Draft Notes

Budget Committee

Town of Gilmanton, New Hampshire

Meeting

January 6, 2021

6**:00pm.** – Gilmanton Academy

**Committee Members Present:**

Chairman Brian Forst, Vincent Baiocchetti- Selectmen’s Rep, Alec Bass, Adam Mini- School Board Rep., Steve Bedard, Rich Bakos-Sawyer Lake Rep.,

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| Also present: Danielle Bosco- recording Secretary, Heather Carpenter- Assistant Town Administrator, Brenda Paquette- Finance Director |

**6:00pm** Chairman Brian Forst opened up the meeting and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Corner Library**

Barbara Swanson presented the budget for the corner library. Mrs. Swanson said the former director stepped down in March and she has now taken on that roll. Mrs. Swanson said volunteers logged 225 hours this year. This years normal fundraising was not able to take place so they have held an ongoing book fair since this summer to replace that. Recently there was expenses needed such as a ceiling fixed, lightbulb replacements and computer upgrades.

**Warrant Articles**

Chairman Ford read the Warrant Articles.

6) Crystal Lake Bridge: $1,600,000 with $42,815 to come from the Bridge Capital Reserve Fund, $277,185 to come from taxation and $1,280,000 to come from NHDOT State Aid.

Tax Impact:2.938

Mr. Bakos questioned why the tax impact was shown as $2.938 if the money is not all coming from taxation. Mrs. Paquette explained that DRA wants it shown this way, you are not able to count revenues. Chairman Ford said he would like to speak with DRA because how they are asking it to be shown gives voters a false idea of the actual tax impact.

7) Town Operating Budget: $4,229,736

Tax Impact: $2.012

8) Add to existing EFT’s

* Refurb/Replace Fire Truck (CRF) $100,000
* Replace Ambulance (CRF) $50,000
* Highway Equipment (CRF) $70,000
* Revaluation (CRF) $20,000
* PD Vehicle Repairs (EFT) $5,000
* Cemetery Maintenance/Improvements (EFT) $5,000

Total: $250,000

Tax Impact: $0.46

9) Discontinue certain existing expendable trust funds

* Public Safety Facility Building (EFT) $.097
* Health and Dental Costs (EFT) $11,279.35
* Mandated Safety Testing (EFT) $1,993.22
* Police Overtime (EFT) $2,094.94
* Post-Closure Testing

Mr. Bakos questioned why they were discontinuing the health and dental EFT because he believed this was to be used if they added an employee that needed benefits. Mrs. Carpenter said she believed this article was being done for accounts that have not been used in awhile as a cleanup. Mrs. Paquette said she believes this article was created when the Town was on a calendar year and the health insurance provider was on a fiscal year and rates changed in July so this was used to offset an increase in rates. Now these rates are set in time to budget for the year. Chairman Forst said when this was established it was presented to be used for a change in employee that had an increase in the health insurance coverage. Mrs. Paquette said this EFT has not been used in the last 4 years and no department has run over budgets by a large amount to need this. Mr. Bedard questioned why they don’t keep the money in the account and use it when needed. Mrs. Carpenter said the Committee has asked for the budget to be cleaned up and be fiscally responsible. Mrs. Carpenter said they have the best interest for the Town and are presenting their best efforts. Chairman Forst said the police overtime was over budget but they didn’t use this account. Mrs. Paquette said they had positions that weren’t filled that offset the budget. Mr. Baiocchetti said if these accounts haven’t been used then why have them. Mrs. Paquette said the safety testing and post closure testing is now budgeted in the Fire Department budget. Chairman Forst said at some point someone felt the need to create these and he would rather see Department Heads requesting the money to be used. Mr. Bedard said he would like to see any information about these accounts. It doesn’t look good to establish accounts then close them when requesting new EFT’s and he would rather see the money drawn off these. Mr. Baiocchetti said these accounts haven’t been used and the police overtime went well over the $2,094.94 that is in the account and has been open for 16 years. Mr. Mini said anything that is being budgeted for he would rather see drawn from this year and then asked to close next year. Mr. Baiocchetti questioned if this was what should be done. Chairman Forst said he didn’t know if it was necessary but it doesn’t look good for the request of new EFT’s.

10) One Ton Dump Truck: $97,983, to be drawn from the Highway Equipment CRF

Tax Impact: $0.18

Mr. Bakos said there should be no tax impact because the money is coming from a CRF. Mr. Bedard said there have been warrant articles written before that show no tax impact. Mrs. Paquette said DRA stated it was done wrong before during the Audit. It needs to show its raised and appropriated. Chairman Forst said its not being raised the money is already raised. Mrs. Paquette said this is how they are being told it needs to be written.

Chairman Forst said he would like to see specs for the dump truck. Mrs. Carpenter said she will have those for Super Saturday.

11) Old Town Hall Restoration: $170,000, $85,000 from taxation and $85,000 from L-CHIP grant.

Tax Impact: $0.312

12) Modify the Elderly Tax Exemption

Mrs. Carpenter said this article is still waiting legal approval.

Mr. Bakos questioned what the exemption was. Chairman Forst said the exemption amount comes off the property value. Mr. Bakos asked for a definition of net income because it is not a tax term. Chairman Forst said legal has not looked at it. Mr. Bakos said it would just be good to determine if its adjusted gross income or taxable income. Mrs. Paquette says the application process states net income. Mr. Bass said the RSA states net income and you can review it.

13) Energy Audit: $15,000

Tax Impact: $0.028

14) Academy Building landscaping and Town Office Sign Repair: $13,000

Tax Impact: $0.025

Mr. Bedard said the article refers to the removal of the wall and if it is a boundary wall you are not allowed to remove it. Mr. Baiocchetti said it is the well wall not a boundary wall. Mr. Mini said the article is very specific and it may put you in a problem if you want to make changes. Chairman Forst said articles have been presented in the past with not enough specificity and the Committee has requested it. Mr. Bedard questioned if there was a quote and plans. Mrs. Carpenter said she can provide them.

15) Petition GYR Library: $47,100

Tax Impact: $0.086

16) Gilmanton Youth Organization: $5,500

Tax Impact: $0.010

17) American Red Cross: $2,000

Tax Impact: $0.004

18) New Beginnings: $1,000

Tax Impact: $0.002

19) Community Action Plan: $5,000

Tax Impact: $0.009

20) Lakes Region Mental Health Center: $7,500

Tax Impact: $0.014

21) Gilmanton Snowmobile Association: $2,500

Tax Impact: $0.005

Chairman Forst said there was some language in the article that needs to be smoothed out.

22) Gilmanton Iron Works Private Library: $1,000

Tax Impact: $0.005

Mr. Bedard said the library isn’t private. Mrs. Paquette said she believes the private is in it because it isn’t Town owned.

23) Central NH VNA & Hospice: $7,600

Tax Impact: $0.014

24) CASA $1,000

Tax Impact: $0.002

25) Rocky Pond Association Milfoil: $1,000

Tax Impact: $0.002

26) Gilmanton July 4th Association: $4,500

Tax Impact: $0.008

Mrs. Kirby questioned if the money was saved from this past year. Mrs. Carpenter said the money was never taxed.

27) Establish Non-Cap Reserve Fund Highway Vehicles & Equipment Repairs: $10,000

Tax Impact: $0.018

28)Establish Non-Cap Transfer Station Vehicles & Equipment Repairs: $10,000

Tax Impact: $0.018

Chairman Forst questioned what the projected cap on Articles 27 & 28 would be. Mrs. Carpenter said $50,000 each. Chairman Forst said he didn’t understand why the Transfer Station would need $50,000 for repair to any transfer station equipment. They are not able to replace with these articles.

29) Refurbish Transfer Station Baler: $12,000

Tax Impact: $0.022

Public Hearing & Deliberative Discussion:

Mr. Baiocchetti said the Selectmen are able to postpone the Deliberative but he doesn’t believe they are in favor of doing that. Mrs. Kirby questioned if there was any direction from the State. Mr. Baiocchetti said he hasn’t seen any. Mr. Baiocchetti said they have discussed holding the deliberative on January 30th. Chairman Forst questioned how you can vote over zoom. Mr. Baiocchetti said you cannot vote online it has to be in person. Mr. Mini said drive thru voting is an option but you have to vote to allow it, if that fails the meeting ends and you go to default budget. Mr. Bass said there is House Bill 1129 that gives information on alternatives to deliberative but there is a lot of planning and needs to be reviewed by legal. Mr. Bedard said he saw something that allows Towns not to have deliberative. Mr. Mini said you still need to vote on not having deliberative and if that fails you have default budget. Mr. Mini said he thought a good plan for public hearing would be to set up in the gym. It needs to be determined what the capacity is and when that number is reached people will be diverted to the Cafeteria where a tv will be set up. If the maximum number of people allowed is reached the overflow will go into a classroom. Mr. Mini said he is doing a dry run with the technology person to make sure everything goes as planned. Chairman Forst said generally the Budget Committee is up front and the Administration and School swap out but you can’t do this without sanitizing. Mr. Bedard said he feels that no Residents should be allowed at public hearing it should only be zoom. Mr. Baiocchetti said holding the public hearing in person gives everyone a chance to test how deliberative will work. Mr. Mini said he will reach out to the Fire Chief to determine how many people can fit while following guidelines.

**School Warrant Articles**

Mr. Mini said he didn’t have them in hand but there is nothing new except an article giving the Board the ability to spend the funds that have been raised. Mr. Mini said the tuition has been brought down by two as well, if they need to cover tuition costs for two children they can use the CRF that is set up.

Mr. Bedrad requested the budget for 2019 be added. Chairman Forst said it doesn’t show the expended for 2021. Mr. Mini said the budget for year prior was never on the sheet but what was expended has always been on. Mr. Mini will ask about adding these.

**Adjournment:** Mr. Baiocchetti made a motion to adjourn at 8:30, seconded by Mrs. Melle; All were in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Danielle Bosco

Recording Clerk