

Gilmanton Board of Selectmen

PRESS RELEASE

Gilmanton Board of Selectmen

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Setting the Record Straight to Move Forward

Our goal remains to work for the residents of Gilmanton and focus on the needs of our community and if we all work together in a spirit of unity we can make positive change.

Over the past two years the Board (BOS) has worked to improve organizational efficiency at town hall and build a strong team to serve the residents of the town. Part of this effort has included to make information more readily available to residents. One change implemented by this BOS was to make audio recordings of the BOS meetings available by posting these meetings online starting in January 2017. The BOS has recognized the need for an improved website which is more user-friendly and is in the process of reviewing proposals from various companies. There will be a need to balance wants and needs versus budget realities but the Board is committed to an improved website.

We, the BOS, through the budget process, have focused on the critical needs of the community and tried to balance those needs with a watchful eye towards impact on taxes. We've been working with the Budget Committee and have supported the department heads in their budget requests, including the Police Department, which has a proposed increase of 8.58% for the 2018 budget. The BOS had previously adopted a wage scale for town employees and for most employees there is not less than a 3% pay increase consisting of a merit raise and a cost of living adjustment.

The Board of Selectmen believe in open government and recognize the Town's obligation under RSA 91-A to respond to public requests for information, regardless of who makes the request or the motivation of the requesting individual. The Board also recognizes its obligation to the public to assure that the Town's workforce is productive and that employees are provided with safe working conditions. At times, these several obligations can be in conflict. This is what occurred on February 23. On that date, Town Hall employees received an overwhelming number of requests for information. The volume of these requests essentially prevented these employees from performing their regular duties. The volume of these requests, together with the conduct of some of the individuals who came to the Town office to make requests, created an environment in which Town employees did not feel that they could effectively perform their duties. Accordingly, the Board decided to close the Town offices early that day. We have used the time since February 23 to look at work flow and access issues, in order to assure that the Town can be responsive to information requests with minimal disruptions to normal. The Board will continue to assess workplace needs and implement additional changes in the work environment in order to assure open government, workplace safety and employee accountability.

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