

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING and PUBLIC HEARING**  
**THE GORHAM TOWN BOARD**  
**October 27, 2021 7:00pm**

The Gorham Town Board held a Special Meeting and re-opened the 2022 Budget Public Hearing on October 27, 2021 at 7:00 pm.

Present were Supervisor Fred Lightfoote, Councilmembers; William Glitch, Brian S. Case and Jake Chard. Water/Wastewater Chief Operator Greg Coston, Billing Clerk Brenda Jones and Town Clerk Darby Perrotte. Assessor Enza Mineo joined via video/phone conference.

Councilmember Richard Malcolm, Highway Superintendent Zach Eddinger and Code Enforcement Officer Jim Morse were necessarily absent.

Other Guests in attendance and via video conference; Donna Graham, Pat and Kristin King, Kevin Stape, Kyle Gruschow, Kevin Moore, Doug and Patti Gruschow, Phil Curtis, Brian Lazarus, Sally Napolitano, Rita Kulp, Margaret Morrison and several unidentified on zoom.

1. Call to Order/Pledge to the Flag. Supervisor Lightfoote called the meeting to order and led the pledge to the flag.
2. Privilege of the Floor – Supervisor Lightfoote said comments are limited to three minutes during privilege of the floor.

Donna Graham, County Road 11 resident, asked about the committees for the Comprehensive Plan Update. She wanted to make sure she was still on the focus group she signed up for in August because she hasn't heard from anyone. She also asked if the town was working on a short term rental agreement.

Supervisor Lightfoote said they haven't gotten to that point yet in the Comprehensive Update Plan but someone would be in touch with her regarding the focus group and yes, they are working on short term rental.

3. Public Hearing 2022 Budget – Supervisor Lightfoote re-opened the public hearing from the October 13, 2021 meeting.

Donna Graham, Sally Napolitano and Councilmember Chard had several questions regarding the 2022 budget. Supervisor Lightfoote explained and answered questions.

Donna Graham had questions regarding property tax and sales tax. Supervisor Lightfoote clarified some points so that Mrs. Graham understood the basis of the amounts in certain funds.

Councilmember Chard had questions regarding the deputy pay for highway, water district and wastewater district budgets.

Councilmember Chard said the budgeting for transmission and distribution in the water and wastewater district budget is very different from previous years.

Chief Operator Coston said replacement of pumps requires a big increase. He said the same for the wastewater district, pump stations and equipment replacements are high. Numbers are based on projections of what the district is going to need. The amount to have septic tanks pumped has increased too.

Councilmember Chard asked why there isn't anything budgeted for Gorham Library.

Supervisor Lightfoote said the Library was able to become a line item through the school district's budget therefore they didn't need the Town's appropriation. The Library asked that the amount appropriated for the Library be put to use on the addition for the library.

Councilmember Chard said there is a significant increase in the line for the Town Lawyer.

Supervisor Lightfoote said EFPR Solutions said Lawyer fees can be put to one fund instead of pulling from several different funds for lawyer fees.

Councilmember Chard had several other questions regarding highway funds that are \$20,000.00 higher than previous years.

Supervisor Lightfoote said if he wants specific information he can get the exact reasoning for the increase.

Councilmember Chard said yes he would like those figures.

Councilmember Glitch had questions on the budgeted amounts for bookkeeping. He wants to know which line item is for the bookkeeping company and which one is for Brenda Jones.

Supervisor Lightfoote said there is more that enters into the budgeted line than Brenda Jones wage. Supervisor Lightfoote will get those amounts for Councilmember Glitch.

Councilmember Glitch said on the budget line \$5,000.00 is a significant raise for one person that is why he is asking.

Supervisor Lightfoote said Brenda, like anyone else, is budgeted for a 2% raise.

Councilmember Glitch said he knows Brenda's is split up between departments he would like to know what departments she is paid out of.

Sally Napolitano said the zoom is very garbled and it is hard to understand the person talking. She had questions regarding some of the line items that were addressed but could not hear or understand what the answers were. She has questions regarding the amount for the bookkeeper and bookkeeping contractual.

Mrs. Napolitano said she understands that several years ago, because an employee left, there was a need to hire a contractual bookkeeping company.

Mrs. Napolitano said "My understanding was it was a stop-gap measure until you brought bookkeeping back in house. To me, it seems we are keeping both and we are paying two different entities to do our bookkeeping. The number has gone up 50% in two years. I have concerns about that."

Supervisor Lightfoote said "Initially that is what we were looking at, getting things under control and then get back to the route that we had been using. By the time we did get things under control, looking at the way we had been doing things, looking at some of the requirements some of the changes in the States requirement and even the State's law, things have gotten very much more complex than they were, we thought we would come back to it, it was working before. Come back to only a bookkeeper in house and we weren't using any bookkeeping services. It then became much more obvious, speaking with some of my peers, the days of smaller towns having a bookkeeper in house, unless you're really really lucky, are over because it's gone beyond the capabilities of anything that any town can afford in those smaller towns."

Mrs. Napolitano asked "Why then, do we have an in house bookkeeper?"

Supervisor Lightfoote said we don't. It's all that there is in the computer program. We have a bookkeeping clerk. EFPR Solutions software only has the capability to list her as bookkeeper."

Mrs. Napolitano asked if that is Ms. Jones title 'Bookkeeping Clerk'.

Supervisor Lightfoote said he can't remember the official title.

Brenda Jones said it is "Billing Clerk."

Mrs. Napolitano said "That is an important differentiation."

Supervisor Lightfoote agrees and asked if she has any other concerns.

Mrs. Napolitano asked why there is such a need for increased staff at the highway department. She asked if things have intrinsically changed in the town that requires more hours.

Supervisor Lightfoote said yes. It has been a steady increase over time. More time being spent on drainage districts. Because of the way bookkeeping is set up in computers we're doing work there but we're charging back to them, they pay back to the fund but it still shows as an increase in labor.

Mrs. Napolitano said "I've got to be honest with you, I don't understand what you just said."

Supervisor Lightfoote said he understands her concerns. This is what he was meaning initially when he wanted to limit comments to three minutes. He said he would meet with Mrs. Napolitano again to go over the budget.

Mrs. Napolitano said "You've gone to the contractual bookkeeper. Let me take a poll of Councilmembers who find this accounting easier to understand?"

Councilmembers do not find this accounting easier to understand. All agreed the previous budgets were easier to understand. They are not saying it's wrong, just different.

Supervisor Lightfoote explained, just like the question with the highway employees, things change. There are several things that are different.

Mrs. Napolitano said "I'm not challenging you on that Fred, I'm saying if you have Town Board members who find it difficult to understand think about your constituents. There has got to be a better way of presenting the budget than the way it's being done, it's got to be transparent."

Councilmember Glitch asked about Crystal Beach Fire Department. He has concerns about the lack of a budget being presented by them.

Supervisor Lightfoote said the budget and the contract can be two different things. He said the Board could hold up the contract to get some answers from the fire department.

Councilmember Case said he would like the fire department to provide the Town an internal audit.

Councilmember Glitch said we have talked about this for the last three to five years.

The Board asked for this last year but it was not provided.

Councilmember Glitch asked about the town tax rate for the village and the town if they are proposed to be the same rate in 2022.

Supervisor Lightfoote said "The State is requiring the B and DB funds to be fully funded by any sales tax revenue and then if there is remaining sales tax revenue it can go to A fund. We had more projected revenue coming in to cover B and DB but we didn't have enough coming in to cover all three, A, B and DB. So we had to assign projected income to B and DB first, that takes away the difference in the village therefore that means we have to charge them the same rate as outside the village."

Councilmember Case did not have any questions or concerns regarding the budget.

With no further questions or comments the public hearing was closed at 7:55 pm.

4. Business -

a. Health Insurance Plan Change –

Tabled from October 13, 2021 meeting. The Board held discussion on the potential changes. Councilmembers are concerned that administrative labor added to the workload of an already busy office, that can't keep up now, would just add more stress.

Councilmembers agree that the projected savings would dwindle significantly if another person is hired to handle the administrative end of a new health plan.

Employee Kevin Stape said the high deductible would be hard on a lot of employees. One reason to work for a Town is for the benefits.

Mr. Stape said "I give 100% to the Town as an employee, it is hard to see our benefits dwindle and the town do a flip-flop on benefits. It was kind of hard to watch the rest of that zoom meeting and you flipped your lid about the longevity part. It kind of said as an employee, it wasn't important, for longevity."

Mr. Stape said the longevity keeps coming up, over 2 years, it seems like employees are not important or it would be taken care of.

Supervisor Lightfoote said "The longevity wasn't what I was flipping my lid about. If I said that wasn't important, that's not what I meant. What I meant was I had other things that were equally or more important. For instance; there are certain things if we didn't get them done in time for the State we stood the risk of losing over \$300,000.00. What I was upset about is we don't have enough help, we can't get everything done."

Supervisor Lightfoote said it's a misconception that employees aren't important. I apologize if there was that inkling out there but that certainly wasn't the case."

On the motion by Councilmember Glitch, to leave it as it is, keep the Excellus Platinum 2 Insurance Plan for 2022 budget year, seconded by Councilmember Chard, the motion carried. (3-Ayes Glitch, Case, Chard. 1-Nay Lightfoote)

b. Longevity Schedule -

Supervisor Lightfoote said back pay for employee's owed longevity may get a lump sum payment or, if it is going to impact the employee, the town will work it out with each individual employee as to how they want the payment. The employee can choose the payment option.

Councilmember Glitch offered the following resolution and called for adoption. Seconded by Councilmember Case, the resolution was unanimously adopted. (4-0)

**080-2021**

## Resolution to adopt official Longevity Pay Scale

Whereas: The Town of Gorham has utilized a longevity scale when preparing monetary compensation for employees, and;

Whereas: There has been confusion regarding the official longevity schedule, that is to be used, and;

Whereas: Lengthy research has failed to identify official documentation identifying the proper schedule to use, and;

Whereas: The Gorham Town Board has directed that the proper schedule be identified, and;

Whereas: A schedule is currently under use that there is considerable support for, and;

Whereas: There is concern regarding utilization of this schedule into the future for new hires, then;

Therefore: The Gorham Town Board directs that the following schedule shall be used when computing pay for eligible employees under the employ of the Town of Gorham on October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

### Longevity pay schedule number one.

This schedule to be used for eligible Town of Gorham employees  
Employed by the Town of Gorham on October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021

5 years \$.25/hour for a total additional \$.25/hour

10 years \$.25/hour for a total additional \$.50/hour

15 years \$.50/hour for a total additional \$1.00/hour

20 years \$.50/hour for a total additional \$1.50/hour

I, Darby L. Perrotte, Town Clerk of the Town of Gorham do hereby certify that the aforementioned resolution was adopted by the Town Board of the Town of Gorham on October 27, 2021 by the following vote:

	<u>Aye</u>	<u>Nay</u>
Frederick Lightfoote	X_____	_____
William Glitch	X_____	_____
Brian S. Case	X_____	_____
Richard Malcolm	absent_	_____
Jake Chard	X_____	_____

c. Recreational Marijuana Opt In/Opt Out dispensaries in Town -

Councilmembers held discussion. The decision was tabled until the November meeting.

d. Resolution calling for public hearing for Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements –

Supervisor Lightfoote offered the following resolution and called for adoption. Seconded by Councilmember Case, the motion carried unanimously. (4-0)

**081-2021**

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SCHEDULING OF PUBLIC HEARING  
TO CONSIDER PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO GORHAM SEWER DISTRICT #1**

**WHEREAS**, the Town Board of the Town of Gorham, after due deliberation, finds it in the best interests of the Town to schedule a public hearing to solicit public comment upon proposed improvements to the Gorham Sewer District #1 pursuant to § 202-b of the NYS Town Law; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town Engineer has prepared a map and plan showing the proposed improvements being the installation and implementation of the Trojan UV3000Plus™ ultraviolet disinfection system to enable the Gorham Sewer District #1 to implement effluent disinfection at the wastewater treatment plant.

**WHEREAS**, the plan shows the estimated costs of these improvements to be \$900,000.00, such estimated costs to be the responsibility of Gorham Sewer District #1. The Town intends to apply for a DEC grant administered through its Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP) program to pay for part of the cost of these improvements. Any remaining amount owing for these improvements will be borrowed from the EFC and financed and repaid by the owners of property within the Gorham Sewer District #1.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Town Clerk be, and she hereby is, directed to schedule a public hearing, to be held on November 10, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. at the Gorham Town Hall, 4736 South Street, Gorham, New York; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Town Clerk, be and hereby is, directed to forward to the official newspapers of the Town a Notice of Public Hearing in the form substantially the same as that attached hereto as Exhibit "1", such notice to be published not less than ten nor more than twenty days before the day set herein for the public hearing; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Town Clerk be, and she hereby is, directed to post a copy of the Notice of Public Hearing on the Town of Gorham sign board, not less than ten nor more than twenty days before the day set herein for the public hearing.

I, Darby L. Perrotte, Town Clerk of the Town of Gorham do hereby certify that the aforementioned resolution was adopted by the Town Board of the Town of Gorham on October 27, 2021 by the following vote:

	<u><b>Aye</b></u>	<u><b>Nay</b></u>
Frederick Lightfoote	X_____	_____
William Glitch	X_____	_____
Brian S. Case	X_____	_____
Richard Malcolm	absent_	_____
Jake Chard	X_____	_____

8. Privilege of the floor –

Town of Gorham Conservation Board Chairman Brett Johnson said he has attended conferences lately and that Governor Kathy Hochul has gained the blessing of many Conservation Boards. She has increased funding for water all across the State. There is a new grant coming forward this year where there will be an additional \$100,000.00 going towards rural municipal wastewater and sewer drainage. Chairman Johnson said possibly as the clock turns in the new year there will be more funding to help pay for improvement projects.

6. Executive Session –

On the motion by Supervisor Lightfoote, seconded by Councilmember Case the board entered into executive session at 8:44pm to discuss medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person relating to appointment, promotion, demotion, discipline or removal.

On the motion by Supervisor Lightfoote seconded by Councilmember Glitch the board returned to regular session at 10:19 pm.

No action was taken in executive session. Both motions carried unanimously. (4-0)

**082-2021**

7. Adjournment -

On the motion by Councilmember Case, seconded by Councilmember Glitch, the meeting was adjourned at 10:20pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Darby L. Perrotte  
Town Clerk



