

# TOWN OF GILL

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



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## SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

*September 28, 2009*

### Called to Order

Meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m.

### Present

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

### Highway Department

Mick reported that he attended a meeting with MassHighway on September 25 regarding the Gill Montague Bridge project. The bid opening has been delayed until the end of September. Construction is to begin within 90 days after the bid opening, but they need to shore up the General Pierce Bridge first, which will take 9-10 months, meaning they won't begin work on the Gill Montague Bridge until next spring or summer. The project is expected to last four years.

Contrary to the original traffic plans for the project, MassHighway is now saying they may close the Gill Montague Bridge down completely for a month at a time. This would increase the amount of traffic coming through Factory Hollow on Route 2. The Selectboard may be asked by Greenfield to write a letter of support asking MassHighway to allow two-way traffic on Turners Falls Road in Greenfield to ease that traffic on Route 2. Tracy will check with the Town Administrator in Montague to see if Montague will be writing a similar letter.

Mick also reported that he was unhappy with the COG bid results for winter sand, so the COG went out to bid again for Gill only. Final results saved the Town \$7,000. He also saved \$1,400 by painting only one line down the center of Main Road when it was repaved, as opposed to two.

The New Holland tractor has a crack in the welds on the boom. The salesman says others have reported the same problem. Repairs may be under warranty.

The new dump truck is back at the manufacturer's for a new paint job because the paint is blistering and peeling. This is covered under warranty.

Mick left the meeting.

Claire raised the question of what happens if no bids are submitted or accepted for the Bridge. At what point does the Bridge become too dangerous to use? Tracy will ask MassHighway that question once bids are opened and it is determined if there is a chosen bidder.

#### Review Minutes

Nancy made a motion accept minutes from the Board's 8/27, 9/31, and 9/14 meetings. John seconded the motion and it was carried by a unanimous vote.

#### Energy Commission

John made a motion to appoint Ben Storrow, Tupper Brown, Claire Chang, and Kevin Cameron to the Energy Commission. Nancy seconded the motion and it was carried by a vote of 2 to 1.

#### Committee to Study Current Regional School Agreement

Ann read aloud an e-mail from Doff Storrow recommending appointees for the Committee (see attached). John made a motion to appoint Sorrel Hatch, Tupper Brown, and Timmie Smith to the Committee. Nancy seconded the motion and it was carried by a unanimous vote.

#### Burning Permits

Tracy reported that there is a meeting on 10/13 in South Deerfield regarding the possibility of using a web-based application to issue and track burning permits. The Board agreed to meet at 3:30 that afternoon to allow time for Tracy to make it to the burning permit meeting.

#### Green Communities Technical Assistance Grant

Tracy reported that the Town was awarded the grant. FRCOG will follow up.

#### Sandri Property

Tracy reported that the closing was held on the Sandri property (Town signatures were not necessary) and it is now officially Gill's property. The Conservation Commission is scheduled to attend an October Selectboard meeting to discuss their plans for the property.

#### Tony Mathews' Party

Tracy reported that Ken and Kimber Sprankle are organizing a party to thank Tony Mathews for his 20+ years on the Town's Conservation Commission. The party will be held at the Gill Tavern on November 4 at 5:00 p.m. Donations may be sent to Ken and Kimber.

### Conservation Commission Appointment

Tracy presented information on Chris Polatin, the Conservation Commission's recommendation for a new member. Nancy made a motion to appoint Mr. Polatin. John seconded the motion and it was carried by a unanimous vote.

### Purchase Orders

Tracy reported that she had approved an emergency purchase order for the Fire Dept. when the brakes fell out of the rescue truck. The final bill came to approximately \$900.

The Board approved a purchase order for \$850 for brakes and wheel bearings on the police Ford Explorer.

### Personnel Committee Recommendations

Nancy explained the Personnel Committee's recommendation regarding vacation carryover. Departments did not adopt the method of accruing and using vacation time within the same year when the policy was changed in 2004. That means that employees who were here at the time will lose the time accrued under the old method when the new policy goes into effect 7/1/10 that says employees may only have two weeks on the books at any given time. The Personnel Committee voted unanimously to recommend allowing employees two years to take that accrued time.

Ann suggested that, if the Selectboard votes to approve that recommendation, it should become an addendum to the Personnel Policy. Tracy suggested a date of 10/1/2011 for the end of the two years.

Timmie Smith joined the meeting.

Nancy also reported that the Personnel Committee recommends moving the highway superintendent position up to a grade 8 on the wage scale and adding the town administrator position to the scale at a grade 8. Ann replied that, when originally assessed, the Selectboard decided not to put the highway superintendent position at a grade 7 because it was not as dangerous as the police and fire chiefs' jobs. Nancy responded that the Personnel Committee discussed that and felt that the highway superintendent does have a dangerous job, especially when winter sanding and plowing is taken into consideration. Ann expressed concern that if the current highway superintendent were to leave, and the position was a grade 8, the Board would have to start his replacement at a grade 8 also. She suggested having the consultant who will look into the three departments suggest an appropriate grade.

Nancy made a motion to allow employees until 10/1/2011 to use up their old vacation time. John seconded the motion and it was carried by a unanimous vote.

Chris Collins joined the meeting.

The Board also decided to ask the consultant to evaluate what grade the town administrator position should be.

#### United Nations Day Proclamation

Nancy made a motion to proclaim October 24, 2009 as United Nations Day. John seconded the motion and it was carried by a unanimous vote.

#### Dock/Pier Application

Tracy presented a notice from the Dept. of Environmental Protection announcing that Albert Fish is applying to build a dock/pier at 88 French King Hwy. DEP will consider all written comments by October 9, 2009. The Board had no comments.

#### DCR Notice

Tracy presented a notice from the Dept. of Conservation and Recreation of their "consideration of acquiring an interest in approximately 33 acres of land in the Town of Gill." Ann read the notice aloud and signed it.

#### Leyden Parade

Tracy presented an invitation from Leyden to have the police and fire departments participate in its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. The notice said Leyden would also contact the departments directly. The Board asked if either of the departments had expressed interest. Tracy responded they had not.

Tupper Brown and Leland Stevens joined the meeting.

#### Dept. of Public Utilities Notice

Tracy presented a notice from DPU regarding an upcoming hearing on WMECO's proposal regarding net metering tariffs on October 14, 2009.

#### State Ethics Liaison

Tracy read aloud a letter from the State Ethics Commission asking for each municipality to designate a senior level employee to serve as its liaison to the Ethics Commission. Nancy made a motion to appoint Tracy to this position. John seconded the motion and it was carried by a unanimous vote.

#### Council on Aging Grant

Tracy presented the contract form for the annual Council on Aging grant for the Gill Montague Senior Center. The grant amount was \$3,500. Ann signed the contract.

#### Regional Police Meeting

Nancy asked how the meeting regarding regionalizing police departments held on 9/24 went. Ann reported that all three towns gave an update on where their departments stand. The COG has hired a consultant, Barry DelCastilho, former town manager in Amherst, to interview the three towns and make a recommendation.

Jim Poulsen and Alden Booth joined the meeting.

### District Meeting

Tupper called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 5:39 p.m. Timmie questioned whether the meeting had been posted. Tracy reported that it was posted for 6:00 p.m., but she had forgotten to ask the Town Clerk to move it up to 5:30 p.m.

Tupper read a statement he wrote that could possibly be read during the district meeting on 9/30. The group edited the statement. Jim made a motion to support the amended statement. Claire seconded the motion. Timmie made further recommendations to amend it. The statement was finally supported by a 6 to 1 vote of the Finance Committee. The Selectboard supported the statement unanimously.

The Finance Committee adjourned its meeting at 6:40 p.m.

### Payroll and Bill Warrants

The Board approved payroll and bill warrant number 7.

### Adjourned

Meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by Tracy Rogers, Town Administrator.*

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John R. Ward, Selectboard Clerk