



SELECTMEN'S OFFICE
TOWN OF GILMANTON

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Board of Selectmen Meeting

September 20, 2021 - Academy Building - 5:04 P.M.

APPROVED AS AMENDED

***Amend AFG motion from 41,761.80 to 44,761.90**

CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Present: Chairman Mark Warren, Vice-Chairman Vincent Baiocchi, Selectman Evan Collins, Town Administrator- Heather Carpenter, Fire-Chief Hempel, Police- Chief Currier, Road Agent- Paul Perkins, Town Clerk/ Tax Collector- Maura Thomas, Assessing/Planning Administrator- Bre Daigneault, Finance Officer- Brenda Paquette, Library Trustees Barbara Swanson, Sue Roberts, and Cemetery Trustee- Candice Daigle

Absent: Transfer Station- Ron Nason

Public Hearing- Appropriation of Unanticipated Funds

Chief Hempel: For approximately 10 years the FEMA has had assistance to Fire Department Grants "AFG". It is a competitive grant writing where towns put in a request for many things, like staffing, apparatus to equipment needs that towns may have. The design to AFG is if you can prove financial need they will assist you with the funding your object and you explain what you are looking for. Last year we applied for a vehicle emissions exhaust system for the Iron Works Station, which is something we hadn't had in there but there was a system in the Corners Station when that was built. We asked our friends at FEMA for that and we have been awarded the monies for the project. We are pretty excited about the grant and the project should be done by the first of the year.

The Chairman opened public comment/ questions; Seeing none, thank you Chief for your effort with the grant. A call for a motion to receive the funds.

MOTION: On a motion by Vice-Chairman Baiocchi and seconded by Selectman Collins it was voted to accept and expend the unanticipated revenue received from the Department of Homeland Security through the AFG grant for *\$44,761.90 to be used for the exhaust system at the Iron Works Fire Station. (3-0)

The Chairman moves on to the next unanticipated fund from the American Rescue Plan Act. These funds can be used to support the purposes listed below. The Chairman also recognized the request from the Energy Committee to use the funds for the solarization project and opens the floor to other requests from the public. Seeing no further public comment the Chairman states that Board has discussed priority projects but a final decision has not been made. Our 2021 goals from the Selectmen were to address personnel policy and continue to assess our roads, knowing that is a significant place we receive complaints. We will be looking at these funds to see if they would be eligible for stormwater management, such as ditching, culvert replacement, etc. These funds do qualify for that and the Board is considering as one of the options to use the funds to invest in some of those projects that have been identified by the road and culvert assessment. The Chairman called for a motion.

To accept the funds received through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) / Local Fiscal Recovery Fund Program for \$394,994.04; to be received in two installments: 2021- \$197, 497.02 and 2022- \$ 197,497.02.

These funds are to be used for the following purposes:

- Support public health expenditures
- Address negative economic impacts caused by the Covid pandemic
- Replace lost public sector revenue
- Provide premium pay for essential workers
- Invest in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure.

MOTION: On a motion by Selectman Collins and seconded by Chairman Warren it was voted to accept the funds received through the American Rescue Plan Act/ Local Fiscal Recovery Fund Program for \$394,994.04; to be received in two installments: 2021- \$197, 497.02 and 2022- \$ 197,497.02. (3-0)

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL

08-16-2021 & 08-30-2021-Workshop

Discussion: Vice Chairman Baiocchi, I have some questions regarding the 08-16-2021 minutes for the Town Administrator; Are we going to receive the pictures/photographs from LRPC?

A: I have not heard from them but can follow up.

Q: The reference to the Highway Block Grant on page 2. The question is having we had the discussion or when will that be addressed?

A: We have not had the discussion but can address it in the budget process as the Road Agent intends to match the funds of the grant.

Q: Did we receive the pictures from Shellcamp Association regarding Lakeshore and pictures for Canaan Rd?

A: Yes, we received the Lakeshore pictures today but nothing additional regarding Canaan Rd.

MOTION: On a motion by Vice-Chairman Baiocchi and seconded by Chairman Warren it was voted to accept the meeting minutes from 08-16-2021. (3-0)

The next set of minutes addressed are the 08-30-2021 Workshop minutes. The Chairman calls for discussion.

Vice-Chairman Baiocchi requests that the minutes be pared down to the topic and the recommendation vs transcription. Further discussion by the Board based on the context of the meeting and if these minutes need to be adjusted for this set or if this request is regarding future preference.

Board Consensus: For minutes for workshops, the topic and recommendations/motions is all the information that is required as transcription is not necessary.

MOTION: On a motion by Vice-Chairman Baiocchi and seconded by Selectman Collins it was voted to approve the minutes as written from 08-30-2021. (2-1 Chairman Warren abstains)

€ **Action Item:** TA to reach out to LRPC for the photographs discussed at the presentation from Dave Jeffers.

€ **Action Item:** Address the Highway Block Grant through the budget process with the Road Agent

CONSENT AGENDA

1. PO: Air Cleaning Specialist-Equipment Plymovent System funded by AFG Grant- \$33,000.00
2. PO: Mas-Con Corp.- Academy Building-Masonry repair at the rear ground- \$23,500.00
3. CAI Technologies Contract- Mapping
4. Event: Academy Building: 10-09-2021 Gilmanton Community Church Pies on the Common
5. Conservation: Request for Appointment- Derek Colquhoun, Megan Hartnett, Robert Baldwin
6. Energy Committee- Resignation from Graham Wilson

Discussion regarding the purpose of the use of the building during the Pies on the Common and the use of the electrical.

Board Consensus: The Pies on the Common Event request; The electricity can be used from an outside source at the Town Hall but the building will remain closed for the event.

MOTION: On a motion by Vice-Chairman Baiocchi and seconded by Chairman Warren it was voted to accept the consent agenda as amended per the discussion regarding the Pies on the Common Event. (3-0)

OLD BUSINESS

7. **2022 Budget discussions-** Budget presentations; Entire budget including, Wages, Cola and Merit discussion. The wage scale will be adjusted based on the determination of the Select Board. *Items not include; Warrant Articles, Insurance rates, estimate from Highway Block Grant, and final estimates for CCS. These numbers will be received in October 2021.*

The items not included will not be received until October.

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Recommendation- Wages, Cola %, and Merit % need to be discussed and determined, final approval can move forward after all final numbers have been received. Finance will be present for this discussion if needed.

Assessing/ Planning & Conservation- Bre Daigneault

Assessing Budget- Overall the yearly request for the department is the same.

Increase: Line 4152-312: The contracted Assessor rate is going to increase from \$75.00 to \$80.00 per hour, this line hasn't increased in approximately twenty years. The 2021 budget was \$31,138 vs 2022 request at \$45,000.00

Decrease: 01-4152-370- Computer Expense from \$6,580.00 to \$5,725.00

TA- Heather Carpenter: The overall budget is reflected as a decrease, the wages for Assessing, Planning, Conservation, Zoning Board of Adjustments, and the Historic District Commission have all been placed under the Executive as these roles all fall under the Board of Selectmen and wages are reflected in one location. Further discussion on the time allocation of each of these roles, the increased workload for each section due to the economic atmosphere and additional involvement from each Board/Commission, all areas have increased workload to building, assessing, planning, conservation, and zoning, the additional open hours for the Town Hall that have increased over the last two years. Increase activity places additional strain on employees that are already at maximum capacity for their workload.

Planning:

Increase: Line 01-4191-343- Advertising and Notices; There have been more cases that increase this line from \$2,000.00 to \$3,000.00. Those are paid back by the applicant but they are paid out of the Town account first.

Line: 01-4191-370- That line appears to be an increase but the line was negated last year, so it is the same need this year and is budgeted for in the amount of \$825.00.

Further discussion regarding the contracted planner, the budget line is staying the same as he is still reviewing and recommending but not physically needed at the meetings as much.

Conservation: The overall budget was presented to the Board last month but additional questions are welcomed.

Chairman: There is a potential for the Land-use Change Tax to be voted on through warrant article and increase the percentage that the Conservation Commission receives. If that warrant article was voted in, would that affect the current year?

A: I believe it would go into effect for the 2022 tax year.

Q: How do we budget for that if we don't know until the vote takes place?

A: The estimated amount is between \$10,000.00-\$14,000.00

Q: The amount still comes into the Town the difference is the account it goes into between the General Fund vs the Conservation Fund.

Further discussion on the increase in hours, the overtime comes from the wage line which is not budgeted for and affects the bottom line of the budget.

Highway Department- Road Agent Paul Perkins

Administrative increase to the two six-wheeler and uniforms, the uniforms have been increased in the anticipation of a new hire.

Line 01-4311-112- Currently vacant but there is a plan to promote, shortly. This will lead to two vacant positions in lines 115 & 116.

Further discussion on the current wage scale and how it relates to these departments is an area of concern, the starting pay is too low. The Selectmen recommend the Road Agent reach out to other towns for further information regarding wage ranges for similar positions in their departments.

The prior wages listed in the budget for the Forman role were \$46,155.00. The other number 2's in the organization make more than what the wages for the Foreman are currently. Addressing the current economy, providing pay that will help retain employees is something that needs to be considered but the full picture needs to be given to determine an adjustment.

Line 4312-693 for the gravel and stone due to pricing hikes. The street lighting has stayed the same. We have not received the firm numbers for the Highway Block Grant at this point but the intention is to match the funds. The information is usually given to the office by October.

The projects that have been planned for the grant money are Stage Rd, Shellcamp, some items on Meadow Pond. Further discussion on the amount spent so far out of line 01-4319-730, \$131,654, and the intention of getting work done on Stockwell Hill Rd, to include shimming.

Questions regarding encumbering funds, placing funds towards roads recommended by the assessment.

Q: Is there a plan long term for Stockwell Hill Rd?

A: Yes, ditching, culverts, shim, and overlay work, which is the same for Shellcamp.

Q: Who is going to do the work, seeing as there are only two people in the Dept.?

A: We will hire the job out but do what we can ourselves & address some of the complaints.

Line 01-4312-669: The signs for road closure have been ordered but they are taking longer than expected. The quote for line striping will be obtained and budgeted for as a line item.

€ **Action Item:** Wages from surrounding towns

€ **Action Item:** Quote for line striping and place in the budget

Police Department- Chief Currier

Salaries- These lines have been flat line while we are waiting for the Boards determination on wages. In the current economy, while Dunkin Donuts is hiring for larger wages, Walmart is paying \$24.00 per shift to unload trucks, \$15.00 per for washing dishes locally, the concern of losing staff from another Town is there. When we lose staff, it cost thousands of dollars to replace and they take historical knowledge with them.

Q: Do we know that we are low compared to surrounding towns?

A: I have not re-looked at the numbers but have done it numerous times for the Belknap county area.

Further discussion on adjustment of the wage scale, comparative pay from surrounding towns, planning for the future, justification, and a gauge of our current requests. The overall wage scale will be addressed in 2022.

Line 01-4210-120- Part-time has dropped significantly because part-timers just don't work, they fill in when they can but they are full-time officers elsewhere. There are currently two part-time officers. The decrease from this line has been placed in the overtime line 01-4210-140, due to an increase in CAC, juvenile issues, investigations are becoming lengthier, even though the calls for service are down.

Line 01-4210-390- Prosecuting Services has increased from \$9,500.00 to \$12,500.00; the increase is due to the case load.

Groundskeeping has been zeroed out and the amount will be covered under the building line through the Town Administrator.

This budget has decreased approximately \$5,000.00

Warrant Articles: We are seeking a replacement cruiser, a Ford F-150, for approximately \$52,000.00 and a new security system at the Public Safety Building- approximately \$24,000, monitors are not included in the quote.

The truck provides the ability to go places that are harder to get to, help the Fire Dept. if needed, and it would provide

better navigation in certain areas during mud season. There are currently 6 in the fleet and we would take the oldest vehicle and use it as the spare. Further discussion regarding CIP, the current fund for the cruisers, and the ongoing replacement on an annual basis.

Fire Department- Chief Hempel

There is a need for additional staff to increase the level of service that is currently being provided. The service

provider currently is from 7 a.m.- 7 p.m. with full-time staff. The need arises with the diminishing resources of call personnel and to continue the coverall within a 24-hr. operation. We had discussed the additional staff members either by the FEMA grant or through budgeting. Currently, we have not heard back about a grant award so the grant may not happen at this point but that does not alleviate the need for personnel.

The positions are currently budgeted for 8 months as a 48-hr. work week with an overall budget number of \$879,132.00 and is roughly a 20% increase.

The Safer Grant doesn't go away, there is another opportunity to try again and the intent is to continue to pursue that.

Further discussion on what surrounding towns have for their personnel with similar cover to what is being recommended in this budget.

Q: The recommendation is to budget for ¾ of the year, starting in May/ June so even though it is a significant increase this year, it will be an even larger increase next year?

A: Correct.

Without the additional staff, the difference between the 2021 budget and this year's budget would be a \$3,000.00 increase.

Q: How many departments in our area don't have 24 hr. coverage?

A: Alton-24 with per diem staff, Pittsfield-24hr., Canterbury- does not have 24 hr. coverage, Laconia-24hr.

There is a greater need for service and even though it is communicated through the annual report the expectation is that we are 24hr coverage. The current level of service we are providing with full-time personnel is 12hrs. At this particular junction, we are not providing the same level of service on the top half vs the back half, it is imperative that we move to a new staffing pattern.

Q: How many calls have not been made?

In 2020- 226 medical incidents, 18- delayed or no responses that were handled by mutual aid, we were requested by towns a total of 11 times that we're unable to assist, 10 delayed responses that were handled by surrounding towns.

In 2021 through July or August 08th we had 95 incidents, out of those 7 were delayed and handled by mutual aid, request for mutual aid requests from other towns- these are calls that we give back, we had 3 EMS calls we weren't able to help with and 12 fire calls and 10 delayed responses.

Further discussion regarding budget impact, staffing needs, staffing patterns, and call personnel.

Warrant Article- Engine replacement will be requested utilizing the money that is in the Capital Reserve, requesting to add funds and then with additional language to lease. Additionally, there is value in our current engine, so there is the ability to list it with a broker and have them handle it.

Cemeteries- Candice Daigle

The only change in this budget is in Line 01-4195-650- Groundskeeping, which covers leave removal.

WA- The warrant article request will be \$5,000.00 for tree removal as the dying ash tree population needs to be addressed.

Town Clerk/ Tax Collector- Maura Thomas

There is no big change in the Town Clerk/Tax Collector budget, aside from the fact that there are two vacant positions that are posted but not filled.

Currently, there is a budget request for the software to match the Assessing software which would place us on the same

system and reduce the issue of error between the two non-compatible systems. The thought would be to overspend the line as there is money that can be used in the bottom line as the money has already been raised instead of requesting 2022. The cost of the system upgrade is \$10,900.00.

Elections- Had been budgeted for 5 elections, that has dropped down to 3. There is one town election and two-state Elections- general and primary this year. There is an increase in pay for election works and supervisors of the checklist.

WA- There are no warrant article requests from this department.

Executive, Finance & Other Budgets-TA Heather Carpenter & Finance- Brenda Paquette

The Executive Budget request is a bit different this year in look and expense. We have moved all the small broken out wages in Planning, Conservation, Assessing, Zoning, and HDC brought under the umbrella of the Executive budget as all the staff falls under the Selectmen. This allows the budget to be easily understood and in one location. There has been a request throughout the year to have a full-time Finance/ HR employee, we have addressed the increase in this budget proposal with the current role being budgeted for 8 months, providing a two-month overlap for the transition and the full-time role being budgeted for the remainder. You will also see an increase in the benefits, retirement, FICA, Medicare.

Executive Budget-

Line 01-4130-115- Admin Asst. has decreased based on the current staff that was just hired.

Line 01-4130-116- There has been an increase of 5 hrs per week that needs to be budgeted for.

Line 01-4130-117 & 118- A restructured position which was previously Assessing, Planning, and Conservation with an increased salary request to cover the increase of responsibility as a supervisor of two positions in the main office and additional staff for increased workload over the past two years. Both lines would increase the overall budget.

Line 01-4130-119- This is the Land Use position that we currently have that has been brought under the Executive Budget.

You will see a large decrease on the budget pages of Assessing, Planning, Conservation, Zoning, and HDC due to these changes.

The restructure would allow for a floor supervisor similar to what we had in the Assistant Town Administrator but not as a second in command but as an additional supervisory role. The Community Development Director would bring in all your aspects of planning, zoning, conservation, HDC, intake for the building department, and assessing. The idea is to bring cohesion to all these various aspects of the organization and the community.

There is one new position being requested under this budget and an increase to an already existing full-time position.

Further discussion on the current structure of the office vs the idea of the restructure, breakdown of roles and duties for the current part-time role and the full-time role. The fact that the current workload is more than the current staff can handle, more staff is needed.

Finance Budget- There is a need for full-time HR and Finance but we are currently in a functional state. If the additional to full time is not moved forward in this budget, it will be a recommendation in the future.

There has been a quote received for HR services, which is approximately \$8,000.00 that is not being recommended as it would not serve the town effectively. Payroll quotes have not been received at this time.

Line 01-4150-110- Recommendation to full time, which also increases the FICA, Medicare, benefits, and retirement.

Line 01-4150-301- Audit services have increased by \$1,000.00 and 2022 is the last year of the contract

Line 01-4150-370- The amount is still up in the air, there will most likely be an increase of 2,045 but the numbers have not been finalized and the other increase is from the accounts payable, payroll, and the fund accounting software.

Line 01-4150-691- Expenses for the budget committee supplies

General Assistant-

Line 01-4441-110- This line has been zeroed out as it was a part of the ATA position in the past, the budget is no longer needed as it has been covered through the Admin. Asst. line. That is a decrease of \$7,079.00

Line 01-4441-800- This line is being recommended as a reduction to 25,000.00 from 100,000.00 as we are one year out from COVID and have a year of history to be comfortable with this budget request. Along with an additional request to the non-capital of \$25,000.00. The budget is a decrease of approximately 74%.

Further discussion regarding the money left in the General Assistance line this year could potentially be used to offset building projects that are needed via transferring the budget or overrun the bottom line. By utilizing the funds leftover from general assistance and the request for the project in the General Government Building category would be normalized and one warrant article be submitted to request a fund to be started for the Town Hall in the amount of \$25,000.00.

Corner Library- The corner library's request was decreased from the preliminary discussion as the Town Hall needs pest care and we got a better deal to join both the buildings together. The total request is \$6,684.00

Patriotic Purposes: Increase due to the cost of flags and the number of flags needed. This budget covers cemetery flags and the flag and poles that the Fire Dept. cares for. These flags are purchased from a local source in NH.

Parks and Rec.: Increase in wage request due to the covered hours.

Further discussion on stipend positions to help cover community events, possible adjustment to opening the park later, and closing earlier. The groundskeeping lines throughout the budget have been increased, he has kept his pricing significantly lower the last few years can not continue to maintain service at the cost.

- Legal Budget- Determination; two outstanding court cases currently. This line will rest at \$60,000.00 and a warrant article to be added.
- Animal Control- Not addressed
- Default Budget- Not addressed
- Outside Agencies- Not addressed
- Transfer Station- Not addressed
- Warrant Articles-Not addressed
- Debt Service- The town currently is paid to date.
- Full background documentation needed for the Budget Committee
- Further information is needed for the two new positions placed in the budget vs a warrant article.
- COLA- The current cola is at 4.1% and the number is forecasted for Dec. over 6%. This percentage may be adjusted depending on the bottom line.

€ **Action Item:** Quote for payroll service

€ **Action Item:** Determination of all the budgets discussed under the Executive, Finance, and Building categories will be addressed at a subsequent meeting.

SELECTBOARD ITEMS

Master Plan Discussion- Board/ Committee/ Department involvement for 2022 requested by the Chairman. This is an idea to bring all members of the organization from Dept. Heads, Boards, Committees together to focus on a direction of planning for the community to get an idea of where we would like to see Gilmanton in the next 10 years. This is a future project but the discussion can be brought forward in 2022 as a part of our goals.

1) NON-PUBLIC Pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (c)-Reputation- Tax Hardship

MOTION: On a motion by Chairman Warren and seconded by Vice-Chairman Baiocchetti it was voted to enter into non-public session RSA 91-A:3, 11(C) (3-0).

This meeting was held to discuss and review a hardship abatement request.

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

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

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

MOTION: On a motion by Chairman Warren and seconded by Vice-Chairman Baiocchetti it was voted to enter into non-public session RSA 91-A:3, 11(I) (3-0).

This meeting was held to discuss a potential Fair Labor Standard act item. No action 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).

3) NON-PUBLIC Pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (b)- Hire/Highway

MOTION: On a motion by Chairman Warren and seconded by Selectman Collins it was voted to enter into non-public session RSA 91-A:3, 11(b) (3-0).

This meeting was held to discuss a potential hire for the foreman position in the Highway Dept.

Board Consensus: Interview required, no further action taken

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

Town Administrator left the meeting at 10:14 p.m.

4) NON-PUBLIC Pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a)- Evaluation

MOTION: On a motion by Vice-Chairman Baiocchetti and seconded by Chairman Warren it was voted to enter into non-public session RSA 91-A:3, 11(a) (3-0).

This meeting was held to discuss the TA evaluation.

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

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: On a Motion by Selectman Collins, and seconded by Vice-Chairman Baiocchetti it was voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at approximately 10:20 p.m.

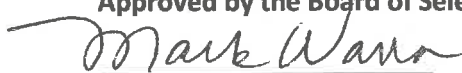
(3-0 Voice Vote – Chairman Warren, Vice-Chairman Baiocchetti-yes, and Selectman Collins -yes).

Respectfully Submitted,



Heather Carpenter
Town Administrator

Approved by the Board of Selectmen



Chairman Mark E. Warren



Vice-Chair Vincent A. Baiocchetti



Selectman Evan Collins