

TOWN OF GILL

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



www.gillmass.org

SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

August 19, 2009 (Continuation of August 17 meeting)

Called to Order

Meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m.

Present

Ann Banash, John Ward, Nancy Griswold, Selectboard members; Tracy Rogers, Town Administrator; Claire Chang, Finance Committee member.

APR-Muni Application

Tracy presented a completed application for the Agricultural Preservation Restriction Municipal Grant Program with regards to Dick French's property on Boyle Road. The grant would allow the Town to pay only a 5% match rather than 20%. The Blake Estate will actually pay that 5%. The Board signed the application.

Recreation Committee Letter

Ann presented a draft appeal letter to local businesses that she revised for the Recreation Committee. The Board approved the letter.

Letter to Superintendent

Tracy reported that she had drafted a letter to the GMRSD Superintendent and School Committee asking them to hold a district meeting as soon as possible so that the towns could set their tax rates. However, in talking with Finance Committee Chair Tupper Brown, Tracy and Tupper realized that, unless the school budget hasn't been solved by January/February 2010, Gill should be fine since it has already sent out preliminary FY10 tax bills. Should that be, then, the focus of the letter?

The Board agreed that the focus should change to requesting that the School Committee decide whether they will have a district meeting as soon as possible and to schedule it sooner rather than later so that we can all move on to planning for FY11. The Board requested that Tracy incorporate the contents of Tupper's e-mail on August 18 regarding the subject and to send a copy of the final letter to Montague.

Special Town Meeting Date

Tracy reported that Tupper was having some difficulty scheduling the Finance Committee members to attend a joint meeting with the Selectboard before the special town meeting date of September 14. He suggested the possibility of a Saturday town meeting. The Board discussed the idea, but Ann had said that when they'd tried it in the past attendance had been low. The Board decided to keep the date of 9/14.

Stretch Code

Tracy reported that she attended a webinar on the new building “stretch” code, which will be required to adopt if the Town wants to become a “Green Community” under the Green Communities Act. The stretch code essentially adds the Energy Star standards onto the current state building code. Claire reported that there is a timing issue with adoption of the code in that it cannot be implemented earlier than six months from the time of town meeting vote and must be implemented on either a January 1 or July 1 date. The Board instructed Tracy to place the article on the annual town meeting warrant for 2010 to allow implementation by January 1, 2011.

DOR Education Waivers

Tracy reported that there are two categories of waivers the Town may qualify for with regards to the Town’s minimum contribution toward the school district. The waivers are not grants, however, so whatever mechanism that would allow the Town to reduce its assessment, would result in the District losing funding. Tracy will get more details from DOR and ask Montague if they will be pursuing any waivers.

Peer-to-Peer Grants

Tracy reported that FY10 Peer-to-Peer technical assistance grants are available. Ann suggested applying for assistance in reviewing the Town’s Master Plan, perhaps to hire the COG to review it.

Goal-Setting

Tracy reported that she had received no comments from the public on the results of the goal-setting retreat. The Board went through the prioritized list of goals and chose the following four to begin working on:

1. DOR’s recommendations
2. Sending out an RFP to hire a consultant to evaluate staffing and equipment needs for the police, fire, and highway departments (perhaps using NMH’s gift money to fund it)
3. Master Plan
4. Mariamante

Tracy will check in with Doff Storrow on the two education committees. She will invite legislators to a future Board meeting to discuss special legislation regarding the collector-treasurer position and the Building Inspector Stabilization Fund.

Claire suggested filing an amicus brief on whichever lawsuit is headed to land court regarding the biomass plant in Greenfield. Tracy will talk to Town Counsel about this when she attends the next Mariamante Committee meeting.

Adjourned

Meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Tracy Rogers, Town Administrator.

John R. Ward, Selectboard Clerk