

May 7, 2018
Annual Town Meeting



**Please use the microphone
when recognized to speak.**

It greatly improves the audio quality of the recording, which is kept as an archival record of the meeting.

Volunteers Wanted

The Town is always looking for residents who might be able to volunteer for one of Gill's many boards, committees, councils and commissions. If you think you might be interested in joining any of these groups, please contact the Chair, or contact Ray Purington at 863-9347.

Agricultural Commission (Ray Steele, 863-2443)

Board of Assessors (Bill Tomb, 863-2475)

Capital Improvement Planning Committee (Greg Snedeker, 863-8168)

Council on Aging (Bev Demars, 863-4792)

Energy Commission (Vicky Jenkins, 325-5722)

Finance Committee (Claire Chang, 626-3620)

Recreation Committee (Nick Stevens, 977-8609)

Zoning Board of Appeals (Suzanne Smiley, 863-8174)

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

FRANKLIN, SS.

TOWN OF GILL

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING: MAY 7, 2018

To any of the Constables of the Town of Gill in the County of Franklin,

Greetings:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby directed to notify and warn the inhabitants of said town, qualified to vote in elections and in town affairs, to meet at the Gill Town Hall in said Town on Monday, the Seventh day of May, in the year Two Thousand and Eighteen (5/7/2018) at 6:30 PM then and there to act on the following articles:

Article 1: To hear and act upon the Annual Report of the Officers of the Town, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved to pass over Article 1.

Progress has been slow during the past year. There will be a rededicated effort this summer to catch up, even if it means certain long overdue board/committee/departments reports are omitted. Additionally, if funding can be found and Town Meeting approves the new part-time "Administrative Clerk" position, Annual Reports will be the top priority for that person.

Article 2: To elect the following officers: Two or more Field Drivers; Fence Viewers; Measurers of Wood, Bark and Surveyors of Lumber - all for one year, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved 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.

Article 3: To see if the Town will vote to accept and expend any sum of money that might be made available from State or Federal funds for roadwork for the Fiscal Year 2019 and for the Chapter 90 type funds, authorize the Selectboard to enter into contracts with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Transportation, and to authorize the Treasurer with the approval of the Selectboard to borrow in anticipation of reimbursement, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to accept and expend any sum of money that might be made available from State or Federal funds for roadwork for the Fiscal Year 2019 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, applying new oil & stone, grading gravel roads, and drainage and guardrail projects. The Town will receive \$148,221 for Fiscal Year 2019.

Article 4: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to accept, for no consideration a gift of land from Renee Jenkins, who lives at 19 Boyle Road. She would like to gift a piece of historically significant land on River Road, where Herbert B. Hasting's Old Blacksmith Shop used to stand. This land contains .08 acres more or less and is near Gill Center on the Beaver Brook. The land is referenced in a Deed recorded at the Franklin County Registry of Deeds (Book 1120, Page 18). It is shown on Assessors' Map 212, Lot 3., or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to authorize the Select Board to accept, for no consideration, a gift of land from Renee Jenkins, who lives at 19 Boyle Road. She would like to gift a piece of historically significant land on River Road, where Herbert B. Hastings' Old Blacksmith Shop used to stand. This land contains 0.08 acres more or less and is near Gill Center on the Beaver Brook. The land is referenced in a Deed recorded at the Franklin County Registry of Deeds (Book 1120, Page 18). It is shown on Assessors' Map 212, Lot 3.

The property has an assessed value of \$900 and annual taxes of \$15.46. During the Town Meeting there will be a discussion of the historical significance of this property.

On a related note, hanging on the wall and marked with yellow Post-Its, are three photographs of Herbert Hastings and his Blacksmith Shop. This photo exhibit was arranged by the Gill Historical Commission as part of the celebration of the 225th anniversary of the Town's incorporation.

Article 5: To see if the Town will vote to delete the first sentence of the second paragraph of the Town's Agricultural Commission bylaw and replace it with "The Commission shall consist of **between three and nine** members appointed by the Moderator, of which the majority of the membership shall be substantially engaged in the pursuit of agriculture.", and further delete the second sentence of the fourth paragraph and replace it with "The Moderator shall appoint additional members to initial terms of one, two, or three years and three thereafter, in such a way as **to maintain a balance of the number of members' terms that** expire in any given year.", or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to delete the first sentence of the second paragraph of the Town's Agricultural Commission bylaw and replace it with "The Commission shall consist of **between three and nine** members appointed by the Moderator, of which the majority of the membership shall be substantially engaged in the pursuit of agriculture.", and further delete the second sentence of the fourth paragraph and replace it with "The Moderator shall appoint additional members to initial terms of one, two, or three years and three thereafter, in such a way as **to maintain a balance of the number of members' terms that** expire in any given year."

This article was requested by the Agricultural Commission as a way to more reliably achieve a quorum at their meetings. For the last eight months, there have only been four appointed members on the Commission, but the Town's bylaw sets the membership at seven. According to the Open Meeting Law, a quorum is a majority of the membership, so in this case, a quorum is four of the seven members. That means all four members must attend in order for the AgCom to legally meet and conduct business.

Ideally, more people would join the AgCom, which would relieve the burden of perfect attendance from the members. However, new volunteers have not stepped forward.

The proposal in this article was developed after consulting with an attorney from the Attorney General's Division of Open Government. By allowing the membership to be a range, a quorum is then considered to be a majority of the appointed members. So if, for example, there are nine appointed members, the quorum is five. If there are only four members, the quorum is three.

The Agricultural Commission recommends this article.

The current Agricultural Commission bylaw is as follows:

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION

*Passed May 1, 2006
Passed May 9, 2011*

The purpose of the Agricultural Commission will be to support agriculture and other farming activities in the Town of Gill. The Commission's duties shall include but will not be limited to the following: serve as facilitators for encouraging the pursuits of agriculture in Gill; promote agricultural-based opportunities in Town; act as mediators, advocates, educators, and/or negotiators on farming issues; work for the preservation of prime agricultural lands; advise the Board of Selectman, or any other appropriate Town Boards on issues involving agriculture; and shall pursue all initiatives appropriate to creating a sustainable agricultural community.

*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. All members of the Commission must either be residents of the town, or owners and farmers of agricultural property within the town. There may be up to three alternates appointed to the Commission by the Moderator that will serve to fill any vacancies at a meeting of the Commission.*

In making appointments, the Moderator is asked specifically to consider the intent of the Commission to represent the agricultural interests of the Town.

*The terms will be as follows: Two members for a term of three years; two members for a term of two years and three thereafter; and one member for a term of one year and three years thereafter. **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 a given year.***

The Moderator shall fill a vacancy based on the unexpired term of the vacancy in order to maintain the cycle of appointments, based upon the recommendations of the Commission.

*Approved by the Attorney General August 7, 2006
Approved by the Attorney General July 18, 2011*

Article 6: To see if the Town will vote to delete the first sentence of the Town’s Finance Committee bylaw and replace it with “The Finance Committee shall consist of **between five and nine** members, appointed by the Moderator for three year overlapping terms.”, and further delete the second sentence of the bylaw, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to delete the first sentence of the Town’s Finance Committee bylaw and replace it with “The Finance Committee shall consist of **between five and nine** members, appointed by the Moderator for three year overlapping terms.”, and further delete the second sentence of the bylaw.

This article was requested by the Finance Committee after learning about the Agricultural Commission’s article. The seven-member FinCom had five or six appointed members from March to December 2017, and only five members from December 2017 up until last week when a sixth member joined. The reason for this article is the same – to more reliably achieve a quorum to allow the FinCom to meet and conduct business.

The second sentence is felt to be no longer relevant to the appointment or operation of the FinCom and is proposed to be deleted.

The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 1 absent.

The current Finance Committee bylaw is as follows:

FINANCE COMMITTEE

*Passed July 2, 1985
Passed June 7, 2004
Passed June 25, 2011*

The Finance Committee shall consist of seven members, appointed by the Moderator for three year overlapping terms. All appointments are to be made within 30 days after annual election.

*Approved by Attorney General August 19, 1985
Approved by Attorney General July 16, 2004
Approved by the Attorney General July 15, 2011*

Article 7: To see if the Town will vote to accept Chapter 90, Section 18B of the Massachusetts General Laws authorizing the Selectboard to establish designated safety zones on, at, or near any public way in the Town of Gill, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to accept Chapter 90, Section 18B of the Massachusetts General Laws authorizing the Selectboard to establish designated safety zones on, at, or near any public way in the Town of Gill.

In the summer of 2017 the Town was approached by officials from the Northfield Mount Hermon School with a request for help controlling vehicle speeds on the section of Mount Hermon Road in front of the new Bolger Center for Early Childhood Education. Speed bumps were considered and dismissed (wear and tear on the road, winter upkeep, and liability concerns), and a “School Zone” isn’t applicable (School Zones are only for grades 1 through 8; daycare children are too young and high school students are too old!).

Safety zones, which were made possible by this law passed in 2016, seem like an appropriate solution for this situation and other locations in Gill with regular pedestrian traffic, no sidewalks, and narrow road shoulders. A safety zone has an enforceable speed limit of 20 miles per hour.

Upon passage of this article, the Selectboard may establish a safety zone by first performing an engineering study of any portion of a town road. The extent of the study is at the Selectboard’s discretion, and the study does not get reviewed or approved by MassDOT. The study is kept on file by the Town, and should have whatever detail is felt to be necessary to defend the safety zone, should anyone ever choose to challenge it. Once the study is complete, it takes a vote of the Selectboard to create the safety zone.

This article is supported by Gill's Chief of Police.

Article 8: To see if the Town will vote to accept Chapter 64N, Section 3 of the Massachusetts General Laws imposing an excise on the retail sales of marijuana for adult use at the rate of three (3) percent, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to accept Chapter 64N, Section 3 of the Massachusetts General Laws imposing an excise on the retail sales of marijuana for adult use at the rate of three (3) percent.

So far, no recreational marijuana businesses have expressed interest in locating in Gill. By adopting this local excise, it presents the opportunity for significant additional revenue for the Town, should such a business (or businesses) ever open here. Similar to the 0.75% local meals tax, the local excise on the retail sales of marijuana is collected by the Department of Revenue and distributed to the Town on a quarterly schedule.

Article 9: To see if the Town will vote to rescind Article 7 of the Special Town Meeting of September 27, 1994 which established a five-member Machinery Committee, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to rescind Article 7 of the Special Town Meeting of September 27, 1994 which established a five-member Machinery Committee.

Although the 1994 vote passed unanimously, for whatever reasons the Machinery Committee was never appointed by the Moderator. According to the 1994 vote, the Machinery Committee was to "...assess the condition of all present town-owned equipment, confer with departments, and assist in the development of a capital plan for repair, or replacement, of major equipment. This Committee would also study the need and recommend the purchase of additional equipment."

The Selectboard was somewhat recently reminded of this vote, and in June 2017 they established and appointed a three-member Machinery Advisory Committee to function in place of the Machinery Committee. The Machinery Advisory Committee is expected to "...confer with department heads and assess and report on the condition of all town-owned equipment on a twice-yearly basis. When requested by the Selectboard, the Committee shall advise on assessing equipment repairs. The Committee shall advise the Capital Improvement Planning Committee (CIPC) on the repair or replacement of equipment included in the CIPC's capital plan."

With the original purposes of the Machinery Committee now being fulfilled by the new Machinery Advisory Committee, the vote from 1994 has been made obsolete.

Article 10: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds \$3,000.00 (Three Thousand and 00/100 Dollars) to be used by the Gill 225th Planning Committee toward expenses related to the celebration of the Town's Quasquibicentennial, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to transfer from Free Cash \$3,000.00 (THREE THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS) to be used by the Gill 225th Planning Committee toward expenses related to the celebration of the Town's Quasquibicentennial.

The highlight event of our town's 225th year will be a picnic and pig roast at the Riverside School on July 28th. The date coincides with the Franklin County Boat Club's annual Christmas in July festivities, which include a fireworks show over Barton Cove. Donations are being sought, but this appropriation from the Town will allow us to make a meaningful contribution toward expanding the fireworks show, as well as defraying costs of other events.

The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 1 absent.

Article 11: To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to Chapter 164, Section 134 of the Massachusetts General Laws, to grant the Selectboard the authority to research, develop and participate in a contract, or contracts, to aggregate the electricity load of residents and businesses in the Town and for other related services, independently, or in joint action with other municipalities, retaining the right of individual residents and businesses to opt-out of the aggregation, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote, pursuant to Chapter 164, Section 134 of the Massachusetts General Laws, to grant the Selectboard the authority to research, develop and participate in a contract, or contracts, to

aggregate the electricity load of residents and businesses in the Town and for other related services, independently, or in joint action with other municipalities, retaining the right of individual residents and businesses to opt-out of the aggregation.

Electricity aggregation was originally approved at Gill's Town Meeting in 2011, and called for the Town to work with the Hampshire Council of Governments (HCOG) to develop an aggregation plan. Those first efforts didn't pan out, as the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities did not approve any of the HCOG's plans due to concerns with procedure and organizational structure. The concept of aggregation, however, is still a sound one, and is being used by many cities and towns throughout Massachusetts, including Bernardston, Greenfield, and Heath, locally.

By combining the electricity needs of most residents and businesses in town, and by combining our electricity needs with those of other towns, we will be buying enough electricity in bulk to be able to offer better pricing, longer price stability, and more green energy options than are available from Eversource as the default electricity supplier.

This year the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) has been helping thirteen towns, including Gill, take the beginning steps toward a fresh attempt at electricity aggregation. A more detailed handout about this project is attached (yellow paper).

The 2011 vote was specific to working with the HCOG. For the Town to participate in electricity aggregation, this new authorization is required.

Article 12: To see if the Town will vote to accept any sum of money that might be made available from the Quintus Allen Trust during Fiscal Year 2019, and authorize the Selectboard to expend such funds in support of the Gill Elementary School, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to accept any sum of money that might be made available from the Quintus Allen Trust during Fiscal Year 2019, and authorize the Selectboard to expend such funds in support of the Gill Elementary School.

Quintus Allen was an original trustee of the Greenfield Savings Bank. Upon his death in 1884, he established a trust fund to be used for education-related expenses in Colrain, Gill, Leyden, and Shelburne. The interest earned by the Trust is distributed to those towns each year. The Town received \$1,881 from the Trust this year, and there is a balance of \$4,146 in the Town's Quintus Allen account.

In recent years the School has used the Quintus Allen funds for:

*2018 Outdoor Learning Center (\$3,173 to date, in progress)
2017 Chromebook Computers (24) & Storage Cart (\$6,050.00)
2016 Climbing Wall & Gear (\$1,329.21)
2015 Nature Program Coordinator & Equipment (\$2,915.60)
2014 Student Clay Tile Mural (\$1,920.59)
2014 Stipend for Afterschool ACT Play Assistant (\$250.00)
2012 Soccer Goals and Sports Equipment (\$1,351.59)
2011 Artist-in-Residence, all-school performance of scripts written by each class (\$3,000.00)
2009 Upgrade to Electrical Panel to allow for a computer lab and classroom computers (\$6,625.00)*

Article 13: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide \$1,630,170.00 (One Million Six Hundred Thirty Thousand One Hundred Seventy and 00/100 Dollars) to provide \$1,619,622.00 for its Fiscal Year 2019 operating assessment and \$10,548.00 for its Fiscal Year 2019 debt service costs for the Gill-Montague Regional School District, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to raise and appropriate by taxation \$1,630,170.00 (ONE MILLION SIX HUNDRED THIRTY THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY AND 00/100 DOLLARS) to provide \$1,619,622.00 for its Fiscal Year 2019 operating assessment and \$10,548.00 for its Fiscal Year 2019 debt service costs for the Gill-Montague Regional School District.

The GMRSD's total Fiscal Year 2019 "General Fund" budget and "All Funds" budget both increased by 0.5%. The overall operating assessment to both towns increased by 4.27%, with Gill seeing a 0.20% increase and Montague 4.99%. Gill's assessment for the GMRSD's operating budget has increased by \$3,179 and the debt service for the high school/middle school renovation project decreased by \$3,746.

The GMRSD is to be commended for presenting a budget that will provide a quality education for our children while staying within the two towns' ability to pay. In recognition of the challenges facing our District, a "Civic Leaders" group comprised of District, School Committee, and Town officials has been meeting regularly since August to search for possible solutions. In November, the Massachusetts Department of Revenue awarded a \$109,998 Efficiency and Regionalization Grant to the District to identify and implement innovative ways to consolidate services and programs among the Gill-Montague Regional School District, Franklin County Technical School, and Pioneer Valley Regional School District.

A handout from the GMRSD is attached (blue paper).

The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 0 absent.

Article 14: To see if the Town will 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 unspent money remaining in the fund at the end of each fiscal year, or take any action relative thereto:

Dept. Spend	Authorized to	Types of Receipts Credited	Program/Purpose for which Funds may be Expended	Maximum Annual Expenditures
Fire Dept.		Oil Burner Inspection Fees	Inspector & Etc.	\$2,000.00
Town Clerk, Animal Control Officer		Dog Fees & Fines	Licenses, Dog Care & Control, & Etc.	4,000.00
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
Zoning Board of Appeals		ZBA Fees	Hearings & Expenses	2,000.00
Board of Health, Administrative Assistant		Recycling Program Revenue	Solid waste & recycling programs, Solid Waste District membership, recycled-content office products	5,000.00

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to authorize the listed 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 as recommended by the Selectboard, and total expenditures for the fiscal year beginning July 1 next will be limited to the amounts listed, with all unspent money remaining in the fund at the end of each fiscal year:

This is the same list of revolving funds that was approved last year. A revolving fund allows program fees to be used within the fiscal year for the purposes listed by the "department" that collects the fees.

Motion: It is moved to continue the remainder of the Annual Town Meeting to Tuesday, June 19, 2018 at 7:00 PM at the Gill Town Hall.

The Town has not yet finished its budget process for Fiscal Year 2019. The Selectboard recommends continuing Annual Town Meeting to a later date, at which time the remaining articles will be presented. A Special Town Meeting is anticipated for June 19th to address any capital improvement projects or purchases that may be recommended.

STOPPING POINT



Article 15: To see if the Town will vote to fix the salaries or compensation of the several officers of the Town as follows, or take any action relative thereto:

Constable(s) – Each Posting	\$
Moderator – Annual Town Meeting	\$
Special Town Meeting, Each	\$
Selectboard Chair	\$
2 nd & 3 rd Member, Each	\$
Board of Assessors Chair	\$
2 nd & 3 rd Member, Each	\$
Board of Health Chair	\$
2 nd & 3 rd Member, Each	\$
Town Clerk	\$
Tax Collector	\$
Additional As Sewer Fee Collector	\$
Treasurer	\$
Registrars – Three members, Each	\$
Town Clerk, as Chair	\$

Article 16: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds any sum or sums of money to provide a cost of living adjustment (COLA) for Town employees and elected officials, or take any action relative thereto.

Article 17: 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 the maintenance of the several departments of the Town (the “Omnibus budget”), and for other necessary charges, in accordance with the amount recommended by the Selectboard, or take any action relative thereto.

Article 18: To see if the Town will vote to establish the position of “Assistant to the Administrative Assistant”, by that name or any other, and to raise and appropriate by taxation, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide any sum or sums of money for the wages and expenses thereof, or take any action relative thereto.

Article 19: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate by taxation, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide any sum or sums of money to pay into the General Obligation Energy Conservation Bond Sinking Fund, and to pay supplemental interest associated with said bond, both relating to the energy project at the Gill Elementary School, or take any action relative thereto.

Article 20: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate by taxation or transfer from available funds \$2,000.00 (Two Thousand and 00/100 Dollars) to add to the First Light Appraisal Account to be used toward the cost of a 5-year appraisal of the real and personal property in the Town of Gill owned by FirstLight Hydro Generating Company, or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 21: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate by taxation or transfer from available funds \$2,000.00 (Two Thousand and 00/100 Dollars) to add to the Board of Assessors Revaluation Account, or take any action relative thereto.

Article 22: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate by taxation or transfer from available funds \$5,000.00 (Five Thousand and 00/100 Dollars) for the Town Audit Account to be used toward a portion of the cost to conduct an independent financial audit of the Town, or take any action relative thereto.

Article 23: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate from taxation or transfer from available funds a sum or sums of money for the Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust Fund, or take any action relative thereto.

Article 24: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate from taxation or transfer from available funds a sum or sums of money for one or more of the Stabilization Funds of the Town (Capital, Education, Energy, or General), or take any action relative thereto.

Article 25: To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum of money or sums of money from unappropriated funds (Free Cash) or other available funds to be used to reduce the tax rate and stabilize the tax levy for Fiscal Year 2019, or take any action relative thereto.

Article 26: Resolution in Support of Changing the State Flag and Seal of Massachusetts

Whereas the history of the State of Massachusetts is replete with instances of conflict between the European Colonists and the Native Nations of the region, who first extended the hand of friendship to the Colonists on their shores in 1620, and helped them to survive starvation in their first winters on their land;

Whereas members of the Native Nation for whom the State of Massachusetts is named were ambushed and killed by Myles Standish, first commander of the Plymouth Colony, in April of 1623, barely two years after the Pilgrims arrived on their shores;

Whereas the naked Colonial broadsword brandished above the head of the Native man on the Massachusetts State Flag and Seal is copied from Myles Standish's own broadsword, borrowed from the Pilgrim Hall in Plymouth by the illustrator Edmund Garrett in 1884;

Whereas the belt binding the Native's cloak on the Flag and Seal is modeled after a belt worn by Metacomet, known to the English as King Philip, who was among the Wampanoag leaders who resorted to a mutually destructive war in 1675-76 in defense of Native lands against Euro-Colonial encroachment;

Whereas the proportions of the body of the Native man in the Flag and Seal were taken from a Native skeleton kept in Winthrop, the bow modeled after a bow taken from a Native man shot and killed by a colonist in Sudbury in 1665, and his features taken from a photograph of an Ojibwe chief from Great Falls, Montana, considered by the illustrator to be a "fine specimen of an Indian," though not from Massachusetts;

Whereas the history of relations between Massachusetts since Colonial times and the Native Nations who continue to live within its borders includes the forced internment of thousands of so-called "praying Indians" on Deer Island, in Boston Harbor, where they died by the hundreds of exposure in 1675, their subsequent enslavement in Boston, Bermuda, and the Caribbean Islands, the offering of 40 pounds sterling as bounty for the scalps of Native men, women and children in Massachusetts beginning in 1686, increased to 100 pounds sterling for the scalps of Native adult males by 1722, half that amount for Native women and children;

Whereas Native Nations within the boundaries of Massachusetts were kept in a state of serfdom, and their members legally considered incompetent wards of the state until the nonviolent action of the so-called Mashpee Rebellion of 1833 led to the granting of Native self rule by the Massachusetts legislature in 1834, as if the sovereign right of Native self-government was the Massachusetts legislature's to confer;

Whereas Native Americans were legally prohibited from even stepping foot into Boston from 1675 until 2004, when that law was finally repealed;

Whereas the 400th anniversary of the landing of the Euro-Colonists at Plymouth Plantation, which gave rise to the long chain of genocidal wars and deliberate policies of cultural destruction against Native Nations of this continent, is approaching in the year 2020, affording every citizen of the Commonwealth a chance to reflect upon this history and come to a new awareness of a better relationship between the descendants of the Euro-Colonial immigrants and the Native Nations of these shores;

And whereas Native Americans have long suffered the many abuses of racism, the appropriation of their symbols for public schools and sports teams, the diminution and pollution of their ancestral lands and the encroachment of their cultural lifeways;

Therefore we, the voters of the Town of Gill, support the bill introduced by State Representative Byron Rushing, (D-Suffolk) H-1707 calling for an investigation by a special commission, including members of the legislature and representatives of Native Nations of Massachusetts, to recommend changes to the State Flag and Seal of the Commonwealth.



Franklin Regional Council of Governments

FRANKLIN COUNTY MUNICIPAL ELECTRICITY SUPPLY AGGREGATION PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET

The Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) is helping to organize a multi-town effort to aggregate the purchase of residential and commercial electricity. Thirteen towns in Franklin County are currently participating in this project. The goal is for towns to collectively control the electricity supply purchase process and to take advantage of economies of scale to realize better pricing, price stability and/or encourage the development of renewable energy resources across New England.

What is Municipal Electricity Aggregation?

1. Municipal aggregation is the process by which a municipality purchases electricity in bulk from a competitive supplier on behalf of the residents and businesses within the community
2. Massachusetts General Law Chapter 164, Section 134 lays out the legal process
3. Allows the town to procure competitive electric supply on behalf of participating residents and businesses
4. A municipality may join with other municipalities to procure competitive supply.
5. Customer participation is voluntary and customers will be provided an opportunity to opt-out of participating in a municipal aggregation program. Customers who do not opt out initially will be automatically enrolled in the aggregation program, but may opt out at any time in the future.
6. Eversource or National Grid still handles the customer billing and the maintenance of transmission lines. Everything will look the same to the customer. (Eversource services all Gill customers.)
7. Going out to bid for electricity on behalf of all combined residents and businesses can lead to:
 - Better pricing
 - Price stability by locking in over a longer term, and/or
 - A broader choice of green electricity to help push a shift to more renewable energy production and away from higher polluting fossil fuels.

How does a Town Create a Municipal Aggregation?

1. Majority vote at Town Meeting to initiate the municipal aggregation program through the Select Board,
2. Prepare a municipal aggregation plan in consultation with the MA Department of Energy Resources (DOER), often in partnership with an aggregation consultant
3. Allow an opportunity for citizen review of the municipal aggregation plan
4. Submit the municipal aggregation plan to the MA Department of Public Utilities (DPU) for review and approval

How will a Regional Aggregation Work?

1. Combine the buying power of multiple towns together in one process.
2. Interested town select boards appointed a representative to a selection committee that prepared and issued an RFP for a licensed electricity aggregator. One proposal was received and the committee decided to award to Colonial Power Group. The aggregator is a consultant that will work on behalf of all the participating towns to help them through the rest of the process, including bidding and contracting for electricity supply.
3. The aggregator will work with each town to prepare an aggregation plan and consult with DOER. The aggregator will then file the plan with the DPU and assist the town with answering questions.
4. The aggregation plan includes an organizational structure (roles and responsibilities of everyone involved), operations (education, outreach, opt-out process), program funding (What are the fees collected? Who is collecting? Who is paying program expenses? etc.), activation and termination of the plan, rate setting and other costs to participants, and rights and responsibilities of customer participants
5. Once approved by the DPU, the plan guides the process the aggregator will follow to prepare bid documents, solicit bids, compare bids and recommend a supplier.
6. The goal is to set up a multi-tiered bid in which there is a basic price and then additional pricing if residents want to choose greener options. This allows towns to join together in a single group process, but still meet the varied desires of residents with differing goals.
7. Town select boards will retain the authority to make decisions on behalf of their residents, including all contracts, plan approvals and bid awards.

What will it Cost?

1. Towns can participate with no up-front outlay of money. FRCOG is using grant funds to issue an RFP for an aggregator, for legal review of a template contract, and for staff to attend meetings to educate local officials and citizens about electricity aggregation.
2. Potential town costs include legal fees to review contracts and administrative staff time.
3. FRCOG does not make any money on the project and will not be involved after an aggregator is chosen.
4. The aggregator makes its money with a small adder per kilowatt hour on the price of the supplied electricity; either by the supplier building it into the bid price, or as an adder on monthly bills.

Conclusion

A Franklin County regional electricity supply aggregation will work if:

- All towns agree to move forward together to take advantage of economies of scale.
- All municipal aggregation plans use a similar format with similar content
- All towns go out to bid for electricity supply at the same time. The strength of the program is in the aggregated electricity load across multiple towns.
- If every town is doing the same thing at the same time so that the aggregator can effectively manage a large number of towns as if it was one very large town.

Gill-Montague Regional School District FY19 Budget Proposal

Gill	Enrollment Percentage	Minimum contribution	Above Minimum	Transportation Assessment	Total Operating Assessment	Operating Assessment Increase	% Increase	Share of HS Debt	Debt Assessment	Total Operating & Debt Assessment
FY17	14.16%	979,702	545,032	50,259	1,574,992	8,963	0.57%	11.90%	18,030	1,593,023
FY18	13.17%	990,406	585,627	40,410	1,616,443	41,450	2.63%	9.70%	14,294	1,630,736
FY19	11.77%	1,013,006	562,757	43,859	1,619,622	3,179	0.20%	7.40%	10,548	1,630,170

Number to Vote

FY19 SCHOOL COMMITTEE PROPOSED	FY18 GENERAL FUND BUDGET	FY18 CHOICE/ CB BUDGET	FY18 GRANTS/ REVOLVING BUDGET	FY18 ALL FUNDS BUDGET	FY19 GENERAL FUND BUDGET	FY19 CHOICE /CB BUDGET	FY19 GRANTS/ REVOLVING BUDGET	FY19 ALL FUNDS BUDGET	INCREASE/ (DECREASE)	
BUDGET SUMMARY	FY18 APPROVED				FY19 PROPOSED					
ADMINISTRATION (1000)	\$ 648,044	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 648,044	\$ 669,519	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 669,519	\$ 21,475	3%
INSTRUCTIONAL (2000)	\$8,470,309	\$707,950	\$ 503,463	\$9,681,722	\$ 8,452,985	\$ 739,156	\$ 457,700	\$9,649,841	\$ (31,881)	0%
STUDENT SERVICES (3000)	\$1,245,044	\$ 11,000	\$ 635,888	\$1,891,933	\$ 1,334,517	\$ 15,250	\$ 681,618	\$2,031,384	\$ 139,452	7%
OPERATIONS (4000)	\$1,612,391	\$ -	\$ -	\$1,612,391	\$ 1,522,121	\$ -	\$ -	\$1,522,121	\$ (90,269)	-6%
BENEFITS & INSURANCE (5000)	\$4,343,386	\$ -	\$ 51,771	\$4,395,157	\$ 4,307,945	\$ -	\$ 49,108	\$4,357,053	\$ (38,104)	-1%
TUITION (9000)	\$2,640,000	\$222,494	\$ 321,000	\$3,183,493	\$ 2,689,167	\$ 318,984	\$ 301,531	\$3,309,681	\$ 126,188	4%
CAPITAL DEBT (8000)	\$ 215,197	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 215,197	\$ 209,090	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 209,090	\$ (6,108)	-3%
TOTAL BUDGET	19,174,370	941,444	1,512,122	21,627,936	\$19,185,344	1,073,390	1,489,956	21,748,690	120,754	

REVENUE SOURCES	FY18 BUDGET APPROVED	FY19 BUDGET PROPOSED	CHANGE FROM PRIOR YEAR
CHAPTER 70 STATE AID	\$ 6,177,674	\$ 6,211,590	\$ 33,916
MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT	\$ 530,000	\$ 200,000	\$ (330,000)
INTEREST INCOME	\$ 3,300	\$ 4,000	\$ 700
EXCESS AND DEFICIENCY	\$ 190,000	\$ 100,000	\$ (90,000)
ERVING TUITION	\$ 770,000	\$ 805,000	\$ 35,000
CHARTER REIMBURSEMENT	\$ 200,000	\$ 121,659	\$ (78,341)
CHAPTER 71 TRANSP REIMB	\$ 316,100	\$ 301,765	\$ (14,335)
TOTAL OPERATING ASSESSMENT	\$ 10,772,099	\$11,232,240	\$ 460,141
CAPITAL DEBT ASSESSMENT (HS)	\$ 147,053	\$ 142,538	\$ (4,515)
CAPITAL DEBT ASSESSMENT (Sheffield)	\$ 68,145	\$ 66,552	\$ (1,593)
TOTAL OPERATING & CAPITAL BUDGET	\$ 19,174,370	\$19,185,344	\$ 10,974
OPERATING FUND BUDGET % INCREASE			0.06%
GRANTS/REVOLVING ACCOUNT BUDGET	\$ 1,512,122	\$1,489,956	\$ (22,166)
CIRCUIT BREAKER REVOLVING BUDGET	\$ 177,494	\$ 248,238	\$ 70,744
SCHOOL CHOICE REVOLVING BUDGET	\$ 763,950	\$ 825,152	\$ 61,202
TOTAL ALL FUNDS PROJECTED BUDGET	\$ 21,627,936	\$21,748,690	\$ 120,754
OVERALL BUDGET % INCREASE			0.6%

Challenges to the GMRSD Budget

1. Chapter 70 state aid grows about 0.5% per year or \$25,000 most years.
2. Net loss to choice and charter tuitions at \$1.5 million a year.
3. Employee/retiree benefits are 5% of budget. Special education costs are 18% of budget.
4. Net reductions in force: 2.6 per year in professional staff (since FY14)
5. Increased burden on local assessments:
FY15 – 3.81%, FY16 – 3.5%, FY17: 3.69%, FY18 – 4.65%, FY19 – 4.27%

Positive Indicators

1. Student enrollment: Increased for second year in a row after persistent declines since 2006.
2. Over last 2 years: Choice-out declined by 8, choice-in increased by 18, and charter-out is 8 less
3. Organizational systems: governance, finance, facilities, technology, admin stability
4. 80% of students say their teachers show they care; 72% say their teachers know them well as learners.
5. More talented teachers dedicated to the 3Rs; relationships, rigor, and relevance

Future Direction

1. Powertown Project – Redesigning high school for modern needs
2. Efficiency and Regionalization Project – Exploring shared resources with Pioneer and Tech School
3. Continued collaboration with Civic Leaders

Capital Projects Summary

Current FY19 Request:

- Gill Entrance Request of \$20,000 to improve the entryway at the Gill Elementary School. This would include the installation of a second set of double doors in the foyer and moving the buzzer system inside with a larger screen or a window to the office to allow for visitors to sign in prior to being buzzed into building. 
- GFMS/TFHS Building Monitoring System This request for \$80,000 would allow for an upgrade to the current automation servers, network controls and related software for the building's current HVAC controls which are at the end of their life cycle and no longer produced or supported by the vendor. Gill would pay approximately 10% of this cost and Montague would pay the balance. 
- Gill Elementary Roof project was submitted to MSBA in February, 2018. We expect to hear if the application is approved by the summer, 2018. If approved, we would need to hire an Owners Project Manager and a Designer for the Feasibility Study and Schematic Design phase during the fall of 2018. The cost of this phase is reimbursable; however, the timing of the reimbursement crosses fiscal years.

Update on Prior Year Capital Projects:

- Kitchen Floor project was completed during the summer of 2017
- Gill Electrical upgrade is currently in the design phase. We hope to complete the upgrade during the summer of 2018.