

**Georgia Selectboard Budget Meeting
Chris Letourneau Meeting Room
Monday, January 14, 2019
6:00 p.m.**

Approved: February 11, 2019

Present: Selectboard: Matt Crawford, Deb Woodward, Tara Wright, Ric Nye, Steve Lamos; Mike McCarthy, Town Administrator; and Amber Baker, Treasurer

Absent: None

Public Present: Gary Deziel and Paula Ralston, Library Trustees

Matt re-opened the budget meeting that was continued from January 7, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.

Matt asked for any additions and deletions.

Additions & Deletions:

1. Price quotes from JFS Electric regarding the lighting and electrical work at the Library.

JFS Electric quote. Mike handed the quote out at the beginning of the meeting. Steve stated that he was over at the Library on Friday when it was sunny and the lights were bright. Has anyone looked into the possibility of changing the light bulbs? Maybe not a florescent, but an LED style that looks like a mini florescent bulb.

The Selectboard had some discussion at one of our meetings that a dimmer switch may actually work against us unintentionally, so that if you put everything into the system and then you turn everything on and start turning it down, that we may actually be degrading our investment by installing a dimmer. We weren't sure if that is the reason why historically there has never been a dimmer switch on anything there. We were going to ask Joel if he really thinks a dimmer on that big of a system will work or does it make sense to just change the bulbs? Could we just cover the lights? These are questions for a qualified electrician.

Mike will ask Joel, does the dimmer switch jeopardize our Efficiency Vermont Grant if we change out the bulbs and if we can, can we just change the bulb lumens? The Selectboard believes the rebate was on the ballasts and not the bulbs. Mike will follow up with Joel and bring back the information to the Selectboard for discussion.

The upgrade to the electrical panel quote is on Estimate #1897. This is something we agreed to take care of in 2018, which is now going to be taken care of 2019. We have money left in 2018 that we are going to bring over and spend in 2019.

Motion to approve the Estimate #1897 from Joel Snyder in the amount of \$2145, as well as an additional \$300 to pay for a plumber to remove the tank at the Library, made by Deb, second by Steve. No further discussion. All in favor.

2. Letter from Jill Stevens regarding the Library. Keep this letter as part of the submission for the ADA grant application. Informational.

The Selectboard then went through the 2019 Library Budget with the Library Trustees. Amber asked the Trustees how they came up with the salary number, Amber couldn't make the math work. Gary states that it is a 2% raise and then increase the amount of hours worked. It would go to 50 hours for Sara Walker (bi-weekly) currently she is at 30 hours; Bridget is currently at 80 hours and Laurie Reynolds is at 30 hours. If you multiple that through the hourly rate, and then by 26 pay periods, Gary got \$72,020.

Will the Library hours change? Paula states, "At this point, we are not going to be able to do an increase in hours until this summer because we are changing over to a library operating system starting now, and going live the first week of June and it is going to be incredibly labor intensive. There is a training process that they have to do in the next couple of weeks."

Steve asks, "Is the \$21,000 increase in salaries per year going to continue next year or is that just to stand up and make active this KOHA system?" Paula doesn't think we know that yet. Paula states, "What we are hoping to do is once this new system gets in place, we will look at some increased hours and look at some increased programming at the Library, which will require more foot traffic. In addition, Bridget has the monthly meetings around the renovation project, which requires research on her part, and which requires her to go out and build community partnerships. Some of this isn't just about staying at the desk at the Library, there is a lot involved. So I can't anticipate a year from now what the staffing needs will be, whether we will turn back our hours or keep what we have, I don't know that at this point."

Gary states, "I have also seen that management of the library can be improved, just in communication. For instance, there is no overlap between the Librarian and Assistant Librarian and other workers, so there is not even a monthly meeting where they get together. There has to be from a "Management 101" perspective, there has to be time for you to meet with your staff. There should be formal meetings between supervisors and the employees, at least on a quarterly basis."

Gary says, "The other thing I would like you to consider is, don't think of percentage, but think of absolute numbers, too. Obviously you see the whole budget of the Town from the school all the way down and so it is, whatever that is, \$25,000."

There was a general discussion regarding the Reserve Fund. We have nothing for Library money to reserve fund in 2017 and 2018. What are your thoughts on the \$2000 that is now in the 2019 Library Money to Reserve line? Gary states that there has been no discussion about the use of these funds.

We are currently re-doing the Capital Budget so we will be collecting impact fees that will probably be adjusted upward based on new assets. So this \$2000, if you allow us to do our process, will grow organically. If your goal is to be able to have more hours and the cross training, if that is your goal to get ready for 2020 for the next thing, then something has to come off. If those are your goals, that is an additional \$15,000, but your budget is up \$26,000. Something has to come off.

Does the Selectboard have a target? 3% was the Selectboard's target and we are not going to hit that by supporting your goal of having additional hours so that you can get your projects accomplished in 2019. You can't have ten goals and meet all ten of them in this budget because we have spent some money in your 2018 budget that was appropriate for things that need to be addressed, but because of that, other deficiencies in other departments didn't get addressed. So \$39,000 for lighting was appropriate, \$50,000 for consultant services town wide was appropriate but now it is time to take that \$39,000 back because we

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need a new roof at the town garage, and we have to address corrosion control on a quarter million dollar fire truck so it can live to its stated life span. Weather and salt brine are degrading assets in other departments in town, and must be addressed in 2019.

If we look at the whole budget overall, and look at actual dollars, it is not meant to be punitive, it is just that everybody has an important goal. We have \$21,000 - \$30,000 worth of corrosion control that must happen on a machine that has to last another 8 years. We have assets that are potentially in jeopardy at the Highway Department because we need a new roof. What we are asking you to acknowledge is that everyone is in the same boat, and addressing your deficiencies in 2018 means that we must pay the same respect to the other departments for their goals. So we need to pull a chunk back and give it to someone else. The ask is that, if it is possible, if that is your number one goal, what other goals are you willing to delay until 2020 so that we can spend the dollars elsewhere.

Gary asked, "So you would be open to somewhere in between." The Selectboard is willing to talk about any and all reductions. One example is you remove the \$2000 that was loaded for reserve funds, and we agree that this will come to you organically through impact fees so that we can start to grow your impact fee collection as a natural outcome of addressing the fact that your assets have increased.

Gary thinks that the Trustees might have flexibility in the utility line. He doesn't know what the new LED lighting is, but is obviously much more efficient than what we have had. Maybe we would be able to remove \$800-\$900.

There was a general discussion regarding the salary line of the budget. Steve asks if the Trustees have an hourly cost to re-barcode the books. Paula states that she doesn't. Steve says, "The reason I am asking is because you are asking for a 28% increase that is still \$21,000 more than you used last year and have you done a staff matrix, to see where the overlap could be and where you can get some efficiencies to have your meetings. It is very important to have meetings, but a 28% increase in meetings is a lot, especially since you don't know how much of that \$21,000 is to stand up the new KOHA system. I agree with you, you should have more hours and you do need to grow the Library, I just think growing it all in one year is a lot."

Gary did do some quick number crunching and maintaining the same hours, but looking more carefully at operational expenses. We could probably drop adult books to \$3,000, utilities drop to \$8500, and getting educational programming back to \$500 from \$1,000 and we cut out the reserve fund, it cuts operating from \$35,000 to \$30,100, which would be an 11% increase from last year rather than a 31% increase. With these suggested changes, the total increase would be 21%.

Steve would recommend other than the 2%, a one-time programmed amount to stand up the KOHA system. Steve thinks that is defensible. Whatever that percentage is, maybe 5% of the 28%, something like that, and then a modest increase in your hours to try to have a little bit of overlap time. But not that the remaining 21% worth.

Tara thinks the question that still didn't get answered is what about next year? Is there a chance that you are going backwards in hours? Paula states that she has no idea. Is this increase just for the new system because when someone puts in a new system to make it better, but then it takes more manhours so is that really a better system? If this system is going to cost you to have more manhours, it might not be worth it. Steve believes that to sustain it should not cost more manhours, but to stand it up and implement it, that you should have a specific line to get the system up and running.

Paula states, “It is going to be really nice for patrons because what it will allow them to do is, go online, there will be a whole interface and what you can do is go right on for any particular book, it will be right there, whether it is in the Library that day, whether we have it or not, if we don’t then you click a button and the inter-library loan will find it somewhere and ship it right to the Georgia Library. That is a savings of time for the Librarian.”

Let’s go with the implementation of the new system and then take it from there. Then maybe a couple of percent extra for your very important meetings, but find efficiencies in an overlapping time when the people are there, when they are there, have the meeting, don’t come in for a special meeting on a Saturday when nothing is open. Paula states, “It is tricky to find that time, it is tricky with just the way that the people are scheduled right now because they are only really the three people that run 56 hours of the library every week. Steve states, “It definitely is challenging, I just think it is doable with a modest increase in available hours.”

Gary states, “The other option is to decrease the number of hours that the Library is open.” Deb asks, “Are there times that support that statement?” Gary states, “It is driven by the financials and the requirement for management. If Bridget can’t work 40 hours a week and we have to do management, we are way above average for staffing on the number of hours we are open. I am just putting that out on the table that it is something we would have to consider as managers.”

The Library Trustees and the Selectboard had a continued discussion regarding the hours at the Library.

The Library is not good at creating business relationships. The Georgia Library is not strongly connected with the business community here in Georgia. That takes personal face to face time. Those business people are not coming into the Library. Bridget has to go out and create community partnerships, so that is a part of that gray area and it doesn’t necessarily happen the same way every week, but there is growth and development. The whole South Village project going on, the Library wants to be connected to all of that and in order to do that we have to pay someone to do it and that is Bridget’s job. That is why the Trustees are saying, this has been really tight for a long time, there was big shift that happened when Bridget was hired. It was \$12-\$13/hour position and there was no way a professional librarian was going to be hired for \$12 or \$13 an hour, it just doesn’t happen. So the Selectboard came together, to make a significant increase in salary, and benefit this position. We were able to attract somebody who is willing to do this community building and do this job and really enjoy it and love it. Paula thinks there is growth that we want to do, but we can’t do it if we don’t have somebody on the ground making that happen in a coordinated way.

What the Selectboard is looking at, if we meet your goal of all the hours, holiday and vacation necessary, we are saying your challenge would to keep your supplies and materials, (adult books, children books periodicals, audio visual, young adult books), level-funded (fund the lines the same as 2018). If you could get the budget to \$129,000 or 15%, the Selectboard should be able to explain this one-time larger increase to the taxpayers. Next year’s goal will be different, and will be expected to be in line with the 2018 budget numbers.

The Selectboard understands the Library Trustees’ drive and determination. If that is what you bring back for a budget, one that supports only your one stated goal, but not all of them, and it looks measurably different so that we can plug in a dollar amount that doesn’t negatively impact other departments’ goals it allows the Selectboard to support each department’s number one goal.

Big picture, right now the Selectboard is looking at about an \$180,000 increase in our budget to address necessary infrastructure projects in 2019. What does that do for the tax rate? Amber states that she ran a few calculations and tax bills would go up about \$86 (based on assessed value of \$426,800), with this increase to the budget.

Amber does not have a drop dead date from the Auditors for anything to be submitted. No timeline from ReproGraphics, either. Amber will reach out to the Auditors for this information.

The Selectboard would like Gary and Paula to share this information to the rest of the Trustees and to get back to the Selectboard by January 22, 2019 with their revised budget. The Selectboard will have to probably have one more budget meeting.

3. Executive Session – Personnel.

Motion to go into Executive Session at 7:10 p.m., is requested at this time, with the GPL Trustees, Town Administrator and the Treasurer present, to discuss contracts, labor relations agreements with employees, arbitration or mediation, grievances, other than tax, pending or probable litigation, or confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the Town of Georgia involving the Town, specifically finding that premature general public knowledge of the subject matter would clearly place the Town at a substantial disadvantage, made by Deb, second by Steve. No further discussion. All in favor.

Motion to come out of Executive Session made at 7:20 p.m. by Ric, second by Tara. No further discussion. All in favor.

No action out of Executive Session. The Selectboard will be following up with the Library trustees.

Motion made to continue the budget meeting to January 16, 2019 at 6:00 p.m., made by Deb, second by Steve. No further discussion. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted by Krissy Jenkins.