

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

FRANKLIN, SS.

TOWN OF GILL

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING: MAY 9, 2016

To any of the Constables of the Town of Gill in the County of Franklin,

Greetings:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby directed to notify and warn the inhabitants of said town, qualified to vote in elections and in town affairs, to meet at the Gill Town Hall in said Town on Monday, the Ninth day of May, in the year Two Thousand and Sixteen (5/9/2016) at 6:30 p.m. in the evening then and there to act on the following articles:

Article 1: To hear and act upon the Annual Report of the Officers of the Town, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved to pass over Article 1.

Annual Reports for Fiscal Years 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013 are nearly ready to be printed, and money remains in the Annual Report project budget and in the Selectboard's Fiscal Year 2016 budget to pay for printing expenses. Money has been included in the Selectboard's budget for Fiscal Year 2017 to cover printing costs for the three reports that remain to be compiled (Fiscal Year 2014, 2015, and 2016), with a goal of getting caught up during Fiscal Year 2017.

Related to Annual Reports, the Town Clerk has leftover copies of Annual Reports (from the 1950s and newer) that are available to residents on a first-come basis. If you are looking to fill in gaps in your collection, or want one key date (birth year, perhaps), act now. Supplies are limited.

Article 2: To elect the following officers: Two or more Field Drivers; Fence Viewers; Measurers of Wood, Bark and Surveyors of Lumber - all for one year, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved to elect Edward J. Golembeski and Clifford C. Hatch as Field Drivers and elect the Selectboard as Fence Viewers; Measurers of Wood, Bark and Surveyors of Lumber - all for one year.

Article 3: To see if the Town will vote to accept and expend any sum of money that might be made available from State or Federal funds for roadwork for the Fiscal Year 2017 and for the Chapter 90 type funds, authorize the Selectboard to enter into contracts with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Transportation, and to authorize the Treasurer with the approval of the Selectboard to borrow in anticipation of reimbursement, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to accept and expend any sum of money that might be made available from State or Federal funds for roadwork for the Fiscal Year 2017 and for the Chapter 90 type funds, authorize the Selectboard to enter into contracts with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Highway Department, and authorize the Treasurer with the approval of the Selectboard to borrow in anticipation of reimbursement.

Chapter 90 funds are given annually by the State to the Town, and are used for our road maintenance program – activities such as repaving asphalt roads, applying new oil & stone, grading gravel roads, and drainage and guardrail projects. The Town will receive \$149,861 for Fiscal Year 2017.

Article 4: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectboard to purchase, accept as a gift, take by eminent domain or otherwise obtain the land and personal assets of the Riverside Cemetery Association, said land located on Main Road and Mountain Road and consisting of approximately 4.4 acres, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to authorize the Selectboard to purchase for One Dollar the land and personal assets of the Riverside Cemetery Association, said land located on Main Road and Mountain Road and consisting of approximately 4.4 acres.

At their meeting on May 4, 2016, the membership of the Riverside Cemetery Association unanimously voted to dissolve the Association, abandon the cemetery, and transfer the cemetery land and financial assets (including all Perpetual Care funds) to the Town of Gill. If voters approve this Article, the Town will assume the operations of the Riverside Cemetery as a Town Cemetery in accordance with MGL Chapter 114. All Perpetual Care funds shall be used exclusively for the continued care of the Riverside Cemetery. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention, and 3 absent.

Article 5: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectboard to negotiate a Tax Agreement, also known as a “Payment In Lieu Of Taxes” (PILOT) agreement with Borrego Solar Systems, Inc., for a term of up to thirty years, for the purpose of establishing annual compensation to the Town for a proposed solar photovoltaic power plant to be constructed and operated by Borrego Solar Systems, Inc. on leased land owned by the Northfield Mount Hermon School at 586 Main Road, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to authorize the Selectboard to negotiate a Tax Agreement, also known as a “Payment In Lieu Of Taxes” (PILOT) agreement with Borrego Solar Systems, Inc., for a term of up to thirty years, for the purpose of establishing annual compensation to the Town for a proposed solar photovoltaic power plant to be constructed and operated by Borrego Solar Systems, Inc. on leased land owned by the Northfield Mount Hermon School at 586 Main Road.

Borrego Solar Systems has negotiated a lease with the Northfield Mount Hermon School to use approximately 11 acres of land (across Main Road from the campus, just north of the lower athletic fields) to construct and operate a 2 MW solar farm. The proposed project has also received the necessary Special Permit from the Gill Zoning Board of Appeals and required permissions from the Conservation Commission..

As a commercial use, the solar equipment is taxable. Based on an analysis provided by the Board of Assessors, the Selectboard believes a PILOT agreement will provide the Town with tax revenue that is more stable and has lower risk over the estimated 20 – 30 year life of the project. Once a PILOT agreement has been negotiated, it will be brought back to a Special Town Meeting for voters’ approval. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention, and 3 absent.

Article 6: To see if the Town will vote to accept Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44, Section 53F ¾, which establishes a special revenue fund known as the PEG Access and Cable Related Fund, to reserve cable franchise fees and other cable-related revenues for appropriation to support PEG access (Public, Educational, and Governmental access) services and oversight and renewal of the cable franchise agreement, with the fund to begin operation for Fiscal Year 2017, which begins on July 1, 2016, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to accept Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44, Section 53F ¾, which establishes a special revenue fund known as the PEG Access and Cable Related Fund, to reserve cable franchise fees and other cable-related revenues for appropriation to support PEG access (Public, Educational, and Governmental access) services and oversight and renewal of the cable franchise agreement, with the fund to begin operation for Fiscal Year 2017, which begins on July 1, 2016.

This Article is brought about by a new requirement from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. If the Town does not adopt this statute, then money the Town receives from Comcast to provide PEG Access programming and services will no longer be dedicated for PEG Access purposes and will become part of the general funds of the Town. Approval of this Article is the first step in keeping these funds set aside for their designated purpose. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention, and 3 absent.

Article 7: To see if the Town will vote to have the Town Accountant transfer any balance as of July 1, 2016 from the existing PEG Access Fund, Account # 271, to the new PEG Access and Cable Related Fund, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to have the Town Accountant transfer any balance as of July 1, 2016 from the existing PEG Access Fund, Account # 271, to the new PEG Access and Cable Related Fund.

This is the second step of the process started in Article 6. Approving this Article will allow PEG Access money from Comcast that has already been received to be transferred into the newly created fund (assuming Article 6 is approved). If this Article 7 is defeated, the existing PEG Access money – approximately \$71,000 – will become part of the Town’s general funds, and no longer reserved for PEG Access purposes. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention, and 3 absent.

Article 8: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectboard to work with the Gill-Montague Regional School District (“District”) to explore and pursue potential building repair projects at the Gill Elementary School, which proposed repair projects would materially extend the useful life of the school and preserve an asset that otherwise is capable of supporting the required educational program, and for which the District may be eligible for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (“MSBA”). The MSBA’s grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to authorize the Selectboard to work with the Gill-Montague Regional School District (“District”) to explore and pursue potential building repair projects at the Gill Elementary School, which proposed repair projects would materially extend the useful life of the school and preserve an asset that otherwise is capable of supporting the required educational program, and for which the District may be eligible for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (“MSBA”).

This Article was initiated by the Selectboard as a way to begin a dialogue with the voters and to get a sense of the level of support for renovations at the Gill Elementary School. MSBA-funded projects will fund repairs to heating systems, windows & doors, and roofs. The roof on the original section of the School was last replaced in 1994, and the roof on the 1986 addition is the original roof. The energy efficiency of the windows and doors is unknown. The building’s boiler was replaced in 2012 and is not expected to be a part of any repair project. Other needs of the building (chief among them: space constraints and floor tiles) would not be eligible for financial assistance from the MSBA. School buildings that receive MSBA funding are required to remain in use for educational purposes for the life of the funding (typically 20 years), or the Town must repay the MSBA funds. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention, and 3 absent.

Article 9: To see if the Town will vote to accept any sum of money that might be made available from the Quintus Allen Trust during Fiscal Year 2017, and authorize the Selectboard to expend such funds in support of the Gill Elementary School, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to accept any sum of money that might be made available from the Quintus Allen Trust during Fiscal Year 2017, and authorize the Selectboard to expend such funds in support of the Gill Elementary School.

Quintus Allen was an original trustee of the Greenfield Savings Bank. Upon his death in 1884, he established a trust fund to be used for education-related expenses in Colrain, Gill, Leyden, and Shelburne. The interest earned by the Trust is distributed to those towns each year. This year the Gill Elementary School has used \$1,329.21 of the Quintus Allen money to update and re-certify the climbing wall in the All Purpose Room. There is a balance of \$9,607 in the Town’s Quintus Allen account. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention, and 3 absent.

In recent years the School has used the Quintus Allen funds for:

- 2016 Climbing Wall & Gear (\$1,329.21)*
- 2015 Nature Program Coordinator & Equipment (\$2,915.60)*
- 2014 Student Clay Tile Mural (\$1,920.59)*
- 2014 Stipend for Afterschool ACT Play Assistant (\$250.00)*
- 2012 Soccer Goals and Sports Equipment (\$1,351.59)*
- 2011 Artist-in-Residence, all-school performance of scripts written by each class (\$3,000.00)*
- 2009 Upgrade to Electrical Panel to allow for a computer lab and classroom computers (\$6,625.00)*

Article 10: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the following revolving funds per the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 53E ½, for which revenues will be deposited into the funds and

expended to pay related costs under the authorization of the Selectboard, and total expenditures for the fiscal year beginning July 1 next will be limited to the amounts listed below, with all money remaining in the fund at the end of each fiscal year, or take any action relative thereto:

Dept. Spend	Authorized to	Types of Receipts Credited	Program/Purpose for which Funds may be Expended	Maximum Annual Expenditures
Fire Dept.		Oil Burner Inspection Fees	Inspector & Etc.	\$2,000.00
Town Clerk, Animal Control Officer		Dog Fees & Fines	Licenses, Dog Care & Control, & Etc.	4,000.00
Cemetery Commission		Opening Fees	Cemeteries & Caretaking	2,000.00
Conservation Commission		Consultant Fees	Project Review	10,000.00
Agricultural Commission		Farmers' Market & Ag Event Fees	Ag Programs	500.00
Energy Commission		Workshop and Program Fees	Energy Programs	1,000.00
Zoning Board of Appeals		ZBA Fees	Hearings & Expenses	2,000.00
Board of Health, Administrative Assistant		Recycling Program Revenue	Solid waste & recycling programs, Solid Waste District membership, recycled-content office products	5,000.00

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to authorize the listed revolving funds per the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 53E ½, for which revenues will be deposited into the funds and expended to pay related costs as recommended by the Selectboard, and total expenditures for the fiscal year beginning July 1 next will be limited to the amounts listed, with all money remaining in the fund at the end of each fiscal year:

This is the same list of revolving funds that was approved last year. A revolving fund allows program fees to be used within the fiscal year for the purposes listed by the "department" that collects the fees. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention, and 3 absent.

Article 11: To see if the Town will vote to fix the salaries or compensation of the several officers of the Town as follows, or take any action relative thereto:

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to fix the salaries or compensation of the several officers of the Town as follows:

Constable(s) – Each Posting	\$19.26
Moderator – Annual Town Meeting	\$140.51
Special Town Meeting, Each	\$25.06
Selectboard Chair	\$2,580.44
2 nd & 3 rd Member, Each	\$2,345.92
Board of Assessors Chair	\$3,133.52
2 nd & 3 rd Member, Each	\$2,848.64
Board of Health Chair	\$1,412.76
2 nd & 3 rd Member, Each	\$1,293.76
Town Clerk	\$17,764.76
Tax Collector	\$22,381.58
Additional As Sewer Collector	\$669.08
Treasurer	\$20,034.30
Registrars – Three members, Each	\$59.75
Town Clerk	\$95.70

All amounts are level funded from Fiscal Year 2016. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention, and 3 absent.

Article 12: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds any sum or sums of money to provide a cost of living adjustment (COLA) for Town employees and elected officials, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved to pass over Article 12.

In January the Personnel Committee recommended a COLA of 1.0% to the Selectboard. The Selectboard has opted to follow the recent past practice of matching the Social Security increase for the current year. For 2016, Social Security did not increase, therefor the Selectboard has proposed no COLA for Fiscal Year 2017.

Article 13: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide any sum or sums of money for the maintenance of the several departments of the Town (the “Omnibus budget”), and for other necessary charges, in accordance with the amount recommended by the Selectboard, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to raise and appropriate by taxation \$1,404,457.74 (One Million Four Hundred Four Thousand Four Hundred Fifty Seven and 74/100 Dollars) and transfer \$53,720.00 (Fifty Three Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty and 00/100 Dollars) from Sewer Use Fees and appropriate \$38,865.00 (Thirty Eight Thousand Eight Hundred Sixty Five and 00/100 Dollars) from Fiscal Year 2017 Estimated Sewer Receipts for a total appropriation of \$1,497,042.74 (One Million Four Hundred Ninety Seven Thousand Forty Two and 74/100 Dollars) for the maintenance of the several departments of the Town (the “Omnibus budget”), and for other necessary charges, in accordance with the amount recommended by the Selectboard.

Please see the separate handout (legal-sized paper) for the Omnibus amounts. The amounts in the motion come from lines 87 – 90 of the handout. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention, and 3 absent.

Article 14: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide \$1,593,022.00 (One Million Five Hundred Ninety Three Thousand Twenty Two and 00/100 Dollars) to provide \$1,574,992.00 for its Fiscal Year 2017 operating assessment and \$18,030.00 for its Fiscal Year 2017 debt service costs for the Gill-Montague Regional School District, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to raise and appropriate by taxation \$1,593,022.00 (One Million Five Hundred Ninety Three Thousand Twenty Two and 00/100 Dollars) to provide \$1,574,992.00 for its Fiscal Year 2017 operating assessment and \$18,030.00 for its Fiscal Year 2017 debt service costs for the Gill-Montague Regional School District.

The GMRSD’s total Fiscal Year 2017 Operating budget increased by 2.26%, and the “All Funds” budget increased by 3.45%. The overall assessment to both towns increased by 3.69%, with Gill seeing a 0.57% increase and Montague 4.28%. Gill’s assessment for the GMRSD’s operating budget has increased by \$8,963 and the debt service for the high school/middle school renovation project decreased by \$878.

While Gill’s increase from the GMRSD is very modest, the assessment from the Franklin County Technical School (voted within the previous Article 13 “Omnibus budget”) will more than double from Fiscal Year 2016 to Fiscal Year 2017, going from \$62,411 to \$126,096. This increase almost directly corresponds to a doubling in the number of students attending from Gill, from 5 students in ’14-’15 to 10 students in ’15-’16. Due to sound fiscal planning, the Town is able to manage these assessments without cuts to town services or the need for an override.

Finances – ours, theirs, and yours – continue to tighten, and enrollments continue fluctuate. We expect future challenges for both districts (GMRSD and Franklin County Tech) and the Town in providing education budgets that are both adequate and affordable. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention, and 3 absent.

Article 15: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate by taxation, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide any sum or sums of money for the operations and activities of the Recreation Committee, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to raise and appropriate by taxation \$3,600.00 (Three Thousand Six Hundred and 00/100 Dollars) for the Fiscal Year 2017 operations and activities of the Recreation Committee.

The Recreation Committee was re-established last fall after several years of inactivity. They offered soccer last fall and are doing T-ball and rookie baseball this spring. The funding in this Article will allow them to expand their offerings next year, and to make some needed improvements and upgrades to the playing fields and equipment. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention, and 3 absent.

Article 16: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate by taxation, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide any sum or sums of money for the operations, stipend and activities of the Emergency Management Director, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved to pass over Article 16.

With the shutdown of the Entergy Nuclear Vermont Yankee plant in Vernon, the Town will soon stop receiving State funding for emergency preparedness. The funds from the State will be sufficient to provide emergency management services in Fiscal Year 2017. However, it is expected that in future years the Town will need to fund this from taxation.

Article 17: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate by taxation, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide \$10,218.00 (Ten Thousand Two Hundred Eighteen and 00/100 Dollars) to pay into the General Obligation Energy Conservation Bond Sinking Fund, and to pay supplemental interest associated with said bond, and to pay for an annual energy performance audit, all relating to the energy project at the Gill Elementary School, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to transfer \$10,218.00 (Ten Thousand Two Hundred Eighteen and 00/100 Dollars) from the Energy Stabilization Fund to pay into the General Obligation Energy Conservation Bond Sinking Fund, and to pay supplemental interest associated with said bond, and to pay for an annual energy performance audit, all relating to the energy project at the Gill Elementary School, and all for Fiscal Year 2017. (A 2/3 majority is required to transfer money out of a stabilization fund.)

This article makes the Fiscal Year 2017 payments related to the 2011 energy improvements at the Gill Elementary School. It is the fifth payment out of sixteen total. The money in the Energy Stabilization Fund is available because of savings produced by the energy improvements. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention, and 3 absent.

A 2/3 majority is required to transfer money out of a stabilization fund.

Article 18: To see if the Town will vote to hear and act upon a report presented by the Capital Improvement Planning Committee, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to hear and act upon a report presented by the Capital Improvement Planning Committee.

The CIPC's report to the Town is in the handout for today's meeting (green paper). Articles 19 and 20 were requested by the CIPC.

Article 19: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate by taxation, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide a sum or sums of money to purchase a police cruiser and associated equipment for the police department, including borrowing costs that may be associated with said purchase and authorize the Town Treasurer with the approval of the Selectboard, to borrow in accordance with MGL Chapter 44, Section 7; all or some of which may be contingent upon a Proposition 2 1/2 debt exclusion vote override, or take any other action relative thereto. (A 2/3 vote is required for authorization to borrow.)

Motion: It is moved to pass over Article 19.

The Capital Improvement Planning Committee has recommended the Town replace the 2005 Crown Vic police cruiser. The Selectboard was not able to finish its deliberations in time to present a course of action for the Annual Town Meeting. A Special Town Meeting is anticipated in late May or June to vote on other matters besides the cruiser. Depending on the Selectboard's decision, the cruiser could be an article for that Meeting.

Article 20: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate by taxation, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide a sum or sums of money to purchase a used back-hoe and implements for the highway department, including borrowing costs that may be associated with said purchase and authorize the Town Treasurer with the approval of the Selectboard, to borrow in accordance with MGL Chapter 44, Section 7, or take any other action relative thereto. (A 2/3 vote is required for authorization to borrow.)

Motion: It is moved to pass over Article 20.

There is general support among the CIPC, Finance Committee, and Selectboard for the Town to purchase a used backhoe for the highway department, and a belief that the purchase can be made without a debt exclusion and without increasing taxes. However, the exact structure of the financing and motion are still being developed, and so the Article will be passed over and brought back at a future Special Town Meeting in late May or June.

In the scenario currently under consideration, part of the cost of the backhoe would come from money left in this year's Snow & Ice budget. Additional funds would come from one or more years of the Highway budget, by taking money that would have been spent to rent a backhoe and using those funds to make payment(s) on the Town's purchase.

Article 21: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide any sum or sums of money for PEG Access operations and other municipal cable-related expenses, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to transfer \$10,750.00 (Ten Thousand Seven Hundred Fifty and 00/100 Dollars) from the PEG Access and Cable Related Fund to provide for PEG Access operations and other municipal cable-related expenses for Fiscal Year 2017.

Assuming Articles 6 and 7 are approved by voters, this Article makes the funding appropriation to provide PEG Access services next year. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention, and 3 absent.

Article 22: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate by taxation or transfer from available funds \$1,500.00 (One Thousand Five Hundred and 00/100 Dollars) to add to the First Light Appraisal Account to be used toward the cost of a triennial appraisal of the real and personal property in the Town of Gill owned by FirstLight Hydro Generating Company, or take any other action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to transfer from the Released Overlay account \$1,500.00 (One Thousand Five Hundred and 00/100 Dollars) to add to the First Light Appraisal Account to be used toward the cost of a triennial appraisal of the real and personal property in the Town of Gill owned by FirstLight Hydro Generating Company.

Every three years the Department of Revenue requires the Assessors to obtain a new appraisal of the value of the Gill portion of the Turners Falls Dam, as well as other property in Gill owned by FirstLight. An appraisal is currently in process. This article adds to the account for saving toward the next appraisal. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention, and 3 absent.

Article 23: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate by taxation or transfer from available funds \$1,500.00 (One Thousand Five Hundred and 00/100 Dollars) to add to the Board of Assessors Triennial Revaluation Account, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to transfer from the Released Overlay account \$1,500.00 (One Thousand Five Hundred and 00/100 Dollars) to add to the Board of Assessors' Triennial Revaluation account.

Fiscal Year 2017 is the next triennial recertification year for Gill, in which the Department of Revenue will review and certify property values town wide. Because of the added level of research and analysis, the Assessors incur extra costs during revaluation years. This article continues saving toward the revaluation. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention, and 3 absent.

Article 24: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate by taxation or transfer from available funds \$5,000.00 (Five Thousand and 00/100 Dollars) for the Town Audit Account to be used toward a portion of the cost to conduct an independent financial audit of the Town, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to transfer from the Released Overlay account \$5,000.00 (Five Thousand and 00/100 Dollars) to be used toward a portion of the cost to conduct an independent financial audit of the Town.

This Article continues to set aside funds to pay for the next triennial audit of the Town's finances, to be conducted this year on the accounts of Fiscal Year 2015. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention, and 3 absent.

Article 25: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate from taxation or transfer from available funds a sum or sums of money for the Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust Fund, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to raise and appropriate by taxation \$6,534.00 (Six Thousand Five Hundred Thirty Four and 00/100 Dollars) for the Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust Fund.

This article continues to set aside money to meet future expenses of the Town's obligation to provide health insurance for future retirees. Although the Town's Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) liability is a very large number (\$760,000 when last updated in 2013), the Selectboard and Finance Committee believe there are still too many assumptions and unknowns built into what is essentially an actuarial estimate. The next update of the estimated OPEB liability will happen as part of this year's financial audit. The current balance in the fund is \$21,318. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention, and 3 absent.

Article 26: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate from taxation or transfer from available funds a sum or sums of money for one or more of the Stabilization Funds of the Town (Capital, Education, Energy, or General), or take any action relative thereto. (A 2/3 majority is required to place money into a stabilization fund.)

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to raise and appropriate from taxation \$2,000.00 (Two Thousand and 00/100 Dollars) to be placed into the Energy Stabilization Fund.

A 2/3 majority is required to place money into a stabilization fund.

There is currently \$138,962 in the Education Stabilization Fund, \$48,284 in the Capital Stabilization Fund, \$262,729 in the General Stabilization Fund, and \$8,890 in the Energy Stabilization Fund.

The \$2,000 in this motion represents a portion of the estimated \$4,800 of annual savings created when the Town converted its streetlights to energy-efficient LEDs.

If any of the articles of the Annual Town Meeting are amended or defeated, the Selectboard anticipates amending this article accordingly in order to maintain a balanced budget that does not require an override. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention, and 3 absent.

Article 27: To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum of money or sums of money from unappropriated funds (Free Cash) or other available funds to be used to reduce the tax rate and stabilize the tax levy for Fiscal Year 2017, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to transfer \$68,000.00 (Sixty Eight Thousand and 00/100 Dollars) from unappropriated funds (Free Cash) to be used to reduce the tax rate and stabilize the tax levy for Fiscal Year 2017.

Free Cash is the money that remains unspent in department budgets from the previous year, plus any revenues that exceed what was anticipated when the tax rate was set. The Free Cash from Fiscal Year 2015 was certified by the Department of Revenue to be \$85,485. Of that, \$15,017.20 was transferred back to the Sewer Fund at the February 22nd Special Town Meeting. Another \$68,000 is used in this article to reduce the tax rate and contribute toward the operation of the Town. The remaining \$2,467.80 will be carried forward to next year unless it is otherwise appropriated by voters prior to June 30th.

Depending on the outcomes of the other "money" articles, a different amount may be recommended to be used to reduce the Fiscal Year 2017 tax rate. The Finance Committee recommends this article by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention, and 3 absent.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

FRANKLIN, SS.

TOWN OF GILL

And, you are directed to serve this Warrant, by posting up attested copies thereof at the Town Hall, Main Road; Post Office, Mt. Hermon; The Gill Store & Tavern, Main Road; and Riverside Municipal Building, Route 2, in said Town seven days at least before the time of holding said meeting.

Hereof fail not, and make due return of this Warrant, with your doings thereon, to the Town Clerk, at the time and place of meeting, as foresaid.

Given under our hand this 27th day of April in the year Two Thousand Sixteen (4/27/2016).

Selectboard of Gill

Gregory M. Snedeker, Chair

John R. Ward, Board member

Randy P. Crochier, Board member

A true copy Attest:

_____, Town Clerk

Date: _____

Individuals who may need auxiliary aids for effective communication for this meeting should call the Gill Town Hall at (413) 863-9347 or MA Relay System at (800) 439-2370.

Pursuant to the within Warrant, I have notified and warned the inhabitants of the Town of Gill by posting up attested copies of the same at Town Hall, Main Rd.; Post Office, Mt. Hermon; Gill Store & Tavern, Main Rd.; and Riverside Municipal Building, Route 2, seven days before the date hereof, as within directed.

_____ Constable of Gill

Date: _____

Article 13 - Omnibus Budget

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
				FY17			
	Omnibus Budget for 5/9/2016 Annual Town Meeting	FY15 Approved with COLA	FY16 Approved with COLA	Selectboard & Finance Comm. Recommended	Increase / (Decrease) (D - C)	% Change	Notes
1	GENERAL GOVERNMENT						
2	Moderator Salary	332.10	335.61	335.00	(0.61)	-0.2%	
3	Selectboard Salaries	7,150.76	7,273.01	7,272.28	(0.73)		
4	Selectboard Expenses	2,909.06	2,801.94	4,520.00	1,718.06	61.3%	Additional funds to print past-due years of Annual Reports
5	Administrative Assistant (Salary & Exp.)	53,207.79	56,046.95	56,190.00	143.05	0.3%	
6	Finance Committee	150.00	150.00	150.00	-		
7	Reserve Fund	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	-		
8	Accountant Expenses	200.00	200.00	200.00	-		
9	Assessors Salaries	8,683.19	8,830.80	8,830.80	-		
10	Assessors Clerical & Expenses	30,655.85	31,162.08	31,505.60	343.52	1.1%	
11	Treasurer Salary	19,699.34	20,034.30	20,034.30	-		
12	Treasurer Expenses	6,902.00	7,037.00	8,480.00	1,443.00	20.5%	Compliance with Affordable Care Act reporting requirements
13	Tax Collector Salary	22,007.57	22,381.58	22,381.58	-		
14	Tax Collector Expenses	8,522.00	8,754.00	8,518.00	(236.00)	-2.7%	
15	Legal	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-		
16	IT Committee	1,750.00	2,550.00	4,250.00	1,700.00	66.7%	New website for Town and website hosting expenses
17	Town Clerk Salary	17,467.83	17,764.76	17,764.76	-		
18	Town Clerk Expenses	5,115.00	4,670.00	1,825.00	(2,845.00)	-60.9%	Moved Voting Machine expenses into Elections budget
19	Elections/Registrars	3,288.00	2,265.70	6,990.00	4,724.30	208.5%	More elections in FY17, Voting Machines (see above)
20	Conservation Commission	826.39	829.76	830.00	0.24		
21	Agricultural Commission	200.00	200.00	200.00	-		
22	Planning Board	1,775.23	1,792.51	1,794.00	1.49		
23	Zoning Board of Appeals	1,573.30	1,597.36	1,598.00	0.64		
24	Energy Commission	500.00	500.00	500.00	-		
25	Town Hall/Riverside Bldg Operations	25,585.71	25,537.06	23,756.00	(1,781.06)	-7.0%	Lower locked-in price for heating oil for FY17
26	Building Repairs & Maintenance	18,000.00	18,000.00	18,000.00	-		
27	Garage/Public Safety Bldg Operations	20,574.00	19,764.40	19,765.00	0.60		
28	GENERAL GOVERNMENT TOTAL	263,575.12	266,978.82	272,190.32	5,211.50	2.0%	
29							
30	PUBLIC SAFETY						
31	Police Department	187,080.19	189,814.05	191,064.00	1,249.95	0.7%	Step raises
32	Fire Department	75,360.85	77,318.04	78,735.00	1,416.96	1.8%	Step raises, equipment replacement
33	PUBLIC SAFETY TOTAL	262,441.04	267,132.09	269,799.00	2,666.91	1.0%	
34							

Article 13 - Omnibus Budget

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
				FY17			
	Omnibus Budget for 5/9/2016 Annual Town Meeting	FY15 Approved	FY16 Approved	Selectboard & Finance Comm. Recommended	Increase / (Decrease) (D - C)	% Change	Notes
		with COLA	with COLA				
35	PUBLIC WORKS						
36	Trees and Forestry	6,455.00	6,455.00	7,655.00	1,200.00	18.6%	One additional day of hired tree removal
37	Highway Department	247,267.81	251,670.98	251,381.00	(289.98)	-0.1%	
38	Highway Dep't. - Snow & Ice Removal	53,651.00	63,970.00	63,970.00	-		
39	Bridges and Street Lights	6,300.00	6,300.00	3,500.00	(2,800.00)	-44.4%	Lower expenses due to switch to LED streetlights
40	Solid Waste & Recycling	69,632.00	70,432.00	69,981.00	(451.00)	-0.6%	
41	Solid Waste District Assessment		1,065.00	2,232.00	1,167.00		50% from town budget; 50% from revolving fund
42	Sewer	87,865.00	87,865.00	92,585.00	4,720.00	5.4%	Hedging against an expected rate increase from Montague
43	Cemetery Commission	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	-		
44	Memorial Committee	693.00	790.00	834.00	44.00	5.6%	Replacement flag holders for veterans' graves
45	PUBLIC WORKS TOTAL	476,363.81	493,047.98	496,638.00	3,590.02	0.7%	
46							
47	HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES						
48	Board of Health Salaries	3,933.35	4,000.28	4,000.28	-		
49	Board of Health Clerical & Expenses	2,694.20	2,732.46	3,733.00	1,000.54	36.6%	Renewal of BOH members' licenses
50	Council on Aging	5,676.00	7,606.20	7,904.00	297.80	3.9%	Montague step raise for Director, misc. operating expenses
51	Veterans District Assessment	2,393.00	2,863.00	2,082.00	(781.00)	-27.3%	Savings from Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans' Services Dist.
52	Veterans Benefits	4,000.00	5,500.00	5,500.00	-		
53	HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES TOTAL	18,696.55	22,701.94	23,219.28	517.34	2.3%	
54							
55	CULTURE & RECREATION						
56	Library	25,569.75	25,831.70	26,643.58	811.88	3.1%	Step raises
57	Recreation Commission						To be discussed & voted under Article 15.
58	Historical Commission	860.00	860.00	860.00	-		
59	CULTURE & RECREATION TOTAL	26,429.75	26,691.70	27,503.58	811.88	3.0%	
60							

Article 13 - Omnibus Budget

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
				FY17			
	Omnibus Budget for 5/9/2016 Annual Town Meeting	FY15 Approved with COLA	FY16 Approved with COLA	Selectboard & Finance Comm. Recommended	Increase / (Decrease) (D - C)	% Change	Notes
61	FIXED COSTS						
62	Town Insurance	40,192.00	40,860.00	40,860.00	-		
63	Mariamante Loan (debt excl)	14,639.33	14,444.70	14,527.56	82.86	0.6%	
64	Energy Bond & Performance Audit				-	100.0%	To be discussed & voted under Article 17.
65	Retirement System	81,538.00	81,943.00	88,093.00	6,150.00	7.5%	Greater increase in Gill salaries vs other Ret. System Units
66	Unemployment Fund				-	100.0%	
67	Group Health and Life Insurance	83,064.00	81,707.00	86,500.00	4,793.00	5.9%	First increase in health insurance rates in 5 years.
68	Safety Complex Roof Loan (debt excl)						Loan being finalized, vote at next Spec. Town Meeting
69	Police Cruiser Loan (debt excl)	11,290.01	11,124.53		(11,124.53)		3-year debt exclusion loan has been paid off.
70	Town Hall Roof Loan (debt excl)	16,448.00	16,224.00		(16,224.00)		3-year debt exclusion loan has been paid off.
71	FIXED COSTS TOTAL	247,171.34	246,303.23	229,980.56	(16,322.67)	-6.6%	
72							
73	FRCOG ASSESSMENT						
74	Statutory & Reg'l Services Assessments	11,786.00	9,536.00	9,749.00	213.00	2.2%	
75	Accounting	22,394.00	22,917.00	23,105.00	188.00	0.8%	
76	Health Agent/Cooperative Public Health	11,788.00	10,788.00	11,112.00	324.00	3.0%	
77	Regional Emerg. Preparedness	100.00	150.00	150.00	-		
78	Cooperative Inspection Program	6,500.00	6,500.00	7,500.00	1,000.00	15.4%	Increase covers costs that permit fees can't charge for
79	FRCOG ASSESSMENT TOTAL	52,568.00	49,891.00	51,616.00	1,725.00	3.5%	
80							
81	EDUCATION						
82	Gill-Montague Reg. Sch. Dist.						To be discussed & voted under Article 14.
83	GMRSD Bldg Loan						To be discussed & voted under Article 14.
84	Franklin County Technical School	96,620.00	62,411.00	126,096.00	63,685.00	102.0%	Gill's enrollment doubled from 5 to 10 students
85	EDUCATION TOTAL	96,620.00	62,411.00	126,096.00	63,685.00	102.0%	
86							
87	OMNIBUS BUDGET TOTAL	1,443,865.61	1,435,157.76	1,497,042.74	61,884.98	4.3%	
88	Less Transfer of Sewer Use Fees	49,000.00	49,000.00	53,720.00			Sewer use fees offset 100% of Sewer Budget
89	Less Estimated Sewer Receipts	38,865.00	38,865.00	38,865.00			Sewer use fees offset 100% of Sewer Budget
90	TOTAL RAISED BY TAXATION	1,356,000.61	1,347,292.76	1,404,457.74	57,164.98	4.2%	

Supplemental Info for Article 13 - Omnibus Budget		Financial Summary for Fiscal Year 2017				
	A	B	C	D	E	F
		Fiscal Year 2015	Fiscal Year 2016	Selectboard & Fin. Comm. Fiscal Year 2017	Dollar Change	Percent Change
1	Omnibus Budget (Town Operations)	1,443,865.61	1,435,157.76	1,497,042.74	61,884.98	4.3%
2	Warrant Articles	183,819.00	224,880.00	41,102.00	(183,778.00)	-81.7%
3	Miscellaneous (Overlay & Cherry Sheet Deducts)	80,022.00	76,321.75	74,174.00	(2,147.75)	-2.8%
4	Total Town Budget	1,707,706.61	1,736,359.51	1,612,318.74	(124,040.77)	-7.1%
5	GMRSD School Assessment (Operating & Debt)	1,458,438.00	1,584,937.00	1,593,022.00	8,085.00	0.5%
6	Total Gross Budget	3,166,144.61	3,321,296.51	3,205,340.74	(115,955.77)	-3.5%
7	State Receipts	265,306.00	275,406.00	281,952.00	6,546.00	2.4%
8	Local Receipts	227,200.00	223,400.00	223,400.00	-	0.0%
9	Available Funds	189,739.00	257,135.00	121,553.00	(135,582.00)	-52.7%
10	Free Cash to Reduce the Tax Rate	68,000.00	68,000.00	68,000.00	-	0.0%
11	Total Receipts	750,245.00	823,941.00	694,905.00	(129,036.00)	-15.7%
12	Total Gross Budget	3,166,144.61	3,321,296.51	3,205,340.74	(115,955.77)	-3.5%
13	Total Receipts (Excluding Property Taxes)	750,245.00	823,941.00	694,905.00	(129,036.00)	-15.7%
14	Property Tax Assessment	2,415,899.61	2,497,355.51	2,510,435.74	13,080.23	0.5%
15	Town-wide Property Valuation (FY17 is in process)	143,353,073	147,336,608	147,336,608	-	0.0%
16	Tax Rate If All Articles Pass (per 1,000 valuation)	16.85	16.95	17.04	0.09	0.5%
	(Loan for Safety Complex Roof will add another approx. 0.10 to tax rate)					
17	Average Valuation of Single-Family Residence	191,953	194,461	194,461	-	0.0%
18	Average Annual Taxes of Single-Family Residence	3,235	3,296	3,313	17	0.5%