

2014 BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, February 11, 2014
Public Hearing

Members Present: Mike Waddell, Terry Oliver, Glen Eastman, Reuben Rajala, Robert Demers, Dan McCrum

Absent: Terry Rhoderick

The Public Hearing regarding the 2014 Budget for the Town of Gorham was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair.

The Chair made it clear to the public that if there were any questions regarding the 2014 budget this would be the time and place to ask them. He also pointed out that the Budget Committee is proposing a 2% wage increase for town employees. The Chair then began the review of the 2014 Budget with a power point presentation. He began with an Operating Budget Comparison from 2012 thru 2014. He noted changes between the 2013 and the 2014 Budgets. He had each town department broken down individually and at the end of each department review he asked the public if there were any questions.

Sue Demers had a question regarding the Public Works Solid Waste Collection Line specifically school trash removal and costs associated with the trash removal. Public Works Director, Austin Holmes answered the question for her and stated yes the Public Works Department does remove trash from the schools.

Sue Demers had a question regarding the Police Department and wanted to know if Gorham Police Department assists nearby towns, mainly Shelburne, and if they do, is the Town of Gorham charging said towns for their services. Chief PJ Cyr answered her question by stating the Town of Gorham has a Mutual Aid Agreement for neighboring towns and that we do assist when needed. There is also a Public Safety Agreement in place. The Police Department does not respond to routine calls for service unless absolutely necessary; if State Police cannot be there in an emergency. Bob Demers also stated he was very displeased in the way the Gorham Police Department was handling the calls without being compensated for said services.

Bob Demers commented on Emergency Management. He stated each town should pay their fair share as the Town of Gorham Tax Payers are doing for said services.

This concluded the review of the Operating Budget. The Chair moved on to the Wage Increase Comparison Sheet. The Chair wanted the public to understand the wage increases from 2007-2015 regarding the Gorham, Randolph, Shelburne Cooperative School District and the Town of Gorham employees and the proposed 2% wage increase proposed to the Selectmen and the Budget Committee.

Next came the review of the MS-737 Operating Budget Appropriations Recommended. Grace LapPierre asked the Chair why the town has incurred an \$8.00 increase from 2010 to the present. The Chair explained in great detail the breakdown of the current tax rate to all in attendance. He stated this increase is due to a couple of different problems. One being the loss of valuation, also due to the fact the town is currently assessed at 92% instead of 100%, there is One Million Dollars being held by the town's auditor to cover tax liens. Taken together this amounts to roughly \$7.00 on the town's tax rate.

REVIEW OF ARTICLES:

The Chair began the review of the articles line by line. Selectman Jackson wanted it clarified if Articles 6, 7, 8, and 9 were going to be on the ballot or floor articles only? The Town Manager answered that they are floor articles only.

The review of Articles 15-44 were without comment. A question regarding Article 18, Fieldstone Road was raised. The Chair stated Article 18 is only on the list to be closed out. Another question regarding Article 42 and monies appropriated

for the Family Resource Center, \$15,000.00. There was not a representative on hand from the Family Resource Center to answer the question. Denise Vallee stated she knew that the monies they are requesting will be to help towards their current operating budget. The Chair concluded the Review of the Articles. He asked the Selectmen if there were any Articles the Selectmen were not recommending and the Selectmen stated no and that they were all in favor of the Articles. There being no further questions the Chair closed the public hearing at 7:10 pm.

The Chair recessed the meeting from 7:10 to 7:20 pm.

At 7:20 pm the Chair reopened the Budget Committee Meeting to act on the MS-737. Glen Eastman made a Motion to Accept the MS-737 as presented. A 2nd was given by Terry Oliver. There were 6 in favor and 1 opposed, (Robert Demers). The Motion was granted. The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm.

The next meeting of the Budget Committee is to review previous meeting minutes and future recommendations and will be held on March 6, 2014 @ 6:30.

APPROVED AS NOTED ON 3/4/14