

TOWN OF GILFORD
BUDGET COMMITTEE
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
December 17, 2015
6:30 PM

Members present: Kevin Leandro (Chair), Kevin Roy, Dr. Leslie Suranyi Jr., Harry Bean, Karen Thurston, Richard Grenier, David Horvath, Robert Henderson, Jeffrey Beane, Susan Greene and Norman Silber.

Kevin Leandro, Chair called the Budget Committee meeting to order at 6:30 PM and led the assembly with the Pledge of Allegiance. The Budget Committee will review the School District Budgets including Elementary School, Technology and Special Education along with the Sub Committees recommendations.

Old Business – High School Budget:

Scott Isabelle prepared an updated School Board Proposed Budget of \$25,785,127 based on the vote/discussions at last week's meeting. For the High School budget, Mr. Isabelle made the necessary adjustments which he reviewed with the committee bringing the new High School Budget amount of \$4,509,631 (reduced by \$7,471 as explained by Mr. Isabelle). Norman Silber made a motion subject to the 3% merit, to approve the \$4,509,631 for the High School Budget; seconded by Kevin Roy and passed; (10-1) (Karen Thurston opposed).

Old Business – Middle School Budget:

Scott Isabelle up dated the Middle School Budget. A vote was taken last week for a total budget of \$2,283,859. Mr. Isabelle removed the longevity (\$2,000) making the new Middle School Budget of \$2,281,859. Dave Horvath made a motion subject to the 3% merit, to approve the new Middle School Budget of \$2,281,859; seconded by Norman Silber and passed; (10-1) (Karen Thurston opposed).

Old Business – Buildings and Grounds; Merit Increases:

Scott Isabelle gave the committee a summary sheet with the changes made to the Buildings and Grounds budget; he walked the committee through the new budget line by line. There were a number of adjustments made. The Committee brought up the merit increase subject for the School District. Scott Isabelle prepared a memo dated 12/14/15 based on an information request, which was revised to include benefit costs. (This was the breakdown the committee asked for various percentage increments for non administrative staff and administrative staff). Extensive discussion ensued. David Horvath made a motion to reduce the merit wages down to 1.5% for the School District the same as they voted to do for the Town (for a total reduction of \$53,472 which includes admin and non admin/non contractual); seconded by Norman Silber and Kevin Leandro amended to reflect that the numbers come out of line items in the budget. Norman Silber then asked David Horvath to again explain his reasoning for this cut as he did when they took the vote on this reduction for the Town budget wages. David Horvath read his presentation including a series of additional reasons for the Budget committees' reduction on merit increases. Extensive discussion took place on the economy, property taxes, employees

pay, benefits, healthcare costs, deductibles, co-pays etc. and Kevin Leandro said the committee is trying to treat the Town/School equally on the percentage of the raise. Further discussion took place. Superintendent Hemingway said that he respectfully disagrees and spoke on behalf of the employees asking the committee to reconsider. David Horvath commented that the School Administration/School Board has a responsibility to the taxpayers of Gilford including educating staff as to the reasons why merit increases were reduced. Mr. Horvath commented that is his opinion, Gilford property taxes have gone up approximately 15% in the last two years and that spending needs to be brought under control. Chair Kevin Leandro called the vote after lengthy discussion; motion passed (9-3). (Karen Thurston, Richard Grenier and Kevin Roy opposed).

The committee reverted back to the Buildings and Grounds budget and discussed the adjustments that were made to arrive at the budget number of \$1,959,009. Norman Silber made a motion to approve the new recommended Buildings and Grounds Budget of \$1,959,009; seconded by Jeffrey Beane and passed; (10-1). (Karen Thurston opposed).

Elementary School Budget:

Jeffrey Beane discussed the subcommittee's recommendations and invited Ms. Danielle Bolduc, Elementary Principal to the podium. Jeffrey Beane went through the budget and explained the sub committee's recommendations page by page noting the accounts where the committee recommended adjustments. Lengthy discussions ensued and Ms. Bolduc answered the committee's questions on the various budget adjustments, programs, etc. Jeffrey Beane made a motion to approve the subcommittees recommended budget of \$2,489,705 (subject to the merit wages); seconded by David Horvath and passes; (9-1-1) (Kevin Roy abstained and Karen Thurston opposed).

Technology Budget:

Norman Silber discussed the subcommittee recommendations and invited Ms. Brenda McGee to the podium. Mr. Silber explained the sub committee's recommendations on pages 1, 2 and 3. There was an increase to the overall budget of \$10,543. Mr. Silber said they were very impressed with the Technology, with Ms. McGee and the computer teachers. Norman Silber made a motion to approve the technology budget of \$447,368 (subject to the merit wages and associated costs); seconded by Robert Henderson and passed; (10-1). (Karen Thurston opposed).

Special Education budget:

Kevin Roy started by thanking Susan Greene for bringing homemade hats, mittens and goodies for the kids to their subcommittee meeting. Mr. Roy invited Ms. Esther Kennedy to the podium for review of the Special Education Budget. Mr. Roy then explained that most of the Special Education budget is required by law and reviewed each line item. Norman Silber asked Ms. Kennedy how a student gets designated as needing Special Education. Ms. Kennedy explained in detail the three ways that this happens. Jeffrey Beane complimented Ms. Kennedy stating it is very special what she does. Norman Silber made a motion to approve the sub committee's recommendation for the Special Education budget of \$3,296,928 (subject to the merit wages); seconded by Jeffrey Beane and passed; (10-1). (Karen Thurston opposed). Ms. Esther Kennedy also expressed her thanks to Susan Greene for bringing hats and mittens for kids in need.

District Wide Budget:

Mr. Scott Isabelle said as of right now in the District Wide Budget, on pg. 4 (acct-2900) the \$15,000 reflects where longevity came out of the other budgets to this line. Also, Mr. Isabelle pointed out that on pg. 3, he took out his merit increase (acct-2520). Discussions ensued. David Horvath made a motion to eliminate the \$15,000 and to zero out that line item making the bottom line District Wide Budget \$9,636,627, pending merit adjustments; seconded by Susan Greene for discussion. Superintendent Kent Hemmingway stated that calculates to about \$250 per person. They have quality people with over 60 years of service. Kevin Leandro stated that the reason they want this to be a separate line item is for transparency. Scott Isabelle said they have Administrators with multi-year contracts. Some Administrators have been with the District since 1977, 1988, 1989 and 2000 to name a few. The Longevity for Administrators has been effective for keeping them here. Lengthy discussions ensued. Kevin Leandro moved the question. Motion passes; (7-4). (Kevin Roy, Robert Henderson, Karen Thurston and Richard Grenier opposed).

Default Budget of the School (2016 MS-DS NH-DRA form):

Scott Isabelle gave a copy of this form to the Budget Committee, and he stated that this is the law and what they have to work with as mandated by RSA. This is the default budget as approved by the School Board (\$25,688,824). Mr. Isabelle explained this form for new budget members. If any members have questions, they may contact Mr. Isabelle directly to set up a time to discuss. Mr. Isabelle wanted confirmation that for the next meeting, he will have a revised revenue budget which includes additional years of history as requested by the Budget Committee and they will also do a brief presentation for the Bond Issue. That was the concurrence of the committee.

Old Business - Merits:

The committee is still seeking to find out if their motion from the 12/10/15 meeting includes the Town Clerk Tax Collectors salary. This will be tabled until the next meeting (01/07/2016).

Approval of the minutes:

Norman Silber made a motion to approve the 12/10/2015 minutes as written; seconded by Kevin Roy and passed (11-0).

Next Budget Committee Meeting:

The next Budget Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, January 7, 2016 at 6:30 PM.

Adjournment:

Motion made by Kevin Roy to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 PM; seconded by Richard Grenier and passed with all in favor; (11-0).

Respectfully submitted,


Angela A. Bovill
Executive Assistant