



APPROVED

**TOWN OF GILMANTON
BUDGET COMMITTEE METTING
WRAP UP
MARCH 29, 2016**

Members Present: Brian Forst -Chair, Stan Bean- Vice-Chair, Steve Bedard-Member, Mark Sawyer- Member, Anne Kirby-Member, Michael Jean- Selectman’s Rep, and Richard Bakos-Sawyer Lake Rep

Members Absent: Joanne Melle- Member, Robert Carpenter- School Board Rep

Also Present: Heather Carpenter – Recording Secretary

Meeting Opened at 7:00 p.m.

Electing the Chairman

The Budget Committee moves to elect Brian Forst as Chairman of the Budget Committee.

MOTION: Stan Bean

Seconded: Michael Jean

The Board votes unanimously to elect Brian Forst as the Chairman of the Budget Committee.

Electing the Vice Chairman

The Budget Committee moves to elect Stan Bean as Vice Chairman of the Budget Committee.

MOTION: Michael Jean

Seconded: Mark Sawyer

The Board votes unanimously to elect Stan Bean as the Vice Chairman of the Budget Committee.

Approval of February 15, 2016 Minutes-

Motion for approval: Michael Jean

Second: Mark Sawyer

Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes.

Items of concern

Chairman Forst addresses the meeting that he had with the Finance Officer- Brenda Paquette. He believes with the approval of the Selectmen she will be able to move to new software. During the meeting Chairman Forst was able to look over the budget with her and he believes it will be an improvement over what there is currently. Over the summer it will be a goal to work towards a cleaner, better budget presentation. Hopefully being able to have reports that show previous year's budget, year to date budget, and the proposed budget. He has expressed the need to have the most accurate numbers as possible to that point and the understanding that in October you will be unable to have the full year's numbers but the accuracy is really key up to that time.

Another thing that Chairman Forst was made aware of at the last CIP meeting was that in 2014 it was voted in to buy a Police Cruiser and to take the money out of the Capital Reserve and put it towards the Police Cruiser and the next article was to close that Capital Reserve. That Capital Reserve still exists and has \$2,500 in it. There needs to be a real effort to make sure that when things are voted in, that they get done.

A discussion takes place on what is the authority of the Budget Committee and the fact that there isn't an audit process that gets done by the committee to provide a checks and balance system without overstepping the boundaries. Richard Bakos concern is that we have a Town Administrator, a Finance Officer and a Select Board that are supposed to provide us with a good budget and it didn't happen during this season. Mr. Bakos mentioned that he would like to see something similar to what the committee receives from the School. Salaries are a very big piece of the budget and when you don't have the correct information then the whole budget is wrong. He would like to see listed by Department- employees, pay rate, FICA, health insurance etc. He feels that account names also need to stay the same because he felt there was an issue with the computer account that should have gone under as a Warrant Article but instead it went in as an expense. Overall if we can get all this information to come together and make sense the rest of the budget is easy but an important piece to that would be to receive a summary page with totals on the first page so there is an idea of where we are at right away.

Chairman Forst spoke to the fact that he is going to bring the 2011 budget up to the Finance Officer so she can have an idea of what the Budget Committee would like to see in the presentation of next year's budget. He believes there is positive movement to put systems in place so that when there is a large expense there is a paper trail.

Michael Jean added to the conversation that the Select Board is working toward putting policies and procedures in place, working on the budget now and not waiting until budget season and making sure that things are in place for the next budget season.

Stan Bean touches on the fact the RSA's do provide the ability for the Budget Committee to review the budget during the year. Although it doesn't satisfy the idea of an audit, it does allow the committee to see if it's going in the right direction.

Steve Bedard feels that there seems to be some positive changes that are happening, and that the mismanagement of the last budget will be in the past.

Chairman Forst's objective will be to look into the Budget process more.

CIP

Stan Bean has a concern on the Capital Reserve. In general the Planning Board develops the plan by sitting down with the Department Heads and Town to figure out what needs to be replaced, when, and the estimated cost. Chairman Forst went to a meeting the other night and he feels that it got sidetracked and the plan isn't coming along. It is important to get the CIP back on track. To understanding what the real numbers are, what the projections are, and what it is going to take for those to be met. The CIP was supposed to be done in 2015 and updated every five years. It is the hope that by the time the next budget season is here that it will be completed. The discussion of having advocates of the CIP is very important in order to get it done, leasing, & how much large interest actual costs the Town. Whether the public supports putting money or doesn't, the importance of it coming before the people is necessary. The only way that can happen is if the Selectmen bring forth a recommendation to put money in the CIP. The process hasn't broadly been used over the last few years. It is a large concern that the CIP is not coming forward. It is felt by not moving it forward the people are not getting the option or choice.

Continued discussion on tax rate, leasing and what the residents have voted for in the past, leasing vs putting money away, and the importance of having the knowledge of what the people are voting for and long term implications to make informed decisions.

New Business-

Steve Bedard brings the question to the committee that under his understanding Mr. Sawyer can't be on the Budget Committee next year due to the article that passed with the issue of conflict of interest. The problem that Mr. Bedard has with this is, Mr. Sawyer is a Call Fire Fighter and didn't receive the COLA under the Warrant Article but the article that passed states, and there is a conflict if you are a Town employee but under that standard Mr. Bedard believes that Mr. Sawyer doesn't fit into that category. There is a further discussion on the validity of the article based on the information that legal counsel gave at public hearing. Chairman Forst doesn't feel that there is a conflict and will not be asking for Mr. Sawyer's resignation.

Conclusion- Next meeting to be determined.

Motion to Adjourn: Steve Bedard

Motion seconded: Michael Jean

Board voted unanimously to adjourn.

Adjournment: 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Carpenter