

**GILFORD BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**December 15, 2009**  
**6:30 p.m.**  
**Gilford Elementary School**

Members Present: Sue Greene, Dick Hickok, Dale Dormody, Phyllis Corrigan, Fred Butler, Mark Corry, Kevin Roy, Skip Murphy and John O'Brien

Members Absent: Margo Weeks and Terry Stewart

Also in attendance were Superintendent Paul DeMinico; Asst. Superintendent for Business Scott Isabelle; School Board member Sue Allen, Director of Student Services Esther Kennedy, GHS Principal Ken Wiswell and GHS Assistant Principal Peter Sawyer. Also in attendance was Executive Secretary Sandra Bailey.

The Budget Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Hickok welcomed the Committee to this evening's meeting and stated that tonight's review will begin with the Special Education budget. Phyllis Corrigan presented the report of the Sub-committee for Special Education. She stated that they met on December 8, 2009 with Esther Kennedy and those present from the Budget Committee were Fred Butler, Sue Greene and Phyllis Corrigan. The Special Education budget is on many pages within the District's budget, so Phyllis Corrigan highlighted increases, many of which are attributed to 3% contractual salary increases. Transportation costs are also budgeted for an expected 5% contractual increase.

The Elementary School employs a full-time registered nurse for a student, 79% of which is reimbursed through Catastrophic Aid. Phyllis Corrigan also pointed out that the salary of the Special Education Director is divided between the three schools and there were several budgetary decreases under Discretionary Spending. There were also some increases under Discretionary Spending in each school that are "need based". Esther Kennedy explained that the "chair" listed for the Elementary School is actually a lift that automatically assists a student into another apparatus. Brief discussion ensued regarding the expected life expectancy of this piece of equipment.

It was also pointed out that the School District maintains a budget line of \$500 for English Second Language for the Middle School. Although there are no students at this time, requiring these services, if one were to move into the District the funds would be used for an evaluation and transcription of the student and his/her records. Psychological services have increased in the High School due to catastrophic instances that have occurred there.

Phyllis Corrigan moved \$2,595,953 for the Special Education budget. Sue Greene seconded.

Chairman Hickok commended the District for being able to provide "more bang for their buck" with the Special Education programming. Selectman O'Brien inquired whether the State has ever considered some sort of pool for Special Education services. Scott Isabelle pointed out that in this instance, a pool could hurt the District since they have very few out-of-district placements. A vote on the motion indicated a vote of 9-0. Motion carried.

Mark Corry then began the review of the High School budget. This Sub-Committee, consisting of Terry Stewart, Sue Greene and Mark Corry, met with Principal Ken Wiswell and Assistant

Principal Peter Sawyer. He explained that the High School has several accounts that have been reviewed in other portions of the budget, leaving the amount to be approved as \$4,216,278. Although this amount is up \$132,100 from last year's budget, it is offset by a large decrease in the Special Education portion, which was just reviewed.

Running through the various items listed out in their report, Mark Corry stated that the Substitutes Salary line item has been increased to \$34,088 to reflect the actual costs of the 2009-2010 budget, which has been affected by staff absenteeism due to the flu and other health concerns. General Tuition to the Laconia Academy has decreased, with only two Gilford students attending. Tuition to the Huot Vocational Center has increased by \$5,785, since the block programming at GHS allows more availability for students.

Under Student Activity Stipends, Mark Corry indicated that Sub-committee member Terry Stewart has voiced his opinion that he is opposed to all stipends. Drivers Education has also increased by \$1,020 due to salary increase, but is a self-funded item offset by fees to the students and reimbursement from the State of NH. Costs for Project Unity are under C/S Office Equipment, because no other budget line exists for this initiative.

Brief discussion ensued regarding the School's ALERTNOW system, which has contributed to a \$1,000 increase under Telephone.

At this time, Mark Corry moved to approve \$4,216,278 for the High School budget. Sue Greene seconded.

Selectman O'Brien inquired about the Laconia Academy. Ken Wiswell responded that this is an alternative education program, offering classes in the evening. Skip Murphy then inquired about Project Unity. Principal Ken Wiswell provided a detailed explanation of this program, which is aimed at eliminating bias and harassment from the School. The process begins with an audit of the school followed by a written report, and then training of faculty and students. The training shows the impact of bias and harassment in the School and how to safely intervene. Another session will be held for parents and eventually, the culture within the School should turn away from bias and harassment. This is a three-year project, which will then be taken over by the District.

When asked for examples of the bias and harassment, Principal Wiswell indicated it is any language or action that makes a student feel that they don't "belong". Some of the examples he cited were due to weight, race, educational status, sexual preference and socio-economic.

A vote on the motion indicated 9-yes and 0-no. Motion carried.

The Budget Committee then briefly reviewed the Football budget, which totals \$29,996. By a vote at the 2009 School District meeting, this budget cannot exceed \$30,000. Principal Ken Wiswell explained the budgetary problems that arise when football players must wear safe equipment that is certified, driving the costs upward.

Mark Corry stated that their Sub-committee did not review the "57" accounts, which are expenses that are combined between the High School and Middle School. The two line items in this category are Library Services and Salary – Clerical, for a total of \$111,669.

Brief discussion ensued regarding the status of the Meadows property. Scott Isabelle stated that all matters related to this project are on hold until the permitting issues are resolved.

Mark Corry moved to approve \$111,669 for the "57" accounts. Phyllis Corrigan seconded. A vote on the motion indicated 9-yes and 0-no. Motion carried.

Brief discussion ensued regarding the ability to have a summary available in the budget books next year, such as the page included with the High School Sub-committee's report.

Mark Corry moved to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2009 Budget Committee meeting. Skip Murphy seconded. Motion carried by a vote of 8-0 with Phyllis Corrigan abstaining.

Extensive discussion ensued regarding the Right-to-Know law. This was brought about by a request from Committee member Terry Stewart to be able to participate in the December 17<sup>th</sup> Budget Committee meeting, via electronic means, since he is currently away on business.

Skip Murphy moved to allow an individual Committee member to telecommute, if the technology allows, and is intended to be on an exception basis only. Sue Greene seconded. The pros and cons of having advance warning were discussed at length. Chairman Hickok thinks that telecommuting at a meeting should only be permitted when a member has no other means of participating in the meeting. The Committee agreed with this concept.

A vote on the motion indicated 7-yes and 2-no. Motion carried.

Kevin Roy moved to adjourn at 7:50 p.m. Sue Greene seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Bailey  
Executive Secretary