



Budget Committee Meeting
Town of Gorham
Medallion Opera House

MINUTES OF JANUARY 7, 2021

Members Present: Douglas Gralenski, Diane Bouthot, Abby Evankow, Greg O'Neil, Patti Stolte, Lee Carroll, and Adam White, Selectmen's Representative

Absent: Reuben Rajala

Town Staff Present: Denise Vallee, Town Manager; Kathy Frenette, Finance Director; Judy LeBlanc, Selectmen; Paul Bousquet and Melissa Laplante, Library Trustees; Shannon Buteau, Library Director; Buddy Holmes, Public Works Director

Minutes Taker: Shelli Fortin

AGENDA ITEMS & DISCUSSION

1. Call to order: 6:01 PM by Douglas Gralenski

2. Minutes of October 21, 2020

Motion to approve minutes of October 21, 2020 from Abby Evankow, with a second from Lee Carroll. Voted by roll call vote in the affirmative. Bouthot- yes, Carroll - yes, O'Neil - yes, Evankow - yes, Stolte - yes, White - yes, Gralenski - yes

3. Old Business

The committee did not have any old business to review.

4. New Business

a. Review of Library Budget

Shannon Buteau advised the board that they faced many challenges this year, but were able to offer curbside services at the beginning of the pandemic and have now safely opened. They loaned out 7,686 physical materials, and 2,980 circulations from their digital collection. They held 17 virtual programs, 15 virtual story times, 5 make and take activity bags, and 5 socially distanced in person programs. They had an attendance in these programs of 3,024. They used their resources to print ear savers for staff at the prison and at St. Vincent's Nursing Home and provided books to the fire station for story times. They had 5,674 visits to the library, 220 curbside pick-ups, and 69 new members. Buteau advised that they are much better equipped for virtual and in-person services now. The budget is almost flat, with a decrease of \$442 to \$161,488. They are also requesting \$5,000 in Capital Reserve Funds which will be saved toward a new furnace in the Spring of 2022. They plan to also request \$5,000 next year, and along with what they already have saved, will use \$5,000 from the Murphy fund for the remaining amount needed. Adam White suggested that they use the full amount from the Murphy Fund as it is a capital expense and save the taxpayers the cost. When asked about the age of the furnace, Buteau advised it is 23 years old. They do get it checked every year and it has been recommended that it be replaced within 5 years. Buteau advised they earned about \$500 in interest on the Murphy Fund last year. The money is currently held in the NHPDIP. Abby Evankow asked about surplus funds from

this year's budget. Buteau advised it is about \$34,000, which the library will retain in a capital overlay account. The Committee suggested that the \$34,000 they will retain be used for the furnace and the \$5,000 be removed as a CRF request. Buteau will discuss this with the Trustees. When asked where the financial information for the Library can be found, Denise Vallee advised it is included in the Town's audit every year.

b. Review of Cemetery Proposed Budget

Buddy Holmes presented the Cemetery budget. The increases in the budget are for an increased hourly wage for the part-time position and an additional \$800 for maintenance, which includes work on the roof. Holmes advised the mower is only 1 year old, but mows 40 hours per week, so it sees a lot of use. Holmes advised there are 4 cemeteries to maintain.

c. Review of Highway Proposed Budget

Holmes advised that telephone and internet service has gone up, along with the cost of heating oil. Tools has gone up \$1,000, and is due mostly to International software. Cost of salt is down, along with gas and diesel. Holmes advised the biggest challenge this year was to get things they ordered. Holmes advised that they ordered signs in October that they still have not received. Diane Bouthot asked about the stipend pay that was discussed in the newspaper. Holmes advised that they are receiving an additional \$50 per week to be on-call from November 15-April 15. Abby Evankow asked about road repairs. Denise Vallee advised that the work on Bellevue was taken out of the \$80,000 line item. There is also money put into a CRF every year for bigger repair projects, such as Stoney Brook Road.

d. Review of MSW/Recycling Proposed Budget

Holmes advised there is a reduction of \$69,182 in the Solid Waste budget, mostly due to a change in manpower. Denise Vallee advised any money left in this budget at the end of the year will go into the fund balance. Diane Bouthot asked about the wetlands project and Vallee advised the project is closed with DES, other than soil monitoring for the next 2 years. Diane Bouthot asked about equipment needs and Holmes advised that he will need a sidewalk tractor and 1 ton truck. The request for the CRF is the same as last year. Holmes advised that there is an additional \$200 in street lighting, and gas is down \$350 in the Other line item.

5. Other

Doug Gralenski reminded the Committee that they like to keep the meeting to a 2-hour maximum.

Denise Vallee advised the Committee that Phil Cloutier applied for a grant from the Firehouse Subs Foundation and was awarded \$29,866, which he will discuss with the Committee on Tuesday.

6. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be held Tuesday, January 12, 2021 at 6:00 pm.

8. Adjournment – Abby Evankow made a motion to adjourn at 6:39 PM, seconded by Diane Bouthot. Voted by roll call vote in the affirmative. Bouthot- yes, Carroll – yes, O’Neil – yes, Evankow – yes, Stolte – yes, White – yes, Gralenski – yes

Respectfully Submitted
Shelli Fortin