

November 21, 2020 Annual Town Meeting



Please use the microphone when recognized to speak.

It greatly improves the audio quality of the recording, which is kept as an archival record of the meeting.

Volunteers Wanted

The Town is always looking for residents who might be able to volunteer for one of Gill's many boards, committees, councils and commissions. If you think you might be interested in joining any of these groups, please contact the Chair, or contact Ray Purington at 863-9347.

Cable Advisory Committee (Tom Hodak, 863-4227)

Capital Improvement Planning Committee (Greg Snedeker, 863-8168)

Council on Aging (Bev Demars, 863-4792)

Cultural Council (Lynda Hodsdon Mayo, 863-0138 and Patricia Crosby, 863-2297)

Energy Commission (Vicky Jenkins, 325-5722)

Finance Committee (Claire Chang, 626-3620)

Zoning Board of Appeals (Suzanne Smiley, 863-8174)

“GILLBILLY” t-shirts are available. All sizes (S, M, L, XL, 2XL, 3XL) currently in stock. \$15 donation per shirt benefits the Agricultural Commission. Shirts may be picked up at Town Hall by appointment



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

FRANKLIN, SS.

TOWN OF GILL

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING: NOVEMBER 21, 2020

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 field behind the Riverside Municipal Building, 54 **French** King Highway in said Town on Saturday, the Twenty First day of November, in the year Two Thousand and Twenty (11/21/2020) at 1:30 PM then and there to act on the following articles.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting will be held outdoors. Face masks and social distancing are required, and voters are encouraged to bring their own chairs. In case of inclement weather the meeting will be held at the same location on Monday, the Twenty Third day of November at 1:30 PM.

Finance Committee Recommendation: *Due to the abbreviated meeting schedule used to develop the overall fiscal plan contained in the following articles, the Finance Committee opted to make its recommendation on the entire slate of financial articles rather than voting on each article separately. The Finance Committee recommends the overall fiscal plan, including passing over Article 8, by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 1 absent.*

Article 1: To elect the following officers: Two or more Field Drivers; Fence Viewers; Measurers of Wood, Bark and Surveyors of Lumber - all for one year; AND

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 2021 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; AND

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 2021, 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 to elect Edward J. Golembeski and Clifford C. Hatch as Field Drivers and the Regional Animal Control Officer as Assistant Field Driver and elect the Selectboard as Fence Viewers; Measurers of Wood, Bark and Surveyors of Lumber - all for one year; AND

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 2021 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; AND

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 2021, and authorize the Selectboard to expend such funds in support of the Gill Elementary School.

The names and positions (Field Drivers, Fence Viewers, and etc.) are the same as last year.

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 \$147,769 for Fiscal Year 2021.

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. The Town received \$1,783 from the Trust during Fiscal Year 2020, and there is a balance of \$7,074 in the Town's Quintus Allen account.

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

2018-19 Outdoor Learning Center (\$4,537.96)
 2017 Chromebook Computers (24) & Storage Cart (\$6,050.00)
 2016 Climbing Wall & Gear (\$1,329.21)
 2015 Nature Program Coordinator & Equipment (\$2,915.60)

Article 2: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectboard to negotiate and enter into a lease of up to twenty (20) years with the Gill-Montague Regional School District for the continued use of the land and buildings known as the Gill Elementary School, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to authorize the Selectboard to negotiate and enter into a lease of up to twenty (20) years with the Gill-Montague Regional School District for the continued use of the land and buildings known as the Gill Elementary School.

The current lease between the Town and the District expires on May 31, 2021. This article is necessary to allow the Selectboard to negotiate and sign a new lease with the District.

Article 3: 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 unspent money remaining in the fund at the end of each fiscal year, or take any action relative thereto:

Dept. Authorized to Spend	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, Selectboard	Dog Fees & Fines	Licenses, Regional Animal Control Services, Dog Care & Control, & Etc.	8,000.00
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, Town Administrator	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, 2020 will be limited to the amounts listed, with all unspent money remaining in the fund at the end of each fiscal 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. This is the same list of revolving funds that was approved last year. The purposes and amounts are also the same.

Article 4: 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, plus any cost of living adjustment (COLA) that may be provided by the Town:

Constable(s) – Each Posting	\$21.00
Moderator – Annual Town Meeting	\$148.00
Special Town Meeting, Each	\$26.25
Selectboard Chair	\$2,707.00
2 nd & 3 rd Member, Each	\$2,460.00
Board of Assessors Chair	\$3,287.00
2 nd & 3 rd Member, Each	\$2,988.00
Board of Health Chair	\$1,483.00
2 nd & 3 rd Member, Each	\$1,357.00
Town Clerk	\$22,237.00
Tax Collector	\$25,043.00
Additional As Sewer Fee Collector	\$704.00
Treasurer	\$22,581.00
Registrars – Three members, Each	\$63.00
Town Clerk, as Chair	\$101.00

Except for rounding, all amounts are level funded from Fiscal Year 2020. A COLA, if approved in Article 5, would be in addition to the amounts listed above.

Article 5: 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 the Town vote to raise and appropriate by taxation \$7,830.00 (SEVEN THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED THIRTY AND 00/100 DOLLARS) to provide a 1.3% cost of living adjustment (COLA) retroactive to July 1, 2020 for all Town employees and elected officials employed as of November 21, 2020.

The Personnel Committee has not met during the COVID-19 pandemic and so did not put forward a recommendation for this year’s COLA. The 1.3% presented in this motion is based on the Social Security increase that will go into effect in January 2021. Six of the last seven years the Town has adopted a COLA percentage equal to Social Security.

Article 6: 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 \$1,656,595.00 (ONE MILLION SIX HUNDRED FIFTY SIX THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED NINETY FIVE AND 00/100 DOLLARS) and transfer \$74,700.00 (SEVENTY FOUR THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND 00/100 DOLLARS) from Sewer Use Fees and appropriate \$98,800.00 (NINETY EIGHT THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND 00/100 DOLLARS) from Fiscal Year 2021 Estimated Sewer Receipts for a total appropriation of \$1,830,095.00 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 and accompanying notes. The amounts in the motion come from page 3, Column D, lines 89 – 92 of the handout.

Article 7: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide \$1,795,622.00 (ONE MILLION SEVEN HUNDRED NINETY FIVE THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED TWENTY TWO AND 00/100 DOLLARS) to provide \$1,785,887.00 for its Fiscal Year 2021 operating assessment and \$9,735.00 for its Fiscal Year 2021 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 \$1,755,622.00 (ONE MILLION SEVEN HUNDRED FIFTY FIVE THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED TWENTY TWO AND 00/100 DOLLARS) and further transfer \$40,000.00 (FORTY THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS) from the Education Stabilization Fund to provide \$1,785,887.00 for its Fiscal Year 2021 operating assessment and \$9,735.00 for its Fiscal Year 2021 debt service costs for the Gill-Montague Regional School District.

A 2/3 majority is needed to transfer funds from the Education Stabilization Fund.

The GMRSD's total Fiscal Year 2021 "All Funds" budget increased by 4.7% over Fiscal Year 2020. The overall operating assessment to both towns increased by 5.7%, with Gill seeing a 9.3% increase and Montague 5.10%. Gill's assessment for the GMRSD's operating budget has increased by \$151,860 and the debt service for the high school/middle school renovation project increased by \$767.

Gill's enrollment in the District increased from 91 to 99 students at the same time Montague's enrollment decreased from 691 to 684. This shift accounts for most of the disproportionate increases in the operating assessments.

The Town's total operating budget (the omnibus budget, which includes the Franklin County Technical School assessment, plus the GMRSD assessment) for Fiscal Year 2021 increased by \$178,435 over the Fiscal Year 2020 operating budget. Of that increase, \$171,283 is attributable to the two education assessments. Responsible use of the Education Stabilization Fund to help level this assessment spike is the exact reason the Town has been setting aside money into the fund. The current balance in the Education Stabilization Fund before this vote is \$157,701.

A handout from the GMRSD is attached (last page of Town Meeting handout).

Article 8: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate by taxation or transfer from available funds a sum or sums of money to add to the FY21 operating budget for Assessors Clerical Salary in order to increase the hours of the Assessors' Assistant from twenty (20) hours per week to thirty (30) hours per week, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved to pass over Article 8.

This article appears at the request of the Board of Assessors. The Assessors requested \$3,572 of additional funds to increase the Assessors' Clerk position from 20 hours per week to 30 hours per week. The request is based upon the belief the position historically takes more than the budgeted 20 hours per week. The Assessors also pointed out it is the work of the Assessors' Office that generates most of the Town's revenues, so it is important to not underfund this line of the budget. The hourly rate for the position starts at \$17.94/hour and ranges to a maximum of \$21.81/hour. The cost for a full year of the additional hours is more than the requested amount, so additional funds would be required in the Fiscal Year 2022 budget as well.

The current Assessors' Clerk, Lynda Hodsdon Mayo, will be retiring from the position once her replacement is hired. Lynda will be available to assist with training, and the requested sum includes funds to provide 40 hours of overlap with the new Clerk for training. At 20 hours per week the position already receives benefits and the change in the number of hours will not alter that.

During their discussion of the request the Finance Committee and Selectboard raised concerns that a FRCOG summary of the position's hours and pay rates in other similar-sized Franklin County towns seems to indicate 20 hours per week is sufficient, and that a pay rate of around \$20 per hour is the norm. The Fiscal Year 2021 budget of \$22,683 for "Assessors Clerical Salary" (line 10 of the Omnibus budget) is based upon 20 hours per week at \$21.81 per hour, and is felt to be sufficient. The motion to pass over reflects the Selectboard and Finance Committee's collective feeling the additional funds are not warranted at this time. It has been suggested this request should be reviewed by the Personnel Committee.

Article 9: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Released Overlay \$30,000.00 (THIRTY THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS) to add to the account to be used toward the costs associated with a 5-year appraisal of the real and personal property in the Town of Gill owned by FirstLight Power and an appraisal of the personal property in the Town of Gill owned by National Grid, New England Power Company, and NSTAR Electric Company d/b/a Eversource Energy; AND

Transfer from Released Overlay \$5,000.00 (FIVE THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS) to add to the Board of Assessors Revaluation Account; AND

Transfer from Released Overlay \$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 \$30,000.00 (THIRTY THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS) from the Released Overlay account to add to the account to be used toward the costs associated with a 5-year appraisal of the real and personal property in the Town of Gill owned by FirstLight Power and an appraisal of the personal property in the Town of Gill owned by National Grid, New England Power Company, and NSTAR Electric Company d/b/a Eversource Energy; AND

It is moved the Town vote to transfer \$5,000.00 (FIVE THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS) from the Released Overlay account to add to the Board of Assessors' Revaluation Account; AND

It is moved the Town vote to transfer \$5,000.00 (FIVE THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS) from the Released Overlay account to the Town Audit Account be used toward a portion of the cost to conduct an independent financial audit of the Town.

Every five 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. The first clause of this article adds to the account for saving toward the next appraisal for Fiscal Year 2022.

The appraisal of the several electricity distribution companies is one that has not been done before in Gill but is being requested due to a 3 million dollar decrease in those companies' self-reported property values. The decrease was experienced by other cities and towns and the Department of Revenue has supported the appraisal process as an effective way to recapture the lost tax revenue. Many communities have been successful in regaining much of their lost revenue. The Board of Assessors will contract with Muddy Rivers Advisors, LLC, to perform the appraisal in time for the results to be used in Fiscal Year 2021's valuations.

Fiscal Year 2022 is the next 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. The second clause of this article continues saving toward the revaluation.

The last clause of this Article continues to set aside funds to pay for the next audit of the Town's finances.

Article 10: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash \$15,000 to perform various building maintenance projects at the Slate Memorial Library including completing the bathroom walls and ceiling, constructing storage for the upstairs loft area, re-glazing and painting four windows, and painting the exterior trim, sills, bulkhead, and front door, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to transfer \$15,000.00 (FIFTEEN THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS) from unappropriated funds (Free Cash) to perform various building maintenance projects at the Slate Memorial Library including completing the bathroom walls and ceiling, constructing storage for the upstairs loft area, re-glazing and painting four windows, and painting the exterior trim, sills, bulkhead, and front door.

This article was the only request to make it through the Capital Improvement Planning Committee's (CIPC) review process before the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted every sense of normalcy. The CIPC unanimously recommended the funds to maintain the historic library building. (Consideration of other requested capital projects will resume when the CIPC begins its work for Fiscal Year 2022.)

Article 11: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash \$15,000 to add to the account established in 2014 for the purpose of purchasing and installing a heating system for the Riverside Municipal Building and/or Town Hall and/or Slate Memorial Library, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to transfer \$15,000.00 (FIFTEEN THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS) from unappropriated funds (Free Cash) to add to the account established in 2014 for the purpose of purchasing and installing a heating system for the Riverside Municipal Building and/or Town Hall and/or Slate Memorial Library.

Through the efforts of Gill's Energy Commission the Town was awarded a \$45,900 grant from the Green Communities Division of the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources to install air source heat pump units (also called "mini splits") in the basement and first floor levels of Town Hall. Mini splits are powered by electricity and provide heating, air conditioning, and dehumidification to indoor spaces. As part of the grant application the Selectboard pledged to recommend Town Meeting voters approve the additional \$30,000 needed to install mini splits for the second floor of Town Hall. (Imagine it! Air conditioning the next time we have a "normal" town meeting at the Town Hall.)

The heating system account referenced in the motion has a current balance of \$20,000. The heating systems at the Riverside Building (2015) and Slate Memorial Library (2019) have both been updated, so the Town Hall is the last building needing a new system. The existing oil-fired forced hot water boiler was installed in 1999 and it is nearing the end of its likely life expectancy. The boiler will be retained to provide heat in the event of an extended duration power outage. Completing this project will mean three of the Town's buildings no longer rely on fossil fuels and have been converted to electricity, which can be generated renewably.

The \$15,000 figure in the motion will provide the necessary funds to install mini splits upstairs at Town Hall and provide a small amount of funds for any contingencies that may arise during the project.

Article 12: 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 \$8,738.00 (EIGHT THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED THIRTY EIGHT AND 00/100 DOLLARS) and further transfer \$5,000.00 (FIVE THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS) from unappropriated funds (Free Cash), for a total of \$13,738.00 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. The Town's Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) liability will be updated in 2021 as part of the next financial audit. The unfunded liability is still expected to be a very large number, but hopefully less than the \$620,000 figure from the last update in 2016 due to the Town's progress in contributing to the OPEB fund.

By placing money into its OPEB fund, the Town demonstrates to banks and other potential lenders it recognizes the financial liability and is doing its best to save for it. In turn, the Town receives slightly better loan rates when it borrows money for building repairs, equipment purchases, and other purposes. The current balance in the fund is \$62,110.

Article 13: 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, Fire Department SCBA/Air Packs, or General), or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to transfer \$2,000.00 (TWO THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS) from unappropriated funds (Free Cash) to be placed into the Energy Stabilization Fund and further transfer \$15,000.00 (FIFTEEN THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS) from unappropriated funds (Free Cash) to be placed into the Fire Department SCBA/Air Packs Stabilization Fund and further transfer (SIXTY NINE THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED FIFTY AND 00/100 DOLLARS) from unappropriated funds (Free Cash) to be placed into the General Stabilization Fund.

There is currently \$53,555 in the Capital Stabilization Fund, \$157,701 in the Education Stabilization Fund, \$25,817 in the Energy Stabilization Fund, \$15,259 in the Fire Department SCBA/Air Packs Stabilization Fund, and \$248,810 in the General Stabilization Fund. (Totals do not include amounts voted in or out by other articles considered today.)

The \$2,000 in this motion for the Energy Stabilization Fund is a portion of the savings created when the Town converted its streetlights to energy-efficient LEDs in 2015.

The \$15,000 in this motion for the Fire Department SCBA/Air Packs Stabilization Fund continues the savings program established in 2019 to set aside funds for the future replacement of the air packs used by the Fire Department. The 20 air packs were purchased new in 2017 using \$144,500 in grant and donated funds, and have 15-year certifications for use.

The \$69,150 in this motion for the General Stabilization Fund takes the remaining balance of unallocated Free Cash and directs it into a savings account that may be used for any purpose upon a favorable two-thirds majority vote by Town Meeting.

If any of the articles of the Annual Town Meeting are amended or defeated, it is anticipated the amounts in this article will be adjusted accordingly in order to maintain a balanced budget that does not require an override.

Article 14: 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 2021, or take any action relative thereto.

Motion: It is moved the Town vote to transfer \$60,000.00 (SIXTY 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 2021.

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 2019 was certified by the Department of Revenue to be \$181,150. Of that, \$15,000 was recommended for use in Article 10 (Library building maintenance), \$15,000 in Article 11 (Town Hall mini splits), \$5,000 in Article 12 (OPEB), \$86,150 in Article 13 (various stabilization funds), and \$60,000 in this article.

Depending on the outcomes of the other "money" articles considered earlier in this meeting, a different amount may be recommended to be used to reduce the Fiscal Year 2021 tax rate.

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 9th day of November in the year Two Thousand Twenty (11/9/2020).

Selectboard of Gill

Randy P. Crochier, Chair

Gregory M. Snedeker, Board member

John R. Ward, 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 Telecommunications Relay Service at 711, or MassRelay at (800) 439-2370 for TTY devices.

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 6 - Omnibus Budget

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
				FY21			
	Omnibus Budget for 11/21/2020 Annual Town Meeting	FY19 Approved with COLA	FY20 Approved with COLA	Selectboard & Finance Comm. Recommended	Increase / (Decrease) (D - C)	% Change	Notes
1	GENERAL GOVERNMENT						
2	Moderator (Stipend & Expenses)	440.32	447.19	401.00	(46.19)	-10.3%	Reduced travel/training & 1 less Special Town Meeting
3	Selectboard Stipends	7,418.48	7,626.72	7,627.00	0.28		
4	Selectboard Expenses	4,266.30	4,241.44	3,920.00	(321.44)	-7.6%	Reductions to advertising, supplies, conferences
5	Town Admin & Admin Clerk (Salary&Exp.)	75,142.36	83,993.99	81,103.00	(2,890.99)	-3.4%	Reduced Admin Clerk from 15 to 12 hrs/wk for FY21
6	Finance Committee	150.00	150.00	185.00	35.00	23.3%	Increase for online conferences
7	Reserve Fund	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	-		
8	Accountant Expenses	200.00	200.00	150.00	(50.00)	-25.0%	Reduced office supplies
9	Assessors Stipends	9,008.68	9,261.24	9,263.00	1.76		
10	Assessors Clerical Salary	22,064.64	22,686.93	22,683.00	(3.93)		
11	Assessors Expenses	12,750.00	13,040.00	12,715.00	(325.00)	-2.5%	Reductions to advertising, supplies, training
12	Treasurer Salary	21,965.84	22,581.00	22,581.00	-		
13	Treasurer Expenses	8,880.00	9,425.00	8,405.00	(1,020.00)	-10.8%	Savings on bank fees and payroll fees
14	Tax Collector Salary	24,359.66	25,042.16	25,043.00	0.84		
15	Tax Collector Expenses	8,807.00	9,104.00	8,584.00	(520.00)	-5.7%	Reduction to tax title expenses
16	Legal	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-		
17	IT Committee	4,260.00	4,260.00	3,535.00	(725.00)	-17.0%	Replacing 1 computer instead of 2 in FY21
18	Town Clerk Salary	21,630.18	22,236.76	22,237.00	0.24		
19	Town Clerk Expenses	1,925.00	2,204.00	1,904.00	(300.00)	-13.6%	Reduced postage, training, and travel
20	Elections/Registrars	9,333.00	9,417.00	9,417.00	-		
21	Conservation Commission	668.00	668.00	634.00	(34.00)	-5.1%	Reduced office supplies and training
22	Agricultural Commission	400.00	400.00	380.00	(20.00)	-5.0%	Reduced miscellaneous expenses
23	Planning Board	745.00	745.00	685.00	(60.00)	-8.1%	Reduced postage
24	Zoning Board of Appeals	200.00	200.00	185.00	(15.00)	-7.5%	Reduced training expenses
25	Energy Commission	500.00	500.00	475.00	(25.00)	-5.0%	Reduced miscellaneous expenses
26	Town Hall/Riverside Bldg Operations	23,155.78	23,413.10	21,545.00	(1,868.10)	-8.0%	Savings on heating oil, fire extinguishers, elevator inspection
27	Building Repairs & Maintenance	18,250.00	18,500.00	16,650.00	(1,850.00)	-10.0%	Fewer projects getting done due to COVID limitations
28	Garage/Public Safety Bldg Operations	20,357.00	20,677.00	18,767.00	(1,910.00)	-9.2%	Savings on trash disposal and heating oil
29	GENERAL GOVERNMENT TOTAL	303,377.24	317,520.53	305,574.00	(11,946.53)	-3.8%	
30							
31	PUBLIC SAFETY						
32	Police Department	190,498.56	206,716.77	206,716.00	(0.77)		
33	Fire Department	86,236.42	88,631.72	95,832.00	7,200.28	8.1%	\$6,800 to fund increasing min. call pay from 1 to 2 hours
34	Emergency Management	5,900.00	6,571.40	5,921.00	(650.40)	-9.9%	\$500 Reverse911 to grant,\$150 from office supplies & equip
35	PUBLIC SAFETY TOTAL	282,634.98	301,919.89	308,469.00	6,549.11	2.2%	

Article 6 - Omnibus Budget

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
				FY21			
	Omnibus Budget for 11/21/2020 Annual Town Meeting	FY19 Approved with COLA	FY20 Approved with COLA	Selectboard & Finance Comm. Recommended	Increase / (Decrease) (D - C)	% Change	Notes
36							
37	PUBLIC WORKS						
38	Trees and Forestry	8,291.00	8,626.00	8,626.00	-		
39	Highway Department	244,584.10	250,616.06	250,616.00	(0.06)		
40	Highway Dep't. - Snow & Ice Removal	63,970.00	63,970.00	63,970.00	-		
41	Bridges and Street Lights	2,500.00	2,000.00	1,950.00	(50.00)	-2.5%	
42	Solid Waste & Recycling	71,730.00	71,730.00	110,500.00	38,770.00	54.0%	Increases for collection, trash disposal, & recyclables
43	Solid Waste District Assessment	2,419.00	3,675.00	4,164.00	489.00	13.3%	Increased assessment
44	Hazardous Waste Collection	750.00	750.00	519.00	(231.00)	-30.8%	Using grant funds to cover 50% of costs
45	Sewer	159,065.00	163,100.00	173,500.00	10,400.00	6.4%	2% increase for sewage disposal, increase maint.costs
46	Cemetery Commission	6,000.00	12,200.00	10,000.00	(2,200.00)	-18.0%	Removed one-time expenses from FY20 budget
47	Memorial Committee	874.00	874.00	830.00	(44.00)	-5.0%	Reduced miscellaneous expenses
48	PUBLIC WORKS TOTAL	560,183.10	577,541.06	624,675.00	47,133.94	8.2%	
49							
50	HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES						
51	Board of Health Salaries	4,081.04	4,196.32	4,197.00	0.68		
52	Board of Health Expenses	2,970.68	2,996.23	2,500.00	(496.23)	-16.6%	Reduced training and advertising expenses
53	Council on Aging	8,662.00	9,096.00	8,856.00	(240.00)	-2.6%	Reduced program expenses during COVID closure
54	Veterans District Assessment	2,665.00	2,763.00	3,008.00	245.00	8.9%	Increased assessment
55	Veterans Benefits	5,000.00	5,000.00	4,000.00	(1,000.00)	-20.0%	No Gill veterans currently receiving these benefits
56	HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES TOTAL	23,378.72	24,051.55	22,561.00	(1,490.55)	-6.2%	
57							
58	CULTURE & RECREATION						
59	Library	28,647.96	29,676.97	29,172.00	(504.97)	-1.7%	Saving from being closed on Wednesdays for 6 months
60	Recreation Committee	2,700.00	2,700.00	-	(2,700.00)	-100.0%	There has been no interest in re-starting a Rec Committee
61	Historical Commission	875.00	895.00	850.00	(45.00)	-5.0%	Reduced miscellaneous expenses
62	CULTURE & RECREATION TOTAL	32,222.96	33,271.97	30,022.00	(3,249.97)	-9.8%	

Article 6 - Omnibus Budget

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
				FY21			
	Omnibus Budget for 11/21/2020 Annual Town Meeting	FY19 Approved with COLA	FY20 Approved with COLA	Selectboard & Finance Comm. Recommended	Increase / (Decrease) (D - C)	% Change	Notes
63							
64	FIXED COSTS						
65	Town Insurance	41,613.00	43,061.00	42,000.00	(1,061.00)	-2.5%	
66	Mariamante Loan (debt exclusion)	14,936.00	32,015.00	26,501.00	(5,514.00)	-17.2%	1 year left after FY21
67	Safety Complex Roof Loan (debt excl)	16,029.00		-	-		
68	Energy Bond	8,467.00	8,967.00	9,467.00	500.00	5.6%	
69	Retirement System	102,099.00	96,609.00	98,733.00	2,124.00	2.2%	
70	Group Health and Life Insurance	122,883.00	120,679.00	109,472.00	(11,207.00)	-9.3%	Change in number of plan participants
71	Backhoe Loan	7,234.00	6,108.00	-	(6,108.00)	-100.0%	Loan is paid off
72	Police Cruiser Loan (debt exclusion)	13,556.00	13,101.00	-	(13,101.00)	-100.0%	Loan is paid off
73	FIXED COSTS TOTAL	326,817.00	320,540.00	286,173.00	(34,367.00)	-10.7%	
74							
75	FRCOG ASSESSMENT						
76	Statutory & Reg'l Services Assessments	10,276.00	10,063.00	10,170.00	107.00	1.1%	
77	Accounting Program	24,301.00	25,454.00	29,543.00	4,089.00	16.1%	Wages & benefits for Program staff
78	Health Agent/Cooperative Public Health	11,112.00	11,340.00	11,567.00	227.00	2.0%	
79	Regional Emergency Preparedness	150.00		-	-		Expense moved into Emergency Management budget
80	Cooperative Inspection Program	7,500.00	7,500.00	7,600.00	100.00	1.3%	
81	FRCOG ASSESSMENT TOTAL	53,339.00	54,357.00	58,880.00	4,523.00	8.3%	
82							
83	EDUCATION						
84	Gill-Montague Reg. Sch. Dist.						To be discussed and voted under Article 7
85	GMRSD Bldg Loan						To be discussed and voted under Article 7
86	Franklin County Technical School	150,778.00	175,085.00	193,741.00	18,656.00	10.7%	Gill's enrollment increased from 11 to 12 students (9.1%)
87	EDUCATION TOTAL	150,778.00	175,085.00	193,741.00	18,656.00	10.7%	
88							
89	OMNIBUS BUDGET TOTAL	1,732,731.00	1,804,287.00	1,830,095.00	25,808.00	1.4%	
90	Less Transfer of Sewer Use Fees	60,200.00	64,300.00	74,700.00			Sewer use fees offset 100% of Sewer Budget
91	Less Estimated Sewer Receipts	98,865.00	98,800.00	98,800.00			Sewer use fees offset 100% of Sewer Budget
92	TOTAL RAISED BY TAXATION	1,573,666.00	1,641,187.00	1,656,595.00	15,408.00	0.9%	

Article 6 - Omnibus Budget

Supplemental Info for Article 6 - Omnibus Budget		Financial Summary for Fiscal Year 2021				
	A	B	C	D	E	F
	Omnibus Budget for 11/21/2020	FY19	FY20	Selectboard & Fin. Comm. Fiscal Year 2021	Dollar Change	Percent Change
1	Omnibus Budget (Town Operations)	1,732,731.00	1,804,287.00	1,830,095.00	25,808.00	1.4%
2	Warrant Articles	195,029.00	137,633.00	177,718.00	40,085.00	29.1%
3	Miscellaneous (Overlay & Cherry Sheet Deducts)	69,061.06	79,485.32	70,599.00	(8,886.32)	-11.2%
4	Total Town Budget	1,996,821.06	2,021,405.32	2,078,412.00	57,006.68	2.8%
5	GMRSD School Assessment (Operating & Debt)	1,630,170.00	1,642,995.00	1,795,622.00	152,627.00	9.3%
6	Total Gross Budget	3,626,991.06	3,664,400.32	3,874,034.00	209,633.68	5.7%
7	State Receipts	299,119.00	288,644.00	288,259.00	(385.00)	-0.1%
8	Local Receipts	225,400.00	232,400.00	233,600.00	1,200.00	0.5%
9	Available Funds	321,065.00	286,447.00	374,650.00	88,203.00	30.8%
10	Free Cash to Reduce the Tax Rate	49,000.00	43,000.00	60,000.00	17,000.00	39.5%
11	Total Receipts	894,584.00	850,491.00	956,509.00	106,018.00	12.5%
12	Total Gross Budget	3,626,991.06	3,664,400.32	3,874,034.00	209,633.68	5.7%
13	Total Receipts (Excluding Property Taxes)	894,584.00	850,491.00	956,509.00	106,018.00	12.5%
14	Property Tax Assessment	2,732,407.06	2,813,909.32	2,917,525.00	103,615.68	3.7%
15	Town-wide Property Valuation (FY21 is in process)	158,308,636	163,125,178	168,000,000	(estimated)	
16	Tax Rate If All Articles Pass (per 1,000 valuation)	17.26	17.25	17.37	0.12	0.7%
17	Average Valuation of Single-Family Residence	209,983	218,070	225,468	7,398.00	3.4%
18	Average Annual Taxes of Single-Family Residence	3,624	3,762	3,916	154	4.1%

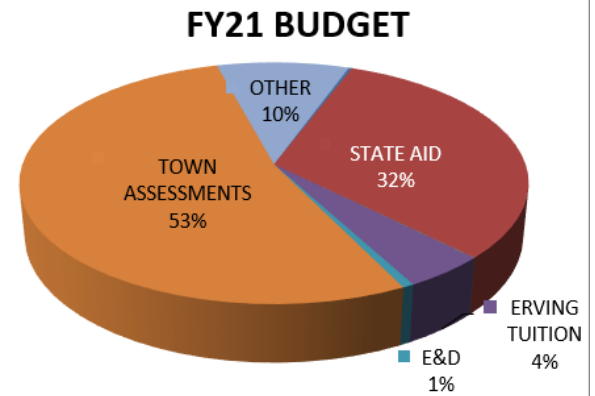
Gill-Montague Regional School District FY21 Budget Proposal

The school committee has approved an FY21 all funds budget of \$23,606,071, a 4.7% increase over FY20. Gill's assessment is a result of Montague's affordable assessment calculation. Gill's Assessment of \$1,795,622 is a 9.29% increase over the prior year, which demonstrates a continued strong commitment, by the town, to the education of the community's children.

Gill	Enrollment Percentage	Total Operating Assessment	Operating Assessment Increase	% Increase	Share of HS Debt	Debt Assessment	Total Operating & Debt Assessment	Increase from prior year	% incr from prior year
FY18	13.17%	1,616,443	41,450	2.63%	9.70%	14,294	1,630,736	37,713	2.37%
FY19	11.77%	1,619,622	3,179	0.20%	7.40%	10,548	1,630,170	(566)	-0.03%
FY20	11.64%	1,634,027	14,405	0.89%	6.50%	8,968	1,642,995	12,825	0.79%
FY21	12.64%	1,785,887	151,860	9.29%	7.30%	9,735	1,795,622	152,627	9.29%

Number to Vote

REVENUE SOURCES	FY20 BUDGET	FY21 BUDGET Proposed	CHANGE
Chapter 70 State Aid	\$6,441,443	\$7,049,318	\$607,875
Medicaid Reimbursement	\$200,000	\$100,000	\$(100,000)
Medicaid Contra Revenue		\$(47,000)	\$(47,000)
Interest Income	\$4,500	\$6,000	\$1,500
Excess and Deficiency	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$0-
Erving Tuition	\$940,000	\$1,088,800	\$148,800
Charter Reimbursement	\$54,183	\$159,379	\$105,196
Chapter 71 Transport. Reimburse.	\$270,000	\$266,000	\$(4,000)
TOTAL OPERATING ASSESS.	\$11,669,848	\$12,331,264	\$661,416
Capital Debt Assess. (TFHS)	\$137,970	\$133,350	\$(4,620)
Capital Debt Assess. (Sheffield)	\$64,914	\$63,276	\$(1,638)
Grants/Revolving Accounts	\$1,427,991	\$1,344,433	\$(83,558)
Circuit Breaker Revolving	\$306,500	\$304,370	\$(2,130)
School Choice Revolving	\$875,523	\$656,881	\$(218,642)
TOTAL - ALL FUNDS	22,542,872	23,606,071	1,063,199
All Funds % Increase			4.7%



FY21 EXPENDITURES	GENERAL FUND BUDGET	Choice Revolving Budget	Circuit Breaker Revolving	Grants/Revolving Budget	ALL FUNDS BUDGET
ADMINISTRATION (1000)	\$ 642,851	\$ -		\$ -	\$ 642,851
INSTRUCTIONAL (2000)	\$ 9,615,722	\$ 549,866		\$ 390,177	\$ 10,555,765
STUDENT SERVICES (3000)	\$ 1,367,776	\$ -		\$ 610,689	\$ 1,978,465
OPERATIONS (4000)	\$ 1,829,054	\$ -		\$ -	\$ 1,829,054
BENEFITS & INSURANCE (5000)	\$ 4,841,491	\$ -		\$ 22,933	\$ 4,864,424
COMMUNITY PROGRAM (6000)	\$ 25,563			\$ -	\$ 25,563
TUITION (9000)	\$ 2,781,305	\$ 107,015	\$ 304,370	\$ 320,634	\$ 3,513,323
CAPITAL DEBT (8000)	\$ 196,626	\$ -		\$ -	\$ 196,626
TOTAL BUDGET	\$ 21,300,387	\$ 656,881	\$ 304,370	\$ 1,344,433	\$ 23,606,071

Original FY21 Budget Plans

This budget would enable the district to maintain current programs, add elementary level positions to improve instruction and support services, restore a secondary music program, start a new health and social services career oriented program at the high school, and continue expanding our 1:1 computing program.

The following new positions were added in this budget:

- Elementary reading teacher
- Special education teacher at Sheffield
- Adjustment counselor – for increased hours at Gill & Sheffield
- First grade paraprofessionals at Hillcrest & Gill
- Secondary music/theater teacher
- Secondary physical education/health teacher

Post-Pandemic FY21 Budget Planning

- The Budget was revised when the state put out baseline Chapter 70 numbers on July 31st. At that time, School Committee re-voted the budget, adjusting revenue figures to match new information. The budget assumed that approximately half of the new positions would not be filled.