

# TOWN OF GILL

MASSACHUSETTS



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## SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

*June 3, 2013*

Call to Order: The Selectboard meeting was called to order at 6:18pm. The Finance Committee meeting was called to order at 6:18pm.

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

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

Others Present: Nancy Griswold, John Zywna, Lynda Hodsdon Mayo

FY14 Budget: The Selectboard and Finance Committee continued their review of the FY14 budget.

Timmie Smith spoke in favor of the Police Chief's request for an additional \$10,000 to provide part-time officers to cover shifts during holidays and vacations of the Chief and Sergeant. Others warned of the dangers of adding "randomly" to budgets when it wasn't part of the original request from the department head. Timmie made a motion, seconded by Ronnie, that the Finance Committee recommend to the Selectboard that \$5,000 be added to the Police Department's budget for FY14. The motion was defeated, 2 in favor, 3 opposed.

On the matter of the salaries for the elected Treasurer, Town Clerk, and Tax Collector, some members felt they still "had no basis for a feeling" on the \$1,000 increases that were requested, even though those officials attended meetings and answered questions, and the Personnel Committee provided a recommendation. Randy made a motion, seconded by Ann, to not include the \$1,000 increases in the Selectboard's recommended budget, and to use FY13 figures for the "set the salaries" article. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

There was further discussion about the three salaries. Timmie Smith suggested that before starting the FY15 budget, there be a discussion about the process for considering salaries, in order to focus on the positions, and not on the individuals in the positions. Others spoke to defend this year's process, and that conversations have been about the positions and not the people. Claire Chang suggested that next year the three positions should be treated individually, rather than lumped together with identical requests.

The Fire Department budget was considered, with a question about the \$1,000 increase for "new equipment." Ray will try to get more details from the Fire Chief. Ann made a motion, seconded by John, to include the Fire Department's requested amount of \$74,129.00 (expenses plus salary plus new steps) in the Selectboard's recommended budget. The motion was approved 2-0, with Randy abstaining from the vote.

In a discussion of Highway-related budgets, it was noted that there is a need in FY13 for a year-end transfer and/or Town Meeting vote to supplement the Highway budget. In a more general discussion, Tupper asked who oversees the Highway budgets and operations, and commented about roadside mowing and the apparent widening of Barney Hale, Grist Mill, and Lyons Hill Roads. The topic was left for a future Selectboard meeting with Highway Superintendent Mick LaClaire.

Ann made a motion, seconded by Randy, to use \$236,139 for the Highway Department's FY14 budget. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative. Randy made a motion, seconded by Ann, to level-fund the Snow & Ice budget at \$53,651.00. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Budget amounts for streetlights, solid waste & recycling, solid waste district, sewer, and cemeteries were accepted with minimal discussion. The Cemetery Commission will need to meet with the Selectboard and Finance Committee as part of the FY15 budget process, as there are still questions about cemetery mowing costs versus their various sources of revenue.

Budget amounts for the Memorial Committee, Board of Health salaries and expenses, Council on Aging, Veterans Agent, and veterans' benefits were accepted with minimal discussion. Budget amounts for the Library and the Historical Commission were likewise accepted. The Recreation Committee budget will be zeroed out in the omnibus budget, and any budget for their programs will be presented as a special article at Town Meeting to highlight the absolute need for more volunteers to join the Rec Committee.

The various Fixed Costs budgets were reviewed and accepted. There was a short discussion about paying down extra principal on the Mariamante loan in order to pay it off sooner. However, the consensus was that interest rates are very low right now and it is better to put any extra funds into Stabilization. This strategy may be revisited if or when interest rates begin to climb.


Assessments for the various FRCOG programs were discussed and accepted. Due to the 50% increase for the Cooperative Public Health Services, that \$10,206 assessment was removed from the omnibus and will be presented as a special article.

Assessments for the Gill-Montague Regional School District and the Franklin County Technical School were discussed and accepted.

There was further discussion of an amount for the special article to fund the Rec Committee. It was agreed to budget it at \$0. If voters approve any funds for the article, the amount going into Stabilization will be reduced accordingly.

Adjournment: The Finance Committee adjourned at 8:50pm. The Selectboard signed the warrant for Annual Town Meeting, and adjourned at 9:00pm.

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



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Randy P. Crochier, Selectboard Clerk