

TOWN OF GILL

M A S S A C H U S E T T S



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SELECTBOARD/FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

June 15, 2009

Called to Order

Meeting was called to order at 4:33 p.m.

Present

Ann Banash, John Ward, Nancy Griswold, Selectboard members; Tracy Rogers, Town Administrator; Timmie Smith, Claire Chang, Tupper Brown, Jim Poulsen, Ronnie LaChance, Finance Committee members.

Absent

Alden Booth, Chris Collins, Joe Williams, Ernie Hastings, Finance Committee members.

Article 15: Override Contingency

The group agreed to recommend to town meeting to pass over the article, since the budget is unbalanced anyway.

Article 17: School Assessment

Tupper recommended using an assessment figure for GMRSD that would correspond to a 0% increase in the GMRSD operating budget. Ann raised the idea of putting any extra money toward the school. Ultimately, both groups agreed to stick with an assessment figure that corresponds to what Montague approved at their June 6 town meeting.

Ann pointed out that the School Committee is the body that requested the article be put on the warrant and it should, therefore, remain the amount the Committee voted on during their May 6 meeting. Tracy will ask Sandy Brown, school committee vice chair, to make the original motion and Ann will ask to amend it to be in line with the Montague figure.

Article 20: Building Maintenance and Repair Account

Both groups approved this article.

Article 23: Building Inspector Assessment Stabilization Fund

There was discussion about making the Building Inspector Stabilization Fund a revolving fund instead. The group instructed Tracy to check with the accountant and legal counsel to see if the article may be amended on the floor to create a revolving fund instead.

Article 24: OPEB Survey

The group agreed to support the article, but on the condition that the funds not be spent until it can be determined that the survey is required, not just recommended.

Article 27: Mariamante Loan

The Finance Committee recommended taking the Mariamante loan payment out of operating expenses. Ann explained her reasoning for suggesting taking it out of the stabilization fund is that, when the property is sold, the money will be put back into stabilization. If it's taken out of the operating budget, there's no real place to "put it back." Both groups agreed on taking it out of operating expenses for now, while we have the funds, but to revisit the decision if the budget situation looks worse by special town meeting.

Article 28: Stabilization

Tupper recommended transferring \$5,000 from free cash to stabilization. Ann recommended waiting until we have a final budget to do so. It was pointed out that if we wait until after June 30, the free cash may not be available to use by the time we hold the special town meeting, depending on when it gets certified.

Ronnie made a motion on behalf of the Finance Committee to recommend to town meeting to transfer \$5,000 from free cash to stabilization. Tupper seconded the motion and it passed by a 4 to 1 vote. John made a motion on behalf of the Selectboard to recommend to town meeting to transfer \$5,000 from free cash to stabilization. Nancy seconded the motion and it was carried by a unanimous vote.

Article 29: Free Cash

The group agreed that the remaining balance of free cash should be used to stabilize the tax levy.

Chase Road Property

Ronnie asked if she could use town funds to clean up a property in tax title on Chase Road. Ann suggested she use FY09 Finance Committee Reserve Funds if necessary.

Forward Planning

Tupper suggested the Board and Finance Committee meet early in FY10 to start planning for FY11, including goal setting for departments or discussing a zero-based budgeting approach.

Biomass Plant

John asked the Board to review a statement (see attached) he prepared to make on behalf of the Selectboard at Greenfield's ZBA hearing on the biomass plant tonight. Ann suggested adding one line to the end of the statement that read "until such time as the baseline measurements are complete." Nancy made a motion to approve the statement with Ann's edit. Ann seconded the motion and it was carried by a unanimous vote.

Adjourned

Meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Tracy Rogers, Town Administrator.

John R. Ward, Selectboard Clerk