



APPROVED

Board of Selectmen Town of Gilmanton, New Hampshire

Meeting

November 16, 2015

6:00 pm. – Gilmanton Academy

Present: Chairman Donald Guarino, Selectman Michael Jean, Vice Chairman Rachel M. Frechette Hatch, Town Administrator Paul Branscombe and Administrative Assistant Stephanie Fogg. Also present Brett Currier, Ralph Lavin, Zannah Richards, Mike Millette.

6:00 pm Chairman Guarino opened the meeting, took attendance of those present and voting (roll call, Selectman Jean, Selectman Hatch and Chairman Guarino, all present) and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

6:01 pm Chairman Guarino opened Public-Input

Tax Bills – Brett Currier said we have a real bad problem with our Tax Bills. I don't know who dropped the ball, I know the Town voted this in, but for the Board of Selectmen not to buy this down, I have no idea what you guys were thinking? The Board of Selectmen need to stop rubber stamping these Warrant Articles. We cannot put money away, when people cannot afford their taxes.

Fire Department has come in with a proposal to the Forestry Truck, those are the big ticket items. Four fire trucks, 2 ambulances, slated on a CIP every 10 years and replace them because the CIP says they are due? I'm not just picking on the Fire Department. I hear we are getting a 1.5% for all of our employees when the Senior Citizens are getting zero! You really have to look at the whole deal. Tired of hearing no one gets raises, let me tell you, when you are buying \$20,000 benefit packages for these people and that package goes up each year by \$3,000 or \$4,000, the employee pays 20% and the Town pays 80%, that's one heck of a raise. You need to start figuring this in. When the guy on the street is going down, it needs to be stopped here. People cannot afford to make it. On a fixed income, social security gets no raise, and you are comparing it to a 2% at the State. Default money was agreed to go back, it needs to go back.

Why didn't we buy it down, \$300,000 would have bought it down for half our money. We would have been just fine with \$1,000,000 in the undesignated fund balance. It was a mistake. It isn't all about 30 employees, you are giving raises to everyone, don't go against the Federal Government on this. I want to know about the medical benefits. This is unheard of a 13.1% increase! You are going to have to say no to these Warrant Articles. People on fixed income have no hope. It's not all about the employees, I'm not saying they are not valuable, but they need to pay the additional costs on medical.

1 Do not send all of the Warrant Articles forward. Let them go forward by Petition. Fire
2 apparatus should be shared by the Mutual Aid, we don't need every piece in the chess set. We
3 don't need it. Most forest fires are put out with tanker trucks, not the forestry trucks. I am
4 hoping the Board agrees with this. Town employees and Selectmen, you don't feel it, but every
5 time something goes up, it pushes those outside of the system down. I think you made a real
6 mistake not buying the rate down.

7
8 Paul Branscombe said on the Forestry Truck, it was going to be for \$62,000 there is money in
9 reserve at \$48,000. The Fire Chief revisited his numbers. I did not recommend the purchase for
10 this year to the Budget Committee, because the remaining funds would have to be raised. What
11 happens in March hits the first Tax Bill in December. What happened in March was the Towns
12 people voted on a much higher default budget, \$91,000 less, was the proposed budget. 29
13 Warrant Articles coupled with the Budget that were voted on, and that is what did it.

14
15 Brett Currier mentioned there was a series of events with the Budget Committee regarding raises
16 for the employees that went against what the Selectmen had asked Department Heads to do. The
17 Town Clerk's budget last year included a 2% raise for the employees, Department Heads were
18 asked not to submit the raises in their budgets, as a Warrant Article for 1.5% raises was going
19 forward for all employees. All other Department Heads followed the Selectmen's request. The
20 Budget Committee left the 2% raise in the Town Clerk's Budget. At Deliberative Session, Brett
21 Currier proposed a 2% increase for all employees as part of the General Operating Budget, and it
22 passed by a hand vote at Deliberative Session. Brett Currier said that in 30 years of voting here,
23 he has never seen a Budget Committee not recommend what the body on the floor has voted for.

24
25 **Selectmen's Office** - Zannah Richards said she has been having a difficult time reaching anyone
26 in the Land Use/Building Departments in the Selectmen's Office. Her thought at first was that
27 there was not enough coverage in the office. Two full-time and two part-time, plus the Town
28 Administrator, then I looked across the hall and thought two full-time and one part time
29 employee and thought wow, we are lopsided here for the amount of work that happens in the
30 Selectmen's Office. Clients trying to get answers on Land Use questions, never caught up to get
31 answers. I was upset, when I left the office, and thought we have to do something to man the
32 office better. My first opinion was, boy.... do we need more staffing over here. After my tax
33 bill, I don't want to see any more taxes. Tax bill higher by \$800. Sales in this Town have been
34 hard because of the tax rate, and now it is even harder. Zannah said I come here tonight, because
35 I know we have gone into our undesignated funds to offset our tax rate before, Brett talked about
36 it a little bit. How much is in that fund right now, and why didn't we use it to offset the rate. We
37 have done it in the past.

38
39 Chairman Guarino said there are recommended amounts by the Department of Revenue. There
40 is \$1,300,000 in there and we reviewed what the State recommended that we save "for a rainy
41 day" amount. It ranges from 5% to 17%, we are at 10.29%.

42
43 Paul Branscombe said that your unassigned fund balance is money that you set aside, which
44 we've done over the years. DRA's minimum thresh hold is \$500,000. There were five scenarios
45 and the Selectmen decided it wasn't enough to take out to make the difference on the rate, if
46 there was an emergency the Town could be in trouble.

47
48 Chairman Guarino said we did not do it this year, because we felt the fund would be too low.

1
2 Zannah Richards said, for my own clarity, we are required to keep a certain amount in that fund?

3
4 Paul Branscombe said that \$572,000 is a minimum. If you had something go wrong, it may not
5 be enough to cover the emergency.

6
7 Zannah Richards said that with the school budget, you always have the tuition to Gilford in the
8 background, no knowing how many new students we may send, which can “kill” the School
9 Budgeting.

10
11 Paul Branscombe said that in all of the scenarios brought forward none of which would have
12 reduced the rate lower than \$25.00.

13
14 Brett Currier said he thought \$300,000 would have bought it down by \$1.44 or \$1.50. You could
15 have dropped the Tax Rate in half. Chairman Guarino said the numbers came from DRA. At
16 this time it doesn't.

17
18 Zannah said, Loud and Clear, here we are coming into another year and there are a whole bunch
19 of us on the independent contractor series, we certainly do not get health insurance, it is just
20 killing us. We are rating as one of the highest Towns now.

21
22 Originally thought we might need more employees to cover the jobs in the Selectmen's Office,
23 or do we look at the employees we have and reshuffle the deck to make sure phone calls get
24 answered, or maybe what are we doing here to realign people. We cannot afford anyone else
25 here.

26
27 Selectman Hatch asked are you looking for Planning, Zoning, Building Departments, when you
28 are calling in? Zannah said yes.

29
30 Mike Millette said he moved to this Town to retire in this community. It is becoming difficult to
31 stay. I want to stay in Gilmanton. I think you are going to hear a lot more about this. When it
32 starts affecting the pocketbook.

33
34 Zannah Richards asked about pay caps for employees. Selectman Jean said that we are working
35 on pay scale and salary schedules.

36
37 **7:36 pm Close Public Input**

38
39 **Property Liability and Trust** – is in run off for July 1, 2016. Primex will begin in July 2016.

40
41 **Primex –**

42 **MOTION:** On a Motion by Selectman Jean, and seconded by Selectman Hatch, it was voted to
43 go with Primex for Property and Liability Insurance. (3-0).

44
45 Proposed Health Care next Selectmen's Meeting.

46
47 **Memorandum of Understanding** – During emergency situation where the school would be
48 used as the designated emergency shelter, it is necessary to firm up the current agreement

1 between the school and the Selectmen. Paul Branscombe met with Superintendent John Fauci to
2 go over what is currently in place. After discussion several items were added, including adding a
3 domestic animals clause. Many people do not want to leave their cats/dogs during an
4 emergency, so there would be a separate room set aside for the animals. During the emergency,
5 one Selectman and one School Board Member would need to be present at the school.

6
7 There are a few items that need to be changed on the Memorandum of Understanding. Paul
8 Branscombe will work on the wording and bring it back before the Selectmen.

9
10 **Grant for Generator** - Chief Hempel was able to procure a 50-50 matching grant for a
11 generator at the IW Fire Station, which would act as the Emergency Management Headquarters
12 for the Town. The generator comes with everything to set it up.

13
14 **MOTION:**

15 The Town of Gilmanton Board of Selectmen, in a majority vote, accepted the terms of the
16 Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) as presented in the amount of \$8,800 for
17 the purchase of a generator. Furthermore, the Board acknowledges that the total cost of this
18 project will be \$8,800, in which the Town will be responsible for a 50% match (\$4,400). (3-0)

19
20 The \$4,400 will come from encumbrances from two years back.

21
22 **Encumbrances -**

23 Selectman Jean would like a list of the existing encumbrances. Paul and Marie will provide the
24 Selectmen with that list at the next meeting.

25
26 **Historic District Commission** – The HDC requests that the Selectmen vote to officially increase
27 the abutters fees from \$6.48 to \$10.00. After discussion by the Selectmen, they decided by
28 consensus to increase abutters fees for HDC, Planning and Zoning to \$7.00 dollars.

29
30 **Select Board Items -**

31
32 Chairman Guarino asked for Cindy Bedford's hours to be recounted toward **reproducing maps**
33 **and property cards** that needed replacement after the flooding. Her hours will be submitted to
34 the insurance company for reimbursement because the files and maps needed to be "restored" to
35 original status of that before the flooding.

36
37 **Circulators** – Chairman Guarino also requested that the bill for replacing the Circulators on the
38 Boiler in the Academy Building be submitted to the insurance company. He felt that the
39 circulators would not have failed if they hadn't been running wide open to dry out the building
40 and keep the open building from freezing after the flood. (they failed under the strain)

41
42 **Year Round Library Board** – have invited the Selectmen to a joint meeting with the Budget
43 Committee, the School Board and the Year Round Library on Monday, November 23, 2015 at 6
44 pm at the Gilmanton Year Round Library. The meeting is to expand on the discussion and
45 proposal that Chris Sleigel had with the Selectmen earlier this month. The meeting is open to the
46 public.

1 **Bridge RFQ's** – Chairman Guarino said that he appreciates the updates from Paul Branscombe
2 regarding the Bridge information. Chairman Guraino said the contract awarding was not right.
3 Chairman Guarino said you cannot award and engineering contract off of an e-mail survey.
4 Proper procedure was not followed.

5
6 Chairman Guarino would like to schedule and “emergency” meeting to address the conversation
7 regarding the RFQ's and awarding the contract to an engineering firm. According to an RSA
8 that Chairman Guarino read from, contracts, negotiations and discussion for awarding them need
9 to be discussed in public.

10
11 **Bridge RFQ's – BOS Meeting on Wednesday November 18, 2015 at 6 pm conference room.**

12
13 **Approval of Minutes –**

14
15 **MOTION:** On a Motion by Selectman Hatch and seconded by Selectman Jean, it was voted
16 unanimously to approve the Minutes of November 2, 2015 as written. (3-0)

17
18 **(A) Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c)**

19 **MOTION:** On a Motion by Selectman Hatch, and seconded by Selectman Jean it was voted
20 unanimously to go into Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c). (3-0 Voice Vote – Chairman
21 Guarino-yes, Selectman Jean– yes, Selectman Hatch - yes).

22
23 The meeting room was closed to the public. Present during the Non-Public Session were
24 Chairman Guarino, Selectmen Jean and Selectman Hatch. Paul Branscombe and Administrative
25 Assistant Stephanie Fogg.

26
27 The Selectmen discussed an abatement of delinquent tax request.

28
29 **MOTION:** On a Motion by Selectman Jean and seconded by Selectman Hatch, it was voted
30 unanimously to come out of Non-Public Session at 7:55 pm. (3-0 Voice Vote – Chairman
31 Guarino -yes, Selectman Jean – yes, Selectman Hatch - yes).

32
33 The meeting room was opened to the public. The Board noted the Non-Public Session minutes
34 were not sealed.

35
36
37 **(B) Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c)**

38 **MOTION:** On a Motion by Selectman Hatch, and seconded by Selectman Jean it was voted
39 unanimously to go into Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c). (3-0 Voice Vote – Chairman
40 Guarino-yes, Selectman Jean– yes, Selectman Hatch - yes).

41
42 The meeting room was closed to the public. Present during the Non-Public Session were
43 Chairman Guarino, Selectmen Jean and Selectman Hatch. Paul Branscombe and Administrative
44 Assistant Stephanie Fogg.

45
46 The Selectmen discussed an employee in the Selectmen's Office.

1 **MOTION:** On a Motion by Selectman Jean and seconded by Selectman Hatch, it was voted
2 unanimously to seal the Non-Public Session. (3-0 Voice Vote – Chairman Guarino -yes,
3 Selectman Jean – yes, Selectman Hatch - yes).
4

5 **MOTION:** On a Motion by Selectman Jean and seconded by Selectman Hatch, it was voted
6 unanimously to come out of Non-Public Session at 7:55 pm. (3-0 Voice Vote – Chairman
7 Guarino -yes, Selectman Jean – yes, Selectman Hatch - yes).
8

9 The meeting room was opened to the public. The Board noted the Non-Public Session minutes
10 were sealed.
11

12 **Adjournment:** On a Motion by Selectman Jean and seconded by Selectman Hatch it was voted
13 unanimously to adjourn at 8:15 pm (3-0).
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15
16

17 Respectfully Submitted,
18
19
20

21 _____
22 Stephanie S. Fogg
23 Administrative Assistant
24

25 **Approved by the Board of Selectmen**
26
27

28 _____
29 Chairman Donald J. Guarino
30

31 _____
32 Selectman Michael J. Jean
33

34 _____
Vice Chair Rachel M. Frechette Hatch