

**Budget Committee Meeting
Minutes of
January 19, 2012**

Members Present: Robert Balon, Robert Demers, Jay Holmes, Lisa Kardell, Bruce Lary (Chairman), John Losier, Terry Oliver, Terry Rhoderick (arrived at 8:01 pm), Steve Roy, Jeff Schall

Others Present: Robin Frost, Denise Vallee, David Graham, Don Provencher, Steve Gauthier, Jeff Stewart, PJ Cyr, Paul Robitalle

Press: Gail Scott

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lary at 6:30 pm

Review/Accept Minutes. Terry Oliver made a motion to accept the minutes of January 18, 2012 as written, Steve Roy seconded the motion; all were in favor.

Work Session: Chairman Lary opened the meeting and Robin Frost handed out two documents, 1.) MS-7 Budget of the Town with a Municipal Budget Committee and 2.) Budget Committee Supplemental Schedule. Using these documents she proceeded to explain what they were and how they are used to determine the 10% rule. Jay Holmes asked if these were used last year. Robin stated they did and Denise Vallee stated she completed the form which the committee signed; it gets posted after the Public Hearing.

Chairman Lary spoke to Robert Balon, recommending and requesting he recue himself from voting on all Police, Highway, Recreation, and Fire Department budgets due to comments and statements made. "I do not have the authority to force this, but for the record I feel this is wise to save potential legalities for the town." Robert Balon stated he participated in all the discussions so he will participate in the vote.

Chairman Lary began the budget review:

Executive Office: Jay Holmes stated he does not see Life & Disability here. Denise Vallee informed him it is in another section, all the departments' benefits are together. Robert Balon asked if they know what the projected tax rate per thousand is at this time. Denise Vallee responded not yet, they usually estimate it right before Town Meeting. Motion was made to accept the amount of **\$75,833** by Jeff Schall, seconded by Robert Balon. Roll call vote was taken:

Balon	yes	Losier	yes
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	excused absence
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Election & Registration: No discussion. Motion to accept the amount of **\$50,148** by Jay Holmes, seconded by Terry Oliver. Roll call vote was taken.

Balon	yes	Losier	yes
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	excused absence
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Financial Administration: No discussion. Motion to accept the amount of **\$267,190** was made by Terry Oliver, seconded by Robert Balon. Roll call vote was taken. There was one No vote.

Balon	yes	Losier	yes
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	NO	Rhoderick	excused absence
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Legal Expenses: No discussion. Motion made to accept the amount of **\$40,000** by Robert Balon, seconded by Jay Holmes. Roll call vote was taken. There was one No vote.

Balon	yes	Losier	NO
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	excused absence
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Personnel Benefits: (3.7% increase in health insurance). John Losier feels since taxpayers have to purchase their own insurance, the town should not purchase health insurance benefits for an employee's family. They can offer family insurance at the town's rate. He's okay with the Worker's Compensation insurance for the employee. Many other companies insure only the employee and so should Gorham.

Jay Holmes added the employee's portion could be increased by 5% rather than remove the plan.

Chairman Lary stated it was a good way of thinking, but this committee could not dictate how monies are spent. Need to recommend an amount.

Bob Demers added if they go along with 5% will there be a ceiling? Work it down for a few years until there is a 40/60 plan in place. The Chairman stated we do not redo contracts. We recommend.

Denise Vallee asked John Losier where he got the information for his comparison? He stated the mill and other businesses have this practice. Denise replied that the comparison should be made with other towns, not with the private sector. The town has a combination plan with the school and the last time we switched health insurance plans, the School saved over \$90,000 while the Town saved \$13,000 and added that if any

changes are made to the percentage of the employee's contribution, they should be made with the school as well. Steve Roy asked if this included the buyouts? Denise: yes. Motion made to recommend the amount of **\$640,000** by Jay Holmes, seconded by Robert Demers. A roll call vote was taken. Tie Vote.

Balon	NO	Losier	NO
Demers	yes	Oliver	NO
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	excused absence
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	NO	Schall	NO

Planning and Zoning: No discussion. Motion made to accept the amount of **\$4,783** by Jay Holmes, seconded by Robert Demers. Roll call vote was taken:

Balon	yes	Losier	yes
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	excused absence
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

General Gov't Buildings: Robert Demers asked where the signal goes when an alarm goes off, who receives it? Shawn Costine responded, dispatch receives the alarm then they notify the proper personnel. Jay Holmes asked if there is any money projected for renovations? Robin stated, no.

Bruce Lary stated the increase is due to electricity and heating oil. Steve Roy asked who does the annual inspection of the sprinkler system, could it be done by our fire department. Denise Vallee stated it was not allowed, can't inspect your own systems. Shawn Costine verified this. Motion made to accept the amount of **\$78,453** by Terry Oliver, seconded by Jeff Schall. Roll call vote was taken:

Balon	yes	Losier	yes
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	excused absence
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Cemetery: No discussion. Motion made to accept the amount of **\$21,676** by Robert Balon, seconded by Steve Roy. Roll call vote was taken:

Balon	yes	Losier	yes
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	excused absence
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Insurance: Robert Balon asked if there were any projects that may make this budget go up or down? Is it solid? Denise Vallee stated this is less than a 5% increase. The Joint Loss Management Committee is always checking buildings and safety practices in order to get the Prime Program discount. The 10 best practices are followed.

Robert Demers asked what the Liability Police line was (01-4196-4-520) and Denise answered that it covers the town if an officer uses brute force and later there is a law suit. Steve Roy asked if the Family Resource Center reimbursed the town any monies. Denise stated, "We send them a bill for the property insurance for the building and they pay it." Motion made to accept the amount of **\$40,799** by Jay Holmes, seconded by Terry Oliver. Roll call vote was taken:

Balon	yes	Losier	yes
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	excused absence
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Advertising & Regional Assoc: Robert Balon stated "it feels they got a good bang for their buck, very positive."

Motion made to accept the amount of **\$ 5,475** by Robert Balon, seconded by Robert Demers. Roll call vote was taken:

Balon	yes	Losier	yes
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	excused absence
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Police Department: Robert Demers questioned the overtime of \$49,000.00 over the actual spent. He realizes there will be overtime, but to this extent. Could it be cut back some? Denise Vallee interjected this also includes dispatch overtime.

PJ Cyr stated there are still three part time officers on the books, but he just used one officer. Robert Demers feels the use of part time officers would save the department in overtime.

PJ stated he projected \$26,097, and used all but \$3,567. Overtime covers for vacation coverage, if they are short staffed, sick time, etc. The department would not spend so much in overtime if they were fully staffed. He has tried to find part time officers, "...but if you have them they are not obligated to come in when you need them." He does not feel this is a good management practice.

Steve Roy asked about Zack Howry's overtime of \$11,261. PJ responded that he receives an education stipend. When an officer gets a degree(s) their pay rate goes up. Besides he is always there, steps up to assist whenever he is needed; a very reliable employee. Steve asked further about this stipend. PJ said they get about a \$.20/hour pay increase. Robert Balon asked about Det. Lamarre's retirement and how it may affect finger printing, how will this be approached?

PJ Cry was not sure if there would be 6 or 7 officers in the department, he would need to make adjustments accordingly.

Robert Balon asked if it was part of the contract to have a detective on the force.

PJ Cyr responded that more senior, experienced officers apply for this position. With Larmarre gone, he was going to do an internal posting for this position. Robert Demers stated an officer he knows in RI who told him they “pad” their last three years, in order to get a larger pension. Is this done here?

PJ Cyr replied that he did the schedule until Jen Lemoine got promoted; now she does it. Light duty is very limited and the officers have their other duties which come first.

Jay Holmes asked if the department went to six officers how much of a savings are we looking at?

PJ Cyr replied, Salary = \$42,640, Uniform = \$600, Average Over time = \$7,000, Benefits would depend upon the package. Approximately \$50,000 decrease. But this would increase the one officer only on duty to 71% of the time, and would increase overtime. Robert Demers feels State Police should be called in if needed, especially since Gorham (Main Street) is a state road.

PJ Cyr stated this is faulty thinking. It’s our town and roads. It affects us. Robert Demers asked “can we afford it?”

PJ Cyr stated: The taxpayers need to decide. They will be better served with a seven officer force. With six there is an increase of overtime.

There was a general discussion as to how many officers have been on the force, at one time, through the years. Approximately 17 years ago, when PJ joined the force, there were nine officers. PJ Cyr stated the downside of going to six officers is the workload goes up. Overtime goes up because of their other responsibilities and court; morale would go down. Some officers have stated if they go to six they would entertain looking for work elsewhere. He is worried about burnout.

Jay Holmes stated he would be comfortable with six officers if they didn’t patrol other areas. PJ Cyr stated they do not go into unincorporated areas very often. They will go to check on an accident, making sure the vehicle is off the road. In the last quarter they responded in Shelburne three times, before that 11 times and during April/June = 21 calls. Most are about 10 minutes.

John Losier asked if the insurance increased when in these areas. PJ stated that the wording was such that the town was protected from liability.

Motion made to accept the amount of **\$440,560** by Jeff Schall, seconded by Steve Roy. Roll call vote was taken:

Balon	yes	Losier	yes
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	excused absence
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Ambulance: No discussion. Jeff Schall recused himself. Motion made to accept the amount of **\$303,136** by Steve Roy, seconded by John Losier. Roll call vote was taken:

Balon	yes	Losier	yes
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	excused absence
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	recused

Fire Department: (Terry Rhoderick joined the meeting in progress) Robert Demers asked about the Cascade Fire House and Engine #2. It went out once in 2010 and four times in 2011. Why do we need this expense? Feels the truck needs to be in Gorham; closer to the station. He understands the insurance rates are reduced by having it housed there, but is it worth it for that small amount of use?

Bruce Lary stated the mill recently reopened and knows from the past that when the mill is up and operating there are more calls there.

Shawn Costine stated during mill operations there are more spills, the paper making process creates dust and dust makes a fast fire. Mill workers who are also firefighters have been allowed to leave work. They get the truck ready, making the department more effective.

John Losier goes along with Robert Demers. He doesn't see the need to heat the building, that's an added cost. He believes they should leave the truck in cold storage.

Shawn Costine acknowledged truck #2 is the next to be replaced and equipment cannot be left to cold storage. It would become unreliable.

Jay Holmes asked if we own the building. Robin stated it is leased from the mill.

Robert Balon asked if we needed all the firefighters we currently have, is this too many?

Shawn Costine "No, it's not too many. You never know how many can make it to a call. I have been on calls when only three show."

Robert Demers asked about the pellets used to heat the fire station. Are they received in bags or bulk? Shawn Costine: Bulk. An 18-wheeler delivers them and an auger fills in the storage tank. Three pallets were donated to them because they were the wrong ones for that person's stove. He couldn't use them. We wanted to use them before ours arrived, but did not have the opportunity or equipment at the time.

John Losier questioned the price. He saw some bag pellets for \$150/ton. Denise Vallee told the committee they paid \$260/ton. Losier feels they should look for better prices.

Terry Rhoderick asked why he sees fire trucks on the road all the time.

Shawn Costine stated Arthur Marchand takes each truck for a pre check/road test every week ensuring it is ready for duty.

Terry asked if others could do the pre-checks. Shawn responded if the same person does it all the time they get to know that vehicle and can tell if everything is in order. Recently one truck had a dead battery. This weekly inspection ensures each unit is ready to respond when needed.

Terry Rhoderick asked who the go to person was while Rick is out. Shawn Costine stated Joe Savage and Wally Corrigan.

Denise Vallee stated in the past they used to purchase 4,500-5,000 gallons of heating oil; now it is 1,000.

Motion made to accept the amount of **\$150,243** by Robert Balon, seconded by Terry Oliver. Roll call vote was taken:

Balon	yes	Losier	yes
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	yes
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Building Inspector: Steve Roy asked if they thought Chief Eichler would be able to make the Public Meeting. Robin stated she hopes so. He wanted to know how many times the sites are visited before approving a building permit. Robin Frost responded that all the sites are looked at.

Robert Balon asked if they were looking to revamp this position? Robin stated it's on the list to revisit.

John Losier feels this should be self funded as in other towns. Who approves/signs the permits? Robin said he (Chief Eichler) does.

John Losier would like to see a better process with standards. Robin stated you would still see this in the budget

Steve Roy asked business owners in town if the Building Inspector ever visited their sites and they said no. Selectman Oliver stated they take his word that he visited the site.

Paul Robitalle stated there are many times they put the permits aside, asking for more information before signing.

Dave Graham added that when they get the permits the building inspector' signature is already on it. He estimates they put 10%-20% aside for further review.

Motion made to accept the amount of **\$13,260** by Terry Oliver, seconded by Bruce Lary. Roll call vote was taken, 5-yes, 5-no. Tie vote- not recommended.

Balon	NO	Losier	NO
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	NO	Rhoderick	yes
Kardell	NO	Roy	NO
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Emergency Management: No discussion.

Motion made to accept the amount of **\$4,570** by Robert Balon, seconded by Terry Oliver Roll call vote was taken.

Balon	yes	Losier	yes
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes

Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	yes
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Dispatch Services: Robert Demers asked if there was a new contract with Shelburne and Randolph. Robin responded there is a new contract with Shelburne for 2012 and very soon they will be discussing one for Randolph.

John Losier questioned the \$250 for batteries. PJ Cyr sated they are expensive and there is some cross usage between the PD and dispatch. Each officer has a digital camera, there is a label maker and each wireless mouse needs batteries.

Motion made to accept the amount of **\$163,680** by Robert Demers, seconded by Terry Oliver Roll call vote was taken.

Balon	yes	Losier	NO
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	NO	Rhoderick	yes
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Highway Administration: Steve Roy asked what percentage was cut from budget. Denise Vallee stated .65% mostly due to the rise in fuel; heating oil and diesel. Bruce Lary asked if they went after money for a pellet boiler as the fire station did. Denise told the committee they did submit a grant but it was not approved.

Terry Rhoderick asked if they go out for bid. Denise says she sent the RFP out to seven firms, but typically only gets three bids back. The price is up, not consumption. Terry asked if other town buildings had increases due to oil. Denise responded, yes. All except the fire station due to the pellet stove. The price for oil is locked in at \$3.445, we did not pre-buy. This contract is good until July 31, 2012.

Robert Demers stated the highway department needs to charge an hourly rate for the service they provide to other department's vehicles. This affects their budget and is good for the department having the work done. They don't pay for it, only the parts used. By charging they should show revenue at the end of the year.

Steve Roy added by doing this the vehicle could be watched for any real concerns. PJ interjected there is software that tracks repairs, but not in any real detail (i.e. man hours, parts used, cost); just basic information. When parts are purchased an invoice is sent and that department pays it. Terry Rhoderick added this means no accountability or paper trail is out there.

Robert Balon asked about mowing of some state property on Route 16. Robin will find out if this is true. Jeff Stewart added there is some, the peninsula at Cascade Flats and the Cascade Park and hill area. They also do the peninsula at Route 16 and Mill Street.

Motion made to accept the amount of **\$654,359** by Steve Roy, seconded by Robert Demers. Roll call vote was taken.

Balon	yes	Losier	NO
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	NO	Rhoderick	yes
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Street Lighting: Terry Oliver stated there are 43 lights being looked at to be shut off. PSNH has been contacted concerning the process. Photo sensors could possibly be used.

Robert Balon asked if this was worthwhile. Terry Oliver replied, not this year. There is an expense in doing this. Denise Vallee stated there is no figure from PSNH yet.

Steve Roy asked PJ Cyr's opinion. PJ stated, "public safety-wise, this it is not a good idea to do this at intersections or around public buildings. As long as it doesn't pose a safety issue it is okay."

Denise Vallee informed the committee they were notified by PSNH that the Town is due for a light change throughout town. We can purchase light sensor bulbs which would make certain lights turn off at midnight. She is waiting for more information.

Motion made to accept the amount of **\$50,687** by Steve Roy, seconded by Robert Demers. Roll call vote was taken.

Balon	yes	Losier	NO
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	NO
Kardell	NO	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	NO

Other: Jay Holmes asked if there was a conservative gas program in place, do we look at waste management. Robin stated there is a "no idle" policy.

Terry Rhoderick asked PJ if there was a cap on miles per day for each unit.

PJ Cyr stated they could put a mileage restriction, but it is taught a police presence is a proactive approach to reducing crime. He is not in favor of this.

Motion made to accept the amount of **\$42,250** by Robert Balon, seconded by Terry Oliver. Roll call vote was taken.

Balon	yes	Losier	yes
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	yes
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Solid Waste: Robert Balon questioned the price of Freon removal. Robin spoke to Buddy and they charge \$10 per unit.

Robert Demers stated he took two units to Berlin and was charged \$10 each. It is a small price to pay for this service.

John Losier states he saw two Coke machines at the town facility, Robin will ask Buddy about this. She further stated the revenue from the metal is good and welcome.

Bruce Lary stated someone needs to get on the revenue tag system so they can remove Freon themselves.

John Losier wanted to comment that the No Smoking Policy needs to be enforced; he sees this all the time, no excuse. Robin – point taken.

Motion made to accept the amount of **\$320,357** by Robert Demers, seconded by Steve Roy. Roll call vote was taken.

Balon	yes	Losier	yes
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	NO
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Welfare Administration: Jay Holmes asked if we had to have this. Robin responded that yes, there are welfare guidelines they adopted and we are required by statute to help those in need.

Motion made to accept the amount of **\$31,700** by Jay Holmes, seconded by Robert Demers. Roll call vote was taken.

Balon	yes	Losier	yes
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	yes
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Animal Control: Does this fall under the police department? PJ Cyr responded that it did. They had to give basic care, as needed, for the animals while in their care, transport to humane society or veterinarian, and pay storage fees. If the owner picks up the animal then the cost is shifted to the owner.

Motion made to accept the amount of **\$1,700** by Jay Holmes, seconded by Robert Demers. Roll call vote was taken.

Balon	yes	Losier	yes
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	yes
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Recreation Administration: Jay Holmes voiced his opinion that Mr. Corrigan does a good job and he feels the other maintenance position should be cut in order to save the town \$11,430. Motion made to accept the amount of **\$138,417** by Steve Roy, seconded by Robert Demers. Roll call vote was taken.

Balon	yes	Losier	NO
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	yes
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Parks Maintenance: Terry Oliver feels the Parks Department doesn't need a \$400 chainsaw. They can use one from another department if the need arises. Steve Roy suggests Buddy's guys do the chainsaw work. Jeff's concern is if they damaged the saw he would have the expense of replacing it, he would rather they have their own. John Losier further stated if they purchased a saw then they need chaps, glasses and helmet to go with it. It is cheaper to have Highway Department take care of the cutting.

There was a discussion on wood chips used around town and the type needed for the playgrounds. Lisa Kardell asked the price and where purchased from. Jeff Stewart stated he gets them from Vermont and will not share with the school again. He needs them for around Libby Pool and town. The schools have regulations on the type and thickness on playgrounds. Robert Demers asked why there are Porta-Potties on the common when the Information Booth has a restroom. Jeff Stewart stated it is not always open.

John Losier asked why \$3,500 for grass seed and fertilizer, can't you lighten up? Jeff Stewart stated they get a schedule from the company they purchase from as what to do and when. They didn't fertilize in 2011. He believes it needs to be done this year. Mr. Losier further commented grass should never be cut when wet or when raining. It is also recommended to keep one inch high, he doesn't see that being done.

Motion made to accept the amount of **\$138,417** by Steve Roy, seconded by Robert Demers. Roll call vote was taken.

Balon	yes	Losier	yes
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	yes
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Patriotic Purposes: No discussion

Motion made to accept the amount of **\$9,423** by Jay Holmes, seconded by Robert Demers. Roll call vote was taken.

Balon	yes	Losier	yes
Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	yes
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Information Booth: No discussion. Motion made to accept the amount of **\$27,816** by Jay Holmes, seconded by Robert Demers. Roll call vote was taken.

Balon	yes	Losier	yes
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Demers	yes	Oliver	yes
Holmes	yes	Rhoderick	yes
Kardell	yes	Roy	yes
Lary	yes	Schall	yes

Adjournment: Terry Oliver made the motion to adjourn and meet to finish business on Monday, January 23, 2012 at 6:30 pm; this was seconded by Jeff Schall with all in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Amero

Approved as Ammended 1-23-22012