

**MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING  
TOWN OF GORHAM  
MONDAY, JANUARY 27, 2014, 6:00 PM  
GORHAM TOWN HALL**

Gorham Selectmen present: Jeff Schall, Paul Robitaille, Bill Jackson  
Also present: Robin L. Frost, Town Manager; Michelle Lutz, Assessing Clerk; Deb Thornblad, Berlin Daily Sun; Kathy Frenette, United Way

**1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chairman Robitaille

**2. Appointments:**

**a) Kathy Frenette, United Way:** Kathy Frenette from the United Way came in to select the winner of the "Town Manager for the Day Contest", for those who participated in donating to the United Way. The winner of the contest was George "Rick" Eichler, Fire Chief.

**3. New Business:**

**a) Abatement Recommendations (Mediation Cases):** Assessing Clerk, Michelle Lutz presented the Board with three BTLA Settlement Recommendations from Richard Dorsett of KRT Appraisal. AC Lutz stated that these are the cases for mediation. The first property reviewed was Twin Light Properties' property at 2 Wentworth Avenue. This property is currently assessed at \$111,300, but had been assessed at \$255,200. The \$255,200 had been reduced earlier this year to \$108,300, but had gone up to the \$111,300 because of building permits that had been issued. AC Lutz explained that Twin Light was looking for a reduction in the 2012 that would equate to a total assessed value of \$35,000 and a reduction for 2013 to an assessed value of \$45,000. Further discussion took place regarding the requested and recommended abatement by Mr. Dorsett and it was agreed that the Board would send this case to BTLA. **A motion was made by Selectman Jackson to send the Twin Light Properties request back to BTLA for decision, seconded by Selectman Schall, voted unanimously.**

AC Lutz presented the Board with Mr. Dorsett's recommendation for the BTLA Settlement Recommendation for Richard and Lisa Kardell's property at 14 Marion's Way. AC Lutz explained that the Kardells had the home inspected for mold and radon, and it is noted that not only is there mold present but the radon level is three times the limit in a portion of the home. The appraisal that the Kardells had completed on their home came in at \$320,000. Mr. Dorsett presented a recommendation of \$330,000. Further discussion took place regarding the Kardells recommended assessed value. **Selectman Jackson made a motion to counter offer the settlement at \$350,000, Chairman Robitaille seconded, voted Jackson – Aye; Schall – Nay; Robitaille – Aye.**

The next BTLA Settlement Recommendation is for Shane and Penny Fredrick for property located at 4-6 Palmer Street. The Fredricks' current assessment for 2012 and 2013 is \$148,500. The Fredricks had an appraisal completed on this property and it with an appraised value of \$113,000. Mr. Dorsett recommended that the Town lower the assessed value to \$115,000. Further discussion took place regarding the Fredricks' property. **Selectman Schall made a motion to take KRT Appraisal's recommendation of \$115,000, seconded by Chairman Robitaille, voted Jackson – Nay; Schall –**

**Aye; Robitaille – Nay. Selectman Jackson made a motion to counter offer the settlement at \$120,000, voted Jackson – Aye; Schall – Nay; Robitaille – Aye.**

**b) Proposed Exemption Adjustments:** AC Lutz reviewed the elderly and disability exemptions with the Board, noting that she is not looking to change the amount of the exemptions, but would like the Board to look at changing the income limit. AC Lutz is suggesting the base income limit be increased by \$2,500. She went on to tell the Board that the income limits had been established in 1997 for the elderly exemption while the disability exemption had been set in 1999. Further discussion took place regarding the proposed increase. **Selectman Jackson made a motion to put a suggested increase of \$2,500 in the Warrant Articles to allow the Town’s residents to vote on, seconded by Chairman Robitaille, voted Jackson – Aye; Schall – Nay; Robitaille – Aye.**

AC Lutz next spoke with the Board about the Wood Heat Warrant Article that was created in 1985. She informed the Board that the Wood Heat Exemption for \$50.00 equates to a savings of \$3.20 per exemption. She asked the Board if they would consider removing this exemption because of the work that is involved in the preparation with including this exemption in the assessments/tax bills. Further discussion took place regarding the Wood Heat Exemption. **Selectman Jackson made a motion to compose a new Warrant Article for the reversal of the 1985 Warrant for this exemption, and prepare for its removal, seconded by Chairman Robitaille, voted Jackson – Aye; Schall – Nay; Robitaille – Aye.**

#### **4. Old Business:**

**a) Updated Public Works Proposal:** TM Frost presented the Board with an updated Proposal from David Laurin, Architect, noting that there is one proposed change to add \$1,250 to his original quote to cover the cost of a survey and base map work. Further discussion took place regarding the office construction. TM Frost also informed the Board that she had asked Public Works Director Buddy Holmes to contact three local roofing companies for estimates on the garage roof. The Board discussed the roof replacement and office construction monies and asked TM Frost to keep moving forward. **Selectman Jackson made a motion to approve the increase of \$1,250 for survey and base map work in the quote prepared by Architect David Laurin, seconded by Chairman Robitaille, voted Jackson – Aye; Schall – Nay; Robitaille – Aye.**

**5. Public Comment:** None

#### **6. Other Business:**

**a) Town Manager’s Update:** TM Frost reiterated that she three local roofing companies that have completed work on commercial buildings are being contacted to get quotes for the Public Works Garage.

She also reminded the Board that the Easter Seals Ride-In is scheduled for February 7, 8 and 9. Governor Hassan will be attending Saturday morning to ride with the kids. TM Frost informed the Board that the sidewalks will be set up for the event.

TM Frost presented the Board with the 2014 Public Safety Agreement that Police Chief Cyr had created. The proposal includes \$5,000 from each unincorporated area for a total of \$35,000.

Further discussion took place regarding Agreement. TM Frost asked the Board to review the Agreement so they could discuss it at their next meeting.

TM Frost informed the Board that she had received a call from Attorney Peter Brown of Concord regarding issues with energy costs. She also presented information that Attorney Brown had forwarded to her for their review. TM Frost reviewed Attorney Brown's comments and concerns with regard to expanding natural gas into New England. Further discussion took place regarding this matter and TM Frost told the Board that she felt that at some point in time in the future, Attorney Brown will be looking for a letter of support from the Town of Gorham.

TM Frost asked the Board if the Fourth of July Committee needs to put together a petition to get their funding included in the Town Warrants or if the Selectman will include the request in their Warrants. Further discussion took place regarding the funding. **Selectman Jackson made a motion to have the Board include a Warrant Article for \$10,900 for the Fourth of July funding, seconded by Chairman Robitaille, voted Jackson – Aye; Schall – Nay; Robitaille – Aye.**

TM Frost asked the Board about the upcoming Annual Chamber Dinner, and who was interested in attending. Selectman Schall stated that he would like to attend. Selectman Jackson stated that he thought he would be attending through the hospital and Chairman Robitaille stated that he would not be attending.

TM Frost also presented the Board with information from the School and the budget that was presented and approved at the public meeting.

**b) Selectmen's Updates:** Selectman Jackson stated that he had no updates to present.

Selectman Schall stated that the street sign on Route 16 for Marion's Way is missing. TM Frost informed him that PWD Holmes is aware of the situation.

Selectman Schall also asked if Public Works could plow and sand in front of the postal boxes that are set-up in the Stony Brook residential area, while they are taking care of the streets. Further discussion took place regarding the responsibility for snow removal and noted that the boxes locations was ultimately decided by the Federal Government and was not the responsibility of the Town. However, TM Frost told the Board that she would contact the local postmaster to speak with her about Selectman Schall's concerns.

Selectman Schall also asked where the Appalachian Trail Conservancy Committee was going and asked if he could help to move it along. Further discussion took place regarding the forming of the local committee.

Chairman Robitaille asked if the police department was still enforcing the engine brake rule. He stated that he is noticing it more and more. TM Frost said that she would speak to Chief Cyr about the matter.

**c) Approval of Minutes (January 13, 2014):** Selectman Schall made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 13, 2014 meeting, seconded by Selectman Jackson, approved unanimously.

**d) Sign Manifest:** All manifests were signed.

**e) Sign Abatements and Exemptions (if necessary):** None were presented.

**7. Non-Public Session: RSA 91-a:3, II a-e:** On a motion by Selectmen Jackson, seconded by Selectman Schall, the Board voted unanimously by roll call to move into non-public session at 7:10 pm under the provisions of RSA 91-A:3,II(e). Robitaille – Aye, Jackson – Aye, Schall – Aye.

On a motion by Selectmen Jackson, seconded by Selectman Schall, the Board voted unanimously by roll call to come out of non-public session at 7:20 pm. Robitaille – Aye, Jackson – Aye, Schall – Aye.

**8. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 7:21 PM.

**REVIEWED AND APPROVED:**

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**Paul Robitaille**

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**William H. Jackson**

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**Jeff Schall**