

APPROVED

Town of Gilmanton
Budget Committee
Thursday, February 5, 2009
7:00 P.M. – Gilmanton Academy

Members present: Stan Bean, Robert Potter, Sr., Frank Bosiak, Mark Sawyer, Betty Ann Abbott, Russell Knowles, Tom Farley, Steven Latici, Dana Twombly and Brian Forst.

Others present: Fire Chief K.G. Lockwood, Police Chief Philip O'Brien, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Debra Cornett, Facility Manager Justin Leavitt, Road Agent Paul Perkins, Business Administrator Timothy Warren, Mark Sisti, Karen Clifford, Anne Kirby, Brett Currier, Brenda Currier, John Dickey, Carolyn Dickey, Elizabeth Bedard, Steven Bedard, Alice Bean, Zannah Richards, Carolyn Baldwin, Nanci Mitchell, Susan Barr, Cindy Houghton, Terri Freeman and recording clerk Rachel Hatch.

Stan Bean called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Confirmation was given that this meeting had been duly posted on January 30, 2009 pursuant to RSA 91-A.

Chairman Bean outlined the procedure of the public hearing, indicating that all public input should be address to the Budget Committee.

Betty Ann Abbott stated that Article 2 and Article 3 was brought forward as a result of the Feasibility Study completed on the Old Town Hall. The report indicated that it would cost over \$700,000.00 to make the Old Town Hall habitable for a police station. Chief O'Brien and Selectman Don Guarino walked the property located on Hattie Smith Road. Chief O'Brien would like this parcel of land to build a police station as it is centrally located in town. Betty Ann Abbott stated that this proposal was outlined in Articles 2 and 3 to allow the residents to decide whether or not to proceed with the purchase of the land for a future site of a police station building. Brett Currier stated that the town did own this property at one time. Zannah Richards asked if the Selectmen were aware of the land restrictions on this parcel? Betty Ann Abbott stated that they were aware of the restrictions that had been place on the property. Brett Currier stated that funds had been placed in the Public Safety Building Capital Reserve Fund and that the proposal was to have one building to house a police station and a fire station.

Betty Ann Abbott stated that the Selectmen had asked the department heads to level fund their budget and find a 4% salary increase for their employees within their level funded budget. Cindy Houghton stated that a 4% salary increase in this economy would be difficult for the residents to fund. Debra Cornett stated that her recommended budget

figure was \$153,872 with no salary increase for her employees. Betty Ann Abbott stated that the Selectmen had reduced her budget to fund the employees' raise in the areas of document restoration, mileage reimbursement and a reduction in the capital outlay for equipment. Any funding to purchase new equipment will come out of the general town new equipment line item. Brett Currier asked what the proposed salary increase is for the town clerk/tax collector? Ms. Abbott stated a 4% salary increase.

Mark Sisti stated that a 4% increase in this economy was not practical and he was of the opinion that the residents will not vote this increase in the budget. Brett Currier asked what the increase was in the insurance. Tim Warren stated that the health insurance had decreased down to .08% and the dental insurance had increased just .01%.

Brett Currier asked if the ZBA clerk was a full time position? Tim Warren stated that the clerk works with the ZBA, HDC and also works for the building department. This position is full time to handle both boards and the building department.

Regarding the repair of the Academy sprinkler system, Zannah Richards asked if this job had gone out to bid? Tim Warren stated that it had and that Tri State Fire was working on the sprinkler system. Karen Clifford asked to explain what Primex did for the town? Tim Warren stated that Primex is the town's liability insurance company that handles claims of any employees who have left the employ of the town and has filed for unemployment, which they can do for up to two years after they have left employment.

Brett Currier asked if the 5th police department position was still funded? Chief O'Brien stated that the position was still in place and would be funded and that it was his hope to have the position filled soon. Terri Freeman asked if the 4% salary increase across the board for all of the employees? Tim Warren stated that the 4% was across the board for all of the town employees. Zannah Richards asked if the salary for the 5th patrolman at a lesser salary than that of last year? Chief O'Brien stated that the new hire salary figure is lower in this budget.

Chief K.G. Lockwood stated that his budget was level funded. The fire prevention line item has increased. He stated that the salaries are based on a 48 our work week. Chief Lockwood stated that he had also proposed a salary increase for the on-call staff in an effort to be fair to all staff.

Regarding the Highway Department budget, Michael Teunessen asked why the over time line item spent in 2008 was so much? Road Agent Paul Perkins stated that the over time line item had been exceeded last year due to all of the inclement weather that the town experienced. Tim Warren stated that the plowing budget was earmarked for \$95,000.00 and the town had spent \$148,000.00 for plowing.

Zannah Richards asked where the recycling facility revenues go to? Tim Warren stated that all revenues for recycling went back to the general fund. Brett Currier asked why the Selectmen decided not to fund the Snowmobile Association this year? Betty Ann Abbott stated that allotting funds for this association was supposed to be a one time funding a few years ago and the Selectmen have funded it every year for the past 3 years. The Selectmen decided not to continue funding this association because it only benefits a certain number of residents. Mr. Currier stated that the Snowmobile Association does much for the town. Both Chief Lockwood and Chief O'Brien spoke in favor of continuing to fund this association, citing that they had just donated a snowmobile to the Fire Department.

Zannah Richards asked for Lakes Region Community Services does for the town? Michael Teunessen stated that they intervene with family issues. Zannah Richards thanked the Board of Selectmen for reducing the town budget this year.

Tim Warren stated that the Selectmen decided to increase the welfare assistance line item by \$50,000.00 this year due to the fact that this line item had been over expended last year and given the economical times at the present time.

The proposed warrant articles were reviewed. Article 6 deals with the withdrawal of \$75,000.00 from the capital reserve Reval/Assessing update with the remaining to be funded by taxation. The project with cost \$100,000.00.

Article 7 is to withdraw \$160,000.00 from the capital reserve highway sheds fund to construct a new salt/sand shed. No monies would be raised by taxation to construct the shed. Article 8 deals with the repair and erecting of the cupola on the Academy building. The Selectmen are not recommending this \$40,000.00 warrant article this year. John Dickey inquired if this project had gone out to bid. Tim Warren stated that it had and the best bid came in from Fifield Construction in Canterbury for \$40,000.00.

Article 9 is for the purchase of a new police cruiser. Betty Ann Abbott stated that the Selectmen had decided not to place funds in the cruiser capital replacement fund this year and fund the purchase of a new police cruiser. Brian Forst inquired why the Selectmen did not propose to place \$20,000.00 in the cruiser replacement fund this year and then withdraw \$27,500.00 to fund the purchase of the cruiser? Betty Ann Abbott stated that the Selectmen were attempting to keep costs down this year. Brett Currier suggested taking the existing \$20,000.00 out of the cruiser replacement capital reserve fund and then funding the additional \$7,000.00 out of taxation to purchase a new cruiser.

Article 10 is asking permission to withdraw \$11,000.00 out of the Recycling/Transfer Facility Capital Reserve Fund to pay for the replacing the fencing at the recycling facility.

Article 11 is for the non-capital reserve funds for office equipment, insurance deductible, hydrants welfare/general aide and fire department plant maintenance, totaling \$72,500.00.

Article 12 is for the purchase of three computers at the police station. The \$6,115.00 cost includes the new software, installation, etc. Chief O'Brien stated that the computers were four to six years old. Mike Teunessen asked if this purchase would go out to bid. Chief O'Brien indicated that it would go out to bid.

Articles 13 and 14 are contingent on receiving the ATV Enforcement Grant and the Highway Safety Grant. This is at no cost to the taxpayers. Article 15 is \$500.00 to fund milfoil treatment. Not funding any milfoil treatment will not allow the Rocky Pond Association to get additional funding from the state.

The Parks & Recreation Association had asked for \$14,000.00 in a warrant article to fund the complete re-wiring of the pavilion. The Selectmen have asked that they give a quote on how much it would cost to fund the re-wiring sections that are safety issues only and then fund the completion of the project in stages, 2-3 years consecutively.

Article 16 is the deed acceptance of the Beech Grove Cemetery by the association. Article 17 is the discontinuance of several capital reserve funds, non-capital reserve funds and expendable trust funds. This is a "housekeeping" warrant article only. Articles 18, 19 and 20 are exemptions of the value of solar energy systems, wind powered energy systems and wood heating energy systems, all of which have not monies attached to the articles. Article 21 is deeding 28 acres of land to the town by tax collector's deed. This parcel of land contains many wetland areas.

Article 22 was submitted by petition. The Gilmanton Year Round Library Association is asking for \$75,000.00 to fund their operating budget for one year. Chairman Stanley Bean recused himself from this discussion and gave the chair over to Frank Bosiak. John Dickey spoke in favor of this warrant article stating that it took 10 years to complete construction of the building and the building is ready to open to the public. Brenda Currier why the library committee had decided to come to the town now for funding? Mr. Dickey stated that the library committee was hoping to be granted an endowment which would fund the yearly operating budget. This did not happen and the library is ready to open to the residents. Cindy Houghton stated that she remembered a meeting where it was stated that the library committee would not ask for public funds. She stated that this is want and not a need. Karen Clifford asked how much of an effort had been made to be awarded a grant or endowment? John Dickey stated that the committee is continuing to work to get grant funds and/or endowments

Michael Teunessen asked why the Selectmen did not recommend this warrant article? Betty Ann Abbott stated that the Selectmen were not endorsing this warrant article

because they had asked all of the department heads to level fund their budget this year. These are tough, economic times and to ask the residents to fund the operating budget is a want and not a need. More discussion following regarding the funding of this warrant article. Stan Bean took his position back and continued to chair the meeting.

Article 23 was also submitted by petition and it is regarding adopting an ordinance recognizing that groundwater and surface waters are a critical, finite, natural resource and the ordinance deals with water extraction. Nancy Mitchell stated that the Conservation Commission had been working on this ordinance since 2006, when the residents had directed the Selectmen to work on an ordinance dealing with water protection. Brett Currier if this ordinance dealt with water extraction? Nancy Mitchell stated that it does deal with the amount of water extraction.

Chairman Bean asked for a budget report from the Corners precinct and the Sawyer Lake Precinct. Steven Latici stated it cost \$6,000.00 to fund the street lighting at the corners this past year. Dana Twombly stated that the Sawyer Lake Precinct lost their clerk of 25 years this past year. The precinct spent \$46,000.00 this past year for roadwork and \$50,000.00 had been earmarked. They spent \$15,000.00 for the long term bond, spent \$4,700.00 for beech upkeep and \$5,000.00 was earmarked for the upkeep of beeches. Mr. Twombly stated that they do not have the figures to repair the dam at this time.

Next Meeting

Mr. Bean stated that the next meeting is Super Saturday, February 7, 2009 at 8:30 A.M. at the Gilmanton Academy Building.

Adjournment

On a motion made by Robert Potter, seconded by Frank Bosiak, the Budget Committee members voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 P.M.

Respectfully,

Rachel Hatch,
Recording Clerk