



Budget Committee Meeting
Town of Gorham
Medallion Opera House

MINUTES OF JANUARY 19, 2023

Members Present: Lee Carroll, Marie Duguay, Greg O'Neil, Judy LeBlanc, Abby Evankow, and Paul Bousquet

Absent: Patti Stolte, Adam White, and Mary White

Town Staff Present: Denise Vallee, Town Manager; Bronson Paradis, Finance Director

Minutes Taker: Shelli Fortin

AGENDA ITEMS & DISCUSSION

1. Call to order: 5:32 PM by Lee Carroll

2. Review Minutes of January 17, 2023

Marie Duguay pointed out that the next meeting should have been listed as Thursday, not Tuesday. This will be corrected.

On a motion by Judy LeBlanc, seconded by Greg O'Neil, the Committee voted to approve the minutes of January 17, 2023 as amended.

3. Old Business

There was no old business.

4. New Business

a. Review Finance Budget

Denise Vallee reviewed the Executive Office budget. Vallee noted that the Selectman Conference and Meetings has been increased. Selectmen, or their representatives, will be paid \$100 per day when required to attend conferences or meetings out of town, along with mileage. The Town Manager Permanent Position is up due to a salary increase, and also for additional hours to train the new Town Manager. The new manager will be working ten hours per week during February, March and April, 20 hours per week in May, and will start full-time on June 19. Minutes Taker is down a little. Health Insurance is a demographic change. Benefits are tied to the wage line. Telephone and Internet is up across the board, and they also added an additional Microsoft Outlook account for email. Elected Officials is down a little, as there is just one election this year. Money is budgeted for an additional election if needed.

Bronson Paradis reviewed the Finance budget. Special Projects is no longer needed now that they have an additional employee. Bank Services is up due to NSF checks, however they get reimbursed for this in the revenues. There is a slight increase in the Phone and Internet, which also includes cell phone reimbursement for Paradis. Printing is down, as they will be printing less town reports. Dues and Subscriptions is up a little, as NHMA has gone up. Office Supplies are down. Postage is purchased by Finance, however cross-charged

to other departments. Conference and Meetings was up last year, as both Kathy Frenette and Paradis were attending. Travel Line has been updated, and the new mileage rate is \$0.67 per mile. Health is a demographic change. Benefits is updated to reflect the additional person, and is split with the highway department. Elected Officials should be \$4,400 instead of \$4,200, which is \$2,800 for the Treasurer and \$1,600 for the Trustees. Personnel Full-Time Position is up, to cover half of the Fiscal Assistant, and the Payroll/HR employee. Maintenance and Repair is up for a new computer, and Equipment and Machinery is up for a new desk and chair for the new employee. Copy charges have gone down.

In reviewing the Legal Expenses, Paradis advised that they have adjusted this and added an additional \$10,000, which is for an environmental study on a property before tax deeding.

General Govt. Building has gone up for the permanent position, which is the custodian. Clock Keeper has been increased by \$150. Electricity is down, and they are locked in at a rate of \$0.075/kw through November of 2024. Heat and Oil is up due to assumed increases in costs. The current contract runs through June 30 of this year. Supplies is up \$1,000, as the costs are up. Maintenance is up due to HVAC costs. Town Vehicle and Maintenance will be expenses for the travel car.

Insurance is up for liability. There is no change in the Advertising and Regional Association budget.

Welfare Administration is up by \$7,000, as there is more homelessness due to a lack of housing. The only option for many is a hotel room at the Rodeway Inn. A Committee member asked if the hotel gives a discount to the town, and was advised they are charged the seasonal rate. Paradis advised that he tries to refer to Tri-County CAP, although they do not have the funding for housing that they used to. Judy LeBlanc noted that Catholic Charities can also assist.

The Conservation Commission budget is unchanged. There is no long-term debt as it has been paid off. Denise Vallee advised that there will be a bond included on the Town Warrant for road repairs in Clay Brook. The Selectboard will finalize terms for this next Monday night. Although they will get the loan May 31 for work to be done this summer, it will not impact the budget this year, as the first payment will not be due until 2024. They will also be using Road Resurfacing money, and by doing the construction all at once they will save on mobilization charges. Paul Bousquet asked how long the road is, and Vallee advised less than a mile. Vallee advised there will be a public hearing on February 13 for this bond.

Interest on TAN is included in case needed. LEADS does not have anything budgeted this year, as they do have quite a bit in the account and have not had an officer available for the last couple years. Library has a \$4,544 increase. Highway Asphalt and Paving is budgeted at \$80,000 again this year.

Agency requests are due by February 7. Denise Vallee advised that AV Home Health would like to attend the meeting on January 31 to speak to the Committee.

b. Capital Reserve Funds

Bronson Paradis reviewed the Capital Reserve Funds and Trusts. Items noted included a new ambulance purchased this year, and that they will be looking to replace one again in 2028. The Assessment CRF has been increased for BTLA cases. A committee member asked if they are winning any of these cases, and was advised they have done pretty well. Some have been dismissed and some have been settled. There are 6 or 7 mediation hearings scheduled next week. Dispatch Equipment has been increased by \$3,000 for the new repeater grant project. The Fire Equipment CRF has been reduced by \$7,500, and this has been added to the SCBA CRF. Highway Heavy Equipment was used to purchase the snow blower, backhoe, and loader this year. They have increased it by \$20,000, as the cost of machinery has increased. They are saving for a dump truck in 2024, and two pickup trucks in 2026. There were quite a few IT projects this year, and this year the IT CRF has been decreased by \$10,000. Denise Vallee advised that they will be switching to a .gov account which is more secure. It was also used for a firewall, backing up to the cloud, and cybersecurity. Medallion Opera House is up \$200 to \$900, and this is money they received in rentals last year. This money is used for maintenance projects, such as the carpeting on the stairs. Renewable Energy Projects has been increased for the solar project at public works. They will be installing solar panels on the roof. They received a grant from Senator Shaheen's office, and will need to match it. They may also look to Tillotson or CDFA for funds. Solid Waste has been increased by \$20,000 as they are hoping to replace the recycle truck this year. Town Building Purchase and Repairs has been decreased by \$40,000. The tax rate impact of the Capital Reserve Funds and Trusts is \$2.24, which is a \$0.12 increase over last year.

5. Other

Denise Vallee advised that she has ordered two owls with a connecting cables so that they can cover the space in the Medallion Opera House to have the public budget hearing online.

6. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date is scheduled for Tuesday, January 24, 2023 at 5:30 pm in the Town Meeting Room.

7. Adjournment

On a motion by Paul Bousquet, seconded by Judy LeBlanc, the meeting was adjourned at 6:29 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Shelli Fortin