

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

FRANKLIN, SS.

TOWN OF GILL

Minutes for Annual Town Meeting May 9, 2011

Voters in attendance: 67

Total number of voters: 1044

Town meeting was opened by Moderator Ray Steele at 7:00 P.M. Monday evening May 9th in the Second story area of Town Hall.

Article 1: Move to hear and act upon the 2009 Annual Report of the Officers of the Town.

This is Annual Report makes the transition from a calendar year report to a fiscal year report, and covers January to June 2009. The Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2010 is in progress, and will be printed later this year.

Passed Unanimously

Article 2: Move to elect Edward J. Golembeski and Clifford C. Hatch as Field Drivers and elect the Selectboard as Fence Viewers; Measurers of Wood, Bark and Surveyors of Lumber - all for one year.

Passed Unanimously

Article 3: Move the Town accept and expend any sum of money that might be made available from State or Federal funds for roadwork for the Fiscal Year 2012 and for the Chapter 90 type funds, authorize the Selectboard to enter into contracts with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Highway Department, and authorize the Treasurer with the approval of the Selectboard to borrow in anticipation of reimbursement.

Chapter 90 funds are given annually by the State to the Town, and are used for our road maintenance program – activities such as repaving asphalt roads or applying new oil & stone. The Town will receive \$152,763 for FY2012, which is up \$34,729 (29%) from FY2011.

Passed Unanimously

Article 4: Move the Town vote to authorize the following revolving funds per the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 53E ½, for which revenues will be deposited into the funds and expended to pay related costs under the authorization of the Selectboard, and total expenditures for the fiscal year beginning July 1 next will be limited to the amounts listed below, with all money remaining in the fund at the end of each fiscal year:

Dept. Authorized to Spend	Types of Receipts Credited	Program/Purpose for which Funds may be Expended	Amount of Funds Authorized
Fire Dept.	Oil Burner Inspection Fees	Inspector & Etc.	\$2,000.00
Town Clerk	Dog Fees	Licenses & Etc.	2,000.00
Cemetery Commission	Opening Fees	Cemeteries & Caretaking	2,000.00
Conservation Commission	Consultant Fees	Project Review	10,000.00
Agricultural Commission	Farmers' Market & Ag Event Fees	Ag Programs	500.00
Energy Commission	Workshop and Program Fees	Energy Programs	1,000.00

These are the same revolving funds approved last year, with addition of a revolving fund for the Energy Commission. A revolving fund allows program fees to be used within the fiscal year for the purposes listed by the "department" that collects the fees.

Passed Unanimously

Article 5: Move the Town vote to hear and act upon a report presented by the Riverside Municipal Building Use Study Committee.

This Committee was established at the recommendation of the 2009 Annual Town Meeting, following a discussion and unanimous vote to not declare the Riverside Municipal Building as surplus property. The Committee wishes to report to the Town on its doings.

REPORT FROM RIVERSIDE BUILDING COMMITTEE TO TOWN MEETING

Since its appointment in the fall of 2009, the Committee has

1. Reviewed the two previous RMB committee reports and found useful information, particularly the last survey on uses for the building and the report to the Selectboard on needed repairs.
2. Brainstormed various uses for the building if it were vacant. Some ideas could be implemented easily (office space for a small business) and others would require expanded restroom capacity and kitchen facilities). The committee supports continuing the current lease contract with the Four Winds school as long as the income equals the costs incurred. With the change to programmed thermostats and other weatherization efforts, the current expenses seem to roughly balance the income.
3. The committee has worked with the Siemens' audit to identify additional energy saving items for the building. We have identified specific items on the energy inventory that could be addressed without major expense and with town as well as volunteer labor. One example is weather stripping outside doors.
4. Jim Tomasi has made a significant contribution by voluntarily working on the windows. He has completed six windows with re-glazing, putting in new glass where needed, painting both sides, and cleaning. He will continue as he can and would welcome volunteers for this window project.
5. Additionally, there is interest in building inserts for the inside of the windows. From a historical and preservation point of view, the re-glazing and the inside inserts keep the integrity of the original window lines on the outside of the building while giving more efficiency.

6. The lighting inside the building needs to be more energy efficient. We hope that WMECO will give the town a grant to address the lighting issues in town buildings including the RMB.
7. The other major project on the drawing board, is to blacken the upper part of the south-facing windows in the museum room.
8. We have entered into dialogue with the Massachusetts Historical Commission about the historical and archaeological heritage of the Riverside building and we await their evaluation.
9. The RMB committee affirms the value of the building and the property to the community. Its location on the French King Highway gives it high visibility to people passing through Gill. It was prominence as a gathering place for the Riverside youth with a basketball court and softball field, and for the neighborhood with events like an outdoor movie and a community pot luck picnic. It offers the whole town a place for activities like the annual Craft Fair, farmers' markets, and tag sales.
10. If you are interested in one of the open membership seats on the RMB Committee, please let Ray know.
11. Advance notice is given for a potluck BBQ at noon on the 4th of July. All residents of Gill are welcome. If you want to help with the planning, please see Bev Demars, Jenn Waldron, or Claire Chang.

Accepted with Gratitude Unanimously

Article 6: Move the Town vote to amend that paragraph of the Town's Dog Control bylaw that references late fees, to read that "An additional late fee of \$10.00 shall be assessed for every dog whose owner fails to properly license his dog by April 1 of any year." *(Simple majority required)*

Currently the bylaw reads June 1st which causes some confusion due to the license stating an expiration date of March 31st. In order to have this expiration date hold any significant meaning, a fine should apply the day after the expiration, not two months later. This article was requested by the Town Clerk.

Passed Unanimously

Article 7: Move the Town vote to amend the first sentence of the second paragraph of the Town's Agricultural Commission bylaw, to read "The Commission shall consist of seven members appointed by the Moderator, of which the majority of the membership shall be substantially engaged in the pursuit of agriculture.", and further add to the fourth paragraph the sentence "The Moderator shall appoint additional members to initial terms of one, two, or three years and three thereafter, in such a way as no more than three members' terms expire in any given year." *(Simple majority required)*

Currently the Town has a five-member Ag Commission. The Commission has more people interested in being on it than there are seats, and feels that expanding the size would allow more involvement, get more done, and spread out duties.

Passed Unanimously

Article 8: Move the Town vote to adopt the following **Resolution to Seek Lower Electric Rates in a Competitive Market**, or take any action relative thereto:

Whereas, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, by enacting Chapter 164 of the Acts of 1997, has established a competitive marketplace through deregulation and restructuring of the electric utility industry; and

Whereas, the citizens of the Town of Gill in Franklin County have substantial economic, environmental, and social interests at stake; and

Whereas, Gill's residential and business consumers are interested in reducing their electricity rates;

Be it therefore resolved, that the Town Meeting of Gill grant the Board of Selectmen authority to develop and participate in a contract, or contracts, for power supply and other related services, independently, or in joint action with other municipalities through the Hampshire Council of Governments. If such contracts are to be approved, individual consumers would retain the option not to participate and to choose any alternative service they desire; and

Be it further resolved, that the Board of Selectmen will appoint a representative for a committee to oversee such joint action.

A separate handout is available that explains this article. Additionally, Marie Guerin, Electricity Director for the Hampshire Council of Governments, will be present to answer questions.

Passed Unanimously

Move to continue the remainder of the Annual Town Meeting to June 25th at 9:00AM.

The Town has not yet finished its budget process for Fiscal Year 2012; therefore, the Selectboard and Finance Committee have not been able to finalize the Town's budget for next year. The Selectboard recommends continuing Annual Town Meeting to Saturday, June 25th at 9:00AM, at which time the remaining articles will be presented.

Passed Unanimously

The Continuation of the Annual Town Meeting opened at 9:05 A.M. on Saturday, June 25, 2011.

Article 9: Motion: Move the Town vote to fix the salaries or compensation of the several officers of the Town as follows, plus any cost of living adjustment (COLA) that may be provided by the Town:

Constable(s) – Each Posting	\$17.57
Moderator – Annual Town Meeting	\$128.27
Special Town Meeting, Each	\$22.87
Selectboard Chair	\$2,431.79
2 nd & 3 rd Member, Each	\$2,210.78
Board of Assessors Chair	\$2,953.02
2 nd & 3 rd Member, Each	\$2,684.54
Board of Health Chair	\$1,311.69
2 nd & 3 rd Member, Each	\$1,201.20
Town Clerk	\$14,272.70

Tax Collector	\$19,446.12
Additional As Sewer Collector	\$610.81
Treasurer	\$16,344.58
Registrars – Three members, Each	\$54.54
Town Clerk	\$87.36

All amounts are level funded from Fiscal Year 2011. A COLA, if approved in Article 11, would be in addition to the amounts listed above.

Passed Unanimously

Article 10: Motion: Move the Town vote to transfer Nine Thousand One Hundred Seventy One and 45/100 Dollars (\$9,171.45) from the Building Inspector Assessment Stabilization Fund and appropriate for a portion of the Fiscal Year 2012 assessment for the Franklin County Cooperative Inspection Program (FCCIP).

A 2/3 vote is required to transfer money out of a Stabilization Fund. The FCCIP provides building inspector services to Gill. The Town collects permit fees for the building permits as they are issued throughout the year. Our assessment for the FCCIP services, however, is based on permit activity during the prior 3 years. In the event of a very large building project with a very large permit fee (like an Arts Center at NMH), the Town will collect a large fee when the project starts, but will also see its FCCIP assessment rise in the 3 subsequent years.

This scenario happened in Fiscal Year 2008 (FCCIP assessment = \$41,494), and the extra permit fees were voted in to this stabilization fund. The Town survived the subsequent assessment increases in FY 09 (\$58,472), 10 (\$54,193), and 11 (\$58,860) without needing to use the entire stabilization fund. The FCCIP assessment for FY 12 (\$37,213) has returned to normal levels, and there is no projected future need for the money in this stabilization fund.

This article is recommended by the Finance Committee.

Passed Unanimously

Article 11: Motion: Move the Town vote to raise and appropriate Six Thousand Two Hundred Eighty Three and 05/100 Dollars (\$6,283.05) to provide a 1.3% cost of living adjustment (COLA) for all Town employees and elected officials.

The Personnel Committee recommended a COLA of 1.3% to the Selectboard this spring. The Finance Committee voted 2 in favor, 2 opposed, and 1 abstention.

Passed by Majority

Article 12: Move the Town vote to raise by taxation One Million Two Hundred Ninety Seven Thousand Five Hundred Fifty Nine and 17/100 Dollars (\$1,297,559.17) and transfer Sixty Seven Thousand Six Hundred and 09/100 Dollars (\$67,600.09) from Sewer Use Fees for a total appropriation of One Million Three Hundred Sixty Five One Hundred Fifty Nine and 26/100 Dollars (\$1,365,159.26) for the maintenance of the several departments of the Town, and for other necessary charges, in accordance with the amount recommended by the Selectboard.

Please see the separate handout (orange paper) for the Omnibus amounts. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, and 1 opposed.

	A	B	C	D	E
	Omnibus Budget for 6/25/11 Annual Town Meeting Continuation	FY11 Approved with COLA	FY12 S'BD/FIN COM Recommendation	Increase / (Decrease)	% Change
1	GENERAL GOVERNMENT				
2	Moderator Salary	174.00	174.01	0.01	0.0%
3	Selectboard Salaries	6,853.35	6,853.35	-	0.0%

4	Selectboard Expenses	2,800.28	2,800.28	-	0.0%
5	Administrative Assistant (Salary & Exp.)	46,480.02	47,543.00	1,062.98	2.3%
6	Finance Committee	150.00	150.00	-	0.0%
7	Reserve Fund	1,500.00	1,500.00	-	0.0%
8	Accountant Expenses	200.00	200.00	-	0.0%
9	Assessors Salaries	8,322.16	8,322.16	-	0.0%
10	Assessors Clerical & Expenses	26,756.60	26,531.60	(225.00)	-0.8%
11	Treasurer Salary	16,344.58	16,344.58	-	0.0%
12	Treasurer Expenses	6,757.00	6,750.00	(7.00)	-0.1%
13	Tax Collector Salary	19,446.12	19,446.12	-	0.0%
14	Tax Collector Expenses	9,034.00	8,336.00	(698.00)	-7.7%
15	Legal	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	0.0%
16	IT Committee	1,700.00	1,700.00	-	0.0%
17	Town Clerk Salary	14,272.70	14,272.70	-	0.0%
18	Town Clerk Expenses	5,350.00	5,350.00	-	0.0%
19	Electors/Registrars	2,575.00	2,000.00	(575.00)	-22.3%
20	Conservation Commission	898.50	911.24	12.74	1.4%
21	Agricultural Commission	200.00	200.00	-	0.0%
22	Planning Board	1,700.50	1,738.72	38.22	2.2%
23	Zoning Board of Appeals	1,974.00	1,924.96	(49.04)	-2.5%
24	Energy Commission	-	200.00	200.00	
25	Town Hall/Riverside Bldg Operations	23,921.16	25,911.00	1,989.84	8.3%
26	Building Repairs & Maintenance	18,000.00	28,000.00	10,000.00	55.6%
27	Garage/Public Safety Bldg Operations	16,715.40	16,715.40	-	0.0%
28	GENERAL GOVERNMENT TOTAL	237,125.37	248,875.12	11,749.75	5.0%
29					
30	PUBLIC SAFETY				
31	Police Department	159,176.00	161,610.00	2,434.00	1.5%
32	Fire Department	66,134.56	67,308.97	1,174.41	1.8%
33	PUBLIC SAFETY TOTAL	225,310.56	228,918.97	3,608.41	1.6%
34					
35	PUBLIC WORKS				
36	Trees and Forestry	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	0.0%
37	Highway Department	251,298.43	201,238.00	(50,060.43)	-19.9%
38	Highway Dep't. - Snow & Ice Removal		53,212.23		
39	Dump Truck Debt Payment	32,265.00	30,159.00	(2,106.00)	-6.5%
40	Bridges and Street Lights	5,950.00	5,950.00	-	0.0%
41	Solid Waste & Recycling	72,826.00	72,686.00	(140.00)	-0.2%
42	Solid Waste District	3,227.00	3,168.00	(59.00)	-1.8%
43	Sewer	66,165.55	67,600.09	1,434.54	2.2%
44	Cemetery Commission	2,600.00	4,100.00	1,500.00	57.7%
45	Memorial Committee	645.00	645.00	-	0.0%
46	PUBLIC WORKS TOTAL	437,976.98	441,758.32	629.54	0.51
47					
48	HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES				
49	Board of Health Salaries	3,714.09	3,714.09	-	0.0%
50	Board of Health Clerical & Expenses	5,509.29	5,560.25	50.96	0.9%
51	Council on Aging	5,569.28	5,569.28	-	0.0%
52	Veterans Assessment	2,470.00	2,082.00	(388.00)	-15.7%
53	HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES TOTAL	17,262.66	16,925.62	(388.00)	-2.2%
54					
55	CULTURE & RECREATION				
56	Library	18,410.96	18,785.96	375.00	2.0%
57	Recreation Commission	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	0.0%
58	Historical Commission	860.00	860.00	-	0.0%
59	CULTURE & RECREATION TOTAL	22,270.96	22,645.96	375.00	1.7%
60					

61	FIXED COSTS				
62	Town Insurance	39,706.19	38,039.00	(1,667.19)	-4.2%
63	Mariamante Loan	19,817.00	15,830.24	(3,986.76)	-20.1%
64	Retirement	58,764.00	67,641.00	8,877.00	15.1%
65	Unemployment Fund	2,500.00	2,500.00	-	0.0%
66	Group Health and Life Insurance	76,869.20	82,979.48	6,110.28	7.9%
67	FIXED COSTS TOTAL	197,656.39	206,989.72	9,333.33	4.7%
68					
69	FRCOG ASSESSMENT				
70	Core & Statutory Assessments	9,827.00	9,967.00	140.00	1.4%
71	Accounting	18,423.00	18,367.00	(56.00)	-0.3%
72	Health Agent	6,244.00	6,204.00	(40.00)	-0.6%
73	Regional Emerg. Preparedness	-	100.00	100.00	
74	Procurement Services	2,380.00	2,381.00	1.00	0.0%
75	Cooperative Inspection Program	58,860.00	37,213.00	(21,647.00)	-36.8%
76	FRCOG ASSESSMENT TOTAL	95,734.00	74,232.00	(21,502.00)	-22.5%
77					
78	EDUCATION				
79	Gill-Montague Reg. Sch. Dist.	Special Article	Special Article		
80	GMRSD Bldg Loan	Special Article	Special Article		
81	Franklin County Technical School	108,339.00	133,985.00	25,646.00	23.7%
82	EDUCATION TOTAL	108,339.00	133,985.00	25,646.00	23.7%
83					
84	TOWN OPERATING BUDGET TOTAL	1,341,675.92	1,374,330.71	32,654.79	2.4%
85	Less Article 10 Bldg Insp Stabilization		9,171.45		
86	Less Transfer of Sewer User Fees	66,165.55	67,600.09		
87	TOTAL RAISED BY TAXATION	1,275,510.37	1,297,559.17	22,048.80	1.7%

Passed by Majority

Article 13: Motion: Move the Town vote to raise and appropriate by taxation One Million Three Hundred Ninety Thousand Four Hundred Seventy Six and 00/100 Dollars (\$1,390,476.00) to provide \$1,369,741.00 for its Fiscal Year 2012 operating assessment and \$20,735.00 for its Fiscal Year 2012 debt service costs for the Gill-Montague Regional School District.

Gill's share of the GMRSD's operating budget has increased by \$23,375 (1.74%) and the debt service decreased by \$5,137 (due to lower interest rates). Although the Town established an Education Stabilization fund last December, the Selectboard and Finance Committee believe the District's assessment is reasonable, and that the stabilization money should be saved for future years. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

Passed Unanimously

Article 14: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide any sum or sums of money for its Fiscal Year 2012 operating assessment and any sum or sums of money for its Fiscal Year 2012 debt service costs for the Gill-Montague Regional School District, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: Move to pass over Article 14.

Article 14 is redundant to Article 13.

Passed Unanimously

Article 15: Move the Town vote to raise and appropriate by taxation Three Thousand Three Hundred Fifty Nine and 64/100 Dollars (\$3,359.64) to pay Fiscal Year 2012 Veterans' Benefits.

Replace 2004 4WD Explorer with an All Wheel Drive cruiser
Replace 2005 Crown Vic cruiser

It is the Committee's understanding that the town has not purchased a cruiser since 1991; the department has received grants for all cruiser purchases during this time.

FIRE

Replace 1979 Ford Louisville tanker truck
Acquire and outfit a "new" brush truck (substantially completed March 2011)

The Fire Department was able to get a 5-quarter ton truck from the State through a surplus equipment program to replace the existing brush truck.

HIGHWAY

Replace 1985 Morbark brush/wood chipper
Replace 1986 Kubota tractor with a good used backhoe
Replace 1990 Ford dump truck

The Highway Department has in the past few years replaced a 20-year-old dump truck (debt exclusion) and a very old loader (Chapter 90 funds). The department is also acquiring a tractor with a roadside mower through a program with WMECO.

GILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Replace asphalt roof
Replace floor tile
Replace boiler (Siemens project)
Acquire and install Emergency Generator
Upgrade water and well components
Replace interior doors & locksets
Replace toilets and sinks
Update lightning protection system

SLATE MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Although the Library has many needs, none reach the threshold of this Committee at this time. However, the Committee appreciates the list and information that was provided.

RIVERSIDE MUNICIPAL BUILDING

The Town needs to determine future of this property. This building has many recognized needs such as boiler replacement, window upgrades and roof issues. However, the uncertainty of its future use makes it difficult for the Committee to prioritize any of the building's needs.

CEMETERY

The Town has a need to acquire additional land as our present town-owned cemeteries are running out of saleable burial plots.

ONGOING PROJECTS

Town Hall Walls – expecting the project to be performed by FCTS students in the fall of 2011
Energy Improvements at Gill Elementary School – expecting the project to be completed in the summer of 2011

Our departments and department heads have been very frugal with their budgets and the equipment provided to them. They have been very active in looking for and applying for grants to help offset costs to the town while allowing the town to update its equipment.

Respectfully Submitted,

Capital Improvement Planning Committee
Jason Edson, Chair

Passed Unanimously

Article 18: Move the Town vote to raise and appropriate by taxation Twenty Eight Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$28,000.00) to purchase a police cruiser and associated equipment for the police department.

The 2004 Ford Explorer has more than 80,000 miles on it, and is being recommended for replacement this year with a new Ford Taurus all-wheel-drive cruiser. The Explorer will be used by the highway department, but will also be available to the police and fire departments for emergencies and driving conditions that require 4-wheel-drive. The highway department's 1999 Chevy Blazer will be disposed of as surplus equipment. The police department has two other cruisers – a 2005 Crown Vic and a 2008 Crown Vic.

The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 3 in favor and 2 opposed.

Amendment: Move to amend Article 18 to read “Move the Town vote to appropriate Twenty Eight Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$28,000.00) to purchase a police cruiser and associated equipment for the police department, plus borrowing costs that may be associated with said purchase and authorize the Town Treasurer with the approval of the Selectboard to borrow in accordance with MGL Chapter 44, §7.

The main article would purchase and pay for the cruiser this year, without borrowing. The amended article envisions a 3-year loan at 2% APR. The total interest over the 3 years would amount to \$1,120. If borrowing occurs, the first payment of \$9,894 would not be due until August 2012, and would be a Fiscal Year 2013 expense.

Amendment Yes – 25 Passes

No - 17

Amended Motion Yes – 22 Fails, requires a 2/3 vote.

No--17

Article 19: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate by taxation, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide a sum or sums of money to fund the first year of a three year lease-to-own schedule for the purchase of a police cruiser and associated equipment for the police department, including borrowing costs that may be associated with said purchase and authorize the Town Treasurer with the approval of the Selectboard, to borrow in accordance with MGL Chapter 44, §7; all or some of which may be contingent upon a Proposition 2 1/2 debt exclusion vote override, or take any other action relative thereto. (A 2/3 vote is required for authorization to borrow.)

Motion: Move to pass over Article 19.

At the time the warrant articles were written, it was still uncertain which cruiser option, purchase or lease-to-own, would be the best for the Town's finances. The lease-to-own scenario is not recommended due to a 6.5% interest rate.

Passed Unanimously to pass over

Article 20: Move the Town vote to create a Capital Stabilization Fund for the purpose of funding any capital-related project, or pieces of capital equipment, or debt-service payment related thereto, as authorized by Chapter 40, Section 5B of the General Laws, as amended.

This article would establish a new stabilization fund for the purposes listed within the motion. Like any stabilization fund, a 2/3 vote of town meeting is required to move money in or out of the fund. Once voted into this fund, the money can only be voted for use on capital projects or voted for transfer to the general Stabilization Fund. The Capital Stabilization Fund is viewed as one important tool for meeting the Town's ever-growing list of upcoming building repairs and equipment replacements. The CIPC, Selectboard, and Finance Committee all recommend this article.

Passed Unanimously

Article 21: Move the Town vote to raise and appropriate by taxation Twenty Eight Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$28,000.00) to fund the Capital Stabilization Fund.

The motion for this article depends on A) the passage of Article 20, and B) the outcome of Article 18. A Proposition 2 ½ Override to fund this article is not anticipated or recommended at this time. A 2/3 majority vote is required to place money into a stabilization fund.

Passed Unanimously and declared a 2/3 vote.

Article 22: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide a sum or sums of money to purchase and install replacement interior doors and locksets for the Gill Elementary School, including borrowing costs that may be associated with said project and authorize the Town Treasurer with the approval of the Selectboard, to borrow in accordance with MGL Chapter 44, §7; all or some of which may be contingent upon a Proposition 2 1/2 debt exclusion vote override, or take any other action relative thereto. (A 2/3 vote is required for authorization to borrow.)

Motion: Move to pass over Article 22.

The requested amount for this project is \$20,000. At the time the budget figures were finalized, the Selectboard and Finance Committee felt they lacked the proper information about the need and/or requirements for additional security measures at the elementary school, and therefore recommend voters pass over the article.

Passed unanimously to pass over Article 22.

Article 23: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide a sum of money to improve the foundation drainage at the Slate Memorial Library, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: Move to pass over Article 23.

The Library Trustees, who requested this article, ask that it be passed over. While the library basement does have a moisture problem, the Trustees have decided to take a whole-building approach to understanding all of the maintenance and structural needs of the Library. Renaissance Builders has been hired to perform an assessment of the existing conditions, and to make prioritized recommendations for repairs, improvements, and renovations. This report is expected to be substantially complete by June 30, 2011, and its \$1,100 cost is being funded through the FY 2011 Building Maintenance & Repairs account.

Passed Unanimously to pass over Article 23.

Article 24: To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum or sums of money from Sewer Use Fees to the Riverside Sewer System account to offset Fiscal Year 2012 sewer expenses and to pay the Tax Collector as related to collecting sewer fees, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: Move to pass over Article 24.

The motion for Article 12 (Omnibus) includes the \$67,600.09 transfer from Sewer Use Fees to fund the FY 2012 operating costs of the Riverside Sewer System. The Accountant asked that this article be combined with the Omnibus article in order to simplify reporting to the Mass. Dept. of Revenue.

Passed Unanimously to pass over Article 24.

Article 25: Move the Town vote to transfer from the Released Overlay account Four Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$4,000.00) for the First Light Appraisal account to be used toward a portion of the cost of a future appraisal of the real and personal property in the Town of Gill owned by FirstLight Hydro Generating Company.

Every three years the Department of Revenue requires the Assessors to obtain a new appraisal of the value of the Gill portion of the Turners Falls Dam, as well as other property in Gill owned by

FirstLight. This article adds to the account established last year for saving toward the next appraisal.

Passed Unanimously

Article 26: Move the Town vote to transfer from the Released Overlay account Three Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$3,000.00) for the Board of Assessors' Triennial Revaluation account.

Fiscal Year 2014 will be the next triennial recertification year for Gill, in which the Department of Revenue will review and certify property values town wide. Because of the added level of research and analysis, the Assessors incur extra costs during revaluation years. This article begins saving toward the next reval.

Passed Unanimously

Article 27: Move the Town vote to raise and appropriate by taxation Five Hundred Fifty Five and 50/100 Dollars (\$555.50) to pay Temporary Loan Interest for short-term borrowing relating to the energy project at the Gill Elementary School.

Ultimately, the costs of the energy project (boiler replacement, energy management system, lighting upgrades, and sealing around univent heaters) will be paid for from energy savings, and financed using a 15-year Qualified Energy Conservation Bond with an effective interest rate between 0.50 and 1.00%. In order to begin the project this summer, a 6-month short-term loan of \$110,000 was needed. This article provides the funds to pay the interest on the loan when it comes due in December.

Passed Unanimously

Article 28: Move the Town vote to raise and appropriate Seven Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$7,000.00) for the repair and/or replacement of the well and/or water system components at the Gill Elementary School.

Although it tests safe for consumption, the water at the elementary school does have odor and visible sediment. This article will fund a project to excavate the topmost well casing extension and inspect the casing weld, as well as open the well, raise the pump, and assess the conditions in the well. The well cap will be replaced with a lockable cap. The \$7,000 includes a contingency in the event that the 30+ year-old well pump is in need of replacement. It is hoped that this basic maintenance, along with a regular flushing of the water lines, will greatly reduce or eliminate the issues with water quality.

Passed Unanimously

Article 29: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate from taxation or transfer from available funds a sum of money for the Stabilization Fund, or take any action relative thereto. (A 2/3 majority is required to place money into a stabilization fund.)

Motion: Move the Town vote to raise and appropriate from taxation Eleven Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$11,000.00) for the Stabilization Fund.

Depending on the outcomes of the other "money" articles, a higher or lower amount may be recommended to go into Stabilization. There is currently \$119,609 in the Stabilization Fund. A 2/3 majority vote is required to place money into Stabilization.

Passed Unanimously

Article 30: To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum of money from unappropriated funds (Free Cash) to be used to reduce the tax rate and stabilize the tax levy for Fiscal Year 2012, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: Move the Town vote to transfer One Hundred Forty Seven Thousand Eight Hundred Fourteen Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$147,814.00) from unappropriated funds (Free Cash), and further transfer Ten

Thousand Eight Hundred Forty Seven and 67/100 (\$10,847.67) from Released Overlay, for a total of One Hundred Fifty Eight Thousand Six Hundred Sixty One and 67/100 Dollars (\$158,661.67) to be used to reduce the tax rate and stabilize the tax levy for Fiscal Year 2012.

Depending on the outcomes of the other "money" articles, a higher or lower amount may be recommended to be used to reduce the FY 2012 tax rate.

Passed Unanimously

Article 31: To see if the Town will vote to approve that, upon exceeding the levy limit, any monies appropriated that exceed the levy limit may be contingent upon the approval by the voters of an "Override of Proposition 2 ½," or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: Move to pass over Article 31.

The motions that are presented in this handout will result in a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2012, and will not require a Proposition 2 ½ Override.

Passed Unanimously to pass over Article 31.

Article 32: Move the Town vote to amend Section 2.F.5.d of the Town of Gill Zoning Bylaws by adding the following language to the existing paragraph: "Signs in excess of ten (10) feet in height but not more than twenty (20) feet in height may be allowed by Special Permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals as outlined in F.1 above."

This amendment was requested by the Zoning Board of Appeals in order to allow greater flexibility in working with Gill businesses on signage needs. Under the current zoning bylaws, signs in excess of 10 feet in height are allowed only by a variance, which is difficult to grant because of a very narrow set of conditions that must be met. The Planning Board held the required public hearing on the amendment on June 2, 2011, and subsequently voted unanimously (5-0) to recommend the adoption of the amendment to the Gill Zoning Bylaws. A 2/3 majority vote by Town Meeting is required to amend zoning bylaws.

Passed Unanimously

During the meeting, the following request was made by Paul Seamans. The Moderator stated that it would be presented as a motion in new business at the end of the Annual Town Meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Motion: Move the town create a statement of town support and sympathy in recognition of the contribution by town resident Chris Demars and his family, as well as to the sacrifices of all town Veterans of Foreign Wars as recommended here, today by Paul T. Seamans.

A Citizen of the Town of Gill

TESTIMONIALS

William A. Burnham

June 25, 2011

Presented by Gary Bourbeau

Thank you for setting this moment aside for the purpose of saying farewell to an active participant in the affairs of our community.

Bill Burnham passed away on the morning of May 25th, losing a courageous battle against cancer. It is unlikely there are more than a few here who don't know his life with his involvement in:

The ZBA

The Bee Association

Maple Sugaring

Agricultural Commission

Visitors Center in Greenfield

The Survival Center

American Legion

Friends of Gill

Volunteering at the Gill Elementary School

He may have taught your child, or even you, social studies at Greenfield Middle School.

He may have just been a person interested in your life, or a friend and neighbor as he was to me.

He was a fellow member of the Gill Church.

The church was very important to Bill, more so because it is the "Gill Church". Few places of worship are more quintessential "New England" than that building across the street. Bill loved his country, New England, the town of Gill and the Lord. To be sure, Bill grasped what a treasure Gill is with its small town values such as neighborhood, community and the nature of its rural character.

He narrowed down the command of Jesus Christ to "Love thy neighbor as thyself," as his defining approach to life. As his closest neighbors, Merri and I naturally reaped the benefits of that credo. He and I frequently shared greetings across our property, our voices echoing off the hillside, our wives admonishing us that the other neighbors didn't necessarily appreciate our early morning enthusiasm. It was Bill who eventually initiated the expression "hallelujah" into our cross boundary ritual, due to his love and appreciation for God's creation. Indeed, the morning of May 25 was a beautiful spring day, Betsy and I tearfully agreeing, it was a "hallelujah day".

As a close friend and closest neighbor, I thank you for joining me in remembering a life well lived, saying goodbye to a significant asset to our community, and the hope that Bill is in eternal peace with his Lord and Savior. Thank you Bill, and farewell.

Anthony A. Mathews

Presented by Tim Storrow

Written by Ken Sprankle

The Town of Gill lost an important member of its community on January 17, 2011. Tony Mathews passed away in his home in Gill after living a courageous year and a half with brain cancer. Tony came to this area in the late 1960s, originally from California, and became a member of the Montague Farm commune for thirteen years. In 1985, Tony settled on Boyle Road in a home he built with his partner Susan Kramer to raise their family and began his business as a cabinet maker, home builder and carpenter, earning a reputation for his beautiful and talented work. Tony and Sue raised their two children Phoebe and Cory in Gill and along the way both became engaged with numerous volunteer efforts that were important to them both, improving our community. Tony's contributions to Gill were significant and include serving on the Conservation Commission for twenty five years, the final ten as its Chairman. His work on the Commission was appreciated and respected by his fellow members and those having business with the Commission due to the thoughtful and balanced approach he brought to the many regulatory responsibilities of that body. His good humor and wisdom served the town well on many potentially

contentious issues. In this official role he also supported many measures to keep Gill's beautiful natural and agricultural landscapes, assisting in the protection of hundreds of acres of land throughout town, through the use of different conservation programs. Other notable contributions include volunteering for the Gill Elementary School, Slate Library, Gill's Conservation Areas, Connecticut River Erosion Committee, and Habitat for Humanity. Perhaps most importantly, he was a kind, giving man, generous with his time and talents, and was known as a good friend to many, many people. He is sorely missed, but will be well remembered for his time with us.

A true copy

Attest:

Synda Hobden Mayo
Town Clerk

Date:

July 5, 2011