

TOWN OF GILL

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



www.gillmass.org

SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

June 23, 2009

Called to Order

Meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m.

Present

Ann Banash, John Ward, Nancy Griswold, Selectboard members; Tracy Rogers, Town Administrator; Rev. James Diemand, Duncan Elliott, residents.

Review Minutes

Nancy made a motion to accept minutes from the June 8, 12, and 15 meetings as written. John seconded the motion and it was carried by a unanimous vote.

Diemand Complaint

Ann reported that Town Counsel advised that the Selectboard's responsibility is to make sure the ZBA, Building Inspector, and police department do their jobs appropriately and thoroughly. The Board should investigate complaints and enforce the bylaws to the best of its ability, which she believes it has done. She recommended taking no action at this point and letting Rev. Diemand pursue an appeal with the ZBA. Rev. Diemand confirmed that he sent a new letter to the Building Inspector last Friday.

Rev. Diemand asked about enforcement of the noise bylaw. Tracy reported that Donna agreed with the Building Inspector's interpretation that the bylaw regulates personal dogs, not a dog kennel.

Ann suggested that if Rev. Diemand wants new conditions put on the kennel he must go through the ZBA to do so.

Ann recommended mediation as a possible way for the two parties to come to agreement.

Rev. Diemand and Mr. Elliott left the meeting.

Annette Krejmas

Tracy reported that she spoke with Chief Hastings after Ms. Krejmas' complaint about her neighbor with a barking dog. The Chief provided a log containing one call from Ms. Krejmas. He stated that the Department received several complaints from Ms. Krejmas

when the house was owned by someone else, but now that Steven Connell lives in the house, the Department has only received one complaint from Ms. Krejmas.

Facilities Request for Farmers' Market

Tracy presented a request from the Agricultural Commission to use the Riverside Municipal Building for a farmers' market on August 2, 1:30 – 5:30 p.m. The Board approved.

Friends of Gill Picnic

Tracy asked the Board if it would permit the Friends of Gill to hold their picnic on July 26, since it was rained out twice in June. The Board agreed.

Spending Freeze

Tracy asked the Board for some guidelines on how severe the spending freeze will be on July 1. The Board agreed that no non-essential items should be purchased, nor should any new regular hires be made. After some discussion, the Board agreed not to decrease the minimum amount of purchase orders from the current \$500 at this time, but to closely watch the warrant. Departments should consult Tracy if have large purchases they need to make that might not fall under "essential."

Goal Setting

Ray Purington joined the meeting. Ray presented an outline for how a goal-setting retreat might work. Ann recommended holding the retreat in a closed meeting. Tracy reported that other town administrators have said this is possible, but that she'd like to get something in writing from the District Attorney's office first. The Board agreed to hold the retreat July 15 at 1:00 p.m. Ray will see if Northfield Mount Hermon will allow us to use a room.

Ad Hoc Committees

The Board discussed potential members for the three new committees created at town meeting.

- Riverside Municipal Building Study Committee:
 - Nancy Griswold
 - Pam Shoemaker
 - Claire Chang
 - Jenn Waldron
 - Jeff Suprenant? (as a rep. from the Water District)
 - Leland Stevens?
 - Maurice Dumas?
- Committee to study and recommend possible changes to the current District Agreement
 - Doff Storrow
 - Jenn Waldron
- Regional School District Planning Committee
 - Doff Storrow
 - Jenn Waldron

The last committee is to be appointed by the Moderator. Ann said she would talk with Doff about who else might serve on the two education committees and she'll talk with the Moderator as well.

Dump Truck Bids

Tracy reported that she had not received any bids on the 1989 dump truck, nor the surplus desk or copier that were on the same invitation. She wondered if the minimum bid of \$5,000 was too high. The Board suggested having Mickey call junk yards to see if they were interested in purchasing it for parts and at what price. Members also questioned whether we could strip the truck for parts and sell the remainder as junk. Tracy will talk with Mickey.

Letter to Mayor Forgey re Biomass Plant

On the Board's request, Tracy reprinted John's statement for the Greenfield ZBA on letterhead, added an introductory paragraph, and addressed a letter to Mayor Forgey of Greenfield. The Board signed the letter.

Bunny Caldwell's Retirement Party

Tracy reminded the Board that the retirement party is scheduled for 2-6 p.m. today. Ann agreed to attend at 2 p.m. so as to be there the same time with the Montague Selectboard to present the towns' gift.

Town Hall Basement

Highway Superintendent Mick LaClaire joined the meeting. The Board inspected the basement of Town Hall for possible mold infestation. The Board instructed Tracy to contact Bernardston to see what steps they went through when they had a mold problem. Mickey agreed to get estimates to install a perimeter drain if there was not one already installed. The Board instructed Mickey to look behind the paneling and under floor tiles to see how bad the situation may be and to remove the carpeting from the Collector-Treasurer's storage room.

Route 142

Mickey announced that Northfield will be doing a book project through MassHighway to work on Route 142, part of which runs through Gill. With the Board's permission, Northfield will also work on the Gill section. The Board approved.

Also, Northfield has offered to assist Gill with addressing a drainage problem on Bob Cook's land. The Selectboard approved this as well. Mickey left the meeting.

Review of Dog Kennel License Fees

Tracy reported that Rev. Diemand brought to her attention that the dog kennel license fee schedule is to be reviewed "from time to time" by the Selectboard and "shall reflect the cost for boarding and care of a dog on a daily basis," per the Town's dog control bylaw as adopted on May 1, 2006. The Board decided that every five years was frequent enough to review said fees, thereby postponing its review of the fee schedule until May 2011.

Sewer Abatement Request

The Board, in its role as Sewer Commissioners, reviewed a sewer abatement request from Jeff Suprenant in the amount of \$165.83. Nancy made a motion to approve the request. John seconded the motion and it was carried by a unanimous vote.

Schuetzen Verein

Tracy reported that the Schuetzen Verein Club has not yet submitted a public gathering permit application. She contacted the former president of the Club, Ray Zukowski, who said he'd forward the information to the current president, Jeff Suprenant.

MEMA Grant

Tracy presented a contract from MEMA for \$2,500 in grant funds to support the Fire Chief's salary in completing the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan for the Town. Ann signed the document authorizing the entire Board and Tracy as authorized signatories for grant documents and Tracy signed the grant contract.

FEMA Reimbursement

Tracy reported that the Town has received the \$10,161 it applied for in FEMA funds for the December 2008 ice storm. It is still unknown whether MEMA will contribute toward the remaining 25% of the costs.

Annual Appointments

Tracy presented the Board with a list of committee and board members who were up for reappointment. She questioned whether the Police Chief should be appointed for a three-year term, given that he has a three-year contract. The Board agreed that it should be a one-year appointment.

The Board asked Tracy to contact Ben Storrow as a possible ZBA alternate and Ivan Ussach as a possible member of the Cable Access Committee.

Nancy made a motion to appoint the slate of members as Tracy presented (see attached), with the addition of Roger Augustine and Ernie Hastings for Building Committee, who were inadvertently omitted. John seconded the motion and it was carried by a unanimous vote.

Laundry

Tracy reported that NMH has gracefully agreed to provide the Town with free laundry service for the highway and police departments.

Fire Dept. Purchase Order

Tracy presented a purchase order request from the Fire Chief for \$1,300 to purchase a hydrant assist valve. She also presented a written explanation of what the valve was and why it was necessary. The Board denied the request given that the department has made it this long without it and could go without it a little longer and that we still need to save enough FY09 funds to account for the mid-year cut in state aid. Tracy will invite the Chief to attend the Board's meeting on July 20 if he'd like them to reconsider.

Retirement Bill

Tracy asked the Board if it would like her to send a letter to state legislators urging passage of Section 54 of the Municipal Partnership Act II, with two changes recommended by the Franklin Regional Retirement System. The Board agreed.

Council on Aging Grant

Ann reported that she has a renewal contract for the Council on Aging grant at home and had forgotten to bring it with her. Would the Board authorize her to sign for the grant? The Board approved.

Appoint Part-Time Police Officer

Tracy presented a request from the Police Chief to appoint Peter Lapachinski as a part-time police officer. Nancy made a motion to appoint. John seconded and the motion was carried by a unanimous vote.

Summer Recreation Program

Tracy asked, on behalf of the Recreation Committee, if it would be alright for the summer camp director to have her child attend the summer program for free. It is not financially feasible for the director to work at the program otherwise. The Board approved.

Payroll and Bill Warrants

The Board approved payroll and bill warrant number 26.

Adjourned

Meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Tracy Rogers, Town Administrator.

John R. Ward, Selectboard Clerk