

REPORT OF THE  
GORHAM TOWN COUNCIL  
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING  
Burleigh Loveitt Council Chambers  
August 8, 2023

Chairman Pratt opened the meeting. There were more than 100 members of the public in attendance.

Roll Call: Chairman Pratt, Councilors Shepard, Wilder Cross, Phillips, Lavoie, Siegel and Gagnon. Also in attendance were Town Manager Ephrem Paraschak and Town Clerk Laurie Nordfors.

**Public Hearing # 1**

**On Item #2023-8-11**

Public Hearing on the proposed 2023-2024 Fiscal Year Budget for the Gorham School Department. (Admin. Spon.)

Chairman Pratt opened public hearing #1

Rhonda Vosmus, Samantha Drive; Dorene Mills, Ledge Hill Road; Lou Simms, Lucina Terrace; Delvina Miremadi-Baldino, Gordon Farms Road; Mary Jo Lyons, Lover's Lane; Naomi Schucker, Gordon Farms Road; Bethany Sanborn, Sleepy Hollow Drive; Nicole Fisher, Little River Drive; Alicia Warner, Burton Drive; Sarah Rimkunas, Garden Avenue; Michelle Littlefield, Burton Drive; Karen Tinkham, Bear Run; Kathryn Ghantous, Ryans Meadow; Jessica Arnott, Ossipee Trail; Brooke Prouix, Gerrys Way; Tammy Delaney, Keene Drive; and Janet Kuech, Narragansett Street all voiced their opinion in support of the current budget set forth before the Council. They urged the Council to pass the budget without further cuts. Some stated their concern for the effect cuts would have on the children. Some suggested that our children are the future and that more cuts would compromise their needs.

Priscilla Wheatley, Fort Hill Road; Sarah Plummer, Brookwood Drive; Kelley Brown, Gray Road; Tim Wing, Buck Street; Jim Means, Beatrice Drive; George Vercelli, Brookfield Court; Clayton Loubier, County Road; Andrew LaPlaca, Musket Drive and Susan Sato, Dragonfly Lane all spoke against the current proposed School Budget. Some remarked that the cuts should not affect the children and staff. Some stated that the tax payers should not take the burden of a high budget and some pointed out that the process is dividing the community and the budget should be affordable for all residents.

Chairman Pratt closed the public hearing.

**Moved by Councilor Siegel, seconded by Councilor Phillips and VOTED to allow Chairman Pratt to recuse himself from the vote due to a conflict of interest. 6 yeas, 1 abstention**

**Proposed**

**Order #23-116**

Moved by Councilor Wilder Cross, seconded by Councilor Siegel and ORDERED, that the following school budget items be adopted and approved for fiscal year 2023-2024:

**NOTE:** Pursuant to Section 405 of the Council-Manager Charter of Town of Gorham, “The Town Council, after reviewing the proposed budget, may change the total appropriation prior to approving the final budget.” Pursuant to State law, 20-A M.R.S.A. Section 2307, “In charter municipalities where the municipal charter confers upon a municipal council or other municipal legislative body the authority to determine the total amount of the school budget and confers upon the school committee or school board the authority to direct the expenditure of those funds for school purposes, the municipal council or other municipal legislative body shall determine the total amount of the school budget to be submitted to a budget validation referendum and the school committee or school board shall determine the allocation of the approved school budget among the cost centers of the cost center summary budget format.” **Pursuant to section 15671-A(5 of Title 20-A of the Maine Revised Statutes, when the Council approves a school budget exceeding the State’s EPS funding model, a separate recorded council vote is required to approve the funds raised. Consequently, a separate Order follows this Order for that purpose.**

ORDERED, that the following school budget items be adopted and approved for fiscal year 2023-2024:

That **\$22,177,920** be authorized to be expended for Regular Instruction;  
that **\$8,475,452** be authorized to be expended for Special Education;  
that **\$0** be authorized to be expended for Career and Technical Education;  
that **\$1,040,444** be authorized to be expended for Other Instruction;  
that **\$4,296,538** be authorized to be expended for Student and Staff Support;  
that **\$1,613,397** be authorized to be expended for System Administration;  
that **\$2,527,249** be authorized to be expended for School Administration;  
that **\$2,562,343** be authorized to be expended for Transportation and Buses;  
that **\$4,556,513** be authorized to be expended for Facilities Maintenance;  
that **\$2,387,674** be authorized to be expended for Debt Service and Other Commitments;  
and that **\$0** be authorized to be expended for All Other Expenditures.

**BE IT FURTHER ORDERED:**

1. That **\$49,637,530** be appropriated for the total cost of funding public education from kindergarten to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act and that **\$14,926,952** be raised as the municipality’s contribution to the total cost of funding public education from kindergarten to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act in accordance with the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 15688.

*Explanation: The municipality’s contribution to the total cost of funding public education from kindergarten to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act is the amount of money determined by state law to be the minimum amount that a municipality must raise in order to receive the full amount of state dollars.*

2. That **\$1,256,943** be raised and appropriated for the annual payments on debt service previously approved by the municipality’s legislative body for non-state-funded school construction projects, non-state-funded portions of school construction projects in addition to the funds appropriated as the local share of the municipality’s contribution to the total cost of funding public education from kindergarten to grade 12.

*Explanation: Non-state-funded debt service is the amount of money needed for the annual payments on the municipality’s long-term debt for major capital school construction projects that are not approved for state subsidy. The bonding of this long-term debt was previously approved by the voters or other legislative body.*

**BE IT FURTHER ORDERED**, that the school committee be authorized to expend **\$49,637,530** for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2024 from the municipality’s contribution to the total cost of funding public education from kindergarten to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act, non-state-funded school construction projects, additional local funds for school purposes under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 15690, unexpended balances, tuition receipts, state subsidy and other receipts for the support of schools.

ORDERED that **\$9,392,774** be raised and appropriated in additional local funds, which exceeds the State’s Essential Programs and Services allocation model by **\$9,392,774** as required to fund the budget recommended by the School Committee.

The School Committee recommends **\$9,392,774** for additional local funds and gives the following reasons for exceeding the State's Essential Programs and Services funding model by **\$9,392,774**. The State's funding model does not support all of the costs of the schools because it includes only those costs considered essential by the new State Essential Programs and Services (EPS) model.

*Explanation: - The additional local funds are those locally raised funds over and above the municipality's local Contribution to the total cost of funding public education from Kindergarten to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services funding Act and local amounts raised for the annual payment on non-state funded debt service that will help achieve the School Department budget for educational programs.*

**ORDER #23-117 VOTED 4 YEAS, 2 NAYS (GAGNON, PHILLIPS)**

**Item #2023-8-12**

Action to enter into executive session for personnel matters and to discuss confidential economic development matters. (Admin. Spon.)

**Proposed**

**Order #23-117**

Moved by Councilor Siegel, seconded by Councilor Lavoie and Ordered, that the Town Council enter into executive session pursuant to Order #23-89 1 MRSA § 405(6) (A) Personnel Matters and 1 MRSA § 405(6) (C) for discussion or consideration of the condition, acquisition or the use of real or personal property permanently attached to real property or interests therein or disposition of publicly held property or economic development only if premature disclosures of the information would prejudice the competitive or bargaining position of the body or agency.

**Order #23-117 VOTED 7 yeas**

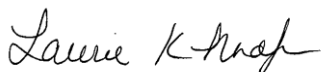
**Moved by Councilor Lavoie, seconded by Councilor Shepard and VOTED to come out of Executive Session. 7 yeas**

**Moved by Councilor Wilder Cross, seconded by Councilor Siegel and VOTED to adjourn. 7 yeas**

**Time of adjournment: 9:20pm**

A True Record of Meeting

08-08-2023



ATTEST

Laurie Nordfors, Town Clerk

08-09-2023