

TOWN OF GILL

MASSACHUSETTS



www.gillmass.org

SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

May 8, 2013

Call to Order: The Selectboard meeting was called to order at 6:07pm.

Present: Randy Crochier, Ann Banash and John Ward, Selectboard members; Ray Purington, Admin. Assistant

Finance Committee: Timmie Smith, Claire Chang, Ronnie LaChance, and Alden Booth (6:13pm)

Guests: Mick LaClaire, Highway Superintendent

Trees & Forestry Budget: The FY14 budget request for Trees & Forestry was reviewed with minimal discussion. There was a general discussion about pruning trees along the road, and that the Town's shared bucket truck allows us to reach farther and do a better, more thorough job. It also lets us get more done without hiring a tree service company. Mick noted that he has also been successful in getting more tree work done by Asplundh under their agreement with WMECO.

Alden Booth joined the meeting at 6:13pm. The Finance Committee meeting was called to order at 6:13pm.

In response to a question about damage to trees by the emerald ash borer, Mick replied that it is a known threat and is being watched. Town-wide, there are 15 trees of various species on his list of dead trees. A tree crew can take down 8-10 per day. Logs from the dead trees are usually claimed by the land abutter. When woodchips and firewood are available, people interested should call Mick to be added to a waiting list. The existence of the waiting list will be announced to residents via the website, newsletter, and Facebook.

Highway Budget: The FY14 budget request for the Highway Department was reviewed. Specific projects were discussed as a way of explaining the \$8,700 requested increase for the purchased materials line. Catch basins are \$600 each; three are needed in Riverside and seven for work on Mount Hermon Road. Mount Hermon Road also needs \$7,700 of pipe to connect and drain the catch basins. On Mountain Road, a project to widen the shoulder of the road near Zywna's will need \$7,500 in gravel and materials, and cost \$11,000 total. There are several culvert headwalls to be replaced at \$360 apiece plus backhoe rental costs.

Mick also warned of several large culverts under West Gill Road and Main Road that will need to be replaced in coming years. The one near the intersection of South Cross Road and West Gill Road could be a 2 month project to dig out and replace the culvert. A culvert liner, however, is only \$60,000. There was discussion that Gill's Chapter 90 money is stretched as far as it can be, but it doesn't go far enough for the road maintenance that needs to be done.

Reparing the driveway loop at the Gill Elementary School is estimated to cost \$45,000. A quote will be gotten for laying an 1 1/2" leveling course and 2" top course on the basketball court area, as it wasn't built for its current use as a loading area for the school buses.

As the FY13 Highway budget is running short on money, there will a number of building maintenance projects getting worked on in May & June. A bulkhead will be installed to replace the cellar entryway at the Library, the steps at the Riverside building should be repaired, and there are miscellaneous outdoor projects at the School.

The machinery repairs line for FY14 is being held at \$6,000 in spite of a projected total of \$9,133 for FY13. It is hoped that all the repairs this year will result in lower expenses next year.

In a discussion about the total budget for the Highway Department, based on actual expenses for FY11 and FY12, and the projected expenses for FY13, the yearly average is approximately \$230,000. In that respect, the level-services request of \$234,521 for FY14 seems realistic. However, it's too early to know if the funds are available to meet that request.

Public Safety Complex Building Expenses: The budget request for the Safety Complex was reviewed with minimal discussion. Now that the startup kinks have been worked out of the new boilers at that building, it is important to keep an eye on heating costs there next winter, to make sure that the expected savings are realized.

7:45pm Mick LaClaire and Alden Booth left the meeting. The Finance Committee was adjourned due to a lack of a quorum.


Gill Elementary School Building Needs: As a followup to the May 6th meeting at the School, there was a discussion about ways to address upcoming renovation/repairs/maintenance projects that are needed at the School, chief among them the removal and replacement of the asbestos vinyl floor tiles. Before assuming that vinyl tiles are the best replacement option, it was felt that other suggestions from May 6th should be considered, including thin concrete, fiber mat, and epoxy flooring.

School building safety precautions were discussed, and it was mentioned that the Quintus Allen Fund might be a possible source for the funds to pay for new locks for the classroom doors, if the Principal wants to make that request. It is important to know how the District and/or Montague will be addressing doors & locks at the Hillcrest/Sheffield building.

Thoroughly assessing the building needs at the School will be an involved, time consuming process, and it was felt that neither the Town nor the District has staff with the time and knowledge to do it. An architect might be needed, preferably one familiar with school buildings and the Massachusetts School Building Assistance Bureau. It was suggested that NMH might be able to recommend some architects with the right qualifications.

Adjournment: The Selectboard adjourned at 8:27pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ray Purington, Administrative Assistant.



John R. Ward, Selectboard Clerk