

Maurice Puzos  
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**Town of Griswold**  
28 Main Street  
Griswold, CT 06351  
**Board of Selectman**  
**Special Meeting**  
**Downstairs Meeting Room**  
**Thursday, March 18, 2021**  
**5:00 PM**



**MINUTES**

1. **Call to Order/Roll Call** – Meeting was called to order at 5 PM by Todd Babbitt, First Selectman. It was noted the meeting was posted as having moved the location to the second-floor meeting room due to a scheduling conflict.

**Members Present:** Todd Babbitt, First Selectman  
Richard Grabowski, Selectman (via zoom)  
Jared Picco, Selectman

**Others Present:** Erik Christensen, Finance Director  
Mario Tristany Jr., Town Planner  
Louis Demicco, JCFD Chief  
Thomas Holowaty, GVFD Chief

2. **Discussion and possible action on 2021/2022 departmental budgets**

Planning – Mario Tristany Jr. presented the budget. He explained the MS4 Stormwater requirements and the need to increase the amount to \$15,000 as the individual who has been providing this service is closing his business and we will have to go out to bid for these services. He also stated the secretary position is not funded as he has been doing that work and there has not been a problem to this point. The only other changes were contractual.

JCFD – Louis Demicco presented the budget. He noted a 2% increase across the board. Hose was increased due to needed repair, maintenance and gear was increased. Everything else was pretty much the same. Membership and retention were discussed and the possibility of paying retention quarterly or bi-annually. It was suggested doing a follow-up meeting to discuss paying retention twice a year to see if it is a benefit to the members. R. Grabowski asked if the disparity in physicals and OSHA testing is just due to the membership. L. Demicco commented if they a physical from this year from another department he will accept it.

GVFD – Thomas Holowaty presented the budget. They also presented a 2% increase. He noted there is more training required as a result of COVID. He stated their membership numbers are holding steady. T. Holowaty also mentioned perhaps paying retention out twice a year and he was informed they plan on meeting to discuss that. T. Babbitt questioned sharing the costs for instructors between departments by training together. R. Grabowski asked if the difference budgeted by each department for OSHA and physicals is strictly due to membership. T. Holowaty noted it is. R. Grabowski asked about the need of all the hydrants. T. Babbitt noted they checked into it before and they were told the town could remove them but the cost would be adjusted to the same amount.

Fire Marshal – T. Holowaty presented the budget. He noted a potential increase for new code books due to upcoming code changes. T. Babbitt asked how that relates to the building code and it was suggested increasing that line item in the building department. They went back and added \$2000 to that line item in the building department. E. Christensen noted the Fire Marshal department is looking for a 2% increase as well. T. Babbitt noted for J. Picco that the 2% is not contractual.

Individual department budgets have been reviewed.

T. Babbitt noted the requested non-contractual raises and some were requesting slightly more than the contractual amounts, but the salaries are higher. T. Babbitt noted he would like to keep them the same across the board. R. Grabowski mostly concurred but questioned the Registrar's request. There was discussion about the number of hours the Registrar's are reporting. T. Grabowski noted he would be in favor of raising their salaries up to whatever those hours would be a week, times minimum wage plus 2.5%. This was figured at an average of 17 hours per week. T. Babbitt suggested maybe splitting their requested increase over the next two years to reach that point. R. Grabowski is concerned about keeping the continuity in the office. J. Picco agreed but wondered if there was some way of getting a guaranteed number of hours that they put in. E. Christensen noted that minimum wage plus the 2.5% would be around \$11,780 each per year for them. They are asking for \$16,200 each and are currently at \$10,710 each. The consensus was to reach the requested amount over a two-year span and \$13,455 each per year or \$26,910 for the line item was the recommendation that the BOS put into the budget. Taxes were adjusted accordingly. Other non-contractual employee requests for raises were discussed. It was agreed that if any raise was to be given it should in no case be more than what the union was getting. It was also noted that individuals requesting more do have the right to go before the BOF and plead their case. E. Christensen noted he already has a 2.5% increase figured into those positions in the proposed budget. T. Babbitt recused himself so the other members could discuss the increase for the First Selectman position. It was noted, at this time, it is uncertain who will be in that position. R. Grabowski felt that the position should be at 2.5% increase as other non-contractual employees. J. Picco again noted his uncertainty in giving any non-contractual raises, but for sake of putting the budget forward would concede to the

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2.5% increase for the First Selectman with no increase for the other selectmen. T. Babbitt came back into the room. With the agreed to changes, E. Christensen noted the general government budget would be at \$9,023,328 of which debt service is \$1,975,175 and capital is \$1,747,824. General government alone would be \$5,300,329 and in increase of \$365,608 about 0.5 mills. It looks like it would be around 1.2 mills with what the BOE is proposing. BOE is proposing \$29,160,420. A mill is about \$738,000. Proposed increases are as follows: Debt services \$11,589 capital \$458,669 operating \$365,608 and BOE \$708,6521,544 equals total \$1,544,518. In the general operating budget \$205,000 was an increase in recreation because it was cut last year due to COVID and \$60,000 is due to reval which the BOF cut to spread it out further and \$64,000 is contractual. T. Babbitt asked if there was anything coming from the CARES act that could be used to potentially lower the proposed increases. E. Christensen noted he is not sure. T. Babbitt asked if the other BOS members would be available to sign onto zoom on April 8, 2021 to discuss the public works budget with the BOF if needed. J. Picco noted not much changed in the PW department. It was agreed to send the budget forward as amended.

**MOTION:** Motion was made by R. Grabowski, seconded by J. Picco, to send the general government budget ending June 30, 2022 as discussed and finalized by the Board of Selectmen for the amount of \$9,023,328 forward to the BOB. **Motion carried unanimously.**

### 3. Adjournment

**MOTION:** Motion was made by J. Picco, seconded by T. Babbitt, to adjourn the meeting at 6:14 PM. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Todd Babbitt,  
First Selectman

Residents that wanted to listen were able to sign into zoom with the information below.

Meeting ID: 782 8240 7609  
Passcode: 3iYnQD