2014 BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, March 4, 2014
6:00 pm Medallion Opera House
Budget Review

Members Present: Mike Waddell, William Jackson, Terry Oliver, Glen Eastman, Reuben Rajala
Excused: Dan McCrum
Absent: Terry Rhoderick

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm

A Motion to accept the following minutes with amendments listed below was made by Glen with a second from Terry Oliver. Discussion requested by Bill Jackson. After the discussion of the minor changes, all were in favor. The meeting dates were as follows: January 7, 201 January 9, 2014, January 14, 2014, January 16, 2014, January 23, 2014, January 28, 2014, January 30, 2014, February11, 2014.

Jackson would like the following changes made to the following meetings: Minutes of January 9, 2014: Add under EMS – 635 calls in 2013 and 102 transfer calls.
Amendment to the meeting minutes of January 14, 2014: Under EMS Chad stated that they had 40 transfers that they could not respond to because they did not have a paramedic on duty. He also mentioned they were doing construction on the inside of the ambulance side to "enlarge office space and not to provide a bunk area". Also need to add $143,433.40 to special revolving fund.
Regarding the meeting of January 21, 2014, Bill had asked for a breakdown of transfer costs from EMS that he is still waiting for.

The following are recommendations that the Budget committee members would like to make to the Selectmen regarding changes for the 2014 coming year:

- Chairman Waddell will make an outline of the recommendations of the budget committee members to present to the Selectmen. This list will include the following:
- Recommend to the Selectmen regarding new hires that changes be made to the current polices: That new hires receive no more than 3 weeks paid vacation time regardless of length of service.
- Budget Committee members address their concerns to the Selectmen regarding mutual aid coverage to nearby towns that will includes charges for the services provided to the community by the Town of Gorham.
- Ask the Selectmen to review and consider all outside contracts and outside service & this will need to be clearly presented by each department.
- It is recommended that all costs and revenues need to be listed for each department budget for our budget process. It is also recommended that the Selectmen have the EMS Director breakdown the charges for outside service calls.
- It is recommended that Recreation Department revolving fund account have a capped amount.
- It is recommended that the library change their timing of pay increases to the same calendar year that the town follows.
- It is recommended that a Flood Plan Policy for the town be in place to include dredging and bank stabilization.

- It is recommended that the Selectmen arrange a round table discussion meeting with Randolph and the Forestry Committees to discuss Town Forest issues.

The Chair will write a letter to the Selectmen regarding the above recommendations and get back to the Budget Committee at a later date and time with any information that he obtains from the Selectmen.

Motion to adjourn meeting was made by Glen with a second from Terry Oliver. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm

ADDENDUM MAY 28, 2014:

As per our recent Budget Committee discussion, a number of amendments were to be attached to some of the multiple meeting minutes.

I have written up the amendment to the Jan. 28 meeting minutes, re the extended discussion that we had with Chad Miller.

Reuben

Chad started off the meeting saying that he wanted to respond to an email inquiry from Reuben Rajala re the town's recent flood emergencies.
In his role as Emergency Management Director, he stated that there is no written flood prevention and management plan. He also said that he has no list of pending flood restoration projects (what might be called "third tier projects," behind the top priority town and state property projects and second priority private property stabilization work. He also reported that he is not actively pursuing any additional State or Federal funding for pending projects. He speculated that permission for any stream dredging or bank stabilization work would be approved anyway. Finally, he said that he would recommend that the Town seek Federal funding to purchase any properties that have been damaged or are at risk of repeated flooding.

Reuben Rajala stated that he and others are well aware of other damaged and threatened properties on the three main rivers around Town. He also said that the State, when asked if they had any list of pending projects said that it's up to the Town to generate such a list. He also cited that the Town has undertaken such work multiple times over the decades, including the spending of funds and use of Town personnel and equipment. The Town has extensive berms/dikes protecting various neighborhoods, as do hundreds of communities around the US, and these to be monitored and maintained. He expressed an opinion that we need to set aside far more money in the dredging/stream bank capital reserve, as has been done in the past so that we don't have to burden property owners with expensive matches or skip badly needed projects.
The past two floods caused more than $1 million dollars in damages and numerous properties are still at risk.

Chad said that he understood that the 20% match paid by a number of property owners along the Peabody was a requirement of the State and Federal agencies. Reuben challenged this, saying that is was a Town decision to not spend Town funds or use Town staff and equipment for the

20% match, not a requirement. Finally, Reuben said that if it's the Town's preference or policy to begin purchase of many properties that this needed to be fully aired and debated in Town. Mike Waddell echoed many of these concerns, especially the idea of buying properties, citing that there are some 120+ properties in the flood plain. Bill Jackon stated that he was concerned about the way flood restoration projects were done, with a focus on public property and only some private property projects while skipping other properties.