

**MINUTES OF SELECTMAN'S MEETING
TOWN OF GORHAM
TUESDAY DECEMBER 5, 2017 6:00 PM
TOWN HALL CONFERENCE ROOM**

Gorham Selectman present: Terry Oliver, Pat Lefebvre, and Mike Waddell

Also present: Robin Frost, Town Manager; Denise Vallee; Chief Cyr; Edith Tucker, Berlin Daily Sun; Judy Leblanc

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Oliver at 5:57 pm.

2. Old Business:

a) Budget Review – Chief Cyr advised the Board that the total budget for the police department was \$719,460 for 2017, and the proposed budget for 2018 is \$695,249, which is \$24,211 less. Chief Cyr stated that with seven full-time positions, they only expect to need part-time work 4 hours per week. Selectman Lefebvre stated that the part-time budget is down \$20,000, but that he also expected the overtime to be down as well. Chief Cyr advised that the overtime was high this year as he only had five officers until August, which is when the two new officers finished the academy. Cyr also advised that part of the \$34,474 of overtime was \$9,000 that should have been in the Vacation Overtime line, but due to the new software it was not able to be charged to a different line item. They are working on fixing this issue. Selectman Lefebvre stated that with one more officer than they had in 2016, the overtime should be lower, but is still up \$400 from the 2016 budget. Lefebvre stated that he would rather cut the department to six and pay the overtime and save on benefits if the town does not see any savings with having the seventh full-time position. Cyr advised that he uses a 5-year rolling average to estimate the budget which the Budget Committee has praised in the past and Lefebvre stated that he understands that, but since they have never been fully staffed, it will not work this year. Cyr stated that he understands that the tax rate is high and they need to make fiscally responsible decisions. Cyr advised that the average number of overtime hours per month is 16, so \$6,750 would be what is needed to cover that. Waddell pointed out that in 2016 they had 2 part-time positions, which equates to about the same number of hours covered, as the two part-time totaled 48, and they now have a full-time officer at 40 hours. Waddell also pointed out that the retention issue is still a problem and they will probably lose one, if not two officers this year as well. Waddell stated that the Board has to be willing to not cover shifts if this happens. Cyr advised that to address the retention issue they have made changes in supervision, in the schedule, and added a severance package in the contract. Waddell stated that they will only discuss the budget at this meeting, not the contract negotiations. Waddell advised that in an ideal world the \$11,000 in the budget for overtime would be high, but realistically the overtime will be needed to cover shifts. Lefebvre stated that if they lose an officer, the salaried employees will have to cover shifts. Chairman Oliver agreed that if an officer leaves, they will have to eliminate a shift and not pay overtime. TM Frost pointed out that the decrease in the budget for 2018 is a little more than \$50,000, which is 7.5%. Waddell asked about the fleet of cruisers and stated that he would like to plan for just a 3 vehicle fleet. Waddell asked if the fire chief needs the other cruiser that the police department has. Lefebvre stated that he would not like the departments to pass along old vehicles, but for each to plan in their budget for what they need. After some discussion, the Board recommended that the line item for overtime be budgeted at \$7,000.

Selectman Lefebvre recommended that the Library adjust their capital reserve request and eliminate the \$10,000. If any work is needed, the Murphy Fund could be used.

Selectman Lefebvre asked about the LED streetlight project and if that could be delayed a year. Denise Vallee advised that they will complete 58-60 this year, and were able to add 20 because the price was good. There are 261 more to do in town. Vallee advised that if they wait, they may not get the grant money of \$100 per light that they are currently offering. TM Frost advised that CDFR is offering a low interest loan, at 2 ½%, which may allow the town to finish the project this year. Waddell pointed out that not only is a rebate available, but there is also a reduction in electric cost. There is also a cost involved in repairing and replacing the existing lights, which is about 3 per year at a cost of \$150-\$400 each.

Selectman Lefebvre stated that he would like to see the Recreation Department move the Admin Temp Position, Telephone and Internet, and the Admin Water lines to the Revolving Fund this year, which would save \$29,823 in the budget. TM Frost advised these are the summer program expenses. Selectman Waddell stated that he would like to meet with the Recreation Director before making this decision, as the Revolving Fund is a mixture of funds and he would like to understand the long-term ramifications before making a decision.

Selectman Lefebvre also asked if the Public Works department could wait one more year before replacing the loader. TM Frost advised that they have patched and repaired the best they could, but it needs to be replaced sooner rather than later. Lefebvre asked if they could just replace the cab and they will research that cost. Edith Tucker asked how much is budgeted for the loader and was advised it is \$35,000 and is a lease.

Selectman Waddell asked about the cost for livestream for the meetings and was advised it is \$3000 per year. Waddell advised that White Mountains Regional School records their own meetings and uploads them to YouTube, with no cost involved. Waddell asked if another camera could be added to the security system in dispatch, and the file could be transferred to a thumb drive or DVD and then uploaded. Chief Cyr advised that the system does have the capacity for another camera to be added, and the cost for the camera would be about \$1200. Waddell asked that this be looked into. Waddell also asked about having a screen for the public to see the documents that are being discussed during the meeting and TM Frost agreed that a smart screen would be useful.

Selectman Lefebvre advised Chief Cyr that the cost of dispatch services billed to the other communities needs to be increased this year. TM Frost advised that Randolph is currently paying \$1700 per year, but figuring the cost based on population or percentage of calls, the fee should be more like \$28,000. Lefebvre stated that Gorham was not going to foot the bill anymore, and if the communities decide to look elsewhere, that would be fine.

Selectman Waddell asked about the flood money and stated he was surprised that the amount in damages for Gorham was almost as high as Berlin. TM Frost advised it was an estimate and that the issue in Stony Brook may not only be the road, but the riverbank as well. Waddell stated that the current balance in the River Maintenance CRF is \$97,000. TM Frost advised that the maximum that could come out of there for the Spring Road project would be \$77,000, but they are hoping that much of that could be "in kind" work.

Chairman Oliver asked about the Ambulance CRF and requested that be removed for this year. Oliver also suggested the River Maintenance be reduced, but TM Frost advised it would be needed as matching funds for FEMA for repairs. Oliver also suggested reducing the Fire Truck Capital Reserve to \$15,000 from \$39,000, and the Solid Waste CRF to \$5,000 from \$10,000. Oliver also mentioned the Town Building and Repair CRF and suggested it be cut in half. Denise Vallee stated that there is a repair on the

clock tower that needs to be done, and the bricks on the town hall sealed. The Board would like to get a figure on this before making a decision.

3. Adjournment: On a motion by Chairman Oliver, seconded by Selectman Lefebvre, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm.

REVIEWED AND APPROVED:

Terry Oliver

Patrick Lefebvre

Michael Waddell