

Budget Committee Meeting
Minutes of
January 18, 2012

Members Present: Robert Balon, Robert Demers, Jay Holmes, Lisa Kardell, Bruce Lary (Chairman), John Losier, Terry Oliver, Terry Rhoderick, Steve Roy, Jeff Schall

Others Present: Robin Frost, Denise Vallee, David Graham, Don Provencher, Steve Gauthier, Jeff Stewart, John Lapierre, Sr, Grace Lapierre, Paul Robitaille, Jessica Jacques, Lee Carroll, Roger Goulet, Theodore Miller, Dave Patry, Michelle Lutz, PJ Cyr,

Press: Melissa Grima

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lary at 6:32pm

Review/Accept Minutes. Spelling of the word Library needs to be corrected on last page, under "Motion made by Terry Rhoderick," in order to be correct. A motion was made to accept the minutes as amended by John Losier, seconded by Terry Rhoderick; all were in favor of the motion.

Water & Sewer Budget Review: Roger Goulet, Lee Carroll and Dave Party presented the budget, together, line by line. They began with the Water Department, decreasing the budget by **\$2,588.00 or approximately .64%**

Jay Holmes asked how many customers do not meet the minimal charge, which they did not have an immediate answer to, but will get that information back to the committee.

Sewer Department – was gone through, line-by-line. Decreasing this budget by **\$4,260.00 or .952%** Terry Rhoderick asked if any employee received a raise this year and was informed there have not been any raises for hourly employees in 4 years or salaried for 5 years. Robert Balon asked if there are any equipment issues this year and was told no, but maybe next year. They are on the 10 year replacement program.

Jay Holmes asked if the sludge would be saleable to the Biomass Plant being built and was told no, they have held onto the sludge for about 10 years now and there is not enough to make it worth anyone's while to come pick up. Steve Roy asked who did the vehicle repairs which they responded they are done themselves unless too big of a job. Then it is sent out.

Lee Carroll informed the committee they recently received a new 72 page document which contains new requirements and regulations. Mapping needs to be done by GIS; they have saved approximately \$10,000.00 by borrowing one. They have 30 months to complete the project as there are numerous regulations that must be followed. If not followed it could cost the town more in fines (up to \$25,000.000/ incident), then will cost \$4,000.00 for a local business to do the maps.

Jeff Schall asked if and how the recent hurricane affected them. Dave Party stated they went out immediately to check and they are ok.

Public Comments: John Lapierre questioned why Public Comment is before Old Business, Chairman Lary stated due to a petition being put before the board he decided to rearrange the agenda

There was a general discussion as to which department the Gorham Airport fell under, if monies was made off the individuals who use it, and how much. Who is the airport manager, where does liability fall? Robin will gather this information for the committee. Paul Robitaille stated it was used by non-commercial aviation clubs a few weeks per year, during the two week window when flying over the Presidential Range was allowed.

Old Business: Jay Holmes passed out minutes from a Haverhill Selectboard Regular Meeting in order to clear up a statement he made at a meeting last week concerning Delinquent Taxes. He feels interest could and should be forgiven in order to keep businesses in the area. This was further discussed, using local examples.

Robin Frost stated it is a state law to charge interest on back taxes, ethically why should one be forgiven and not the others. How do you choose one over the other?

Terry Oliver stated they have been working with Currier's right along, trying to help get the tax issue settled and they have reneged on several times. They have been given every opportunity to pay, but don't follow through.

Terry Rhoderick asked if the town took the property would they do soil samples first. Robin Frost responded by telling the committee yes, all environmental areas would be covered.

A **petition** to dissolve the budget committee was presented and discussed. It contains the required 25 signatures for a warrant article, majority ballot vote required. Each member of the general public was given the opportunity to voice their opinion and views. John Loiser stated the petition was unethical and maybe we should get a legal opinion. Steve Roy questioned why PJ Cyr started the petition and if PJ was on duty when he obtained signatures. PJ stated that the behavior of a committee member is not professional and member(s) of the committee should have the towns' best interest at heart; not have personal vendetta.

Robert Balon: Wants on the record, "I have a right to a private life. I was asked to serve"

Public Comment (2)

Robin Frost asked if any of the committee members could define the 10% rule and if they knew how much was already cut from last years budget. No one on the committee could accurately answer. Robin went on to explain how important it is to know the job and the budget has been cut 10.9%, which is about \$500,000.00. She explained a Public Meeting was the opportunity to gather input from the people and to use that information to make decisions and to go with the best recommendations.

Paul Robitaille: Have to remember town politics do get personal; we all have to live together and take care of each other.

John Lapierre, Sr: feels several committee members have axe to grind, don't feel most know how the budget process works. They need the knowledge to do the job.

Michelle Lutz: feels the tools offered, to do the job (i.e. books, classes), are not being used by the committee. They take the selectman to task for taking Currier's property, to keep business locally. Is this fair to the taxpayers? The committee needs to know their job. Shouldn't be in this position if have axe to grind.

PJ Cyr: feels the way some members conduct themselves is unprofessional. Example – posting his wife and himself as their (committee members) facebook picture and making comments, which could be taken in threatening manner, to and about his family and other individuals.

Jeff Stewart: the committee want to cut benefits and services where they should be cutting back elsewhere.

Adjournment: Terry Oliver made the motion to adjourn; seconded by Terry Rhoderick and all in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Amero

Approved 1-19-2012