

GILFORD BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES
December 14, 2010
6:30 p.m.
Gilford High School Library

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

Members Absent: None

Also in attendance were Superintendent Paul DeMinico; Asst. Superintendent for Business Scott Isabelle; School Board member Sue Allen; Gilford Middle School Principal Marcia Ross and Technology Director Brenda McGee. 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 stated that they would be reviewing the Technology and Gilford Middle School budgets.

Tonight's review began with the Middle School. Phyllis Corrigan made a presentation on behalf of the sub-committee, which was comprised of herself and Dale Dormody. She reported that the budget increase for 2011-2012 is \$99,785, which is due largely to a 3% contracted increase for teachers, guidance counselors and school nurse and a 2% increase for support staff and administration. In addition, transportation costs have also increased due to a contractual agreement.

Phyllis Corrigan moved to recommend \$2,442,211 for the Middle School budget. Dale Dormody seconded. Dave Horvath stated that at the beginning of the School District budget review, it was noted that the total salary increase for support staff and administration is approximately \$80,000. He further stated that he would like to address this matter at some time during the budget review process. Terry Stewart explained how, at the conclusion of last year's budget review, he made a motion to decrease the budget because of stipend amounts. Brief discussion on stipends ensued, with Scott Isabelle clarifying the policy regarding stipend increases. A vote on the motion indicated a vote of 10-2. Motion carried.

Fred Butler provided the sub-committee review of the Technology budget. He stated that the total budget is \$360,785, which represents a 1.3% increase. Discussion ensued regarding the costs associated with maintenance contracts for hardware and software, as well as the District's policy to replace computers at a rate of 20% per year. Skip Murphy commented that computer replacement is a potential area to reduce costs and he reiterated his previously stated concern regarding the overall 3.5% increase in the School District's budget.

Terry Stewart pointed out that when the Board of Selectmen reviewed contracted services in the Town budget, they made decreases in the amounts and felt they could live with less. Extensive discussion ensued regarding the computer maintenance agreements. Skip Murphy expressed frustration with how little oversight the Budget Committee is able to have over the School District's budget. Terry Stewart added that, in these hard times, he thinks that the District budget must be reduced. Scott Isabelle provided an explanation of how some costs associated with a particular operating system are set and the District has no flexibility. Brenda McGee

added that the renewal date for contracts depends upon the original date of purchase, so they are contracts with various renewal dates. Scott Isabelle stated that the District appreciates constructive feedback that is received from the Budget Committee.

Discussion then ensued regarding the Technology salaries. Although the sub-committee report indicates it is level funded, the proposed pay increases are found in another part of the budget, which was explained by Scott Isabelle.

Fred Butler moved to recommend \$360,785 for the Technology budget. Skip Murphy seconded. Motion carried by a vote of 12-0.

Scott Isabelle pointed out that there are two line items in the "57" accounts that have not been voted on – the Librarian and Special Education Secretary. These accounts are shared by the High School and Middle School. Terry Stewart moved to recommend \$70,711 for the Librarian. Paul Blandford seconded. Motion carried by a vote of 12-0.

Phyllis Corrigan moved to recommend \$43,192 for the Special Education Secretary. Paul Blandford seconded. Motion carried by a vote of 12-0.

Chairman Hickok then brought up the matter of the next meeting on Thursday, December 16th. He stated that there would be a review of the Elementary School budget first, followed by the guest speaker. Extensive discussion ensued regarding the role of the Budget Committee and the appropriateness of having a speaker come into a meeting to explain the alternative to a superintendent.

Dale Dormody stated that it is the School Board's role to assess the need for a superintendent, not the Budget Committee. Dave Horvath brought up the matter of the vote on full day kindergarten that occurred in Gilford approximately five years ago that was not approved by the voters. Paul Blandford stated that, at that time, full day kindergarten represented a budget increase. The proposal for the 2011-2012 school year to add full day kindergarten results in a cost savings due to decreased transportation costs and a shifting of staff.

Dale Dormody reiterated his previously stated position that if \$175,000 is removed from the budget and the School District has indicated that they cannot eliminate the position of superintendent, then that money would need to be taken from other parts of the budget. Extensive discussion followed regarding whether or not the Budget Committee had any responsibility in determining where those cuts would be made.

Kevin Roy made a motion, seconded by Skip Murphy, to approve the minutes of the December 9th meeting. Motion passed 11 to 0, with Terry Stewart abstaining.

Paul Blandford made a motion, seconded by Kevin Roy, to adjourn at 7:32 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Bailey
Executive Secretary