



Budget Committee Meeting
Town of Gorham
Gorham Town Hall
Public Meeting Room

Minutes of January 25, 2018

Members Present: Diane Bouthot, Chairman; Doug Gralenski, Vice-Chairman, Robert Demers; Lee Carroll; Dan McCrum; Abby Evankow; Judy LeBlanc; Terry Oliver, Selectmen's Representative

Absent: Todd Lamarque

Town Staff Present: Robin Frost, Town Manager; Denise Vallee, Finance Director

Others present: Sue Demers

Minutes Taker: Shelli Fortin

AGENDA ITEMS & DISCUSSION

1. Call to order: 6:00 PM
2. Approve Minutes 1/23/2017: **Motion to approve from Lee Carroll with a second from Bob Demers. Voted in the affirmative. Terry Oliver abstained.**
3. Update on Prior Requests

Abby Evankow asked about the Payment in Lieu of Taxes agreement with Coos County Family Health. TM Frost advised she has not worked on this yet.

4. Recreation and Parks Department

Jeff Stewart advised that the Recreation budget is down \$269.00, and the Parks budget is down \$228.00. Dan McCrum asked about the senior program position, which is part-time. McCrum asked if the programs are well-attended and Stewart advised they are. They plan 1-2 activities per week. The position is also involved in helping with the information booth and the moose tours. Judy Leblanc asked where you can find information on the programs offered and Stewart advised they do a mailing. Leblanc suggested that the information be on the website as well. Bob Demers asked about the gasoline charges and Stewart advised gas for the Moose Tours comes from the revolving fund, and the rest is in the budget, which covers youth and senior programs. Stewart advised that the Moose Tours run from Memorial Day until the end of September and that they had a 99% success rate this year. The committee asked if they run one or two buses and was advised it is just one tour per night, and the bus is usually pretty much full. Leblanc asked about building maintenance this year, and Stewart advised they are looking to do the lighting this year. Lee Carroll gave them a plan, but they have not received any quotes yet. Doug Gralenski asked about the cost of the fishing derby and was advised that the only thing they purchase is prizes, as it is sponsored. McCrum asked about the use of the new building, and Stewart advised that the Middle School uses it after school, there are also classes being held there such and chess club and sewing, and Northern Human Services has also been using it. Stewart advised electricity is down as last year was an estimate for the new building. Demers asked about park machinery, which Stewart advised has always been at \$500. Leblanc asked if they purchased a new snow blower to replace the one that was taken and Stewart advised they have. Gralenski asked about the Patriotic Purposes line and was advised it is for police coverage for the Fourth of July. Diane

Bouthot asked about the balance in the Revolving Fund and was advised it is \$91,629. Gralenski asked if there was a balance that they would like to see and TM Frost advised that this is something they have not discussed. McCrum pointed out that the balance had been going up year after year, but it seems to have leveled out. Demers asked if they are replacing any vehicles this year and Stewart advised they are not for another 2-3 years. Abby Evankow asked what the purpose of the revolving fund is and was advised that the user fees that are collected go into the Revolving Fund and the programs are paid for out of there. The idea is to be self-sufficient, which they are not, but are partly. TM Frost advised that Police Special Detail could also be a Revolving Fund, as they bring in revenue and could pay the officers from the fund, as well as purchase items needed for the details. The Selectman are agents to expend on the fund, same as the budget. Bouthot asked about the Recreation Access Fee and was advised it is money received from the Cooperative School District to help maintain the fields for sports. Stewart advised that all programs have both a resident and non-resident fee, and only Gorham residents get the resident rate. Evankow asked what could be moved from the budget to the revolving fund and was advised anything could be. The committee was advised that the new bus will come out of the revolving fund, instead of a capital reserve fund, and that there will be a warrant article to close the Field Maintenance CRF, which has a balance of .02. Sue Demers spoke about the Revolving Fund and stated that even though these items come out of there instead of the budget, it still costs the town money, as the income that would be going into the general fund is going into the Revolving Fund as well. Stewart advised the committee that the department's budget is \$89,421 less now than when he started, and overall the expenditures are down \$14,566.

Police Department

Chief Cyr advised that the budget for the police department is \$683,985, which is \$35,475 less than last year. Leblanc asked if this includes the union contract and was advised it does not. Cyr advised the budget is down, as they cut back the part-time hours to only 4 per week. Since there is a new schedule for the seven man department, the hours will be used for the farmer's market, concerts in the park, and other events such as these. Bob Demers asked about the overtime lines and was advised that the regular OT line is for criminal investigations and the OT vacation line is to cover leave, such as sick, vacation, and personal time. Bouthot asked if the officers work 40 hours per week and was advised they work 4 10-hour days. Leblanc asked if they get overtime after 10 hours in a day or 40 in a week and was advised it is both per the contract. TM Frost advised there is no comp time. Abby Evankow pointed out that it would make sense to fill the open shifts with part-time employees rather than full-time at the overtime rate. Chief Cyr advised that Brian Lamarre, Toby Reichert, Brian Valerino, Gerry Marcou, and Joshua White are on the part-time roster. Gralenski questioned the amount budgeted for overtime, as this year \$30,000 was expended and only \$16,000 is budgeted. Cyr advised that the Selectmen requested that it be reduced now that they are fully-staffed. Cyr advised that this past year they had two of the officers at the academy, which increased the overtime amount. Terry Oliver advised that there are some other ways to save, such as not filling shifts instead of filling the overtimes, or having salary employees cover the shifts. Evankow asked about the special details, and the Forest Service patrols. Cyr advised that each of six officers each worked a 4-hr shift, this is a grant from the USFS due to the break-ins at the trailheads. Demers asked about vehicles and was advised they are not purchasing one this year, as they are reducing the fleet from four to three. Bouthot asked about gas usage and if this was down because of having one less cruiser, and Leblanc asked if it was due to less patrol time. Evankow asked if there was a no idling policy and was advised there is, except when there is precipitation and it is below freezing. Bouthot asked if the department would be applying for any grants and was advised that they are now part of a ballistic vest program and anything after April will be covered. Demers asked about Firearms training and Cry advised that each officer must take a 4-hour course every year in the use of force. This is a requirement from PSTC. They must also qualify with their weapon at the range 3 times per year. Lee Carroll pointed out that this uses up most of the ammunition cost. Demers asked about the Police Equipment CRF and was advised they are requesting \$2500. Cyr advised they would like to replace firearms at some point. Rifles were purchased about 5 years ago. Cyr also advised that they would like to outfit the officers with body cameras, which will cost about \$5-6,000, but a

grant is available to cover half of the cost. Leblanc asked if they still have cameras in the cruisers and was advised they are not working. Leblanc suggested using GoPro cameras.

Dispatch

The dispatch budget is up \$16,829 more than last year, and most of this is due to an increase in benefits of \$14,350, which was due to a change in plan. Cyr advised there are 4 full-time dispatchers and one 8-hour part-time shift per week. Gralenski pointed out that the budget two years ago was \$155,000, last year was \$161,000, and this year is \$141,000 for personnel. Cyr advised that last year they had an employee out on medical leave for 4 ½ months, so barring any extended leave, he feels that the budget will work. The committee mentioned that the dispatch study seemed to fall by the wayside and asked if there was any portion of the day that might be covered by the state or another department. Cyr advised that he did speak with Lancaster Highway, who advised they could not cover Gorham. Leblanc asked how the shifts were scheduled and was advised they work 12-hour shifts, with 36 hours one week and 44 the following. They get overtime after 12 hours in a day or after 40 in a week. McCrum asked where the money would come from to cover sick time and Cyr advised that it could come from the part-time line if worked by a part-time employee or from the OT vacation line since it is covering leave. Denise Vallee advised that the PD employees earn 30 sick days per year, and this was to lower the cost of short-term disability insurance for the town. Employees who have 15 years of service can collect 75% of their balance. The committee pointed out that with a dispatch revenue of \$16,000 maximum and expenses of \$327,971, there is something wrong with the amount we are charging other towns for 24-hour dispatch services and a flat rate or a rate based on population is needed. The committee was advised that although the Selectmen decided not to change the rates this year, there will be a change in 2019. Evankow asked when the last contract was signed as was advised it was last week. The new per call rate is about \$25 per call. Demers pointed out that the cost of just dispatch services adds about \$1.40 per thousand to the tax rate. The committee asked about police calls to Shelburne that Gorham had to handle and Cyr advised there were less than 5 and they are only to assist another officer in Shelburne. Sue Demers stated that based on OEP population, Shelburne would be paying \$35, 100 and Randolph \$28,200. Sue Demers advised that this issue was discussed at length last year and does not understand why Gorham continues to pay for all 3 towns. Sue Demers asked about vacations and if certain times were blocked out. Cyr advised that vacations are picked by seniority until April first, and after that if is whoever requests it first. Cyr advised the Fourth of July is blocked out. Sue Demers pointed out that Bartlett has the same population, but \$1 billion in valuation, and only 4 officers. She suggested that others should be involved in contract negotiations to bring new ideas to the table and asked who negotiates the contract now. Cyr advised that Cpl Turgeon, Sue Dorval, Lt Woodworth, himself, Denise Vallee and TM Frost have been working on the contract. Demers was advised that the old contract is available anytime to review and suggestions can be made to the Selectmen as an individual, but not as a committee. Doug Gralenski asked about the Capital Reserve for Dispatch Equipment and was advised there are two more years after this for the \$76,500. Cyr advised that he is looking for grants to help with this cost and the USDA may have some money available. Bouthot asked about the cost now and was advised the quote is about the same as it was to replace the radio equipment.

On a motion by Abby Evankow, seconded by Doug Gralenski, the committee voted to accept the Police and Dispatch budgets as presented.

5. New Business

Diane Bouthot asked the committee members to submit something to her to be included in the town report.

Doug Gralenski and TM Frost commended everyone on their service this year on the committee.

Sue Demers thanked the Selectmen for their work.

6. Date of Next Meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 30 at 6:00 pm at the Town Hall Conference Room.

7. Doug Gralenski made a motion to adjourn at 8:31 PM, seconded by Abby Evankow. Voted in the affirmative.

Respectfully Submitted
Shelli Fortin

Approved 01-30-2018