

TOWN OF GILL

MASSACHUSETTS



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SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

October 25, 2010

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:30pm.

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

Others Present: Rick James, David Detmold

Approval of Minutes: Ann made a motion, seconded by Randy, to approve the minutes of 10/12. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Highway Uniforms: Ray presented an analysis (attached) that he prepared with Mick LaClaire, Highway Superintendent, and explained several options available to the Town with respect to providing work uniforms to Highway employees. The Town currently contracts with Cintas for \$35.47 per week, which includes repair and replacement of uniforms and laundering, although the employees typically launder their own uniforms at home.

Cintas has offered a no-laundry option that would cost \$20 per week, and still covers repairs and replacements. Employees could continue to do their own laundry, or could use the no-charge service offered by NMH (as the Police Department does). This is the recommended option. The analysis also considered the cost of Town purchasing uniforms for the employees, but this option was not recommended by Ray and Mick due to the extra "soft cost" of managing and tracking clothing purchases and reimbursements.

The Board discussed the analysis, and agreed that the \$20/week option from Cintas makes the most sense. They asked that Mick and Ray try to negotiate with Cintas to get extra sets of uniforms for Mick and Ed, and to request Cintas to bill quarterly. The Board gave Ray permission to proceed with Cintas up to the \$20/week discussed.

Capital Improvement Planning Committee: Ann made a motion, seconded by Randy, to appoint the following residents to the CIPC: Randy Crochier (Selectboard), Leland Stevens (Finance Committee), Jane Oakes (School Committee), Jason Edson, Nancy Griswold, and Timmie Smith (at-large). The vote was unanimous in the affirmative. It was noted that the Planning Board has yet to name its representative.

ESPC: Ray reported on recent developments for the Energy Savings Performance Contract that the Town continues to develop with Siemens. Beth Greenblatt, Gill's Technical Agent for the project, has received from Siemens most of the documents that will become attachments to the contract, and is in the process of reviewing them. The Investment Grade Audit will also be provided by Siemens, and will summarize what buildings were evaluated and the energy conservation measures that were considered for each one.

Siemens has determined that the boiler stack/chimney at the elementary school will need a stack liner when the new boiler is installed. Since this should have been determined many months ago, Siemens has agreed that they will not add the \$20,000 cost to the project. Siemens also arranged to have an asbestos abatement contractor visit the school's boiler room and give an estimate of the cost to remove the boiler and fully abate the boiler room. The proposal for the work is for \$3,300. This work would be contracted by the Town, not by Siemens. If the overall ESPC budget can support the added cost, the abatement could be "paid for" using energy savings.

The Energy Savings Agreement that is proposed to be signed by the Town and GM School District has been reviewed by Town Counsel. Ray expects to prepare a redline version by Wednesday for the Selectboard and Energy Commission to review. Once their feedback has been addressed, the document will be sent to Supt. Ladd.

Nancy Griswold joined the meeting at 4:50pm. Tupper Brown and Supt. Carl Ladd joined the meeting at 4:55pm.

Technical Panel: Tupper and Carl addressed the Board as one-half of the so-called Technical Panel, a group that has been studying ways to achieve greater fiscal stability for the Gill-Montague Regional School District. This group has produced a long-term plan, called "Table B" (attached), that strikes a balance between district expenses and the various district revenues.

In his explanation of Table B Tupper pointed out that the projected increases for Chapter 70 school aid aren't a best guess of what will happen, but rather are a realistic balance of what needs to happen in order to achieve a stable budget. He also noted that the panel was very conservative in its other estimates. The figures for FY11 reflect the actual state aid amounts and the school committee's budget, but include a proposed compromise between the school committee budget and the assessment that Montague believes it can afford. It is expected that the compromise will be discussed at the November 18th district-wide meeting. If the compromise is passed, Gill will have over-funded its assessment by roughly \$25,000.

The Technical Panel has also prepared a "Compact for Funding Education" (attached), which formalizes the acceptance of the Table B plan and outlines the roles of the various parties involved. It is hoped that the document will be endorsed and signed by the Gill and Montague Selectboards and Finance Committees, the School Committee, DESE, Senator Rosenberg, Representative Kulik, and the soon-to-be-elected representative for Gill. The document has been reviewed by Montague's Selectboard and Fin. Comm., and was generally well received.

In response to a question from the Board about the status of the District Review being conducted by DESE, Supt. Ladd answered that there has been no word from DESE, but that he is hopeful the review will be completed in early November. He expects the report will address the district's per-pupil spending, and also expects that it will call upon both Towns to use their financial reserves to support the school budget.

Ronnie LaChance joined the meeting at 5:30pm.

The Board made general comments in support of the Compact. Randy made a motion, seconded by Ann, to authorize John as Chair to sign the Compact as written. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative, and John signed the Compact.

Tupper Brown and Supt. Ladd left the meeting at 5:55pm.

Veterans' Benefits: Treasurer Ronnie LaChance updated the Board on recent changes in the way veterans' benefits are paid. The Town is now responsible for paying benefits to veterans or surviving spouses of deceased veterans in amounts determined by the Department of Veterans Services. The Town will be reimbursed for 75% of the expense, but is responsible for the remaining 25%. Currently there is one person in Gill receiving benefits – for the remaining 9 months in FY11 the Town will make payments totaling \$2,057.13. At a future special town meeting voters will need to appropriate funds for the \$514 that is the Town's share.

Ronnie also reported that there is a new plan document for the OBRA retirement account used by Town employees who are not eligible to contribute to the state retirement plan. There was a \$250 cost associated with producing the new document, and that was paid using money available in the Retirement line of the FY11 Omnibus.

Ronnie LaChance and Nancy Griswold left the meeting at 6:05pm.

FY11 Housing Rehabilitation Program: The Board reviewed a change to the FY11 Housing Rehabilitation Program (attached) that has been proposed by the F.C. Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA). Previously, no-interest housing rehab loans would be repaid in full when the home was sold or transferred. In the current economy, the HRA has had some difficulty finding homeowners willing to take on any new debt. The HRA is proposing to start making loans in which 50% of the loan will be forgiven after 15 years, and the other 50% must be

repaid when the home is sold or transferred. Since less of the rehab money will be repaid, it means that less money will be available to be re-loaned. The Board supports the change proposed by the HRA, noting that if loans aren't getting made, then there is nothing to be repaid. The proposed change will also be presented during the CDBG information session on November 8th.

Cultural Council Allocation: Ann made a motion, seconded by Randy, to accept the Massachusetts Cultural Council's allocation of \$3,870 for Gill, and to authorize the Chair to sign the contract for the funds. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative, and John signed the contract as Chair.

Announcements: The following upcoming or ongoing events were noted: Children's Halloween Party at the Fire Station, Gill PTO fundraiser, and Cheese Night sponsored by the Agricultural Commission.

Appointment: Frederick Sheard of Center Road has volunteered to serve on the Planning Board. Ann made a motion, seconded by Randy, to appoint Mr. Sheard to the Planning Board to fill a term that expires 6/30/2013. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

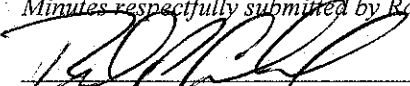
Fire Department Purchase Order: The Board signed a purchase order for the Fire Department to purchase two Motorola UHF radios from Comtronics for a total of \$1,590.82.

David Detmold left the meeting at 6:20pm.

Warrant # 9: The Board reviewed and signed Warrant #9.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ray Purington, Administrative Assistant.



Randy Crochier, Selectboard Clerk

GILL-MONTAGUE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
FY'11 OPERATING BUDGET

Per Table B of October 15, 2010 by Oversight Group

Final Cherry Sheet School Committee Voted 7/27/10		GILL-MONTAGUE 100%	MONTAGUE 85.20%	GILL 14.80%
TOWN MINIMUM CONTRIBUTION (update)		\$ 5,230,945	\$4,378,670	\$852,275
Chapter 70 STATE AID (reflecting 4% reduction)		\$ 5,936,062	\$5,057,525	\$878,537
NSS		\$ 11,167,007	\$ 9,436,195	\$ 1,730,812
FY'11 OPERATING/MAINT BUDGET		\$ 16,408,162		
LESS: TRANSPORTATION	\$ 544,130		3/30/10 Vote	\$16,537,788.00
COMMUNITY SERVICE	\$ -		SFSF Grant	\$ (116,126)
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$ -		Reduce RAN	\$ 16,421,662
DEBT RETIREMENT	\$ 204,449	\$ 748,579		\$ (13,500)
				\$ 16,408,162
FOUNDATION BUDGET		\$ 15,659,583		
LESS: STATE AID		\$ 5,936,062		
SUB TOTAL		\$ 9,723,521		
LESS: OTHER REVENUES				
ERVING TUITION	\$ 530,000			
EXCESS & DEFICIENCY	\$ 586,596			
	\$ 157,482			
INVESTMENTS	\$ 20,000			
MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENTS	\$ 223,374			
BUILDING USE FEES & OTHER REVENUES	\$ -	\$ 1,517,452		
SUB TOTAL		\$ 8,206,069		
LESS: MINIMUM CONTRIBUTION		\$ 5,230,945		
AMOUNT OVER MINIMUM		\$ 2,975,124	\$ 2,534,806	\$ 440,318
TRANSPORTATION		\$ 544,130	\$ 463,599	\$ 80,531
LESS: TRANSPORTATION AID @55%		\$ (180,802)	\$ (154,043)	\$ (26,759)
FIXED ASSETS		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
COMMUNITY SERVICE		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
DEBT RETIREMENT ***		\$ 204,449	\$ 178,577	\$ 25,872
TOTAL OUTSIDE NET SCHOOL SPENDING		\$ 567,777	\$ 488,132	\$ 79,645
MINIMUM CONTRIBUTION		\$ 5,230,945	\$ 4,378,670	\$ 852,275
ABOVE MINIMUM		\$ 2,975,124	\$ 2,534,806	\$ 440,318
OUTSIDE NET SCHOOL SPENDING		\$ 567,777	\$ 488,132	\$ 79,645
FY'11 ASSESSMENT	A	\$ 8,773,846	\$ 7,401,608	\$ 1,372,238
FY'11 Assessment(less debt \$204,449)	B	\$ 8,569,397	\$ 7,223,031	\$ 1,346,366
FY'10 ASSESSMENT	C	\$ 8,581,856	\$ 7,184,423	\$ 1,397,433
FY'10 Assessment(less debt \$204,449)	D	\$ 8,377,407	\$ 7,005,846	\$ 1,371,561
DOLLAR CHANGE(FY11-FY10)A-C	E	\$ 191,990	\$ 217,185	\$ (25,195)
PERCENT CHANGE(E/C)		2.2%	3.0%	-1.8%
Adjusted Dollar Change(B-D) Less Debt	F	\$ 191,990	\$ 217,185	\$ (25,195)
PERCENT CHANGE(less Debt)F/D		2.3%	3.1%	-1.8%

this is 1/2 of certified FY09 E&D

Compact for Funding Education

Gill-Montague Regional School District

This is a Compact made among persons and entities interested in the education of students in the Gill-Montague Regional School District. It has been agreed upon among the persons and entities of interest because the funding of this District has become an unsustainable burden on the member Towns that threatens the quality of the education of their students.

The Parties

This Compact is endorsed and entered into by the State legislators representing the residents of the District; by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE); by the member Towns of the District through their respective Selectboards and Finance Committees; by the Gill-Montague Regional School Committee; and by the District administration.

Precepts

The basic precepts underlying this Compact are:

- (a) The children of this District must have the best possible education.
- (b) The funding of public education in Massachusetts is shared among the State and the respective Towns.
- (c) In order to make funding in this District sustainable over the long term, and thus to provide current and future students with excellence in education, costs must be controlled and revenues must be assured. In particular, growth in District expenditures, both fixed and non-fixed, must be supported by corresponding growth in revenues.
- (d) In order to find a path to sustainable financing for the District, a plan has been established that sets forth current and future levels of expenditure by the District and current and future levels of funding by the State and the member Towns. This plan, attached to this Compact, is entitled "Table B" and is intended to set forth a workable balance between necessary District expenditures and corresponding revenues from the State and the member Towns.
- (e) In the out years through FY15, Table B is based upon projections of expenditures and revenues that are both possible and necessary for reaching a state of balanced financing. The parties understand that future events may require modifications to specifics within the plan, but that the overall shape of the plan must be pursued to achieve the goals of this Compact.

The Compact

The parties pledge and agree as follows:

1. Table B is accepted as the long term plan for fiscal stability of the District, and the parties accept its requirements and projections as goals for achieving its purposes.

2. The parties shall each, in its own sphere, work actively to achieve the expenditure and funding levels anticipated in Table B. Specifically:

(a) The Towns commit to allocate available funds to the district according to the formula used in Table B (approximately 3% annual increase in town assessments, supplemented through FY14 with additional funds).

(b) State legislators and DESE agree that a 3% annual increase in Chapter 70 is needed to stabilize district funding, to be achieved by FY 13. If that level of aid proves to be unrealistic due to reduced State revenues or other factors, State officials will work with the district and member Towns to make the district budget viable with a lesser amount. State officials will consider the policy recommendations of the member Towns as the Chapter 70 program is revisited in the coming months.

(c) The School Committee and District agree to slow the growth of expenditures to keep them in line with projections in Table B (2.5% increase annually beginning in FY 13). If the District believes that it can not fulfill its goals within these projections, it will collaborate with the legislators, DESE and the member Towns to find a solution that does not automatically involve passing the problem on to the member Towns in the form of unaffordable assessments.

3. Recognizing that a multi-year program is always subject to future events, it is agreed that any party may propose changes in the Table B plan if it feels assumptions are no longer viable or core projections are no longer realistic. Proposals will be evaluated by all parties with the goal of reaching consensus on a revision of the long term plan, if necessary.

4. The plan set forth on Table B for FY12 should be examined by the parties in detail at an early date, modified where necessary and then confirmed as quickly as possible due to the potential for a large revenue-expenditure gap that could undermine the plan in future years.

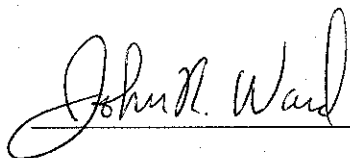
5. The question of total District expenditures as compared with state norms will be resolved as quickly as possible. Recommendations on whether and how to bring these expenditures in line with state norms will be reviewed and agreed to by all parties and then implemented by the District in collaboration with DESE.

6. The Oversight Group and Technical Panel will continue to meet as necessary to assist with continued collaboration among the parties and with review of the process toward fiscal sustainability.

7. The School Committee, the District and the member Towns agree to consider seriously any proposal for regional consolidation of school districts that is shown to have a positive educational, fiscal and social impact. DESE and the legislators agree that proposals for consolidation will include a specific model for the district including a formal, data-based analysis detailing educational, cost, and social issues.

Approved and agreed to by:

For Montague Selectboard



For Gill Selectboard

For Gill-Montague School Committee

Stanley C. Rosenberg

For Montague Finance Committee

Allen Tupper Brown
For Gill Finance Committee

Carl Ladd, Superintendent
Gill-Montague Regional School District

Stephen Kulik

[New 2nd District Representative]

Jeff Wulfson, for DESE

FY2011 PROPOSED REGIONAL HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAM
COLRAIN (LEAD), Ashfield, Deerfield, Gill, Leyden

PROPOSED ACTIVITY: The town currently has six (6) Gill applicants on a waiting list for an affordable housing rehabilitation program.

PROPOSED HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAM DESIGN:

Eligibility:

- Federal Regulations dictate the program must meet the National Objective of benefit to low and moderate income residents.
- Applicant income eligibility is based on the HUD Section 8 Income Limits which are updated yearly (see attached 5/14/2010 income limits); verification of income for all household members will be directly verified; further, proof of ownership is required, verification that property tax payments are current, and verification of homeowner's insurance.
- The applicant's structure must be brought into code compliance through the elimination of building, plumbing, electrical and sanitary violations; Example: Improvements are made to existing conditions. Removal and replacement of roofs, windows, siding, and electrical, plumbing and heating system repairs and replacement are typical. But other improvements like flooring replacement, bathroom upgrades, and new cabinets may be eligible if conditions are determined to be "sub-code."

Increasing the energy efficiency of homes by making general weatherization improvements, insulating homes, and replacing outdated heating systems and hot water tanks with Energy Star rated boilers, furnaces, and domestic hot water systems is also permitted.

Further, houses built prior to 1978 are tested for the presence of Lead Paint by a certified lead paint inspector. Some level of lead paint remediation may be required if lead paint is found, even if there are no children living at the property. If there are children under the age of 6, the project will include full deleading of the property.

Program Design:

- Loans are awarded to projects determined to be the neediest. A Criteria Ranking System is used that factors in household income, code violations, and other demographic indicators such as the number of elderly or handicapped persons living at a property.

- Inspections of properties are made by a qualified Housing Rehabilitation Specialist. The Rehabilitation Specialist inspects the premises for code compliance and substandard conditions.
- A detailed work list is then sent to each homeowner who will solicit bids from contractors who have been pre-qualified to work for the Program. However, owners may choose to solicit bids from contractors who are not on the contractor list, as long as the contractors are licensed and insured. Homeowners are typically given four weeks to submit bids. Each bid is reviewed for completeness and cost reasonableness.
- Loans are generally no greater than \$30,000 per unit. However, if homes need inherently expensive improvements such as lead paint removal, asbestos abatement, a new artesian well, handicapped accessibility modifications, septic system replacement, or historic preservation, then loans can be made for up to \$35,000.
- All lead inspection fees are calculated in to the total cost allowed per unit, but the fees themselves are not included in the mortgage loan amount. In other words, the loans are for the construction cost and mortgage recording fee only.
- Once a project is chosen, contracts are prepared on behalf of the homeowner and contractor's licenses and insurance are verified. Contracts are then executed. A loan closing is then conducted and recorded at the Franklin County Registry of Deeds, Greenfield, MA.
- Notices to Proceed are sent to each contractor after the loan closing with information on progress payments and permit requirements. The Housing Rehabilitation Specialists act as the liaison between owners and contractors.
- When a contractor submits an invoice for work performed, the housing rehabilitation specialist inspects the work for quality and conformance with the contract specifications. Payments are made directly to the contractors. Final payments are made only when all applicable municipal inspectors have also signed off on the project.

Financial Mechanism:

- Allow one-half of the loan to be forgiven after 15 years and if sold or transferred prior to the 15 years the payback would be prorated at 0% interest otherwise it would be discharged on the 15th year anniversary date of the loan

- The other half of the loan would be a full deferred payment loan at 0% interest which would remain as a mortgage lien until it is paid back when the property is sold or transferred

EXAMPLE: Total amount of the Housing Rehabilitation Loan is \$35,000. One-half \$17,500 would be recorded as a 15 year declining loan discharged at the end of 15 years; and, the other \$17,500 would remain recorded as a 0% deferred payment loan until sale or transfer of the property.

Program Administration:

- If Gill was successful in receiving Massachusetts Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the Department of Housing and Community Development, Colrain, Lead Community of the Five-Town Housing Rehabilitation Program would contract with the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) to administer the Housing Rehabilitation program on behalf of the towns.