

**Budget Committee Meeting**  
**Minutes of**  
**January 11, 2012**

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

**Others Present:** Robin Frost, Denise Vallee, David Graham, Don Provencher, Steve Gauthier, Connie Landry, Jeff Stewart, Rufus Ansley, Elizabeth Thompson

**Press:** none

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

**Review/Accept Minutes.** Terry Rhoderick stated his name was mentioned under Old Business, but it should be Jay Holmes' name. A motion was made to accept the minutes as amended by Terry Oliver, and seconded by Steve Roy, all where in favor.

**Library Budget Review:** Rufus Ansley presented to the board, with Elizabeth Thompson, Director, by his side. He passed out the GPL 2012 Budget Summary to the Budget Committee for their review during his meeting. He stated the Library cut the budget by 3%.

There where no salary increases for 2012, but July 1, 2011 raises where given, as was customary. Jay Holmes questioned how many employees are employed by the library. Rufus responded there are 2.65. Break-down: 1 full-time (Director) and two part-time. There was also a change in employees during 2011.

Jay Holmes asked Rufus if he knew the town departments cut their budget by 5% and Rufus stated he knew, but the library was only cutting 3%.

John Losier questioned the benefits; Life/Disability, Health, Holiday/Vacation, etc. Denise Vallee responded that Elizabeth Thompson receives 20 vacation days per year, and Life/Disability is \$789.00. The 80% employee is Connie Landry and she gets 16 vacation days with no other benefits, her hire date is July 1, 2011.

John Losier asked about the Maintenance/repair line under Expenditures. What was done for \$47,659.00? Rufus responded they purchased 3 air conditioning units, door for the main entrance, replaced stacks, converted the boiler, repaired fire alarm system, elevator repair and maintenance, and purchased a bike rack along with general repairs and new computer system.

Robert Balon asked if the library feels the town needs to put money into the Capital Reserve for them? Rufus stated no, not asking for this. They have the Murphy Money.

Steve Roy questioned the number of rooms in the library? There are 6 rooms including the kitchen; reception, office, reading room, children's room and the meeting room. Some users of the rooms are: Tri-County Cap, Adult Education, Chess Club, TOPS, & Learning

Center to name a few. Terry Rhoderick questioned if they charge for the use of the meeting rooms, there is not.

A general discussion questioned the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. What is up there? Could it be used? What is planned for it? Rufus responded that it is in rough shape, it needs wiring, drywall, heating system, etc. Currently it's used to store books. There is also a cellar, but only under the main part of the building. There are currently no long term improvements in the planning phase. They follow the plan set forth in the will. Doing what Mr. Murphy wanted, unless there is an emergency.

Statement by Chairman Lary: "I didn't support your budget last year and you are asking for a lot more this year. There is not enough information provided. There is a big difference in 2011 Budget / 2011 Actual/Est. Spent and 2012 Budget. You are asking for funding, but you are not giving the Budget Committee much to go on. It needs to be broken down more." At this point Rufus distributed a GPL Expenditures 2011 sheet which broke down expenses by department and accounts.

The Budget Committee reviewed the detailed report and had several questions for Rufus, which he answered. This part of the meeting closed at 7:30 pm

Steve Roy had a question regarding abatements. Wal-Mart and Top Furniture filed for these. He knows there are several other businesses that want to file also. He is requesting a list of these businesses. Robin stated businesses have until March 1, 2012 to file and the town must respond by July 2012. This was discussed by the board in more detail.

Assessments: we are in the 5-year cycle where evaluations are going to be done to all homes. Robin confirmed this is done in most towns. Gorham's assessors' position was questioned, should it be dissolved? To which Robin replied, they need someone to keep up with all the abatement requests, and assist public in other areas.

**Old Business:** As requested by the committee, Denise Vallee handed out a Fire Department Vehicle Response sheet. It stated how many responses for each vehicle in 2010 and 2011.

Steve Roy asked how John Scranzia was getting paid while Rick Eichler was out. Robin responded by telling him from the Building Inspectors line.

Jeff Schall questioned the work being done on the Peabody River/Rte 16, caused by Hurricane Irene, where is the money coming from to fund this project. Robin informed the committee it is NRCS project. The town has to be the pass through for the funds.

**Public Comments:** Don Provencher stated not a lot of the public may show to Public Meeting because they may be afraid to speak up or out about issues. They feel they are being represented by a good committee now. The former selectmen and town manager got us to this point. Good working relationship with current selectmen and town manager. He also suggested the union contract for the police department be looked at to see just what is mandated and would like to see salaries in town report.

Dave Graham, as a selectman they do the best they can in dealing with assessing, they try to be fair. Commercial property owners fight tooth and nail, they appeal to the board of Land Tax & Land Appeals, which is bad news. They have nobody to answer to in this area. They are pro-business, for the business. Who are these people? Not elected officials,

they are appointed by the Supreme Court, and are probably business owners. Robin stated Mr. Sansoucy is the expert in NH and travels the country.

Dave further asked if the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor to the library could be used to house another town office and what would be the estimated cost to make it ready for use. John Losier responded maybe \$50,000.00. Dave asked if this was considered a historical building and would there be grants available?

Several suggestions were made on how to cut the library budget: reduce vacation time for eligible employees, cut town's contribution on health insurance for family members, reduction in utilities, maintenance/repairs, computer services and office expenses, close it on Saturday (2 hrs).

Terry Rhoderick is asking \$3,759.00 be cut from the budget, taking it from a 3% cut to 6%.

**Motion made by Terry Rhoderick:** Motion to recommend Library Trustees return with budget sum of \$115,000.00. Then committee will recommend the library budget.

Jay Holmes seconded the motion. A roll call vote was unanimous:

Robert Balon	yes	Robert Demers	yes
Jay Holmes	yes	Lisa Kardell	yes
Bruce Lary	yes	John Losier	yes
Terry Oliver	yes	Terry Rhoerick	yes
Steve Roy	yes	Jeff Schall	yes

**Adjournment:** Terry Rhoderick made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Terry Oliver; all in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sharon Amero