



Budget Committee Meeting
Town of Gorham
Gorham Town Hall
Public Meeting Room

Minutes of January 12, 2017

Members Present: Michael Waddell, Chairman; Diane Bouthot, Vice Chairman; Reuben Rajala, Secretary; Robert Demers; Lee Carroll; Doug Gralenski; Todd Lamarque; Dan McCrum; Terry Oliver, Selectmen's Rep

Town Staff Present: Robin Frost, Town Manager; Denise Vallee, Director of Finance & Administration; Chief PJ Cyr; Chief Jay Watkins Fire/EMS Chief; Shawn Costine, Gorham EMS; Grace LaPierre, Chairman of Board of Selectman

Others present: Rich McClure, Judy LeBlanc, Elaine Riendeau

Minutes Taker: Shelli Fortin

AGENDA ITEMS & DISCUSSION

1. Call to order: 6:00 PM
2. Approve Minutes 1/10/2017: **Motion to approve Diane Bouthot with a second from Robert Demers. Voted in the affirmative, with an abstention from Dan McCrum.**
3. Update on Prior Requests:
 - a. Job descriptions, minus EMS and the Town Manager, were received by members via email from Diane Bouthot. Bouthot advised the committee that she felt many of the job descriptions were outdated and did not accurately reflect the jobs that the employees are doing. Bouthot suggested that all of the job descriptions should be revised and updated by the department heads and reviewed annually with employees during their evaluations. Reuben Rajala asked why there was no job description available for the town manager and TM Frost advised that it was covered by RSA and in her contract. TM Frost also advised that the departments are working on updating the job descriptions, but it is not the responsibility of the Budget Committee as to when and how they are done. Doug Gralenski responded by saying that as a member of the committee, the job descriptions will give them a better understanding of the jobs being performed by the employees as the committee looks for any redundancies or gaps in the positions to be sure things are running as efficiently as possible. Robert Demers reiterated Gralenski's position that it gives the committee members an idea of what jobs are part of town government and where the money is going. Chief Cyr asked Bouthot which departments she felt had outdated job descriptions and advised that he recently researched job descriptions for his department, and reviewed the ones that they have, and even though they are dated 2006, they fully cover the duties and responsibilities for the officers and new ones were not needed to replace them. Doug Gralenski suggested that department heads should review the job

descriptions every three years, and that would assure that they were kept up-to-date.

- b. Mike Waddell reported that he tried to view the road studies this week in the town office and the reports were not available, as they were locked in the Town Manager's office. Denise Vallee advised they are now on the file cabinet and available for him to view. Selectman Oliver and Waddell exchanged words over the Budget Committee's scope of authority and requests for information and Oliver chose to leave the meeting.
- c. Mike Waddell read Section 32:16, paragraph 2, of the Municipal Budget Act, which states that it shall be the duty of all officers and other persons to furnish pertinent information to the budget committee. (See attachment provided) Waddell felt that the town office should be providing information requested to the committee, rather than their having to go the town office to research it themselves.
- d. Mike Waddell also read a summary of Green v. SAU#55, which states that if records are requested electronically, and exist in that format, then they must be provided electronically. (See attachment provided)
- e. Mike Waddell advised that the breakdown of legal expenses requested was received, but requested a further breakdown of the administration line of \$18,092. Waddell would like a brief synopsis of what those costs were for.
- f. Waddell again asked for a copy of the Emergency Management Plan, and TM Frost advised that she will send it as soon as she locates the CD.
- g. Waddell also reminded TM Frost that a revenue spreadsheet was requested for the EMS Department and that Jeff Stewart was supposed to send his spreadsheet for the Recreation Department budget, but it had not been received. TM Frost forwarded the Recreation spreadsheet to the members.
- h. Denise Vallee advised that the health insurance amount for Fred Corrigan was added twice accidentally to the Recreation Department budget, and has been subtracted out.
- i. Denise Vallee advised that the LED lights installed will be owned by the town. She reported that Lancaster just installed the same fixtures and that they are not supposed to require any maintenance for 29 years.

4. Review of Budget Request from Police:

Chief Cyr provided to Mike Waddell the copy of the current roster for the police department and dispatch as requested by the committee. Waddell requested that Cyr send the information electronically to the committee members.

Cyr began with the cost for fuel, stating that they used 5031.5 gallons in 2016, and 5067 in 2015. The request for 2017 is for 5,770 gallons at 2.60 per gallon. Doug Galenski asked how the figures are arrived at by each department and why the cost per gallon is not consistent from department to department. Denise Vallee advised that the cost per gallon should be consistent, but that department's may figure their usage differently as Fire and EMS gets part of their fuel from the state pumps. Diane Bouthot asked if the money is not used for fuel in the budget if it goes back into the general fund and was advised it did. Bouthot also asked about the vehicles currently in the department's fleet. Cyr advised they have 4 vehicles, a 2008 Crown Victoria, a 2008 Ford Explorer, a 2013 Ford Taurus, and a 2016 Ford Explorer. Cyr advised that the 2008 Explorer will not pass inspection, as it has major structural problems, and this is the vehicle that he is hoping to replace in the 2017 budget. Waddell requested that Cyr send a copy of the list of vehicles to the members electronically.

Cyr advised that he chose not to provide a copy of the schedule they are using, as giving it to the committee would make it a public record, and he felt that this was a safety issue as the public would know when and how many officers were working in town. Cyr advised that they have six officers in the current four-week rotation, which gives officers a consistent schedule

that they can use to plan. The schedule gives them every other weekend off, which helps with retention, as the schedule was an issue with other officers who chose to leave. Cyr shared that with the current schedule, the town has 1 officer on duty 56% of the time, 2 officers 26% of the time, and three 18% of the time. Doug Gralenski asked if the officers were working 8 or 10 hours shifts, and Cyr advised they work four 10-hour shifts, for a total of 40 hours per week. Waddell asked about the Chief's schedule and if he fills out a time card each week. Cyr advised that he does, but he is salary and might not work a consistent 40-hour week. Some weeks he may put in less hours, but would put in more the next week. Cyr also advised that he has five weeks of vacation time, and was sick a lot this fall. Waddell asked for copies of Cyr's time cards, which Cyr offered to send electronically. Waddell asked to also come in and view the time cards in person, and he and Cyr will set up a time to do this.

Diane Bouthot asked about the auxiliary officers and when they work. Cyr advised that the two permanent part-time positions were eliminated from the budget and the department was restructured with the seven full-time positions. Cyr advised that the budget still includes 24 hours of part-time service per week, which are available to the auxiliary officers on the basis of seniority. Cyr advised there are 6 auxiliary officers currently on the department's roster. Bouthot asked why the part-time officers are not being used to cover overtime in the budget, and Cyr stated that they are used for cover shifts from either 2-10 pm or 4-midnight. Cyr advised that the overtime in the budget is for when officers need to stay due to an arrest, if they are on a call, at an accident, or having to cover sick time. Mike Waddell advised that the budget is down by \$5,795 for the police, and Cyr advised they were able to do that despite the 2% contractual raise for employees because of the elimination of the permanent part-time positions.

Mike Waddell asked about the line item request for administrative holiday pay and Cyr advised this is based on what is historically paid out. Doug Gralenski asked about the change in vacation overtime from \$6,000 to \$9,000. Cyr advised that this is an average based on the three years he has been keeping track, and that since they are not always fully staffed, the average does not always work. Cyr advised that he often schedules himself to cover time off.

Chief Cyr advised that the Administrative Repairs and Maintenance line is up this year, as the chairs used at the workstations are 8 years old and need to be replaced. Several of the chairs do not work properly. Cyr also advised that the money in this line item is used for surveillance cameras in the building that need to be replaced. Diane Bouthot advised that she did some research and there are several grants available for equipment for police departments from the US Department of Justice, COPS, and First Responders, which cover equipment such as cameras and ballistic vests. Bouthot asked if Cyr had applied for any of these grants and Cyr advised he had not. Robert Demers asked how many of the ballistic vests would need to be replaced this year. Chief Cyr advised that he has requested four at \$800 each. Cyr advised he would do his best to get this cost reimbursed with a grant.

Todd Lamarque asked Cyr about the crime rate in town, and if there was available data on that. Lamarque was wondering if having the 7th officer had helped to lower the crime rate. Chief Cyr shared the figures for 2016, but advised that there was no way to quantify the deterrent effect of having an additional officer on the street. Cyr summarized that there was a decrease in offenses and arrests, and an increase in traffic stops, with more tickets being issued. Cyr shared that there was a decrease of 17% for arrests, and an increase of incidents reported of 37%, with crimes against persons being up 29%, crimes against property down 1%, and crimes against the community down 29%.

Chief Cyr advised that printing costs went over budget last year, as they had to order new parking tickets. Cyr advised that vehicle maintenance was over budget last year due to winter tires being needed for the 2016 Ford Explorer. He stated that the cost for intox supplies should go down as the law was recently changed about requiring the capture of a breath sample for DWI arrests. Cyr advised that the ERT cost in the budget was for Officer Imperial to attend ERT Training with Berlin PD, and if there is not another officer from Gorham on the

team, that money would not be needed. He also advised that more is being requested for training, as they are hoping to hold a class here this year.

Mike Waddell asked about the cost for uniforms this year. Cyr advised that they hired three new officers and the initial cost to outfit them is high. After the original purchase, officers get a yearly stipend of \$1000 for the upkeep of their uniforms. The resignation of Officer Imperial was mentioned and Chief Cyr was asked if there was any interest in the position. Chief Cyr advised that they had two other candidates in the last round of testing who had passed the written and physical tests and the oral board. He stated that a conditional offer of employment would be given to one of those candidates. Diane Bouthot asked why Officer Imperial chose to go to Berlin, and Chief Cyr advised that many officers choose to go because they have supervisors and other officers available on their shift and there are more training opportunities. Mike Waddell asked if the new officer to be hired is already certified and was advised he is not. Waddell asked if the officers on the department are all currently certified and was advised they are not. Chief Cyr advised that they have requested two extensions for the officer that is currently not certified, and he is scheduled to go to the Police Academy in May and graduate in August. Cyr advised that the uncertified officer has completed the FTO program, but is not allowed to work alone, only under the supervision of a certified officer. Diane Bouthot asked if there is a charge to the department for an officer to attend the academy and Cyr advised there is not, just the officer's hours and travel. Waddell asked how long the academy is, and Cyr advised it is 16 weeks. Waddell mentioned that the department will have two officers gone this summer for 4 months at the academy.

Mike Waddell asked about Capital items in the budget for this year and Chief Cyr advised that the new cruiser was being requested. The estimated cost for the new cruiser is \$38,226. TM Frost advised the balance in the capital reserve is currently \$23,552.30. They are requesting to add an additional \$30,000, and the balance left over after the purchase will go towards the next cruiser needed. Waddell asked if there were any other capital reserve requests and Chief Cyr advised new tasers are being requested as part of the Special Equipment Capital Reserve Fund. Bob Demers asked how much the tasers cost and Chief Cyr advised about \$750 each. Cyr advised that there was also a request for capital reserve in the dispatch budget for a new radio, as Motorola will no longer support the equipment they currently have by 2020. The request would be for \$76,500 to be put into the fund each year for the next four years, so that the equipment could be replaced. Denise Vallee advised that until other quotes are received and they settle on an amount, it is not yet included in the budget request. Mike Waddell asked about the backup documentation from Ossipee Mountain for the proposal and Chief Cyr advised he would send a copy to the committee members.

Robert Demers made a motion to extend the meeting until the dispatch budget had been discussed, seconded by Lee Carroll. Voted in the affirmative.

Jay Watkins was excused from the meeting and his presentation was rescheduled for January 17th at 6:00pm. Diane Bouthot asked Watkins if he could have the updated EMS job descriptions by then and he advised he would work on them.

Mike Waddell asked if there were any other questions about the police budget before moving on to dispatch. Todd Lamarque asked if the DARE program would be reinstated. Chief Cyr advised that this is the third year without it and it is not an issue of funding, but of staffing. Cyr stated that when he has an officer who is interested and ready to take on the job, they do have money available. There is no money requested this year in the budget.

Robert Demers began the discussion about the dispatch budget by asked about the dispatch revenues and where they come from. Chief Cyr explained that the money received is from the contracts with Randolph and Shelburne for providing their dispatch services.

Chief Cyr advised that he is requesting four full-time positions in the budget this year, as there has been a retention issue with the part-time positions that are currently in the budget. Cyr advised that they have gone through five part-time employees in the last few years, and most leave due to other full-time opportunities with benefits. Cyr stated that the extra full-time position is needed in order to keep a dispatch center that functions well with a consistent schedule. Todd Lamarque asked how many positions there are currently, and Cyr responded that there are three full-time and two permanent part-time dispatchers. Currently only one of the part-time positions is filled. Cyr advised that adding the extra dispatcher will add \$9,812 to the budget, with a tax impact of .04 per \$1000. Reuben Rajala asked about the long term costs of the dispatch center and wondered if there was a way to combine with Berlin. Chief Cyr advised that there was a proposal for this three years ago and even though it was requested, a quote was never received from Berlin. Rajala requested that Chief Cyr actively pursue sitting down with Berlin to see if this is a possibility, as it would be mutually beneficial. Diane Bouthot asked about per diem dispatchers and if they are still utilized to fill shifts. Chief Cyr stated that the new schedule will only require 8 hours of fill-in time per week, as most of the schedule would be covered by the full-time positions. The overtime request for dispatch is to cover vacation time, and this is new this year as it was previously included in the part-time line item.

Denise Vallee asked the budget committee members to update their books for the Social Security line to \$9,847, and the Medicaid line to \$2,303, with a revised bottom line of \$234,642.

Mike Waddell asked about the repeater on Pine Mountain and if it is in good shape. Chief Cyr advised that it is. Cyr advised the tower was previously owned by Verizon, but is now owned by American Tower Corporation. There is no cost for the lease. Chief Cyr was asked what the propane cost was for and he advised it was for the generator, as backup for the radio in case the power goes out.

Diane Bouthot asked about the difference in the cost of paper between the police and dispatch budgets. Denise Vallee advised that the town has been able to purchase under the state contract for supplies last year, with a cost savings of 60-80%, and that may change this year.

Diane Bouthot asked about the large increase in the budget on the graph this year and Denise Vallee advised it is because insurance costs have been added to each department instead of including them in her budget.

Public Comment

Judy LeBlanc spoke about available grants that the Sheriff's Department was able to apply for and use for 2 or 3 positions. She would like to see the department apply for grants to help reduce the cost to the taxpayers.

Rich McClure spoke about the option of combining the Gorham and Berlin police departments and dispatch centers. He stated that Berlin is in favor of looking into it and is waiting for Gorham to discuss it.

5. New Requests for Information

6. Old Business

7. New Business

8. The next Budget Committee meeting will be on 1/17/2017 for review of the Fire/EMS and Public Works budgets. It will be at 6:00 pm in the Town Hall Public Meeting Room.

**9. Diane Bouthot made a motion to adjourn at 8:45 PM seconded by Bob Demers.
Voted in the affirmative.**

Respectfully Submitted
Shelli Fortin

Approved January 17, 2017