

**GILFORD SCHOOL BOARD PUBLIC MEETING 2018-2019 PROPOSED BUDGET
MONDAY NOVEMBER 6, 2017
GILFORD HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM
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The Gilford School Board held a public meeting in reference to the 2018-2019 proposed budget on Monday November 6, 2017 at the Gilford High School Auditorium. Present were board members Sue Allen, Gretchen Gandini, Chris McDonough, and Karen Thurston. Representing Gilmanton were Robert Carpenter and Frank Weeks. Administrators present were Rick Acquilano, Tim Bartlett, Kirk Beitler, Danielle Bolduc, Tim Goggin, Scott Isabelle, Esther Kennedy, Brenda McGee, Peter Sawyer, Anthony Sperazzo, and Steve Tucker.

**PROPOSED BUDGET
PRESENTATION**

Superintendent Kirk Beitler opened the meeting at 7:03p.m. He noted that the proposed budget would be presented and then a question-and-answer session between attendees and the board would follow. The board members and the Assistant Superintendent for Business introduced themselves.

Mr. Beitler narrated a slide presentation. He outlined the four school board goals that help drive budget discussion: Student Learning, Families and Communities, Resource Management, and Safety and Facilities. He elaborated briefly on each goal area. He also reviewed enrollment history since 2009-2010 and six main areas of budget considerations:

- Middle-high school roofing project. The roof is nearing the end of its warranty period (June 2018) and has developed leaks.
- Long-term view of facility maintenance. Last year some maintenance projects were deferred and need to be re-engaged.
- Technology replacement. Considerable momentum has evolved in the development and use of technology in the schools and there are some facets that need replacement.
- Teacher Contract. The agreement was approved by the voters last year and salary increases need to be accommodated in the 2018-2019 budget.
- Health Insurance Reduction. The prior budget was developed using an anticipated 14.4 percent increase; however the increase was only 5.1 percent which resulted in a substantial reduction.
- Dental Insurance Reduction. Similarly, a difference in the anticipated and actual charged dental insurance cost resulted in another substantial reduction.

Proposed maintenance, technology projects and contractual obligations total \$961,228 and include the following:

- Interior and exterior painting at GES. During last year's construction project some areas were revealed to be in need of repainting. Exterior wood in particular requires protection.
- Replacement of Chromebooks at GHS and GES. These machines are on a four-year replacement schedule.
- Roof replacement as described above.
- Booster pump replacement.
- Hydraulic Elevator replacement at the high school. The present elevator is nearing the end of its useful life and the school must have a working elevator.
- Stage Curtain replacement at GHS, Phase 2.
- Refurbish high school gym ceiling and floor. These are original to the building. The ceiling will first be cleaned then painted a brighter white color. The floors will be stripped, sanded, re-lined and repainted with the school logo, then refinished.
- Replacement of windows at the SAU office. The windows are roll-out style, date from 1984, and some fall off when rolled out.
- Teacher Salary Increase—Contractual
- Heating Oil contract at \$2.06 per gallon.

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**PROPOSED BUDGET
PRESENTATION**

Budget reductions total \$1,115,388 and include the following:

- Health insurance cost reduced to 5.1 percent increase from an anticipated 14.4 percent
- Dental Insurance cost reduction
- Bond interest reduction
- Elimination of a vacant paraprofessional position
- Elimination of assistant teacher position at the middle school, vacant since staff reassignment
- Contract services—handicapped
- Rubbish removal reduction
- Elimination of one special education bus

Warrant articles include the following:

- School Buildings Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund at \$75,000. The district seeks to put funds aside towards a project to replace locker rooms at the high school, anticipated to cost \$870,000.
- School Buildings Roof Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund at \$62,500. These funds will be put aside to offset the cost of replacing the elementary and high school roofs at an anticipated cost of \$400,000 each.
- School Buildings Technology Infrastructure Capital Reserve Fund at \$30,000. These funds will offset an anticipated cost of \$132,000 to replace aging technology infrastructure.

Mr. Beitler summarized that the proposed 2018-2019 budget at \$26,237,939 is \$246,011 or .9 percent less than the current 2017-2018 budget. The proposed budget allows for continuing support of maintenance and technology needs. Mr. Beitler reviewed the budget timeline which commences work with the town Budget Committee directly after Thanksgiving, then proceeds through deliberative session on February 6 and voting on March 13.

PUBLIC INPUT

The floor was opened to questions or comments from the public.

Katie Bryant inquired about health insurance costs. Mr. Isabelle clarified that the total results from the rate increase reduction and the additional amount that teachers will be paying toward their health insurance policies per the most recent collective bargaining agreement.

Tim Sullivan inquired whether the enrollment projection had considered real estate closings or building permits issued. Mr. Beitler responded that neither of those factors had been factored into the projection. Rather, the projection is based largely on the district's estimate of the number of kindergarten enrollments anticipated for 2018-2019.

Mr. Sullivan next inquired whether funding for the Meadows project and track resurfacing would come primarily from volunteer contributions or would there be participation from the district. Mr. Beitler responded that the track resurfacing is in the capital improvement plan for next year. There has been a contribution from the PTA but that contribution does not cover the entire amount. The Meadows project will be funded at least partially through the capital improvement plan as well.

Mr. Sullivan congratulated the board on the replacement of stage curtains.

Chris McDonough commented that while the cost of replacing Chromebooks may appear large, as it did to him when he first joined the board, he pointed out with pride that now the district has a Chromebook for every student and high school students each have one assigned to them to take home. He further explained that while \$2.06 per gallon for oil may seem high, that price comes into effect on July 1, 2018 and is guaranteed for a year.

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PUBLIC INPUT

David Hart noted his observations as a student athlete about the gymnasium: “The brown ceiling casts a dark shadow;” “the royal blue painted on the gym floor has turned green, and it is not our school color;” and “the basketball and volleyball lines are a dark cream and we’ve had to cover them with white tape to emphasize the boundaries.” He observed that students “spend countless hours in the gym for sports and other activities” and “having these issues resolved would make the gym more presentable. If the process is completed we will showcase our gym.” He thanked the board for its interest in these issues.

Amy Tripp noted that she has been coaching at the school since 1995 and teaching since 2009. She characterized the high school gym as “the most-used space in the whole facility” and enumerated several non-sports related functions it holds. “We have a beautiful gym and an amazing custodial staff that care for it. But it needs a tune-up. It’s been there since 1974 and every time a ball touches [the ceiling], paint chips fall off. I am very happy this is being talked about.”

ADJOURNMENT

As no further public input was offered, Chris McDonough on behalf of the school board thanked the audience for attending and closed the public hearing at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Gretchen Gandini
School Board Secretary**