GILFORD BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES
October 21, 2010
6:30 p.m.
Town Hall

Members Present: Gus Benavides, Sue Greene, Dick Hickok, Dale Dormody, Kevin Roy, Phyllis Corrigan, Fred Butler, Paul Blandford, Skip Murphy and Pat Labonte

Members Absent: David Horvath and Terry Stewart

Also in attendance were Town Administrator Scott Dunn, Finance Director Geoff Ruggles, Executive Secretary Sandra Bailey, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Denise Morrissette Gonyer, Library Director Katherine Dormody and Fire Chief John Beland.

The Budget Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Hickok reported that a request will be made to Lakes Region Planning Commission Executive Director Kimon Koulet to attend the October 28th Budget Committee meeting.   He noted that DPW Director Sheldon Morgan, who is very active with LRPC, will also be in attendance at that meeting for the DPW budget review.

Phyllis Corrigan, representing the Town Clerk/Tax Collector Sub-committee, provided members with a summary of their findings from their meeting on October 7th.   She pointed out that a part-time position of 24 hours per week has been eliminated upon the retirement of an employee, but the Board of Selectmen will be reviewing this decision on November 1st.

Phyllis Corrigan stated that the Sub-committee questioned if the Records Preservation could be delayed for one more year, reducing the budget by $3,000.   They were advised that the records must be preserved since it is mandated by State statute.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector Gonyer further clarified that the Town is already behind in preserving records and deferring this again would put them even further behind. Phyllis Corrigan moved to recommend $363,994 for the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's budget.   Selectman Benavides seconded.

Skip Murphy moved to amend the motion by $1,000, decreasing it to $362,994.   Pat Labonte seconded.   Fred Butler Asked TC/TX Gonyer if she would explain what records preservation entails, to which she replied that there are vital records from the 1800's that need to be preserved.   All preservation efforts are sent out to a vendor to be accomplished.   A vote on the amendment indicated a vote of Yes-3, No-7.   The amendment failed.

Sue Greene inquired if the $2,956 proposed for Membership/Dues could be reduced. TC/TX Gonyer pointed out that even though the residents of Gilford voted to combine these positions, they still are two separate positions with two different sets of standards.

She pointed out the value of the conferences she attends and further stated that membership in various professional associations is required as part of her certification. Skip Murphy asked if the Town did not pay for this training, would she pay for it out-of-pocket? TC/TX Gonyer replied no, she did not have the financial means. She further pointed out that her salary has held the line for five years and she feels that furthering her education is a fair trade-off. A vote on the motion indicated 10-0. Motion carried.

Moving onto Elections, Phyllis Corrigan stated that the salary to the Supervisors of the Checklist is under the Town Clerk's budget for their work at elections and under the Administration budget for their yearly stipend.

Phyllis Corrigan moved to recommend $14,283 under Elections. Gus Benavides seconded. Fred Butler asked for clarification on the matter of over-time for Elections vs. over-time for the Department of Planning and Land Use. Motion carried by a vote of 10-0.

Fred Butler presented the Library budget, on behalf of the Sub-committee consisting of Phyllis Corrigan, Kevin Roy and himself. The total Library budget being recommended by the Board of Selectmen is $433,371, representing a 3.3% increase from the 2010 budget. The main cost drivers are increased electricity usage and a new cleaning service contract. He also noted that the projected increase in circulation, compared to 2009, is 40%.

Under Wages and Benefits, the only tangible increase is a request for a substitute Librarian at $14.50 for 80 hours. The original request of 200 hours was reduced by the Town Administrator. This led to discussion on the necessity of hiring substitutes in the Library. Selectman Benavides clarified that the Library is not hiring any new employees. Rather, they are only requesting additional funding under their Part-time wages.

Fred Butler noted that the Town Administrator deleted funding for carpet cleaning this year, but the Library Staff and Trustees think that this must be included in next year's budget. Extensive discussion followed regarding the contract with Belknap Landscape Company. Funding for this contract was also deleted by the Town Administrator and concerns were aired regarding the maintenance of the irrigation lines and mowing. Town Administrator Dunn indicated that these functions would be delegated to the Department of Public Works. The matter of fertilization and the Library's cleaning service were also briefly discussed.

Skip Murphy asked Director Dormody if funding were not made available for Meetings and Dues – would she pay for pay for these out-of-pocket? She stated that her staff would not pay and many of their memberships are organizational and cover the entire staff and Trustees. Selectman Benavides pointed out that by having the contracted cleaning service, there are no employee costs or benefits associated with it.

Fred Butler moved to recommend $433,371 for the Library.   Selectman Benavides seconded.   Motion carried by a vote of 9-1.   Chairman Hickok asked Skip Murphy why he did not support the recommendation, to which he replied it was because of the 80 additional hours funded under Part-time Wages.

Chairman Hickok reminded Committee members that the vote for the Cemetery budget would take place on November 4th.

Gus Benavides moved to approve the minutes of the October 14th meeting.   Phyllis Corrigan seconded.   Motion carried with all in favor.

Paul Blandford moved to adjourn at 7:29 p.m.   Gus Benavides seconded.   Motion carried with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Bailey
Executive Secretary