

TOWN OF GILL

MASSACHUSETTS



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SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 16, 2013

Call to Order: The Selectboard and Finance Committee meeting was called to order at 6:11pm.

Present: Randy Crochier and John Ward, Selectboard members; Ray Purington, Admin. Assistant; Nancy Griswold.

Finance Committee: Claire Chang, Timmie Smith, Ronnie LaChance, and Tupper Brown

Minutes: The Selectboard reviewed the minutes from the 4/8 and 4/10 budget meetings. John made a motion, seconded by Randy, to approve the minutes of 4/8 and 4/10. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

FY14 Budget Review: The Selectboard and Finance Committee continued their review of budget requests for FY14. The Planning Board budget was considered. There is a \$41 increase for a step raise for the clerical assistant. It was asked if that increase could be absorbed within the PB's base budget, since they don't spend their entire budget every year. This will be reconsidered at a later date.

The Energy Commission budget request was explained by member Claire Chang. The EC expects to conduct more workshops next year in relation to Green Community activities. She noted that the requested increase, from \$200 to \$500, was somewhat arbitrary. There is no specific use planned for the increase – it might get spent on speaker fees, promotional flyers, advertisements, etc. Timmie Smith asked if solar powered speed limit signs could be purchased using funds from the \$139,900 Green Communities grant. Claire answered that it would be up to DOER whether that use qualified.

The budget for Town Hall & Riverside Building Expenses was discussed. Ray noted that he kept the custodial salary line level-funded, with plans to have the custodian working more hours next year. It has been many years since floors were polished and windows were washed. There is a reduction in the photocopier expense line because the lease on the copier was paid off this year. It was suggested that it is time for another lighting audit. Claire will provide the name of an audit firm to Ray.

There was a brief discussion about the increased cost of heating the two buildings. Some is related to more hours (the Four Winds School at the Riverside building returned to 5 days per week this year, after two years of 3 days/week), but the Town Hall seems to be using more oil without any appreciable change in use patterns. It is hoped that an upcoming building audit by Bart Bales will identify energy savings and possible improvements to the heating systems at both buildings.

The Building Repairs & Maintenance budget was discussed. It was suggested that the remaining months of FY13 would be a good time to have the Highway Department perform as many building maintenance projects as they are able. That department's budget is low on funds, and the cost of materials for building repairs could come from the BR&M budget. It was noted that the chimneys at the library and Riverside building both need repointing, and that if the Highway Department cannot do the work, it should be contracted out.

The Town Insurance budget was reviewed with little discussion as it is a fixed cost.

The Mariamante Loan budget was reviewed, with comments on how much the interest costs have decreased since FY10. This is largely due to interest rates, with some effect from paying off principal of the loan. At the current schedule of \$13,700 per year, there is approximately 12 more years remaining to pay off the loan. There is nothing that would prevent the Town from paying it off faster, if one-time funds were used. The DOR would likely have concerns if payments were accelerated by increasing taxation from the project's already approved debt exclusion.

The Dump Truck Loan was reviewed. It was noted that this debt exclusion loan will be paid off on October 31, 2013. The Capital Improvement Planning Committee is discussing the purchase of a replacement highway truck, but no recommendations have been made as of yet.

The Energy Bond and Performance Audit budget was reviewed. Once Siemens completes its audit of the first year's energy savings at the Elementary School, there will be a credit coming back to the Town from the School District. The exact amount and the timing is still uncertain.

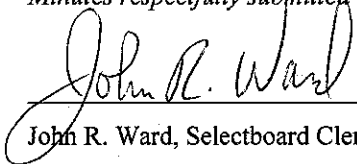
The Retirement budget was reviewed. There were questions about the 10.6% increase, but the budget is viewed as largely a fixed cost. Ray will attempt to provide more information.

The Health Insurance budget was reviewed. It was noted, with pleasure, that the Hampshire Group Insurance Trust was again able to avoid a rate increase for FY14.

The Cruiser Loan was reviewed. The principal amount of the loan is \$32,877.15 and the first payment will be made in March 2014. The three-year loan is at 1.51%.

Adjournment: The Selectboard and Finance Committee meetings adjourned at 7:50pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ray Purington, Administrative Assistant.



John R. Ward, Selectboard Clerk