

**MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING  
TOWN OF GORHAM  
MONDAY, November 19, 2012, 6:00 PM  
GORHAM TOWN HALL**

Gorham Selectmen present: Chairman David Graham, Paul Robitaille, Bill Jackson

Also present: Robin L. Frost, Town Manager; Chad Miller, Director of EMS and Emergency Management; PJ Cyr, Chief of Police; Rick Eichler, Fire Chief; Don Provencher, Jeff Schall, Dennis Arguin, Ron Donato, John Scarinza and Gail Scott, Berlin Daily Sun

**1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 5:58 pm by Chairman Graham.

**2. Appointments:**

**a) Public Safety Budget Review** - Chairman Graham started with asking Town Manager Frost how she felt budget preparation was going, and TM Frost indicated that she felt the department heads were doing a great job with keeping the budgets as close to last year as possible.

Chief Cyr presented the proposed 2013 Police Department budget. Chief Cyr indicated that the current proposed budget is \$9,712 above current budget for 2012. Chief Cyr went on to explain that the bulk of the increase is due to the 2% pay increase, as outlined in the union contract. Further discussion ensued with Chief Cyr explaining line items. Chief Cyr also noted that a portion of the salary increase is due to additional time needed for trials/court stating that the court is currently over docketing by 300%. Selectman Jackson asked Chief Cyr what the department has for a current vehicle roster and mileage for same, as well as why are we now purchasing vehicles instead of leasing them. Chief Cyr said that he would provide the list to the Board and went on to explain that he thought that while leasing may be less expensive in the short term it ends up costing the Town more in the end. Chief Cyr said that typically the oldest vehicle is rotated out of service, but that this past year the 2009 Crown Vic was passed down to EMS because of the mileage. Selectman Jackson voiced concerns about the fact that the Town seems to be getting a lot of vehicles. Selectman Jackson then went on to say that he felt that before a vehicle is passed down to another department, rather than being put out for bid and/or sold, it needs to be presented to the Board of Selectmen. Further discussion went on between the Board, Chief Cyr and TM Frost, and it was believed that while the 2009 Crown Vic may not have been brought specifically before the Board, there had been discussions at the previous budgetary meetings that this would probably be the case for future vehicles. Chief Cyr went on to say that the gasoline line item is up. He explained that he felt this number is more accurate based on averages. Also included in this year's budget is an additional \$1,640 for the Roger Williams University – First Line Supervisor Course. The Department will be sending Cpl Santos for this training. Selectman Robitaille praised Chief for a job well done. Selectman Graham questioned Chief Cyr about the coverage for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration, and voiced concern that the Town had to pick up a \$9,500 tab even though the committee had \$24,000 to spend on the celebration. Chief Eichler pointed out that even though the committee was able to raise

\$24,000 for the celebration it still operated at a loss. Chief Cyr also stated that requests for assistance are sent out to other local departments for this week, but typically only hears from the Sheriff department. Chief Cyr indicated that he would like to see 19 officers available for this event, but only had 14 officers. Selectman Graham went on to state that he would like to see the committee absorb these additional costs.

Chief Cyr then went on to discuss the Dispatch Budget, indicating a \$6,280 increase in this budget, which again is due to the 2% increase as stated in the union contract. Further discussion took place reviewing the budget's line items. Chief Cyr stated that while in the past, the training line tended to be more than \$1,000 as noted in the budget, he stated that Amy Girard has found an on-line training website for continued education which will assist in keeping this number below where it had been in the past.

EMS Director Chad Miller then presented the Ambulance budget. He is indicating an increase of \$13,802, noting that he feels the \$7,000 of projected increase in revenue will assist with off-setting the increase. He went to start reviewing line items and explained that he would like to "recraft" the position line to show the items that are offset with revenue. Selectman Jackson made note to Director Miller that while it is nice to know what the revenues in the budget are, the bottom line is that the expenses need to be treated as expenses, and we cannot necessarily look at off-set revenues. Director Miller went on to say that he felt the department should be looking at creating capital reserve accounts for equipment, like the fire department has in place. Discussion went on and review of all expense line items. It was noted which expenses are shared with the fire department. Director Miller also indicated that the department is working hard on tracking all costs so that all users, other communities, are paying their portion correctly. Director Miller went on to say that they are tracking all billables to make sure that the Town is receiving all possible revenues, noting that there has been a large increase in revenues over the past couple of years. Director Miller did note however that the department will be looking to write off some bad debt. Selectman Jackson said that in 2009 the Town did write off approximately \$100,000 to wipe the slate clean. Director Miller indicated that he is very comfortable with the projected revenue based on the department's history. Selectman Jackson asked Director Miller if the department is tracking transfers versus calls, and Director Miller indicated that the department is tracking calls manually and that the department does make money from transfers.

Selectman Jackson asked Director Miller to please take the time to review the Emergency Management budget. Director Miller started reviewing the budget by stating that he is currently not taking a stipend for this portion of his position, stating it is absorbed into EMS. Director Miller would like to use the current person that the Town of Shelburne is using, June Garneau from Twin Mountain. She is still working with Shelburne, but is almost complete. Director Miller went on to state that she had been recommended by a Homeland Security Rep. Chairman Graham went on to praise Director Miller for not accepting a stipend, and wanted to make sure that Director Miller knows that it is recognized and appreciated.

Fire Chief Eichler started presentation of the fire department budget by indicating that the capital reserve fund for equipment has helped the department level out expenses. Chief Eichler stated that this

year's budget is showing an overall increase of \$4,275. Discussion went on noting that the cruiser the department is using has been gone through and the body touched up. Chief Eichler went on to explain that the primary increase in the budget is due to bi-annual physicals that are being included in this budget, which equates to \$4,000. Chief Eichler went on to say that this amount includes ½ of the department per year. In past years these physicals have been covered by a CDC Grant, however, that has not been the case for the last couple of years. Therefore, these required physicals have not been completed. Chief Eichler also stated that the department will probably need to create a new capital reserve fund for the repaving of the parking lot, noting the cost to be approximately \$10,000. Selectman Graham reviewed the cost of the volunteers' salary and asked Chief Eichler if he thought that the \$75,000 - \$80,000 can be cut down. Chief Eichler explained that a volunteer department is a tough item, stating that when the tone goes off, you are never sure how many volunteers will show up.

### **3. New Business**

**a) Tax Bills** - TM Frost informed the Board that they went out, stating that the problem that had arisen was from the recent merger indicating that 33 bills did not correctly show the 1<sup>st</sup> half's payments; however, by Friday afternoon the problem was resolved.

### **4. Old Business**

**a) Modulars from Federal Correctional Institution – Berlin** - TM Frost informed the Board that Rec Director Stewart, Code Enforcement Office Scarinza and Highway Director Holmes and herself went to look at the modulars, stating that it does not look like it makes sense. The buildings are in bad shape and they feel that there are too many items that would need to be corrected/repared. Selectman Jackson went on to question the bathhouses at Libby's and TM Frost stated that she will look into what can be done to fix them up or replace them. The offices at the Public Works garage were discussed and decided that they are to be of top priority in replacing/upgrading. It was noted that the modulars at the Biomass project may be another possibility.

**b) Bullying Policy** – The policy matrix has been approved by Town counsel and will be put into place.

### **5. Public Comment**

Ron Donato came before the Board stating that nothing has happened with regard to the ongoing issue with this next door neighbor, the Edmondson's. He stated that he has been working with John Scarinza with regard to the rooster. Code Enforcement Officer Scarinza stated that he had in fact been working with Mr. Donato. CEO Scarinza went on to discuss what he had completed for background work as to whether or not there had always been farm animals of some sort on the Edmondson's property. CEO Scarinza told Mr. Donato that he felt the best way to handle the situation was through the Zoning Board. He informed Mr. Donato that he needed to get a document prepared and notarized stating that there was a period of time that there were no farm animals on the Edmondson's property. He would then request the Edmondson's to file a variance with the Zoning Board stating that there had always been

animals on the property. Mr. Donato also expressed his concern regarding the fact that Frank Edmondson drives tractor trailer truck for a living and starts his truck early in the morning leaving it idling just 50-60 feet away from his bedroom window. Mr. Donato also expressed concern regarding who owns the right of way that the Edmondson's use like a driveway. Further discussion ensued and it was decided that Mr. Donato should call the police department whenever he has a concern regarding noise, and TM Frost will check into who owns the right of way and what can be done if it is abandoned.

Dennis Arguin – Mr. Arguin came in to follow up on the river situation. Selectman Jackson informed Mr. Arguin that he did in fact get the DES information in writing from TM Frost. TM Frost went on to explain that she had been looking into what can be done and whose jurisdiction it may fall under. TM Frost said that she spoke to Rene Pelletier, Supervisor of Shoreland Zoning, and was told that Shoreland Zoning may be where jurisdiction lies. Further discussion went on, and Selectman Jackson wanted to make sure that Mr. Arguin understood that we are working on the issue. TM Frost also stated that she is working on it and wants to make sure that she has the backup evidence of tampering/fill needed to proceed in this direction. CEO Scarinza said that he will look at some aerial photos as well.

Don Provencher – Mr. Provencher started by looking for verification as to whether or not the cruiser that had been passed on to EMS was being used for Director Miller as transportation between his home in Lancaster and Gorham, TM Frost and the Board assured him that it was parked at the station nightly. He also asked if the cruiser that Chief Cyr had his accident with was being fixed or not, and TM Frost informed him that it was in fact being fixed. Mr. Provencher then went on to discuss the overnight parking ordinance, stating his concern for vehicles and a trailer that were being parked on Park Street overnight. He informed the Board that he had spoken with Officer Benjamin about it and was told that there was no snow to worry about. Mr. Provencher feels that this practice is unfair and that the parking ban is in place and that the Town should adhere to the ordinance regardless of the situation. The Board asked TM Frost to check into this matter.

## **6. Other Business**

**a) Town Manager's Update** – TM Frost started by informing the Board that on December 5<sup>th</sup>, the FEMA reps will be meeting at 11:00 am in the City of Berlin's Council Chambers. TM Frost informed the Board that she will not be able to attend due to scheduling conflicts and asked if a Board member may be able to attend the meeting, Selectman Jackson said that he would be able to attend. TM Frost also informed the Board that the Recreation Department Van that was purchased from the Mt. Washington Auto Road needs extensive repair, and does not feel it is worth fixing. After further discussion, it was agreed that the van should be put out for bid/sale. TM Frost informed the Board that she would keep them posted on the status of such sale. If it goes out for bid, the bids will be brought before the Board so they may look at them.

**b) Selectmen's Updates** – Selectman Robitaille once again expressed his concern regarding ATVs travelling on the road. TM Frost suggested that he speak with Henry Sanschagrin regarding this issue for assistance. CEO Scarinza said that he saw what he thought to be the same ATV; he thought that there

was a plate on the vehicle. Selectman Robitaille also informed the Board that he had met with Senator elect Jeff Woodburn and showed him around and brought him to the locations that had damage from Irene.

Selectman Jackson discussed the Route 16 residents and the concern over the passing zone and had asked TM Frost for an update. TM Frost said that she had not prepared the letter as of yet, but indicated that it would be completed before week end. TM Frost informed the Board that the handicap sidewalk had been patched as best as possible for right now, and indicated that it would be looked at again next spring when weather permits.

**c) Approval of Minutes (November 5, 2012) - A motion was made by Selectman Jackson to approve as presented, seconded by Selectman Robitaille and approved unanimously.**

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

**e) Sign Abatements** – There were none for review/signature.

**7. Non-Public Session** – There were no request/need for session.

**8. Adjournment** – At 9:30 pm, Selectman Jackson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Selectman Robitaille, and approved unanimously.

**REVIEWED AND APPROVED:**

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**David Graham**

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**Paul Robitaille**

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**William H. Jackson**