

**MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING  
TOWN OF GORHAM  
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2013, 6:00 PM  
GORHAM TOWN HALL**

Gorham Selectmen present: Bill Jackson, Jeff Schall, Paul Robitaille

Also present: Robin L. Frost, Town Manager; Deb Thornblad, Berlin Daily Sun; Ron Donato, Jay Holmes

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

**2. Appointments:**

**3. New Business:**

**a) Signature Authorization for CDBG Feasibility Study:** TM Frost presented the Board with the CDBG Grant Feasibility Study for Gorham Community Learning Center. TM Frost informed the Board that the Study was underway and that Donna Lane hoped that the Board would give TM Frost the authority to sign the necessary Grant paperwork. Further discussion took place, **Selectman Schall made a motion to give authorization to TM Frost to sign the necessary documents for the CDBG Grant for GCLC, seconded by Selectman Jackson, approved unanimously.**

**b) Solid Waste Committee Members:** TM Frost revisited the fact that the Solid Waste Grant monies will run out at the end of the month. TM Frost asked the Board if they would approve the creation a committee as recommended by Regan Pride. The Board asked who she felt should be on the committee, and TM Frost indicated that when discussed with Mr. Pride, the following people would be included: Jeff Schall, Robin Frost, Denise Vallee, Austin "Buddy" Holmes and Yves Zornio, if he would be willing. TM Frost said that if Mr. Zornio could not participate then she would like to ask David Graham. Selectman Jackson asked if TM Frost would be including members of the public. TM Frost stated that she could find people who might be interested. Further discussion took place, and it was agreed that the committee could be formed with the people mentioned about, but that there would need to be two additional public members at large.

**c) Budget Preparation:** TM Frost informed the Board that she had presented a deadline of September 16<sup>th</sup> for the department heads to submit their budgets to her. TM Frost said that she will be reviewing the budgets and plans on meeting with each department head on October 23 and 24 to discuss their budgets with them. TM Frost went on to tell the Board that she felt that a draft of the budgets will be ready for their review by the beginning of November. The Board asked if TM Frost had given the department heads any guidelines for their budget preparation in light of what the outcome of some of the Town's legal matters might be. TM Frost informed the Board that the issue had been discussed at the most recent department head meeting. Selectman Schall stated that he felt the department heads should be looking to cut their budgets 10 to 20% across the board. Chairman Robitaille stated that he felt that TM Frost knows what we are looking at and is confident that TM Frost knows what to do and how to handle budgets. Selectman Jackson stated that he felt there should be paper trail notifying the department heads of the potential situation, rather than just verbal notification. Further

discussion took place regarding the budget preparation schedule. TM Frost stressed to the Board that she understood what needed to take place regarding the budget preparation.

#### 4. Old Business:

Selectman Schall stated that he noticed that the pedestals for the phone booths had been cut off at the base.

Selectman Jackson reiterated the graffiti issue that has been taking place with some of the local ATV signage. Selectman Jackson went on to present the Board with a copy of a picture that was taken of the "No ATV on Bridge" sign for the swinging bridge. Selectman Jackson informed the Board that he has spoken with Henry Sanschagrín and he said it is a 50/50 chance that it was an ATVer that did the damage. Mr. Sanschagrín also told Selectman Jackson that the club wants to work with the Town with regard to patrolling these issues. He also stated that he felt the people inflicting the graffiti should be prosecuted if caught. Further discussion took place regarding the sign and graffiti. Selectman Jackson went on to express concern regarding this bridge and the ATV use of it. He said that the Town should find out what the widest stance for a snowmobile and install concrete posts to keep ATV traffic off the bridge. Selectman Jackson noted that while he is not against ATV travel on the bridge, he is concerned that some of the wider ATVs would be too wide to access/travel on the bridge without possibly damaging it.

**5. Public Comment:** Jay Holmes asked the Board when they were going to finish the ordinance for ATV usage. TM Frost informed Mr. Holmes that it was on the next agenda. Mr. Holmes also asked what the status of the Solid Waste Study. TM Frost and the Board informed Mr. Holmes that it was discussed at the previous meeting, noting that Regan Pride had presented a draft of the Full Cost Accounting at the last meeting. She went on to tell Mr. Holmes that a committee was being formed to see what to do next. Mr. Holmes spoke to the Board about the upcoming budget season, stating that he feels there should be a 25% cut in the budget for the amount of approximately \$800,000. Further discussion took place regarding the budget as well as the current and possible budget impact on the upcoming tax rate. Mr. Holmes told the Board that he feels that Gorham should not be competing with Berlin's ATV Festival, and said that the Town should look at doing its own "fall festival". Mr. Holmes stated that he was concerned about the ambulances travelling all over Coos County, noting that he was concerned that the ambulances would not be available if needed by a resident. The Board and TM Frost assured Mr. Holmes that when the Ambulance Department takes a call, there is another ambulance and crew available. Mr. Holmes questioned the Board as to why he is seeing the Police Department in Shelburne so often especially when there is no contract in place. He went on to say that if there is no contract for mutual aid, then we should be staying out of Shelburne, period. Further discussion took place with regard to the Police Department being seen in Shelburne, and TM Frost assured Mr. Holmes that she would look into the matter.

Ron Donato informed the Board that he agrees with the things that Mr. Holmes stated. He went on to say that, these are hard times and people are struggling to pay their taxes. Mr. Donato also stated that he believes that the current building permit fees are too high. Mr. Donato asked TM Frost about how her contract was written up expressing concern about what time she comes into work. Mr. Donato stated that he feels that she should be in at 8:00 in the morning and stay as needed for meetings. Mr. Donato also stated that he is concerned that because she is not a Town resident that she has no real personal interest in what happens to the Town. TM

Frost informed Mr. Donato that she has done it both ways and feels that it is easier not living in Town because she can stay neutral.

## **6. Other Business:**

**a) Town Manager's Update:** TM Frost presented the Board with the Workers' Comp. insurance packet from Primex for 2014. TM Frost informed the Board that the Primex offer includes a maximum increase of 14 percent. Further discussion took place regarding the offer, **Selectman Jackson made a motion to accept the Workers' Comp. Policy offer as presented from Primex, seconded by Selectman Schall, voted unanimously.**

TM Frost also presented the Board with the Town's MS-5, noting that this is the form the State uses when setting the Town's tax rate. Further discussion took place regarding the MS-5, **Selectman Jackson made a motion to sign the MS-5, seconded by Selectman Schall, voted unanimously.**

TM Frost updated the Board on the pay phone pedestal removal from various locations, and told them that she is waiting to hear back from Pacific Telemanagement Services with regard to having a phone located at the Town Hall. TM Frost also spoke to the Board about the recent meeting between EMS and the Fire Department and the possibility of merging the two departments. She went on to say that the discussion between the departments over all went well. Selectman Jackson stated that he too attended the meeting, and agreed with TM Frost that while the opening tone of the meeting was contentious; the overall meeting went well. Selectman Jackson passed out notes that he had taken during the meeting. TM Frost informed the Board that Carol Porter, Tax Collector, has pulled together a list of potential properties to be taken by tax deed. The list includes 31 properties, for 25 taxpayers. TM Frost went on to inform the Board that it is TC Porter's intention to prepare to take the properties prior to the second half tax bills being sent out. Further discussion took place regarding the outstanding taxes as well as the process for the Town selling the properties once taken.

**b) Selectmen's Updates:** Selectman Jackson informed the Board that he has reviewed the expenditures/revenue report and that the bottom lines of the departments seem to be in good shape. However, he did note some red flags, which included the Ambulance Department revenues at 31.70%. Selectman Jackson went on to say that usually by this time, the percentage is usually around 33.75%. Further discussion took place regarding the report.

Selectman Jackson also presented TM Frost with organized binders of the Multimodal Project.

Selectman Schall stated that with the upcoming budget cycle starting, noting the Town is only 1/3 of the portion that it might be prudent to make sure that the school is aware of the situation that the Town may be in with regard to the utilities and tax rate.

Selectman Robitaille noted that there was a very nice article in the newspaper regarding the ATV trail access and the Town.

A discussion took place regarding the Chamber of Commerce, noting that the Chamber is looking to fill two ex officio member positions, and they are interested in the Town and City Managers being involved. Further discussion took place regarding these vacancies.

**c) Approval of Minutes (August 26, 2013):** Selectman Jackson noted that in one section of the Minutes there was a discussion with Chad Miller and concern for where things were going. Selectman Jackson stated that the Board wanted further information prior to making any decisions, and the Minutes failed to note that. It was agreed that the correction needed to be made and would be tabled until the next scheduled meeting.

**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.

**8. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 7:07 PM.

**REVIEWED AND APPROVED:**

---

**Paul Robitaille**

---

**William H. Jackson**

---

**Jeff Schall**