

Town of Gorham New Hampshire

PUBLIC MEETING OF THE GORHAM BOARD OF SELECTMEN Gorham Town Hall Public Meeting Room 2nd Floor Monday, December 5, 2022 4:30 p.m.

SELECTMEN PRESENT: Michael Waddell; Judy LeBlanc; and Yves Zornio.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Denise Vallee, Town Manager; Adam Marsh, Police Chief; Lieutenant Jimmy Willhoite; and Philip Cloutier, Fire Chief.

OTHERS PRESENT: Adam White

1. Non-Public Session - 4:30 p.m.

Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3, II(a) *The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted.*

2. Swearing In Ceremony for Officer Amelia Campbell - 5:00 p.m.

3. Public Session Call to Order - 5:30 p.m.

Chairperson Waddell called the public session to order.

4. New Business

a. Announce Action, if any, Taken in Nonpublic Session

No announcement concerning the nonpublic session.

b. Tax Rate Setting

There is no update to the Tax Rate Setting, but it is of the highest urgency.

c. Budget Review - Fire/EMS

EMS: With (6) full-time employees now, there is budgeted increase in wages and in benefits. In 2022, the new full-time employee wages were included from April through December. In 2023, they are included for the entire year, which causes an increase. As with all departments, an increase in gasoline prices will result in a budgeted increase of

\$4,050. That will include fueling the new ambulance in replacement of the diesel, so diesel costs 2023 drop significantly.

Anecdotally, the call numbers are up, but response to scene times are down over 10 minutes from same time 2022, now at under 7 minutes. Proper staffing during overnights has had a significant impact in this dramatic improvement.

In sum, with heating oil, a facade repair, and a much-needed water heater for the station, and other noted and approved actions, there is a budget increase of \$38,574 for 2023.

FIRE: An oversight in last year's computations, corrected for 2023, will decrease the salary line. Gasoline will increase \$1,050 and Diesel \$2,000 based on current usage. Aging equipment will require \$1,000 on maintenance line. IT costs down \$2,100. Payments to Water Works for the 146 hydrants at a new rate of \$150 each, up \$7,500, will now be \$21,900. Fire Budget total increase proposed includes wage increases. Questions from the Chairperson illuminated increase in pay for responders. Further, the Capital Reserve Plans for replacement to Engine 3 at \$50,000/year may not catch up to the anticipated need in 2025 for a \$450,000 Engine.

The Ambulance Capital Reserve Plan for a 2028 purchase seeks an increase from \$35,000 a year to \$40,000. Fire Equipment CRF is re-set to \$12,500 with a distant goal of \$130,000. Recent grant monies for SCBAs means the equipment is more than a decade from wholesale replacement of 20 sets. Addition of Swiftwater equipment and on-going training detailed.

Revenues included \$10,000 for Coos County responses. Budgeted \$170,000 coming year from ambulance contracts, steady year to year. Chief investigating greater recruitment, retention, and training for Paramedics. Vice Chair LeBlanc inquired about associated costs to the education. The expense of Paramedic training is a great burden to individuals whereas many other departments can offer inexpensive initial training.

The relationship with Berlin saw them offering Mutual Aid four times last year, and Gorham responding similarly 17 times. This is a change from the historic nature, but represents the growing capability of town's first responders. The agreement may be revisited if this trend remains strong.

The Chairperson recognized the chief's efforts in grant writing and expressed the appreciation of the Board.

d. Budget Review - Police/Dispatch

POLICE: An increase to 7 full-time officers leads looking at all numbers. Overtime and part time used will be lower and staffing better, but lines for salary, equipment, training, including new mandates from NH, are up for 2023. Attorney Wendy Roberts is seeking an increase because of greater appearances and consultations. An increase of 700 traffic stops last year, and fuller investigative staff will likely result in yet more appearances.

Many small variations from 2022 but increases in fuel and IT cost increases similar as in other departments. Maintenance for the cruisers will be lower because of the 2022 purchase of a new cruiser. Chief is investigating grants for new ballistic vests. Copier is paid off. \$5,000 highway safety grant won, and other applications with US Forest

Service, Fish and Game, Eversource, Walmart awaiting responses. The unanticipated loss of Officer Carter has the search for a new LEADS personnel ongoing.

DISPATCH: Some numbers in the budgets printed need to be changed. The usual equations seem to have been applied, but with the changes in staffing and the various edits being looked at in the room, it was agreed that the Overtime and Leave Coverage will be reviewed.

Software for report processing, recording software and Microsoft Office 365 all went up for 2023. Small uniform increase. A couple other lines noted by Vice Chair LeBlanc will be checked with Bronson.

The Equipment Capital Reserve increased \$10,000. A 5 year grant for \$26,000 will cover cost of operating Body Cameras after upfront payment and cloud contract. New LIDAR equipment for roadway use will arrive soon. The Chief is investigating a DOJ grant for mobile repeaters to aid communication away from the center of town.

Budget calls for \$25,000 anticipating needed purchase of a new cruiser in 2024. Still investigating bench testing, reprogramming radios in ongoing project.

5. Old Business/Updates, if any

A question before the Board concerning Stony Brook construction needed further clarification on location and price before the Board could hear it.

6. **Public Comment:** Those in attendance will have the opportunity for public comment of two (2) minutes or less.

No comments from the public

7. Other Business

a. Abatements, if any

The exact language agreed upon, the 485 Main Street and 595 Main Street abatement was signed by all members in attendance. No motions required.

8. Adjournment

MOTION: Selectman Zornio moved to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Vice-Chair LeBlanc.

Vice-Chair LeBlanc: Aye

Selectman Zornio: Aye

Chairperson Waddell: Aye


The motion carried. (3-0-0).

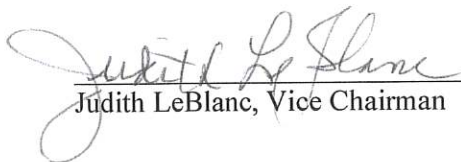
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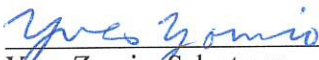
Dennis O'Connor, Recording Secretary

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Reviewed and approved on January 23, 2023 by:


Michael Waddell, Chairman


Judith LeBlanc, Vice Chairman


Yves Zornio, Selectman