

**MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING
TOWN OF GORHAM
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2014, 5:00 PM
GORHAM TOWN HALL**

Gorham Selectmen present: Jeff Schall, Grace LaPierre, Terry Oliver

Also present: Robin Frost, Town Manager; Kirstan Lukasak, Berlin Daily Sun; Mike Waddell, Dennis Arguin, Ben Murphy, Dana Horne, Rick Eichler, Fire Chief; Chad Miller, EMS Director; PJ Cyr, Police Chief

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm by Chairman Schall.

2. Appointments:

a) Budget Review

1. Fire Department – FD Chief Eichler reviewed his budget with the Board and highlighted increases. These increases include an increase in the telephone line item for a 911 subscription service, and an increase in the uniform/physical lines for remaining half of the department's physicals. He stated that the price of physicals has increased. FD Chief Eichler stated that there also an increase in the Training line because of the increase in wages. Chief Eichler stated that at this time, the revenues for the department are approximately \$8,931, which is primarily from the County for accident coverage. Chief Eichler stated that he has two Capital Improvement requests, one is for turnout gear and the other is for an Engine to replace Engine 2. He stated that he is applying for a \$200,000 grant to assist with the replacement.

2. Ambulance – EMS Director Miller when reviewing his budget stated that at this time, he is keeping the bottom line at status quo. However, he did state that at this time, the department would like to add a third, used Ambulance. EMS Director Miller said that if the department continues doing transfers as it has been doing, he is concerned about the current two vehicles as it relates to mileage and wear and tear on them. His goal would be to increase the Capital Reserve amount for 2015 from \$21,000 to \$45,000 and to increase both 2016 and 2017 from the anticipated \$25,000 to \$50,000 so this new/used Ambulance can be added as well as keeping the current replacement schedule intact.

3. Police – Chief Cyr stated that when looking at the current proposed budget, it still includes Lt. Lemoine as a full-time officer. Therefore, all wage numbers are not reflected correctly. Chief Cyr told the Board that he is looking to increase the part-time officers' hours to include 16 additional hours per week. He said that the part-time officers are getting burned out because their current work week does not include enough time for them to finish up paperwork. With this being said, because the part-time officers are doing the same amount of work as a full time officer, he would like to increase their wages to \$21.21, which is equivalent to a first year full time officer. Eight hours of this additional time would be devoted to office work. Chief Cyr stated that the increase in the supplies – field line includes new vests, tactical gun ammo as well as a mountain bike. Chief Cyr stated that the other item that shows an increase is the training line item. At this point in time, the department cannot honor the contract with the City of Berlin for the Emergency Response Team. This increase is for the necessary training to bring the department up to date. Chief Cyr did note that Officer Imperial is the only officer trained because he has been doing so on his own time. Chief Cyr stated that the remainder of the budget is level funded.

Chief Cyr stated that at this time, the dispatcher budget is down \$1,201, until such time as the union agreement is completed. Chief Cyr stated that for this year he would like to increase the cruiser CRF from \$14,000 to \$21,000. He said that \$7,000 would be added to the current CRF balance of approximately \$26,000 to purchase a 2015 Ford Explorer. The balance of \$14,000 will stay in the CRF to be used for an additional purchase in 2016. The \$5,000 request for the Special Equipment CRF is to replace Tasers. The Dispatcher's \$5,000 Special Equipment CRF will be used for emergency communications. A portion of the fees and expenses are off-set by monies received from Shelburne and Randolph for these services. Chief Cyr stated that there is still a small amount of work that needs to be taken care of which a portion of these funds will be used for.

4. Finance – FD Vallee reviewed changes in the budget noting that the tax collector's supply line is up due to an increase in postage and that the increase in tax liens is for research fees. FD Vallee stated that health insurance rates increased 1.1 percent, but because of demographic changes, the overall total is down. FD Vallee noted that the Town is changing the disability insurance from a seven day pay to a thirty day pay and therefore that amount is going to be approximately \$13,700 instead of \$19,700. Therefore, the overall bottom line is down just over \$16,000. FD Vallee stated that the under Planning and Zoning the development code updates had been completed and that amount has been taken out of the budget. The General Government Building electricity line is down, however, the final number for electricity expense will be locked in for eight months in February. FD Vallee also noted to the Board and TM Frost that there are only two more payments for the building's long term debt. FD Vallee stated that the Capital Project request in the amount of \$22,000 is to replace obsolete software for the office.

b) Dennis Arguin – Moose River: TM Frost stated that all letters had been sent out and that she had not received any comments from the residents, whether good or bad. Mr. Arguin asked what the Board's position on this matter is, and stated that if the Army Corps of Engineers did the original work, they should be doing the necessary repairs. He expressed his concern and frustration with regard to this matter. Mike Waddell stated that when Roger Guilmette worked for the Town his approach had always been that it was the Town's responsibility to repair this area. TM Frost and the Board discussed that if the Town did move forward with the project, the money would be taken out of the River Maintenance CRF. Chairman Schall asked Chad Miller what his thought was on this matter. He stated that he will make some calls to check into the matter, and told the Board if they spend \$9,000 on this project that they should be prepared to pay for other areas of concern. Mr. Miller said that at this time, he is more concerned with the Moose River by Gateway Trailer Park than with this situation because of the number of homes involved. Mr. Miller stated that the Town needed to have a better plan in place for these matters. TM Frost said that a lot of infrastructure issues are being ignored. Mr. Waddell stated that the issue in Mr. Arguin's area is a current issue, not a what if or maybe and said that he believes that if the Town is picking up property assessments as they are, then they should be addressing this issue. **Selectman Oliver made a motion to proceed with the Engineering Study and spending \$9,000 out of the River Maintenance CRF to complete the study, seconded by Selectman LaPierre, voted Schall – Nay; Oliver – Aye; LaPierre – Aye.**

c) Mike Guay – Bedbug Ordinance: Mr. Guay thanked the Board for working on this matter. TM Frost stated that the proposed ordinance had been changed to include where items needed to be disposed of along with a fine schedule for those who do not take care of the items appropriately. The next item for this matter will be a public hearing so the ordinance can be added to the Town Code.

3. New Business

a) Munce Properties: TM Frost reminded the Board that the auction for the three Munce properties is taking place on Thursday, November 20 and the equipment auction will be the next day. If the property is sold, the Town should receive tax money in the amount of approximately \$173,000.

b) Traffic Light at Former Shaw's Property: TM Frost stated that Bill Lambert of the State of NH asked the Town how they felt about the State discontinuing the lights at the old Shaw's plaza. The State does not want to have to maintain them anymore. The Board told TM Frost that they do not have a problem with the State removing them.

4. Old Business

a) Great Lakes Hydro/Brookfield Update: TM Frost stated that she was going to be meeting with Jim Wheeler of the City of Berlin and Brian Fogg of Skip Sansoucy's office this week with regard to how we should be moving forward with Great Lakes Hydro. TM Frost stated that she has been working with Brian Fogg instead of Skip Sansoucy, which has been great because Mr. Fogg can explain information in laymen's terms.

b) Town Hall Windows: TM Frost presented the Board with a memo outlining the answers to the final questions the Board had on the windows with regard to the deposit and warranty for workmanship. The deposit required is \$1,000 and the warranty for workmanship is one year. Selectman LaPierre made a motion to move forward with the window maintenance, seconded by Selectman Oliver, voted unanimously.

c) Street Lights: The cost to turn on the three lights on lower Main Street and the one on Jimtown Road is \$1,034. PSNH informed the Town that to remove the other lights the cost would be approximately \$22,000 and the savings would be approximately \$12 per light per month. Based on the current proposed list, the savings would be approximately \$14,400 per year. PSNH suggested tagging the poles and advertising via the local newspaper along with the Town's website so the public can review which poles are potentially being shut off prior to a public hearing.

d) Public Safety Contracts: TM Frost presented the Board with a spreadsheet outlining the proposed Public Safety Contract amounts. She said that the Town has been approached by Shelburne for the Board to sit down with both Randolph and Shelburne to discuss the contract proposals. This new proposal is formulated on a per call basis as the previous contract. The amount for Shelburne is \$20,299.70, \$12,797.64 for Randolph and \$25,153.98 for Coos County. The Board asked TM Frost to set up a meeting for December 1 at 5:00 pm to meet with Shelburne and Randolph.

e) John Ellis Memorial: TM Frost presented the Board with information received from Don Piper with regard to a memorial for John Ellis. The Board thought that so far, all options presented looked amazing and that the project can move forward.

Other Old Business:

TM Frost informed the Board that the engineering and preliminary costs for the culvert/road repair to Tinker Brook on Cascade Flats is higher than originally planned. At this time, the Warrant Article for this work is at \$75,000. She also stated that at this time, it is not sure whether this area will last the winter.

5. Public Comment: There was none.

6. Other Business

a) Town Manager's Update: TM Frost stated that as the Board was aware, at the end of the year, Attorney Rob Upton will be retiring and that the Board needed to make an official decision with regard to the Town's replacement. TM Frost said that Attorney Upton had recommended that the Town use Chris Boldt, the Attorney the City of Berlin has been using. The Board agreed with the recommendation and stated that the Town will begin using Attorney Boldt upon Attorney Upton's retirement.

TM Frost told the Board that the possibility of discontinuing use of the Cascade Fire Department should be looked at again. While it is an emotional discussion, the Board needs to think about whether the Town should keep it and whether Engine 2 should be replaced if we discontinue use of that station.

Selectman Oliver asked if the Town did get a third ambulance, where would it be kept as well as if there are crew quarters. TM Frost stated that the Board should look to combine the Fire and EMS Departments. There are both pros and cons to merging the two departments, but she believes that it would benefit the Town with regard to organization and training. Selectman LaPierre stated that she is concerned about agreeing to look into doing this unless FD Chief Eichler was on board. TM Frost stated that Chief Eichler had originally been okay with the restructure. It was stated that there is no succession plan in place for when Chief Eichler retires. The Board agreed that it would be fine to move forward with exploring the merger of the two departments.

b) Selectmen's Update: There were no updates.

c) Approval of Minutes (November 3, 2014 and November 10, 2014): Selectman LaPierre made a motion to approve the Minutes of the November 3 and November 10, 2014 meetings as presented, seconded by Selectman Oliver, voted 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: There was no need for non-public session.

8. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 PM.

REVIEWED AND APPROVED:

Jeff Schall

Grace LaPierre

Terry Oliver