



Budget Committee Meeting  
Town of Gorham  
Gorham Town Hall  
Medallion Opera House

Minutes of February 13, 2018

**Members Present:** Diane Bouthot, Chairman; Doug Gralenski, Vice Chairman; Lee Carroll; Robert Demers; Todd Lamarque; Abby Evankow; Judy LeBlanc; Terry Oliver, Selectmen's Rep; Absent: Dan McCrum

**Town Staff Present:** Robin Frost, Town Manager; Denise Vallee, Director of Finance & Administration; Carol Porter, Town Clerk; PJ Cyr, Police Chief; Jay Watkins, Fire Chief; Michael Waddell, Board of Selectman; Patrick Lefebvre, Board of Selectmen; Michelle Lutz, Assessor; Jeff Stewart, Recreation Department; Joey Ramsay, Public Works Department; Jeff Tennis, Water and Sewer Department; Shawn Costine; Phil Cloutier; Shannon Buteau, Librarian; Gail Wigler and Margaret Laperle, Library Trustees; Ted Miller and Roger Goulet, Water and Sewer Commission

**Others present:** Terri Letarte, Patti Stolte, Pauline Tibbetts, Sue Shevlin, Melinda Beaulieu, Wallace Corrigan, Janet Corrigan, Nathan Corrigan, Pam Couture, Reuben Rajala, Mary White, Adam White, Andy Porter, Paul Robitaille, Andrea Philbrook, Edith Tucker, Berlin Daily Sun, and others

**Minutes Taker:** Shelli Fortin

1. Call to order: 6:33 PM
2. Public Hearing of 2018 Budgets

Diane Bouthot presented the PowerPoint with information on the 2018 budget. Bouthot advised that at the Selectmen's meeting before the public hearing, \$20,000 was added to the budget for the work to be done to the land at the public works garage and \$55,000 to cover the cost of buying out the Town Manager's contract and hiring an administrative assistant if Article 3 does not pass. Selectman Waddell advised this would be an increase of \$0.78 on the tax rate.

Articles 5 – 7

There was no public comment.

Articles 8 - 9. Doug Gralenski advised that the Water and Sewer Departments are self-sustaining and will not affect the tax rate.

Article 10. Judy Leblanc advised this is a flat line budget.

There were no questions on Articles 11-12.

Bouthot read Article 13, which is to raise \$270,000 for road improvements. Bouthot advised that the Selectmen were given five options and they chose a plan that was in the middle. Bouthot advised that we have to start maintaining the roads. This is an article that will come up every year. Doug Gralenski advised that the town is trying to establish a 10-year management plan. Andrea Philbrook asked if this would include the roads in Stony Brook and was advised it was for the whole town and that is part of it.

Article 14. Phil Cloutier asked if this will be the rest of the LED lights in the town and Denise Vallee advised it will be.

There were no questions on Articles 15-18.

Article 19. Diane Bouthot advised that this was changed from \$40,000 to \$60,000.

There were no questions on Articles 20-31.

Article 32. Reuben Rajala expressed concern over the amount in the River Maintenance Trust Fund. Rajala advised that in the aftermath of the last storm, work will need to be done on Spring Road and Stony Brook Road, along with the berm and the ball field at Libby's. Bouthot advised that FEMA will be assisting with the cost and TM Frost advised that the town will have to match 25%, but we don't have totals yet. Selectman Waddell advised that he shares the same concern, but that work for Spring Road and Stony Brook will come from the Highway Capital Reserve Fund, and the berm may also be able to come from that as well. Rajala also advised that in looking at the surveys returned for the Master Plan, 80% of the residents stated that the town should be responsible for maintaining the berms for flood protection, not the abutters. Rajala mentioned that flooding is the number one threat to Gorham and it is an issue that needs to be given higher priority.

Article 33 – 34. There was no public comment.

Article 35. Selectman Waddell advised that the Board was split on this, with him voting yes against the other two members. Waddell stated that the cost for the Fourth of July celebration is in the area of \$25-26,000 and that the committee finds \$15-16,000 each year in donations to make it happen. Waddell felt strongly that the town should support the celebration and expressed his gratitude that the Corrigan family continues to help coordinate the event every year. Selectman Oliver advised that the taxes went up \$2.10 last year and that the Board was looking for ways to cut taxes. Oliver advised that the people have the right to vote to put it back in if they want to. Nathan Corrigan advised that many businesses ask if the town is supporting the celebration, and will not donate unless they are. Corrigan advised that the ads in the flyer and the carnival are how they pay for the majority of the celebration. Janet Corrigan wondered why the whole \$10,000 had to be cut, as they did make do with \$5,000 for several years, but when everything is cut it hurts tremendously. Nathan Corrigan also expressed his concern that when this was discussed by the Board of Selectman, nobody from the Fourth of July Committee was notified. If they had been, they would have made sure somebody was there. Selectman Lefebvre advised that the discussion was not a secret, as it was on the agenda and posted publicly. Lefebvre suggested that many celebrations find sponsors for the fireworks display and Janet Corrigan advised they have tried, but have had no luck. Reuben Rajala stated that this is a town-sponsored event, which is important to keep in mind. Rajala mentioned that if the town puts nothing into it, that says a lot to the local businesses and supporters. Judy LeBlanc advised that the committee needs people to attend meetings before we get to this point, they are trying to prepare a budget to keep the

people from being taxes out of their homes, but need direction from the townspeople. Diane Bouthot reminded the public that meetings are available to watch online and the agenda and minutes are posted on the town website.

Article 36. Pauline Tibbetts spoke on behalf of Androscoggin Valley Home Care. She advised that the money is used to take care of Gorham clients to allow them to stay in their homes instead of having to go to a nursing facility. Tibbetts advised they currently have about 40 clients, but that number goes up and down. AV Home Care bills each month for the direct services to clients.

Article 37. There was no comment.

Article 38. Paul Robitaille explained that the \$3000 for the Community Contact Office is to offer help with Fuel Assistance to clients. In order to access federal funds, there also needs to be input from the local community. Robitaille advised that the people of Gorham get more in fuel assistance from this program than the \$3000 contributed.

Article 39. Melinda Beaulieu spoke on behalf of the Gorham Community Learning Center. She advised that the funds will go into the general fund. Beaulieu stated that the towns of Gorham, Shelburne and Randolph all have warrant articles. The rest of the money raised comes from tuition from families and some grants. They currently have 49 students from Gorham, five from Randolph, and six from Shelburne.

Article 40. There was no comment.

Article 41. Patti Stolte spoke on behalf of the Family Resource Center. Stolte stated that they appreciate the support that the town has given them over the past 20 years. Stolte advised that they serve about 390 people and provide after school programs, family support programs, tax assistance, and senior programs.

Article 42. Pam Couture spoke on behalf of the Androscoggin River Athletes. She advised that they currently have six athletes from Gorham and they provide sports and physical fitness activities year round. The largest part of their budget is to attend state events, such as the Winter Olympics at Waterville Valley and Summer Games at UNH.

Article 43. There was no comment.

Article 44. The president of North Country Home Health and Hospice advised they serve about 110 Gorham residents and have provided about 3000 visits. He stated that with Medicare cutting the amount they will pay for services, they are looking for alternative ways to cover costs. Last year they consolidated with North Woods Home Health and Hospice. He advised 80% of their budget is for the wages and benefits of clinical staff.

Diane Bouthot ended the public meeting at 7:47 pm.

Diane Bouthot called the work session to order at 7:56 pm.

**3. Approve Minutes 1/30/2017: Motion to approve from Terry Oliver with a second from Bob Demers. Voted in the affirmative.**

**4. Work Session on Budget Recommendations:**

Selectman Waddell advised that a new Article 4 on the Warrant will raise \$55,000 to cover the cost of severance and associated expenses should the Town Manager form of government

be voted out. Lee Carroll asked if there was a worksheet explaining the cost and was advised there is a worksheet for the \$28,000 in severance, but not for the whole \$55,000. Waddell stated that this was a number grabbed out of thin air, but would include the severance in addition to a temporary assistant and hiring costs. Waddell advised that if it occurs, there will be an opportunity to argue the number on the floor.

**Doug Gralenski made a motion to add a new Article 4 to raise and appropriate \$55,000 to cover the cost of severance and associated expenses if the town manager form of government is voted out. Seconded by Lee Carroll.**

Bob Demers asked where we will go from there if it happens and was advised the town would hire an administrator. Waddell stated that a town this size really does not need a town manager, and that a town administrator is much more common in NH. The only difference would be in the amount of authority the town manager or selectmen have. There would be a change in responsibilities for the Board. Selectman Lefebvre stated that he disagreed with Waddell.

**The Committee voted 8-0 to include the new Article 4.**

Article 5

**On a motion by Lee Carroll, seconded by Todd Lamarque, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 6

**On a motion by Doug Gralenski, seconded by Lee Carroll, the Committee voted 6-2 to recommend.**

Article 8

**On a motion by Doug Gralenski, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 9

**On a motion by Lee Carroll, seconded by Bob Demers, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 10

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Bob Demers again expressed concern over the cost of insurance for a family plan. Abby Evankow stated that the salary is low for a library director, so it evens out.

Article 11

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 12

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 13

**On a motion by Lee Carroll, seconded by Todd Lamarque, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 14

**On a motion by Doug Gralenski, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 15

**On a motion by Terry Oliver, seconded by Todd Lamarque, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 16

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 17

**On a motion by Lee Carroll, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 18

**On a motion by Terry Oliver, seconded by Doug Gralenski, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 19

**On a motion by Lee Carroll, seconded by Judy LeBlanc, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend, with the increase to \$60,000.**

Article 20

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 21

**On a motion by Terry Oliver, seconded by Todd Lamarque, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 22

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 23

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 24

**On a motion by Lee Carroll, seconded by Todd Lamarque, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 25

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 26

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 27

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 28

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 29

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 30

**On a motion by Lee Carroll, seconded by Todd Lamarque, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 31

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 32

**On a motion by Lee Carroll, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 33

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 34

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 35

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 5-2-1 to recommend.**

Article 36

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 37

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 38

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 39

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 40

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 41

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Lee Carroll, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 42

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

Article 43

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Terry Oliver, the Committee voted 7-1 to recommend.**

Article 44

**On a motion by Todd Lamarque, seconded by Lee Carroll, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend.**

**5. Old Business**

Abby Evankow asked what would happen if Article 6 for the union contract did not pass. She was advised they would go back to negotiations, and that is why Article 7 authorizes a special meeting to vote on this if needed.

**6. New Business**

**7. Date of Next Meeting:** Town Meeting on Tuesday, March 13

**8. Lee Carroll made a motion to adjourn at 8:27 PM, seconded by Terry Oliver. Voted in the affirmative.**

Respectfully Submitted  
Shelli Fortin

Approved 06-20-2018