

**TOWN OF GILL**  
MASSACHUSETTS



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**SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
*October 13, 2009*

Called to Order

Meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m.

Present

Ann Banash, John Ward, Nancy Griswold, Selectboard members; Tracy Rogers, Town Administrator; Claire Chang, Finance Committee member.

Management Consultant

The Board reviewed three proposals received from consultants offering to conduct an analysis of staffing and equipment needs for the police, fire, and highway departments.

- Matrix Consulting Group of Andover, MA bid \$14,300.
- Groux and Associates of N Chatham, MA bid \$3,000.
- Municipal Resources of Meredith, NH bid \$7,500 - \$10,000.

The Matrix Consulting Group's bid seemed high, while Groux and Assoc. didn't seem to add much more information than what we already know internally. None of the candidates indicated that they had worked in a town as small as Gill. The Board decided to hold interviews with all three bidders on Monday, October 19.

Minutes

The Board approved minutes as written of its September 28, 2009 meeting.

Cemetery Commission Update

Carrie Stevens and Pat Haigis of the Cemetery Commission joined the meeting. They reported that there will be more work necessary on the Center Cemetery erosion project in November. There is only \$2,268 left in the fund set aside for the project. Highway Superintendent Mick LaClaire estimates he'll need \$2800 - \$4000 to finish the job this season and recommends some funds be set aside for future maintenance. The Board discussed the possibility of placing a special article on the next special town meeting warrant to raise the rest of the money needed for this year's project.

The Commission reported that they are now charging opening fees for burials. Ann notified them that those receipts will have to go into the general fund until a revolving fund can be approved at the next annual town meeting.

Carrie and Pat left the meeting.

#### Donelan and Rosenberg Visit

Tracy reported that Senator Rosenberg and Representative Donelan are available to meet with the Board on October 26, but at 3:30 p.m. rather than 4:30 p.m. The Board agreed to move its meeting up that week to 3:30 p.m. and to invite the general public to attend as well.

#### Energy Commission Appointments

Tracy reported that the appointments the Board made to the Energy Commission during their September 28 meeting should have been for staggered three-year terms. The Board placed the appointees names into a hat and randomly selected members for staggered terms. The results were:

- Ben Storrow and Tupper Brown for one year
- Claire Chang for two years
- Kevin Cameron for three years.

#### Payroll and Bill Warrants

The Board approved payroll and bill warrant number 8.

#### Naughton Letter to GMRSD

Nancy made a motion to support Mike Naughton's letter to the School Committee (see attached). John seconded the motion and it was carried by a unanimous vote.

#### Selectmen Office Hours

Tracy brought forth a proposal from Ray Purington to have a selectman hold regular office hours for the public to give residents a time when they can come in to discuss town issues or bring complaints to the Board's attention. The Board felt that, given the lack of attendance at regular Selectboard meetings, there would likely also be low attendance at such office hours. John also thought, given the differing opinions of each member of the Board on different topics, it would be better for people to address all three at the same time. The Board decided against holding office hours.

John reported that he has heard from residents that they are watching Board meetings on TV and are happy they are now being televised.

#### Letter to the Editor

Nancy questioned where the letter to the editor in today's Recorder came from. Ann explained that there didn't seem to be a good time during the District meeting to read aloud the statement the Selectboard and Finance Committee had worked so hard on at the last meeting, so she submitted it to the paper as a letter to the editor instead.

### Sewer Abatement

Tracy presented an abatement request from Jeff Suprenant for a total of \$11.74 for filling his spa twice in the last quarter. Nancy made a motion to approve the request. John seconded the motion and it was carried by a unanimous vote.

### Deposition/Public Records Request Policies

Tracy presented a recommendation from MIIA for towns to create public records request and deposition policies. Tracy suggested that the Town Clerk be the gatekeeper for public records requests, to which the Board agreed, given she is the keeper of town records. The Board suggested that Tracy ask MIIA for examples of such policies.

### Cultural Council Grant Contract

Tracy presented the contract form for the FY10 Cultural Council grant from the State, for a total of \$4,000. Ann signed.

### State Police Visit

Tracy reported Capt. Sutherland, the Director of Telecommunications for the MA State Police will be in Deerfield on 10/26 to hear feedback from towns. The Board suggested mentioning to him that County Dispatch is a wonderful service. Being short two staff will be difficult for them. While issuing burning permits may seem trivial to the State Police, it is critical for small towns.

### Burning Permits

Tracy reported that she will attend a meeting tonight that includes a presentation of a web-based application to issue and track burning permits. She reported the possibility of towns issuing annual permits, where people would be read the rules and regulations the first time they call, then they'd only need to call to notify the next time they intended to burn. This would reduce the load on Dispatch and they may be willing to still handle the calls that way. Ann suggested that the annual permit then be in writing, so permittees are sent a hard copy of the rules and regulations the first time they apply for the season.

### Riverside Municipal Building Study Committee Update

Leland Stevens joined the meeting. Claire reported on the progress of the Committee.

Jenn Waldron is working on getting the Sheriff's office to come before the end of the season to paint the building.

The roof needs work within the next 2-5 years. No one has made it into the attic yet to check on rafters, look for leaks, etc.

The windows are a big energy drain. It may be possible to remove the panes of glass and replace and reglaze them one window at a time by volunteers. The windows would still be single-pane, but not be leaky any more.

Jenn Waldron has offered to donate a low-flow toilet for the first floor bathroom and Jim Tomasi has offered to install it. Ann stated that she'd rather have the Highway Dept.

install it for liability reasons. Tracy will have the Highway Superintendent contact Jenn to work out the details.

The building has only 100 amp electrical service and knob and tube wiring. The knob and tube makes insulating the building problematic. An upgrade of the system is recommended.

The front concrete steps are crumbling.

The Committee believes many of the projects would fall under the Energy Savings Contract and it is looking into other grants to address the other projects. Pam Shoemaker is looking into getting the building on the register of historic buildings. Nancy pointed out that, in order to qualify for many of the grants, the project must be “shovel-ready.” Also, if the building is on the register of historic buildings, there may be significant restrictions on what the Town can do.

Nancy also stressed that the Town needs to vote on many of these projects before they happen. Ann concurred that Town Meeting will have to approve any project currently being discussed.

Ken Sprankle joined the meeting.

Lee expressed concern that the Committee’s work is going beyond the scope of its charge; they shouldn’t already be applying for grants. Ann stated she didn’t feel the energy improvements were out of line, but that applying for other grants before there is a full plan in place of what to do with the building concerns her.

Claire proposed a free film night at the RMB on 10/30. Children’s movies would be projected on the outside back wall of the building. The event would be over early enough in the evening so as not to cause any noise complaints. The idea was approved.

Claire asked if a donation account may be set up for the building. Ann expressed concern about collecting donations without a real plan for them.

Nancy made a motion to appoint Maurice Dumas to the RMB Study Committee. John seconded the motion and it was carried by a unanimous vote.

Lee left the meeting.

#### Conservation Commission Update

Conservation Commission Chair Ken Sprankle reported on the Commission’s current work.

Permitting for riverbank stabilization was lengthy and involved, but is finally complete. The Commission issued its final order of conditions to First Light and New England

Environmental. The Commission and the MA Dept. of Environmental Protection will be closely monitoring the project.

Regarding the Sandri property, Ken asked for permission for the Commission to form a subcommittee to work on the property. He'd like them to start by forming a recreation plan. Chris Polatin, Ray Purington, and Dick French have all expressed interest in serving. He envisions the subcommittee bringing any decision-making questions to the full Conservation Commission for a vote. The Board approved.

Ann suggested that signs indicating that motorized vehicles are not allowed on the property be erected fairly quickly. Ken will take care of it.

Ken said that public hearings will likely be held over the winter months to introduce the public to the new property and gather feedback on what they would like to see happen with it.

Lastly, Ken asked for permission to use \$3,500 of the Agricultural Protection/Restoration fund to pay half of the appraisal costs on the Urgiel Property. Franklin Land Trust will pay the other half. Nancy made a motion to approve the expense. John seconded the motion and it was carried by a unanimous vote. Ken left the meeting.

Management Consultant (Cont'd)

Tracy received a last minute additional proposal from MMA Consulting Group for \$8,400. The Board suggested inviting them in for 10/19 as well.

Four Winds Lease

Headmaster Stephen Hussey failed to make the meeting. The Board discussed if it wanted to make any changes to the lease given the ongoing work of the RMB Study Committee. Members did express interest in getting the lease back on a fiscal year schedule. They decided to give the Headmaster the option of renewing the lease through June 30, 2010 or 2011, but to keep the utilities clause in the lease.

Adjourned

Meeting was adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by Tracy Rogers, Town Administrator.*

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John R. Ward, Selectboard Clerk