



SELECTBOARD AGENDA & MEETING NOTICE

February 10, 2025

***Indicates item added after the 48 hour posting
bold underlined time = invited guest or advertised hearing
 (all other times are approximate)

Location: Town Hall, 2nd floor meeting room, 325 Main Road, Gill

5:00 PM Call to Order (If the meeting is being videotaped, announce that fact. If remote participation will occur, announce member & reason, & need for roll call voting)

Executive Session: The purpose of the executive session is to conduct contract negotiations with non-union personnel, i.e. contract for police chief.

- Take roll-call vote to enter executive session
- Announce the meeting will reconvene in open session

Old Business

- Review of Minutes: 8/12/24, 1/27/25

New Business

- Historical Commission – Possibility of Additional Space at Riverside Municipal Building
- Other business as may arise after the agenda has been posted.
- Public Service Announcements, if any
 - “Stop the Bleed” class (basics of stopping traumatic bleeding) – Sat., Feb. 22nd, 6-7 PM at Fire Station training room. Sign up with Police Sgt. Richardson, jrichardson@gillmass.org
- Warrants
 - FY25 #16 – Vendors (\$92,655.95) & Payroll (\$36,507.42) – reviewed/signed on 1/27/25
 - FY25 #17 – review & sign

Adjournment

Other Invitations/Meetings:

Date	Time	Event	Location
Mon 2/17		Presidents’ Day holiday	
Mon 2/24	5:30 PM	Selectboard meeting	Town Hall
Mon 3/10	5:30 PM	Selectboard meeting	Town Hall
Mon 3/24	5:30 PM	Selectboard meeting	Town Hall

TOWN OF GILL

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



SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

August 12, 2024

Called to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM in the 2nd floor meeting room at the Gill Town Hall.

Members Present: Greg Snedeker, Charles Garbiel Members Absent: Randy Crochier

Others Present: Ray Purington, Town Administrator; Kate Savage, Tim Batchelder, Kurt Schellenberg, Peter Turban, Becca Mandel, Tupper Brown, Sandy Brown, Chris Redmond, and Jason Bassett.

Review of Minutes: No minutes were ready for review.

Police Department Vacancy: Police Chief Chris Redmond and Purington reported they interviewed several applicants for the open sergeant position in the Police Department, and recommended the position be offered to John Richardson of Greenfield. Richardson is currently the sergeant in Bernardston and has held that position since 2017. He was the sergeant in Northfield from 2013 to 2017, and has worked in law enforcement since 1999. Garbiel made a motion, seconded by Snedeker, to hire John Richardson to the position of Sergeant in the Police Department with a starting rate of \$37.82 per hour (step 7-F) and vacation accrual of three weeks/per year, contingent upon satisfactory results from the standard pre-employment checks. The motion was approved by a vote of 2 in favor, 0 opposed.

Police Department 3rd Full-Time Officer: Following up on a topic from the July 15, 2024 Selectboard meeting, Purington reported on the potential costs and possible funding sources if the Town wanted to add a third full-time officer to the police department. Based on Gill's current wage scale, the annual salary for the position ranges from \$52,000 to \$63,000, and given the region-wide shortage of POST-certified officers, the upper end of the range, \$58,000 was assumed. The Town's share of a family plan for health insurance adds another \$18,360, for a rough total of \$76,000. There is \$29,000 in this year's budget for part-time officers, and Redmond indicated \$14,000 could be put toward the cost of a full-time officer. Purington recommended against using one-time funds like Free Cash and the NMH donation accounts, as a full-time salary is a recurring expense that will need funding year after year.

Redmond outlined changes to law enforcement staffing brought about by the police reform that was signed into law at the end of 2020. The training required for a part-time police officer is now identical to that for a full-time officer, so finding new officers to work in part-time positions is almost impossible. In the past, Gill relied on part-time officers for one third of its shifts, and had as many as 10 part-timers. There are currently only three part-time officers working for the department. Redmond noted neighboring towns have been increasing full-time staff in response to the shortage of part-time officers. Bernardston has four full-time officers, Northfield has five, and Erving has six.

Redmond stated the State Police has not increased its staffing for providing coverage of rural Franklin County, and still only has two troopers on patrol during the overnight shift. He suggested another important benefit from adding a third full-time officer would include the ability to backfill shifts when officers are attending mandatory in-service training, making court appearances, or taking days off for holidays and vacations.

Tupper Brown, a member of the Finance Committee, suggested the FinCom would like to review call data as part of making its recommendation on adding the third officer. Questions to be answered include: What does scheduling look like with only two officers? How often are calls not answered by Gill officers, and what happens when another agency responds? What is the general impact on the community to having fewer police officers around?

Sandy Brown, a member of the Finance Committee, asked if regionalizing police services with other towns was under consideration. Redmond responded it is an idea that has been discussed and thought about almost every single day for years, and remains an active topic of discussion among departments. Regionalization could bolster coverage to the member towns, and the larger size of a combined department could provide better career advancement possibilities.

It was agreed adding a third full-time officer will require much more discussion, and is not a viable option for the current fiscal year. The Selectboard and FinCom members were encouraged to send their data requests to Redmond. A joint meeting of the two boards to review the data and continue the discussion will be scheduled. Turban, Mandel, T. Brown, S. Brown, Redmond, and Bassett left the meeting at 6:20 PM.

Naloxone Cabinet at Town Hall: Kurt Schellenberg, a regional health agent with the Cooperative Public Health Service (CPHS), joined the meeting to explain a program offered by the CPHS through a Health Excellence grant from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. The program is called the Rural Communities Naloxone Cabinet Initiative, and provides up to two wall-mountable indoor/outdoor cabinets per participating town. Each cabinet holds six doses of naloxone (generic name for Narcan) nasal spray, which can be used to reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. Gill's Board of Health has recommended a cabinet be mounted at Town Hall. Someone from Town Hall will need to restock the cabinet as doses are taken, and there will be an online monthly reporting of usage. The CPHS will provide additional doses of naloxone as needed at no cost. Garbiel made a motion, seconded by Snedeker, to authorize Purington to sign the host organization agreement with the CPHS and to mount the cabinet at a suitable location at Town Hall. The motion was approved by a vote of 2 in favor and 0 opposed. Schellenberg left the meeting.

State Primary Election Warrant: By consensus the Selectboard signed the warrant for the September 3, 2024 state primary election.

Community Compact Grant Application: Purington requested approval from the Selectboard to apply for a Community Compact grant in the amount of \$13,000 to be used to hire the Collins Center for Public Management to perform a classification & compensation study for the Town. It has been more than 20 years since the Town's wage scale has been professionally reviewed and updated, and there are multiple positions on the wage scale which are felt to be out of line with the local labor market. Garbiel made a motion, seconded by Snedeker, to authorize Purington to submit the application. The motion was approved by a vote of 2 in favor and 0 opposed.

FFY 24 EMPG Grant Application: Emergency Management Director Gene Beaubien has proposed two projects for this year's Emergency Management Preparedness Grant application: \$687.50 toward a portion of the Town's \$1,500 annual cost for the CodeRed Reverse 911 notification system, and \$2,012.50 toward the purchase of two ice rescue Mustang suits. Garbiel made a motion, seconded by Snedeker, to approve the application as presented and to authorize Purington to sign grant documents as required to submit, receive, and implement the grant. The motion was approved by a vote of 2 in favor and 0 opposed.

Paint Stewardship Legislation: The Selectboard reviewed a draft of a letter to the Massachusetts House Ways & Means Committee expressing the Town's support for a paint stewardship law. If enacted, the law would impose a fee (less than \$1 per gallon) on all paint sales in the state. The collected funds would be used to establish paint collection sites, transport paint for processing, and public education. Eleven states, including New York, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, and Maine, have already implemented paint stewardship laws. The letter was approved by consensus and signed by Snedeker as Chair.

Sewer Commitment: Snedeker made a motion, seconded by Garbiel, to approve and sign a sewer commitment in the amount of \$118.69 for a mid-cycle reading related to the sale of 7 & 9 Oak Street. The motion was approved by a vote of 2 in favor and 0 opposed.

Sewer Abatement: Snedeker made a motion, seconded by Garbiel, to approve a sewer abatement of \$128.82 for Mark Timberlake for metered water used to fill a swimming pool. The motion was approved by a vote of 2 in favor and 0 opposed.

Savage and Batchelder left the meeting at 6:45 PM.

Warrant: The Selectboard reviewed and signed the FY 2025 warrant # 4 with totals of \$78,411.36 for vendors and \$37,878.43 for payroll.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ray Purington, Town Administrator

Signed copy on file. Approved on 02/10/2025

Charles Garbiel, Selectboard Clerk

TOWN OF GILL

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



SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

January 27, 2025

Called to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:32 PM in the 2nd floor meeting room at the Gill Town Hall.

Members Present: Greg Snedeker, Charles Garbiel, Randy Crochier Members Absent: None

Others Present: Ray Purington, Town Administrator; Kate Savage, Tim Batchelder, Gene Beaubien, Dorri Beaubien, Brian McHugh, Peter Turban, Tupper Brown, John Richardson, and Dan Flagg.

Beaubien Retirement as Fire Chief: Today was Gene Beaubien's last day as Gill's Fire Chief, as he turned 70 years old and retired after XX years as chief and more than XX years as a member of the Fire Department. The Selectboard recognized and thanked Beaubien for his dedicated service to the Town and its residents. Proclamations were read and presented to Beaubien from the Selectboard, the Governor and Lt. Governor, the Massachusetts Senate, the Massachusetts House of Representatives, and the State Fire Marshal. Dorri Beaubien was presented a certificate of appreciation from the Selectboard thanking her for sharing her husband with the Town and for being so understanding of the countless interrupted dinners, family gatherings, and nights of sleep. It was announced Gill's Board of Fire Engineers has elected Deputy Chief Bill Kimball to take over as Fire Chief on January 28, 2025. Turban, G. Beaubien, and D. Beaubien left the meeting at 5:40 PM.

CDBG Application FY2025: Brian McHugh, Director of Community Development for the Franklin County Regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority (FCRHRA), met with the Selectboard to provide information about the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and a possible FY25 application to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) for a regional program for residents of Gill, New Salem, and Shutesbury. The CDBG is a federally funded program established in 1974 and provides funding for projects that meet one or more of three national objectives: benefit low- and moderate-income (LMI) persons, prevent or eliminate slums or blight, and meet urgent community development needs.

The focus of the grant application will be a housing rehabilitation program for residents of the three towns. Loans of up to \$70,000 will be provided to assist qualifying households bring their homes up to code and correct problems with lead paint, septic systems, drinking water wells, asbestos, windows, doors, and roofs, among others. To be eligible, the household income must be less than 80% of the area's median income. Loans are provided at 0% interest, have a declining balance over 15 years, and only need to be repaid upon transfer of ownership of the home.

The grant application will seek funding to rehabilitate 12 housing units in total among the three towns. The FCRHRA can receive up to 30% of the grant as a management fee. There is typically a two- to three-year cycle for awarding, implementing, and closing out the grant. Gill will be the lead town for the grant, which means grant funds will be received and disbursed by the Town. The CDBG application is due April 14, 2025 and McHugh will return to Gill in March to hold the formal public hearing on the grant application.

By consensus, the Selectboard strongly supported Gill's participation in the CDBG application. The last time Gill was part of a CDBG award was in 2016 with Bernardston and Rowe. In anticipation of the grant application the Selectboard addressed two grant-related housekeeping matters. Crochier made a motion, seconded by Garbiel, to appoint Purington as the Environmental Certifying Officer for the CDBG application and grant. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote. Crochier made a motion, seconded by Garbiel, to designate Sharon Pleasant, FCRHRA's Community Development Program Manager, as the Authorized Official for the EOHLC's online reporting system. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote. McHugh left the meeting at 6:00 PM.

Municipal Energy Manager Grant: Tupper Brown, representing the Gill Energy Commission, met with the Selectboard to present the Commission's recommendation that the Selectboard express interest to the FRCOG in its application for a Municipal Energy Manager Grant through Mass Save. According to an email from the FRCOG's Jessica Atwood, if the application is successful, the grant would provide funding for the FRCOG to work with participating towns to develop energy management practices, track energy consumption, oversee the installation of energy-saving projects, and plan decarbonization efforts. The last two tasks are of particular importance to Gill,

based on the Commission’s letter to the Selectboard. The municipal energy manager could help advance three key projects in town: the roof and insulation project at the Gill Elementary School, the feasibility study for roof replacement and solar PV at the Riverside Municipal Building, and planning for needed upgrades to the electric service at the Public Safety Complex.

Crochier disclosed he works for the FRCOG, and noted this grant would not be associated with his position or the program for which he works. The Selectboard reviewed a draft of a letter to the FRCOG in support of the grant application, and during discussion the Selectboard felt there was little downside to sending the letter. The letter was approved by consensus. Brown left the meeting at 6:10 PM.

Review of Minutes: No minutes were ready for review.

Gill Digital Equity Report: Purington presented the final draft of the Digital Equity Report that was prepared for the town by the FRCOG using funding provided by the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) under the Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program. Since the initial draft was presented on December 30, 2024 the document has been proofread and comments from several stakeholders have been incorporated. Crochier made a motion, seconded by Garbiel, to approve the Digital Equity Report. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

2025 DLTA Requests: Purington presented his recommendation of the Town’s top priority projects for which funding be requested through the 2025 District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program administered by the FRCOG. As an employee of the FRCOG, Crochier recused himself from the discussion and vote.

Purington suggested the top three priorities be: 1) continued technical assistance related to FirstLight’s relicensing by the FERC and MassDEP’s 401 Water Quality Certification; 2) assistance with updating Gill’s Hazard Mitigation Plan that expires later this year; and 3) assistance with updating Gill’s Zoning Bylaws to include recent changes in state laws surrounding affordable dwelling units (ADUs), including FRCOG staff attending Planning Board meetings and drafting proposed changes to the bylaws. Other non-prioritized projects include: training for officials on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in local governments, local official continuing education workshops, exploration of shared municipal planner services, a pavement/roadway condition study (a need previously discussed during budget meetings, but not prioritized due to the in-house expertise of Highway Superintendent John Miner), and assistance with zoning bylaws related to large-scale solar and battery energy storage projects.

Garbiel made a motion, seconded by Snedeker, to approve the prioritized list of DLTA projects. The motion was approved by a vote of 2 in favor, 0 opposed, and Crochier recused from the vote.

Appointments: Crochier made a motion, seconded by Garbiel, to reappoint Eve Brown-Waite to the Cultural Council through November 22, 2027. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote. Crochier made a motion, seconded by Garbiel, to appoint Matthew McCarthy as a Firefighter through June 30, 2025. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote. Crochier made a motion, seconded by Garbiel, to appoint Mitch Waldron as the Fire Department representative to the Northfield EMS Regionalization Task Force. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

FY25 Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant: Crochier made a motion, seconded by Garbiel, to accept the award of a \$10,500 Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant from the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services to be used for the purchase of gloves, helmets, and SCBA facepieces, and to authorize Purington to sign any documents required to implement the grant. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

“Stop the Bleed” Class: Police Sergeant John Richardson announced he and Fire Chief Bill Kimball will be teaching a “Stop the Bleed” class for Gill residents on Saturday, February 22nd from 6-7 PM at the Fire Station training room. The class will cover the basics of stopping traumatic bleeding during a bleeding emergency before professional help arrives. If there is an overwhelming response and interest, additional classes will be scheduled.

Richardson, Flagg, Batchelder, and Savage left the meeting at 6:25 PM.

Warrant: The Selectboard reviewed and signed the FY 2025 warrant # 16 with totals of \$92,655.95 for vendors and \$36,507.42 for payroll.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ray Purington, Town Administrator

Signed copy on file. Approved on 02/10/2025

Charles Garbiel, Selectboard Clerk

February 5, 2025

To: The Gill Selectboard

From: The Gill Historical Commission

Subject: Possibility: Added Space for GHC at the Riverside Municipal Building

Dear Selectmen,

Thank you for taking time to meet with us.

Background:

1983: GHC was formed and the town agreed to locate us in the southwest room at RMB.

1993: Town Meeting minutes of 4-12-93 show that GHC was allowed to expand to the middle room for displays.

2002: The Four Winds School began renting two rooms; GHC was told to move out of the middle room. The SB was to ask the Water District to share space with GHC.

Where we are now: As the second and third room are no longer being rented at RMB, this situation could provide an opportunity for GHC to expand.

In order to better serve the town of Gill, the Historical Commission needs more space for the following:

1. Space for residents to research information about their families in GHC family files.
2. Access to valuable archival material now stored in the locked Water District room.
3. Storage of items currently not on display and for materials to create new displays.
4. Office space for GHC planning, communications and research.
5. Space for historical presentations for groups; possible oral history collection.

Additional space would allow for more activities around Gill's history. We plan to work with the Gill Elementary School's principal and teachers to offer access to museum holdings, space for related activities for students, and displays of Gill School pictures.

With more space, we are hoping to increase community participation in Gill. Additional space would help us expand displays on natural history, Indigenous life (past and present), industrial development, farming and other relevant aspects of life in Gill. Space for presentations that engage the public are sure to build community.

In short, we view this opportunity as an invitation for GHC to enhance the ways our group can serve the town of Gill. We will appreciate any blessings you all can provide.

Thank you so much for your consideration.

Kit Carpenter, GHC Chair

Bob Perry and Lynda Mayo, members

Bev Demars and Becky Minor, alternates

Sherry Heldt, volunteer