

**2016 BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING  
PUBLIC HEARING  
February 4, 2016  
Medallion Opera House - Gorham Town Hall at 6:30 pm**

**Members Present:** Mike Waddell, Diane Bouthot, Glen Eastman,, Robert Demers, Reuben Rajala, Dan McCrum, Terry Oliver, Todd Lamarque, Denise Vallee, Selectmen: Jeff Schall, Grace LaPierre, Terry Oliver

**Members Excused:** Dennis Arguin, Patrick Lefebvre

**Public Present:** Approximately 50 members of the public including department heads and others representing their positions on petitioned warrant articles.

The Chair called the Public Hearing to order at 6:30 pm.

The Chair opened the meeting with a review of the budget committee process. The Chair described how a combination of the budget the fund balance as we understand it today, and property evaluations in the Town of Gorham as we understand it today, were the fundamental drivers of the budget process. A loss of seven and a half million dollars in valuation equaling roughly \$1.00 on the tax rate, a municipal budget as presented by the Selectmen representing \$1.84 on the tax rate, caused both the budget committee and the Board of Selectmen to revise the original budget to what we are reviewing here. The Chair then reviewed each of the Articles as presented by the Selectmen.

ARTICLE 4: Operating Budget – as recommended. No substantive discussion.

ARTICLE 5-14: As recommended. No substantive discussion.

ARTICLE 15: Discussion regarding funding of \$15,000.00 for new playground equipment for the proposed Cascade playground. The pros and cons of how to fund this article were discussed at length. The majority opinion was that it should be funded from the Recreation Revolving Fund. Parks and Recreation Director Jeff Stewart explained that he did not support the Article as the property the playground would be on is not owned by the town and therefore, he was not in favor and did not support the Article 15.

ARTICLES 16-17.- As recommended. No substantive discussion.

ARTICLE 18 – As recommended. No substantive discussion.

ARTICLES 19-26 – As recommended. No substantive discussion.

ARTICLE 27 - As recommended. No substantive discussion

ARTICLES 28-30 – As recommended. No substantive discussion.

ARTICLE 31 – As recommended. No substantive discussion.

ARTICLE 32 –As recommended. No substantive discussion.

ARTICLE 33- As recommended. No substantive discussion.

ARTICLE 34 – As recommended. No substantive discussion.

ARTICLE 35- As recommended. No substantive discussion.

ARTICLES 36-38 – As recommended. No substantive discussion.

ARTICLE 39 – As recommended. No substantive discussion.

ARTICLES 40-41 –As recommended. No substantive discussion.

**The Chair closed the PUBLIC HEARING AT 7:40 PM and called a 5 minute recess.**

**Regular meeting of the Budget Committee 7:45:**

The Public Hearing being closed, the Chair called the regular session to order at 7:45 pm. First on the agenda was to review and accept the minutes of 1/26/16. A motion was made by Diane with a second from Terry. All were in favor.

**2016 WARRANT:**

The Chair asked the Budget Committee members how they wished to proceed? Specifically which, if any articles, should be not recommended or amounts changed. The following articles received discussion:

ARTICLE 15: The Recreation Director reemphasized his position that town money should not be used for this purpose because the town does not own the land and he doesn't believe the child population in this area warrants it. The Board discussed the pros and cons of the Article and how it should be paid for. Bob Demers concurred with the Recreation Director that money should not be spent. Selectmen Oliver believed the Article should go as recommended to the floor for an up or down appropriation. The rest of the Board believed the Article should be funded with money from the revolving fund. In that scenario the money would come from the revolving fund without any necessity to go to town meeting. Based on that a Motion was made to not recommend Article 15 by Diane with a second from Dan. Passed 7-1. Terry Oliver voting no.

ARTICLE 31: Reuben Rajala objected to what he considered to be an inadequate amount of money for the River Maintenance Fund. The Chair asked if he had a specific figure and Reuben believed that \$45,000.00 would be a more appropriate level of funding. It was also discussed that should Spring Road culvert work be approved by FEMA the Town's match could empty the River Maintenance Fund. The Town Manager assured the Board that "in kind" work and/or monies from the roads capital reserve fund could be used to supplement this match. After much discussion the Board which was largely sympathetic to Reuben's concerns and felt they did not wish to raise this amount of money at this time. A Motion was made by Glen with a second by Terry to recommend the Article. Diane and Reuben voted against, all others voted in favor. Article 31 was recommended by the Budget Committee 6-2.

ARTICLE 41: It was learned after the closing of the public hearing that the amount for the Androscoggin Valley Chamber of Commerce was \$3000.00, not \$2000.00 as was presented. The pros and cons of this Article were discussed at some length. At the end of this discussion the Chair asked if Article 41 and all the other Articles should be recommended by the Budget Committee. Glen Eastman moved the balance of the Warrant be recommended by the Budget Committee, second by Diane. All were in favor.

**MOTION TO ADJUOURN:** A Motion to Adjourn was made by Glen with a second from Diane, all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

APPROVED AS IS ON 11/15/15