



**SELECTMEN'S OFFICE
TOWN OF GILMANTON**

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Board of Selectmen Meeting

December 20, 2021 - Academy Building – 5:10 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Present: Chairman Mark Warren, Vice-Chairman Vincent Baiocchi, Selectman Evan Collins, Town Administrator-Heather Carpenter, Chief Currier, Chief Hempel, and Adam Rague

Members of the Public Present: Timothy Hanna

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL

1. 11-29-2021- Non- Public
2. 12-06-2021

MOTION: On a motion by Vice-Chairman Baiocchi and seconded by Selectman Collins it was voted to approve the public minutes of 12-06-2021 (3-yes-0-no)

CONSENT AGENDA

3. **Private Road Agreement** – Map/Lot 410-025, approved by ZBA and brought to Planning Board for recommendations and they approved. Question of extending culvert to allow safety vehicles, Chief Hempel agreed it would need to be extended. Planning agreed no building permit would be issued until the work was complete. The inspection would be done in conjunction with the Road Agent and also by advice from Fire Chief. Discussion held on recommendations, expectations, and notifying Planning Board.
4. **PO: #01198 HP Fairfield** - \$51,980, Warrant Article approved at the last election for Highway, the One Ton is ready for pick up after Selectboard approval.
5. **Police Dept. Request** – Chief Currier, submitted a price sheet from Farrell's Gun Supply and a request to trade is 16-year-old firearms. The cost is just over \$5,200. This would be taken out of the equipment line in the budget. *Added to Consent Agenda as amended.*
☐ **Action Item** – Check with Finance when the check was received for Ford Explorer that went to auction.

MOTION: On a motion by Selectman Collins and seconded by Chairman Warren it was voted to approve the consent agenda as amended. Amendment was the purchase of firearms for \$5,279. (3-0)

COMMITTEE UPDATE

6. **Energy Committee** – Budget and warrant article discussion and review. Clarification of the original request of \$60,000 and the Board approval of \$40,000. Selectboard is open to outlining projects and making sure communication is clear moving forward to keep a positive relationship. Breakdown of cost to be covered by the \$40,000 request will be submitted shortly.

OLD BUSINESS

7. **Offer of Employment – Full-time/Fire Department** – Chief Hempel introduced Adam Rague to the Board and believes he is a good fit for the Department, Town, and highly recommended. The proposal is to bring him on Full-time with the conditional offer listed and successful completion of courses within one year. The official start date is to begin the week of January 2nd, 2022.
8. **LCHIP Grant & Moose Plate Grant Announcement** – LCHIP Grant was awarded for Old Town Hall, notice was received the previous week. Project timeframe, beginning in the spring. TA will post information on the website to inform the community when the project is in progress. Moose Plate Grant for \$10,000 was awarded earlier in the fall. LCHIP grant was \$ 170,000 plus \$10,000. Warrant article appropriation of \$97,000 came from taxation in conjunction with the grant.
9. **DRA** – Re-cap letter of 2019 statistical evaluation, this is in conjunction with information received from the Community Development Director the prior week detailing the equalization study. This is documentation to justify where assessed values came in comparison to the fair market.

APPROVED 12-07-2022

10. **Warrant Article** – Language and review approvals. *Article numbers are subject to change, for current information please reference the Warrant and Voter's Guide.*

Article #4- This article is for the purchase of a Fire Truck and will be explained in the voters' guide. The previous decision was made to buy down the tax rate with \$200,000 from the unassigned fund balance.

Further discussion to use the unassigned fund balance further to assist the purchase of a new fire truck to replace the 2004 HME. Two options have been presented:

- **Option 1-** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$850,000 for the purchase of a new fire truck, with \$555,000 coming from the unassigned fund balance and \$295,000 from the refurbish and replace fire truck capital reserve. Non-lapse of warrant article for RSA 32:76 and will not lapse until the purchase is complete or until December 31, 2027, whichever comes first.
- **Option 2-** To use \$295,000 in the capital reserve as a deposit and pay \$125,000 yearly payment for five years in a lease-purchase agreement, after the five-year term is up the Town would own the truck.
- The average life is approximately 20 yrs. The current truck is a 2004 (9 Eng. 3), by the time the truck is ordered and received we will be on track with the replacement schedule.

Board Consensus – To present Option 1, utilizing the unassigned fund balance and capital reserve fund with a zero-tax impact.

Article #5 Fire Department Salary/ Wages – Discussion and clarification on the true impact of the salary amounts for a full 12 months. The warrant article amount being requested for 2022 only covers six months of the salary for two full-time firefighter positions and benefits. Specific language has been added to the article to ensure that these positions will be added to the default budget the following year if this article is approved by the voters. The full budget impact in the future is more than what is represented in this warrant article.

Board Consensus and Action Item: TA will review with legal if the language for the period of salary can be added cleanly to the article it will, if not, it will be explained in the voter's guide. Either way, this will be moved forward to the Budget Committee as recommended by the Board.

Further discussion on this year's budget process and the SB2 timeline.

TA Recommendation- The future timeline for the budget process and warrant article review:

1. Dept. Head preliminary budgets presentation in August
2. A final recommendation from Dept. Heads with formulated warrant articles by September
3. Board of Selectmen review and approval first meeting in October to move forward to the budget committee.
4. Voter's Guide to be written in November
5. Revenues, encumbrances, and Default will be reviewed and approved in December

Article #7 Town Driveways – Capital Reserve- To see if Town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$80,000 to be deposited in previously established, Town Driveways Capital Reserve Fund for the Safety Building. This fund is for any Town Driveways.

Article #9 – Purchase Police Cruiser

The purpose of this article is to purchase a Police Cruiser in the form of a pick-up truck. Clarification on language change; original language discussed with the Dept. Head was for a pick-up truck. The language change to a cruiser is because a truck is also a cruiser. The cost of \$51,000 is from full taxation and does not come out of the revolving fund. TA is obtaining more clarification on the legalities of the use of the revolving fund for the purchase of a cruiser as the fund was intended to cover expenses from outside detail. Further discussion with DRA and legal counsel will be required.

Article #17 – Veteran’s Tax Credit: Clarification requested by Vice-Chairman Baiocchetti on who can apply within a household. This is available to any resident, spouse, or surviving spouse.

Further discussion regarding the unknown cost to the Town for this credit because we don’t know how many veterans could potentially apply and qualify. If this article passes the following year will provide an understanding of the cost to the Town.

Article #24-Granite VNA – Chairman Warren requested clarification on why they were requesting Town funds since the organization was so large, they are a non-profit but so are hospitals. This is a company that gets reimbursed for health insurance.

TA- The request has been a long-standing, yearly request for the services that they provide our community.

Board Consensus- In future years, it is requested to understand more about what they are funding and have them come in to speak with the Board to clarify how they are supporting the community.

WA- Infrastructure- TA reviewed the clarified language, no further discussion was had.

Article #14 Conservation Land – Clarification, the Town will retain as conservation, recreational why we make choices on those to be conservation. TA – It’s based on the origin of the original article, which the RSA 80:80 is very specific in that land has to go through Conservation Commission and Planning for recommendation and review. Chairman Warren would like the properties reviewed by the Selectmen before warrant articles and would like the Commission to explain why the recommendations are being made.

Timeline for Warrant Article request by any Committee, Board, or Commission. The recommendation would need to come before the Board by September for it to be reviewed to potentially be added as a warrant article.

Board Consensus – Remove the warrant article.

Article #18 – Gilmanton Year-Round Library- This is a petition warrant article.

Vice-Chairman stated that the Town subsidizes approximately 50% of the library's budget.

Board Consensus – Approved.

Fourth of July Association – Determination to keep Fourth of July Association as an Association. TA clarification after listening to the Board’s discussion. The public was not made aware of the legal opinion given but it is my understanding that based on legal opinion, the Board feels comfortable leaving it as an Association and not combining it into the Operating Budget.

Board Consensus – The Board agrees with the clarification.

Further discussion regarding the balance of specificity and being too vague within the yearly warrant articles.

MOTION: On a motion by Chairman Warren and seconded by Selectman Collins it was voted to approve the warrant articles as presented with the amendments of removing the Conservation Land article and request the TA to check with legal for clarifying language for the article- Fire Dept. Salary and Wages by adding a specific time frame of which we are paying these positions and remove option 2 from article #4 regarding the lease option for the purchase of the fire truck. (3-0)

11. **2022 Budget –** Discussions and approvals of the Operating Budget review of minor changes, Default budget, Encumbrance request, Advertisement of full-time vacancy confirmation/budget, and Revenue.

Encumbrances:

- Line 4153-320 Legal -\$5,000.
- Line 4194-930 Old Town Hall Repairs and Maintenance \$3,066
- Line 4414-800- Animal Control Cages- \$1,280.00

- Line 4900-800- Loon Pond Dam Repair- There is a contract for this work, the office is working on obtaining an easement with a property owner. *There is a budget line within the operating budget for continued maintenance, however, if this encumbrance was removed and we obtain the easement that budget line wouldn't cover the full contract.*
- The encumbrance total is \$15,258.
- Total for Non-Lapsing Warrant Articles is \$1,347,205.00
 - 01-4903-930- CO OTH Restoration- \$170,000.00
 - 01-4909-811- CO Bridge Eng. Design CLR 2021 WA- \$1,177,205.00
- Total- 01-2440-010 Reserve for encumbrance- \$1,362,463.00

Date of spending for the current budget- TA explains the process of submission for purchase orders in the current year being given by the end of the year as opposed to submission after the 1st of the year.

Board Consensus: Departments Heads are allowed to spend until December 27th unless it is for an emergency. Spending will resume after the 1st of the year.

Estimated Revenues – Question on recommended decrease when the actual was significantly higher. TA was unable to review and speak to Finance about the information before the meeting but will clarify. Permit Fees and License remains the same. Revenue from State and Federal Government or Trust, reduction in amounts received. Service and Income from Departments increased on the MS-434.

TA reminds the Board that these are estimated revenues and requested that in the future Finance would be invited to budget discussions to explain the details further.

Board Consensus – Approved.

Budget Changes– Page 3, Dental Plan #211, \$4,423, change. Across all budgets, short-term disability was not budgeted appropriately and is over in every department's budget. Line 4220-120, Part-time wages in Fire Department, page 24. Line 120: increase to \$39,000. Building, Line 4240-620 increased to \$800 for supplies, specific one is needed for purchase in 2022, which is a \$300.00 increase.

These budget lines will need to be increased within the operating budget recommendation.

- ☐ **Action Item**- Dept. Heads need to be updated when an increase happens to utilities, so they can plan properly for the following year's budget. Communication with Department and Finance before the August budget presentation is required.

Budget for Old Town Hall, \$10,000 request from Steve Bedard, outside the scope of the LCHIP grant, no background documentation given.

- ☐ **Action Item**- Next year if additional monies are needed for the regular care and maintenance of the Old Town Hall the request and background documentation will need to come before the Board starting in August like all other budgets.

Default Budget –Definition of the default budget-“Based on prior years budget based on reduced or increased as the case may be debt services, contract or other obligation previously incurred or mandated by law and reduced by one time expenditures contained in the operating budget.”

We had several positions hired in 2021 that fell outside the operating budget. Total of approximately \$115,444.64 that are not covered in the default because they are positions that were hired in 2021 and included increase not covered. This includes Community Development Director, Foreman, Operator II, and vacant 40-hour position. TA requesting formal approval to advertise and hire for the vacant 40-hour position.

If the Default Budget is approved, significant cuts will need to be made to services.

The Full-time position is budgeted for in the 2022 budget. 2021's total budget request was \$6,517,296 with warrant articles. 2022's budget request is \$5,311,230. Comparably, the Operating Budget is higher, but a lower budget overall is still be presented to the voters. The Warrant Article total is \$635,895 without the fire truck.

TA Recommendation – To hire now for the vacant 40-hour position.

MOTION: On a motion by Selectman Collins and seconded by Chairman Warren to approve the Town Administrator to advertise the full-time 40 hr. position for the Community Development Assistant, effective immediately. (3-0)

MOTION: On a motion by Vice-Chairman Baiocchetti and seconded by Chairman Warren it was voted to approve the operating and default budget as presented. (3-0)

MOTION: On a motion by Vice-Chairman Baiocchetti and seconded by Chairman Warren to hire Adam Rague at either Step 7 or Step 1, whichever is appropriate upon the completion of his firefighter physical exam, his NHCDL Driver's License, and his State of New Hampshire Firefighter, Level 2 Certification, his rate will go to Step 2. He will participate in Group 2 Retirement, he'll have a 12-month probationary period, Insurance, dental, health, life insurance will be paid, and as appropriate he will get vacation and sick time per department policy. And his failure to meet these requirements may result in his termination. His start date will be the week of January 2nd, 2022. (3-0)

NEW BUSINESS

12. Resignation – Officer Laundry, Board acknowledges.

SELECTBOARD ITEMS & FYI 's

13. **Budget Committee Update from the last meeting** – Selectmen's Representative Re-cap on the last meeting
14. **Update Bridge Project** – The cost of the bridge project was lower than originally expected. There is a 700 ft. portion of the road to repair and the leftover funds will be used in the spring for that project when they begin paving.
15. **The reminder of Selectmen's message for the annual report** – Due date of 12-31-2021
16. **Deadline Date** – *End of year spending. This item was discussed during budget discussions earlier in the meeting*
17. **A reminder of Public Hearing** – January 5th, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. – The Budget Committee public hearing on budget and warrant articles.
18. **Holiday Schedule** – New Year's holiday falls on a Saturday and the Transfer Station will be closed but will open an additional day the following Monday, however, the Town offices will be closed in observation. There is a Board of Selectmen's meeting that falls on Civil Rights Day and the newly recognized federal holiday of Juneteenth, the Board will recognize the importance at the meeting.

Additional Items:

Complaint by a Resident via email: Discussion, Vice-chairman Baiocchetti received an email from a community member regarding Christmas decorations at the transfer station. The community member was told that Vice Chairman Baiocchetti told the transfer station they could not put them up. A community member was upset by this. Vice-Chairman Baiocchetti clarified with a community member that this is misinformation and the Selectboard did not tell the Transfer Station they could not decorate.

Chairman Warren agreed and clarified the conversation he had with the Transfer Station manager that due to not being able to keep up with the necessities of the Transfer Station, he recommended that they did not need to put as much effort into decorating because it takes time away from what is necessary. This was a recommendation, not a directive.

Gifts: Discussion and clarification, Chairman Warren would like to know about expectations about gifts and receiving gifts. Vice-Chairman Baiocchetti believes a small token of appreciation is acceptable, however, gratuities with the expectation of favors are not, and is illegal. Selectboard agrees food, gift cards of appreciation, homemade items, etc. are acceptable.

☐ **Action Item:** The Police Dept. has gifts and gratuity policy that the Board should look at.

NON-PUBLIC Pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a)-Employee Corrective Action Letter Review.

This meeting was held to review a letter that will be given to an employee.

Determination: Amendments specified, the TA will update the information language and the deadline dates.

MOTION: On a motion by Chairman Warren and seconded by Vice- Chairman Baioccehhtti it was voted to come out of non-public session RSA 91-A:3, II. (3-0).

NON-PUBLIC Pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (I)- Legal

This meeting was held to update the Board members regarding current litigation. No action was taken.

MOTION: On a motion by Chairman Warren and seconded by Selectman Collins it was voted to come out of non-public session RSA 91-A:3, II. (3-0).

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: On a motion by Chairman Warren and seconded by Selectman Collins it was voted to adjourn the meeting at approximately 10:05 p.m., no recorded time captured.

(3-0 Voice Vote – Chairman Warren- yes, Vice-Chairman Baiocchetti-yes, and Selectman Collins -yes).

Respectfully Submitted,



Approved by the Board of Selectmen



Chairman Mark E. Warren



Vice-Chair Vincent A. Baiocchetti



Selectman Evan Collins