

# TOWN OF GILL

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



[www.gillmass.org](http://www.gillmass.org)

## SELECTBOARD & FINANCE COMMITTEE BUDGET MEETING MINUTES

*June 9, 2010*

Called to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m.

Selectboard: Ann Banash, Randy Crochier and John Ward, Selectboard members; Ray Purington, Administrative Assistant

Finance Committee: Claire Chang, Tupper Brown, Ronnie LaChance, Timmie Smith, Lee Stevens, Alden Booth, Colleen Sculley, Jim Poulsen

Others Present: Nancy Griswold; Gene Beaubien (arrived at 4:30pm)

An updated version of the spreadsheet file from 5/24 was on Ann's laptop computer, and was projected on a large screen for all to see. This was used throughout the course of the meeting and updated as decisions were made.

The first topic was the salaries of the Town Clerk, Treasurer, and Tax Collector, and the amount that should be recommended to Town Meeting. Ronnie recused herself from the discussions as she is the Treasurer and Tax Collector. There was back-and-forth discussion on amounts, comparable towns, duties and responsibilities, and qualifications of the two people currently elected to the positions. Ultimately recommended was a 10% increase for the Tax Collector, 15% for the Treasurer, and 25% for the Town Clerk.

(Note: In the following votes, if a motioner and seconder are not listed, it is because the names were inadvertently not recorded while taking notes of the meeting.)

The Finance Committee voted to recommend an amount of \$15,929.04 for the Treasurer's salary for FY11. The vote passed with 6 in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, and 1 recusal (Ronnie).

The Finance Committee voted to recommend an amount of \$18,929.85 for the Tax Collector's salary for FY11. The vote passed with 6 in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, and 1 recusal (Ronnie).

The Finance Committee voted to recommend an amount of \$13,938.18 for the Town Clerk's salary for FY11. The vote passed with 7 in favor, none opposed, and no abstentions.

The Finance Committee voted to recommend an amount of \$2,500.00 for the Registrars/Election Workers budget line for FY11. The vote passed with 5 in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, and 2 recusals (Ronnie and Timmie).

The Finance Committee voted to recommend an amount of \$233,389.06 for the total amount for General Government for FY11. The vote passed with 7 in favor, none opposed, and no abstentions. The Selectboard also voted to recommend that amount, 3 in favor, none opposed, and no abstentions.

For the Public Safety budget, the total of \$220,454.14 keeps the part-time police line at \$15,653.14, and includes \$1,600 as a uniform allowance for the Police Department. The Finance Committee voted to recommend an amount of \$220,454.14 for the total amount for Public Safety for FY11. The vote passed with 7 in favor, none opposed, and no abstentions.

Ann made a motion, seconded by John, that the Selectboard recommends a budget of \$65,125.91 for the Fire Department for FY11. The vote passed with 2 in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, and 1 recusal (Randy).

Ann made a motion, seconded by Randy, that the Selectboard recommends a total Public Safety budget of \$220,454.14 for FY11. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Claire made a motion, seconded by Jim, that the Finance Committee recommends a total Public Works budget of \$432,830.65 for FY11. The vote passed with 7 in favor, none opposed, and no abstentions. For the Selectboard a motion to recommend the same amount was made by Ann, seconded by Randy, and the vote passed unanimously.

Claire made a motion, seconded by Ronnie, that the Finance Committee recommends a total Health & Human Services budget of \$17,004.21 for FY11. The vote passed with 7 in favor, none opposed, and no abstentions. For the Selectboard a motion to recommend the same amount was made by Ann, seconded by John, and the vote passed with 2 in favor. Randy recused himself from the discussion and vote.

Claire made a motion, seconded by Ronnie, that the Finance Committee recommends a total Culture & Recreation budget of \$21,952.00 for FY11. The vote passed with 7 in favor, none opposed, and no abstentions. For the Selectboard a motion to recommend the same amount was made by Ann, seconded by Randy, and the vote passed unanimously.

Ronnie made a motion, seconded by Jim, that the Finance Committee recommends a total Fixed Costs budget of \$197,656.39 for FY11. The vote passed with 7 in favor, none opposed, and no abstentions. For the Selectboard a motion to recommend the same amount was made by Ann, seconded by Randy, and the vote passed unanimously.

Claire made a motion, seconded by Ronnie, that the Finance Committee recommends a total FRCOG budget of \$95,734.00 for FY11. The vote passed with 7 in favor, none opposed, and no abstentions. For the Selectboard a motion to recommend the same amount was made by Randy, seconded by John, and the vote passed with 2 in favor. Ann recused herself from the discussion and vote.

(Colleen rejoined the meeting at 5:35pm.)

Gene Beaubien, Fire Chief, presented information on the cost to retrofit the Fire Department's air packs to be capable of providing "buddy breathing" assistance as part of a Rapid Intervention Team. Not including shipping, the total cost is \$20,076.90 (20 air packs at \$825 each, and 1 RIT pack at \$3,251.90). This is Article 18 on the town meeting warrant. Ronnie made a motion, seconded by Claire, that the Finance Committee recommends this article. The vote passed unanimously with 8 in favor. Gene left the meeting.

A 15-minute recess was taken just prior to the GMRSD presentation at 6:00pm. Alden left the meeting at 6:02pm. Ronnie left the meeting at 6:15pm.

The following people joined the meeting: G-M Superintendent Carl Ladd, Business Manager Lynn Bassett, School Committee Members Sorrel Hatch, Jen Waldron, Jane Oakes, and Jeff Singleton.

Referring to a letter dated June 5, 2010, the Superintendent outlined the budget process and financial issues faced by the District. He noted that a level-services budget for FY11 would have meant an increase of nearly \$800,000 to the total operating budget. Instead, the District has proposed a level-funded budget, which meant finding cuts from FY10 totaling \$817,000. He feels the District has done its job on the expense side. The financial squeeze is because the State has not come through on the revenue side of the budget.

Ann asked if it would be useful to continue the State's involvement in the financial oversight of the District. Carl expressed the belief that regardless of whether the District's budget is passed or not, the Dept. of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE) will continue to be involved, since the District is a "Level 4 Underperforming District." It is thought that this status could remain for another 1-2 years, depending on a DESE review this fall. Jen Waldron pointed out that DESE has been, and continues to be "at the table." What is needed is a greater presence from our legislators.

In response to a question about per-pupil costs, Carl stated that the District's costs for instructional leadership are higher than most in the area, but are comparable to those at Mohawk and Frontier. The District's costs for salary benefits are also higher than most.

Timmie thanked those from the District for attending tonight, and expressed a hope that they will also be present at Gill's Annual Town Meeting on June 21.

In looking ahead to FY12, zero-based budgeting will be used, and the District will do its best to provide the necessary services while keeping costs as close to level as possible.

Timmie cautioned the District from using any further amounts of its Excess & Deficiency account to lower assessments for FY11. That money will be sorely needed in FY12.

Several people spoke regarding the impact of Gill's vote on the District's budget, given that Montague voters turned down the budget on June 5<sup>th</sup>. Several speakers stressed the importance of a locally approved budget this year rather than one mandated by the State.

Ronnie rejoined the meeting at 6:55pm.

Claire made a motion, seconded by Ronnie, that the Finance Committee recommends a total Education budget of \$1,518,698.00 for FY11 (amount includes FC Tech in the Omnibus and the special article for GMRSD). The vote passed with 7 in favor, none opposed, and no abstentions. For the Selectboard a motion to recommend the same amount was made by Ann, seconded by Randy, and the vote passed unanimously.

It was decided to remove a proposed warrant article for \$13,000 for the Fire Department's brush truck conversion kit, and to fund that project from the NMH Gift account instead. It was decided to remove a proposed warrant article for \$2,227 for the Police Department's bulletproof vests and weapons replacement, and to fund those items from the NMH Gift account instead.

In the discussion of the special article for additional funds for part-time police officers, members spoke strongly in favor and in opposition.

Jim made a motion, seconded by Timmie, that the Finance Committee recommends the article for \$14,356.86 for part-time police. The vote passed with 4 in favor, 2 opposed, and 1 abstention.

For the Selectboard, Ann made a motion, seconded by Randy, that the \$14,356.86 article for part-time police be kept on the warrant for annual town meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Ann made a motion, seconded by Randy, that the Selectboard support the article for part-time police. The motion carried, 2 in favor, 1 opposed.

Jim made a motion, seconded by Claire, that the Finance Committee recommend warrant articles for the following amounts and purposes: \$9,819 from Free Cash to reimburse FY10 accounts for FY09 salary expenses paid there from; \$200 to establish a budget line for the Energy Commission; \$6,400 to install a water meter and backflow preventers at Gill Elementary; \$10,000 from Released Overlay to construct office walls at Town Hall; \$4,000 to purchase a copy of Montague's appraisal of FirstLight; \$3,000 to be added to the Assessor's FirstLight Appraisal account; and \$800 from the Dog Revolving Fund for use at the Library. The motion passed unanimously with 7 in favor. The Selectboard took no action.

Jim made a motion, seconded by Ronnie, that the Finance Committee recommends the warrant article that uses \$4,667 from the Building Inspector Assessment Stabilization Fund to support a portion of the FCCIP assessment for FY11. The motion passed unanimously with 7 in favor. The Selectboard took no action.

Ronnie made a motion, seconded by Leland, that the Finance Committee recommends the warrant article for \$66,165.55 of Sewer Use Fees to be used for the FY11 Riverside Sewer System account. The motion passed with 6 in favor, none opposed, and 1 abstention (Ronnie). The Selectboard took no action.

Ann made a motion, seconded by Randy, that an article for a 3% COLA for all elected and appointed employees of the Town be kept on the warrant. The motion passed unanimously.

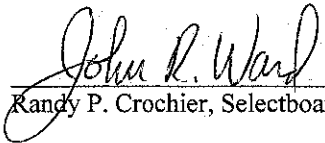
Claire made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend a 0% COLA. There was no second.

Timmie made a motion, seconded by Leland, that the Finance Committee recommend the 3% COLA. The motion passed with 4 in favor, 1 opposed, and 1 recusal (Ronnie). The Chair (Tupper) did not vote.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 15<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by Ray Purington, Administrative Assistant.*

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Randy P. Crochier, Selectboard Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Claire Chang, Finance Committee Secretary