

# TOWN OF GILL

MASSACHUSETTS



[www.gillmass.org](http://www.gillmass.org)

## SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

*March 15, 2010*

Called to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:33 p.m.

Present: Ann Banash, Nancy Griswold, and John Ward, Selectboard members; Ray Purington, Administrative Assistant

Guests: David Detmold, Montague Reporter; Amanda Dunnell and Skip Dunnell, Northfield Fire Department

One-Day Liquor License for Northfield Fire Department: The Board reviewed an application from the Northfield Fire Department for a one-day all alcohol license for a fundraiser/dance they are holding on the NMH campus on March 20<sup>th</sup>. It was noted that both bartenders working the event are certified, and the event has liability insurance. There were no concerns raised by the Police, Fire, Highway, Health, or Inspection departments. No one spoke against the license.

Nancy made a motion, seconded by John, to grant a one-day all alcohol license to the Northfield Fire Department for their event on March 20<sup>th</sup> at the NMH campus. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative. Amanda and Skip Dunnell left the meeting at 4:37 p.m.

Municipal Energy: Ken Johnson, President of Municipal Energy Consulting Group, LLC, made a short presentation to the Board about his firm and the services they provide. Municipal Energy is a consulting firm that goes after refunds of street lighting overcharges to municipalities by WMECO. The "fee" is 25% of the total amount recovered for the town. His firm's work on behalf of Connecticut towns resulted in over \$12 Million in refunds from Connecticut Light & Power. He is now working on WMECO's territory, and expects similar results, as the two utilities shared the same software and billing practices.

In Massachusetts, Municipal Energy has been working with the Attorney General's Office, and Ken believes the AG is ready to sponsor an appeal to the Public Utilities Commission on WMECO's past practices. A preliminary analysis of Gill's street lighting data indicates a refund of approximately \$7,400; if successful, the Town would receive 75% of that amount. John asked how the settlements affected the Connecticut towns' relationship with CL&P. Ken replied there was very little impact, that billing and refund issues aren't directly related to day-to-day service issues.

Ray noted that the contract Ken had brought had already been reviewed and modified by town counsel last year. John made a motion, seconded by Nancy, to authorize Ann to sign the contract between the Town of Gill and Municipal Energy. The motion was unanimous in the affirmative.

Approval of Minutes: The Board approved by consensus the minutes from 3/1.

Schuetzen Verein Liquor License, Round 3: Ray explained that the ABCC has asked that we submit an amended Form 43 for the new seasonal restaurant license approved on 3/1. The amended form will show the address of the "restaurant" as "Rear of 55 Barton Cove Road." Nancy made a motion, seconded by John, to approve an amended Form 43 for the new all-alcohol seasonal restaurant for Schuetzen Verein. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

HRS Contract Extension: The Board discussed a request from Sandy Stapczynski of Human Resources Services to extend the deadline for the police/fire/highway project from April 2 to April 30. Her firm would like additional time to analyze the information received from the departments and town officials, and to collect data from the comparison communities. The extension will also allow HRS to make their final report when the full Board is able to meet. Nancy made a motion, seconded by John, to authorize Ann to sign the contract extension with HRS. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Gill Elementary School Water Well: Ray reported that representatives from Mass. Rural Water Association will be at the elementary school on Friday, March 19<sup>th</sup> before the start of school to perform leak detection on the wellhead and underground piping between the well and the building.

FY11 Budget: The Board asked Ray to use a 4% reduction in local aid when preparing the revenue side of Gill's FY11 budget, as that is the latest figure coming from House and Senate leaders. Board members gave Ray the questions they want the departments to answer about the submitted budgets.

ESCO Investment Grade Audit (IGA): Ray reported that the IGA for the Town Hall, Library, RMB, and Public Safety Complex has been received from Siemens, and that the Energy Commission will be discussing it at their meeting on March 17<sup>th</sup>. Also, it has been determined that the Gill Elementary School will be included in the Town's ESCO project. The lease agreement between the town and the school district prohibits the district from making major capital improvements such as those envisioned for the ESCO project. There was discussion about the importance of reaching an agreement with the school district so that energy savings created by the ESCO will be credited back to the town.

Annual Town Meeting: The Board discussed various dates for holding this year's Annual Town Meeting, noting a desire to try a Saturday in June this year. The top three choices are June 12<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup>. The meeting would start at 9:00 a.m. and last as long as necessary, with a break for lunch. Various groups in town could be asked if they want to raise money by selling food during the break or by providing childcare. Ray will check on the availability of other town officials and the Finance Committee. The warrant for ATM will be closed on April 23<sup>rd</sup> (for the June 5<sup>th</sup> date) or April 30<sup>th</sup> (for June 12<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup>).

GMRSD Financial Stability Advisory Group: The group's next meeting is March 25<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in the Montague Town Hall. John will try to attend to represent the Town.

Aubuchon Hardware Blue Tarp Credit: The Turners Falls Aubuchon Hardware Store has extended to the Town an application for a credit purchasing account through the Blue Tarp Financial program. Using this account to make purchases (at any Aubuchon location) would provide a consolidated monthly bill and online account tracking and reporting. Ray has reviewed the program with the department heads, and there is support for trying it. A \$500 credit limit it suggested. Nancy made a motion, seconded by John, to authorize Ann to sign the Commercial Credit Application with Blue Tarp Financial, with a \$500 credit limit. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Tax Collector's Auction: Ray reported that the Tax Collector has arranged for Douglas Auctioneers to auction two parcels of land that have been taken for non-payment of taxes. The auction is scheduled for April 7<sup>th</sup>.

Update to Local Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan: The FRCOG Planning Dept. has grant funding that will allow it to work with Gill to update our LNHMP. This was last done in 2004, and the Town has been asked to assemble a team to help update our plan. The Board recommended that the team be comprised of the people who hold the same jobs or titles as those from the last team. Ray will contact the "volunteers" and make arrangements with the FRCOG.

FRCOG Long Range Regional Transportation Plan: There is a meeting on March 17<sup>th</sup> to discuss Gill's transportation needs and potential projects. Ray asked the Board for their ideas; future needs at the Mariamante property was mentioned, and it was suggested to check with Mick LaClaire for possible projects along Main Road and West Gill Road. Ray will attend the meeting, or will email the list to the FRCOG. Ray also mentioned that there is an online survey that the public can use to give their input.

Authorization to Access MassEnergyInsight: MassEnergyInsight is internet-based software that municipalities and school districts can use to report and track energy usage data. To be certified as a Green Community (and be able to

apply for certain grants), someone from town must be authorized to use the software and receive training. Ray recommended that he and Claire Chang (Chair of Energy Commission) be authorized. DOER also suggests that towns authorize the sharing of their energy data with other participating towns. John made a motion, seconded by Nancy, to authorize Ann to sign the both the User Authorization and the Data Sharing Authorization letters. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Common Cause e-Government Award: Ray reported that Gill has won an Award with Distinction from Common Cause Massachusetts for having a municipal website that provides governmental transparency. This is the second year in a row that Gill has received this award.

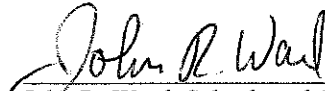
Sewer Abatement: The Board, acting as Sewer Commissioners, reviewed an application for abatement of sewer taxes from Jeff Suprenant. A motion was made by Nancy, seconded by John, to grant Mr. Suprenant an abatement of sewer taxes in the amount of \$11.74. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

FRCOG Offer to Do Traffic Counts: The FRCOG has extended to Gill and other towns an offer to perform traffic counts. Both the Police Chief and Highway Superintendent are aware of the offer. The Board had no specific roads they wanted studied.

Warrant #19: The Board reviewed and signed Warrant #19.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

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

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John R. Ward, Selectboard Clerk