

**TOWN OF GILL**  
**M A S S A C H U S E T T S**



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**SELECTBOARD & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**  
*April 23, 2018*

Called to Order: The Selectboard and Finance Committee were called to order at 6:10 PM.

Selectboard Members Present: Randy Crochier, John Ward, Greg Snedeker    Members Absent: None

Finance Committee Members Present: Claire Chang, Sandy Brown, Timmie Smith, and Ronnie LaChance  
Members Absent: Tupper Brown

Others Present: Ray Purington, Administrative Assistant

Review of Minutes: There were no minutes ready for review.

Review of FY19 Budget Requests:

5.2 Recreation Committee: Ray presented a level-funded request of \$2,700 on behalf of the Recreation Committee, but noted it was without input from the Committee. He has made several attempts to contact the Chair, but received no response. During discussion it was decided it is better to give the Recreation Committee the benefit of the doubt and include FY19 funds than to penalize them for not completing a budget form.

Ronnie made a motion, seconded by Sandy, to accept the Recreation Committee budget. The vote of the Finance Committee was 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, and 1 absent. Acting by consensus, the Selectboard unanimously approved the budget as well.

6.4 Energy Bond: The funds for making payments on the Energy Bond Sinking Fund and its supplemental interest are currently provided via an agreement with the Gill-Montague Regional School District whereby the annual energy savings at the Gill Elementary School as measured in the annual audit by Siemens are subtracted from the Town's operating assessment for the GMRSD, and voted into the Energy Stabilization Fund at a Town Meeting. Money is then voted out of the Energy Stabilization Fund for the coming year's appropriation for the Energy Bond budget.

Discussions with District officials during the past two years have raised questions that the energy savings being reported by Siemens are not real, and are likely the result of erroneous data used during the initial development of the project with Siemens. Earlier this year the Selectboard voted to terminate the performance contract with Siemens and discontinue the annual audit.

In light of the financial difficulties forecasted for the District, with increasing costs, enrollment pressures, and stagnant state aid, Ray suggested shifting the Energy Bond expenses out of the current "claw back" arrangement and building it into the Town's budget. This will help out the District by roughly \$14,000-15,000 annually. If this approach is to be taken, FY19 is the time to do it, as the Town's operating assessment for the GMRSD is increasing by only \$3,179 (0.2%). For the entire education budget (GMRSD and Tech combined), the increase is \$11,023, or 0.6%.

In the past, the difference between the actual assessment increase and a 2.5% increase would have been directed toward the Education Stabilization Fund. For FY19, the amount of that difference is \$43,984. The Energy Bond budget will use \$8,467 of the \$43,984, leaving \$35,517 that could be appropriated to Education Stabilization or allocated to other budgets and needs.

There was consensus to pursue this approach. Ray will update the figures.

Town Meeting: There was consensus the work on the FY19 budget will not be finished in time for the May 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Town Meeting. It was decided to split the Town Meeting into two parts, and address non-financial matters on May 7 and postpone budget matters until mid-June. June 11 and June 18 were identified as possible dates for the continuation and a Special Town Meeting to address any capital projects.

Review of Warrant Articles for May 7 Town Meeting: The Selectboard and Finance Committee reviewed “Draft 1” of warrant articles for the May 7 Town Meeting.

Based on the proposed article to change the number of members of the Agricultural Commission (Article 5), the Finance Committee requested a similar article to change their membership from seven members to “between five and nine members”, and to strike the last sentence of the Finance Committee bylaw (“All appointments are to be made within 30 days after annual election.”) as it no longer is relevant. The Selectboard agreed to add this article.

The proposed Article 7, dealing with a local excise on the retail sales of marijuana, was discussed and the maximum rate of 3 percent was suggested. Ronnie made a motion, seconded by Sandy, to recommend the article with an excise rate of 3 percent. The vote of the Finance Committee was 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, and 1 absent.

The proposed Article 9, dealing with funding for the 225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration, was discussed and a figure of \$3,000 from Free Cash was suggested. Timmie made a motion, seconded by Sandy, to recommend the article with the amount of \$3,000 taken from Free Cash. The vote of the Finance Committee was 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, and 1 absent.

Due to the timing of Montague’s Town Meeting on May 5<sup>th</sup>, it was decided to include the GMRSD assessment in the May 7<sup>th</sup> portion of Gill’s Town Meeting. The article will be moved in the warrant to appear immediately following the article for the Quintus Allen Fund.

The proposed Article 18, dealing with the transfer of funds from the FY18 GMRSD account to the Energy Stabilization Fund, will be deleted. See earlier discussion related to the Energy Bond. If it turns out the transfer is still necessary, the article can be added to the warrant of the Special Town Meeting in June.

Finance Committee Adjournment: The Finance Committee adjourned at 7:40 PM.

DEP Administrative Consent Order: Ray reported the DEP agreed to the Town’s request to revise the Administrative Consent Order (ACO) related to the treatment system for the well at the Gill Elementary School. The penalty for lateness on the project was not eliminated, but was decreased from \$500 to \$250. Greg made a motion, seconded by John, to sign the revised ACO. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

The Selectboard adjourned their meeting at 7:45 PM.

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

*Signed copy on file. Approved on 05/10/2018*

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Greg Snedeker, Selectboard Clerk

Adopted by the Finance Committee in lieu of separate Finance Committee minutes on 05/10/2018.