

TOWN OF GILL

M A S S A C H U S E T T S



www.gillmass.org

SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

July 24, 2017

Called to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:35 PM.

Members Present: Randy Crochier, John Ward Members Absent: Greg Snedeker

Others Present: Ray Purington, Administrative Assistant; Janet Masucci, Jeff Singleton, Miranda Davis, and Mick LaClaire

Speed Bumps for Mount Hermon Road: Highway Superintendent Mick LaClaire met with the Selectboard to discuss a request from the Northfield Mount Hermon School to install speed bumps on Mount Hermon Road in the area of the new Early Childhood Education Center. In its request, the School stated parents who walk their children to the Center have frequently reported vehicles traveling at speeds they feel put them and their children at risk. Mount Hermon Road is a town-owned road.

LaClaire summarized his discussions with Bao Lang of the MassDOT. Speed “humps” or “buffers” is the more correct term, and the design of the humps must correspond to the speed limit of the roadway, which is 35 mph in this case. The humps must be attached to the road surface, with proper signs from each direction. The humps may be installed by Town employees or by a contractor. If speed humps are installed, any liability related to them would fall onto the Town. LaClaire also reported the School has offered to purchase the speed humps.

Ray Steele joined the meeting at 5:40 PM.

From LaClaire’s observations of traffic on that road, most is related to School faculty and staff, with a smaller number of vehicles for parents and delivery vehicles. The Selectboard was not enthusiastic about installing speed humps, and asked LaClaire to research options for lowering the speed limit on the road, and to check prices of solar-powered “Your Speed Is” signs or trailers. Research will also be done on MassDOT rules for establishing a School Zone.

Old Road to Scott Place: LaClaire discussed a request from resident Ernie Hastings to have the Town open the “Old Road to Scott Place,” a town road that was established by a 1798 Town Meeting vote. The road has not been maintained by the Town for decades, but was never formally discontinued by the Town. The road leads to Hastings’ property, and he wants it opened enough for a log truck to pass.

LaClaire hiked the road today and saw minimal tree growth on the road surface, but there are some “good sized” trees that need to be cut. The road is approximately 1,600 feet long, with a few areas of exposed ledge and shallow spots that will need some gravel fill. Several loads of gravel and a culvert would be needed where the road branches off of Hoe Shop Road. The Selectboard asked LaClaire to return in two weeks with a cost estimate to open the road sufficiently for a logging truck.

Ramp at Riverside Building: LaClaire reported that the building permit for the replacement ramp at the Riverside Building is in the works.

Backhoe Implements: LaClaire asked about revisiting his request to purchase attachments for the backhoe. The Machinery Advisory Committee has not met, so no action was taken on the request.

LaClaire left the meeting at 5:55 PM.

Ag Day on Town Common: Ray Steele, a member of the Agricultural Commission, met with the Selectboard to discuss an Ag Day that is in the early planning stages. If the event takes shape, other town groups will be invited to

participate. Steele requested to use the Town Common for the event, and permission was granted enthusiastically and unanimously. Steele left the meeting at 5:56 PM.

Review of Minutes: Minutes were passed over due to the absence of Greg Snedeker, the Clerk of the Selectboard.

Sewer I&I Study: Nothing to report.

Gill Elementary Well: The application paperwork for the treatment system was sent to DEP on July 19th. Ray will be talking with equipment suppliers and installers to get pricing for components and installation.

It was noted that Ben Weil, with the UMASS Department of Energy Conservation, has been working with Gill's Energy Commission and analyzing town building energy data. Weil has identified high energy use at the Elementary School. John suggested individual electrical circuits at the School be monitored in order to identify high loads during periods when the building is not in use.

Mariamante Property/Community Solar: Nothing to report.

Annual Reports: Nothing to report.

French King Bridge Cameras: Ray reported that the Erving Selectboard is still reviewing the proposed agreement between their town and MassDOT. It is likely to be approved pending review by their Town Counsel. Randy reported on a conversation he had with one of Erving's Selectmen, stating it seems both towns are on the same page with respect to the need for a Gill-Erving camera access & responsibility agreement.

FCECS – FRCOG Response: The Selectboard reviewed correspondence from Linda Dunlavy, Executive Director of the FRCOG, in response to their letter outlining concerns about the current Franklin County Emergency Communications System.

Cultural Council Appointment: John made a motion, seconded by Randy, to reappoint Sue Kramer to the Cultural Council for a term through January 17, 2020. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant: Ray reported the Fire Department has been awarded a \$118,627 grant by the US Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency through the Fiscal Year 2016 Assistance to Firefighters Grant. The award was announced on July 21st. The grant requires a 5% match (\$5,931) from the Town, and it is anticipated NMH Donation funds will be used for the match.

This is the fourth year in a row the Fire Department has applied for this grant to fund the replacement of 20 SCBA air packs, masks, and air bottles. Fire Chief Gene Beaubien, Deputy Chief Stuart Elliott, and Selectman Greg Snedeker were thanked for their significant roles in writing the successful application.

John made a motion, seconded by Randy, to accept the grant and to authorize Ray Purington and Gene Beaubien to sign the necessary documents to accept and implement the grant on behalf of the Town. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Four Winds School Painting: Ray reported that representatives from the Four Winds School will attend the August 7th Selectboard meeting to request permission to have a parent of one of their students paint the walls and ceilings of the two classrooms at the Riverside Building.

Resignation: Ray reported Steve Connell has resigned as the Custodian for the Town Hall and Library. The Selectboard authorized advertising and filling the position.

Jeff Singleton and Miranda Davis left the meeting at 6:15 PM

Warrant: The Selectboard reviewed and signed the FY 2018 warrant #3.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ray Purington, Administrative Assistant.

Signed copy on file. Approved on 08/07/2017

Greg Snedeker, Selectboard Clerk

Ray Purington/Gill Selectboard

From: Lynda Hodsdon Mayo/Gill Town Clerk <townclerk@gillmass.org>
Sent: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 9:57 AM
To: 'Mike Henderson'
Cc: 'Ray Purington/Gill Selectboard'
Subject: RE: Speed bump installation on Mt .Hermon Rd

Thank you for your communication.

I am forwarding this email to our Administrator to the Select Board (Ray Purington) for comment. Ray Purington will be able to help you, better than I can.

Thank you for contacting us.

Lynda

From: Mike Henderson [mailto:mhenderson@nmhschool.org]
Sent: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 9:41 AM
To: townclerk@gillmass.org
Cc: Sharon Miller
Subject: Speed bump installation on Mt .Hermon Rd

Hi,

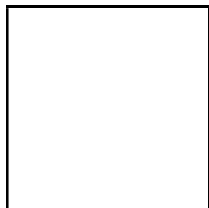
NMH is seeking permission to install speed bumps along Mt Hermon Rd to slow traffic that passes the Early Childhood Education Center that has recently opened. Parents that walk their children to the facility have frequently reported vehicles traveling at speeds they feel put them and their children at risk.

Please advise if we may do the installation and if so if there're any specifications the speed bumps must meet. Thank you for considering, we look forward to your reply.

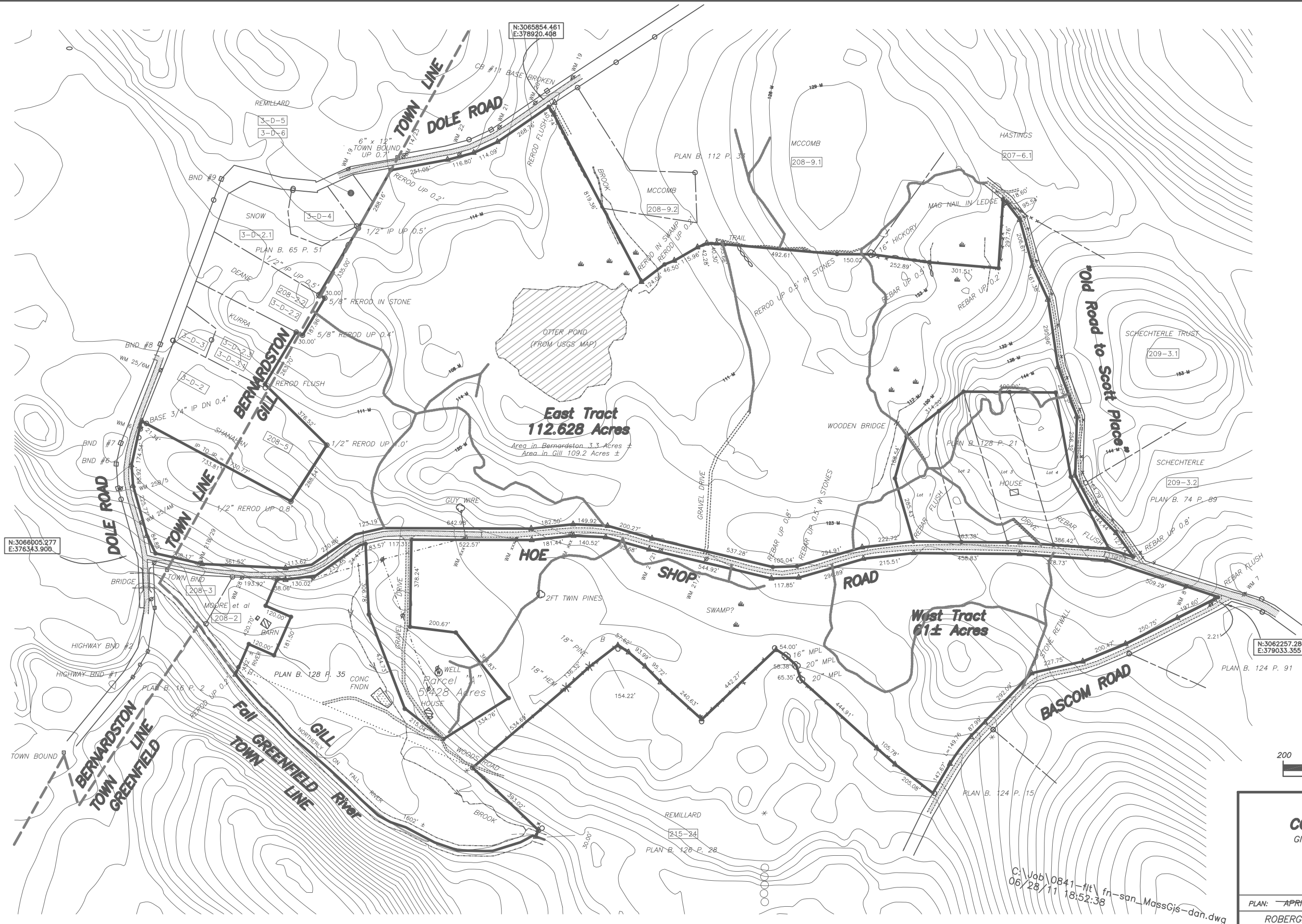
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Michael K Henderson
Assistant Director for Grounds
Northfield Mount Hermon School
413-498-3444

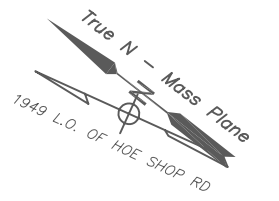
One Lamplighter Way, Mount Hermon, MA 01354 nmhschool.org



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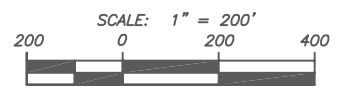


- LEGEND**
- x- WIRE FENCE
 - ∞∞∞ STONE WALL
 - IRON PIPE FOUND
 - STONE OR CONC BND FND
 - △ UNMARKED POINT
 - IRON ROD SET
 - ⊕ UTILITY POLE
 - OVERHEAD WIRES
 - 9-7 ASSESSORS' MAP-LOT NUMBER
 - 383 ELEVATION (METERS)



GIS Edition
With 4 Lots Added

This print, and the corresponding cad file are issued in Massachusetts State Plane Coordinates. Coordinates derived from measurements made in May 2009 using Trimble Pro-3R GPS receiver with RTCM corrections. The precision is 4' ±. Bearings are those of the reference plan.



SITE PLAN
CONSERVATION LOT
GILL & BERNARDSTON, MASS.
(Franklin County)
SURVEYED FOR
DICK FRENCH

PLAN: ~~APRIL 25, 2011~~ JOB NO: 09-01

ROBERGE ASSOCIATES LAND SURVEYING
21 MOHAWK TRAIL #283, GREENFIELD, MA 01301
413-772-2801

N:3066005.277
E:376343.900

N:3065854.461
E:378920.408

N:3062257.280
E:379033.355

C:\lab\0841-11\fr-san_MassGis-dan.dwg
06/28/11 18:52:38

fr-san_MassGis-dan.dwg



Franklin Regional Council of Governments

July 19, 2017

Gill Selectboard
325 Main Road
Gill, MA 01354

Dear Randy, John and Greg,

I am in receipt of your 7/18/17 letter regarding your grave concerns with the Franklin County Emergency Communication System. Thank you for taking the time to write the letter and share your issues. I share your worry and recognize the gravity of the situation and so does the System's Oversight Committee. We are working daily to repair our existing system and to develop a long-term replacement plan. Let me summarize our current actions:

Repair of the existing 450 MHz system includes three projects – one completed and two in process:

1. GPS Timing Clock Replacement Project: A Western Region Homeland Security Committee grant award in the amount of \$67,000 was used to replace obsolete and failing GPS Timing Clocks at nine locations. The GPS Timing Clocks are vital to ensuring clear communication by timing the release and reception of radio waves in an effort to eliminate interference. This project has been completed.
2. System Wide Antenna Replacement Project: The FCECS Oversight Committee was advised by Beltronics, the current FCECS radio system maintenance and repair vendor, that we could see an improvement in system performance by having an engineering study completed which would specify the correct antenna type and configuration for the system. An engineering vendor is being procured for this project and installation of the new antennas is tentatively scheduled to being in the fall of 2017. We know it is critical that this project be completed as soon as possible but want to ensure that it is completed correctly and results in system improvement.
3. Mt. Toby Repeater Repair Project: The Mt. Toby repeater, which is an integral and centrally-located component of the FCECS system needs repair and is currently not functioning. Because of the age of the system, repair parts are not easily available. We have located a company in CT that may have parts in one of its warehouses. Once located, we will repair the repeater as quickly as possible.

Tomorrow, 7/20/17, there is a FCECS Oversight Committee meeting and a FRCOG Council meeting. Staff will be recommending that FCECS and FRCOG reserve funds be used to stockpile repair parts to the extent practicable so that we can more easily and quickly respond to equipment failures. We know this is not failsafe – parts secured may not be the parts needed – but it may help to keep the system functional until we have a more permanent solution. We have also implemented a ticket system to report system problems. We know that some first responders are not reporting problems because they are too frustrated. While I understand the frustration, help in identifying new problems as quickly as possible is the only way for us to expeditiously identify the root of a problem and fix it.

Let me pause here and provide some history of the system and the FRCOG's role, especially since you bring up the idea of withholding the FY18 assessment. The FRCOG was created by the towns of Franklin County to do things on behalf of our members, like own the FCECS. We accepted responsibility for the FCECS because you, the Select Boards of the 26 Franklin County towns, asked us to on your behalf. Because the FRCOG is not a user of the system and did not have technical expertise, we agreed to the responsibility only if an Oversight Committee of users and experts was created to oversee the System and make recommendations to the FRCOG about maintenance, insurance, capital reserves, etc. An early decision of the Oversight Committee was to establish an assessment to cover the costs of the system. The assessment never included a depreciation schedule. This was understandable because it kept a new regional assessment relatively low and manageable. This decision was supported by all members of the FCECS Oversight Committee, the FRCOG's Finance Committee and the FRCOG's full Council. In retrospect, we all should have recognized that this early decision would have consequences. We are experiencing them now. We have an aging system that needs continuing care and repair and a very small capital reserve fund. The FY18 assessment increase simply restores the reserves used in FY17 for the antenna project. It is not enough to replace the system and it may not be enough to keep the system fully operational, which the Committee and FRCOG tried to make very clear during budget development, but neither the Oversight Committee nor Council was willing to increase it any more. All that is said to now say that withholding the FY18 assessment will only make it harder for you and for us to protect your public safety personnel. We all need to work together to keep the system functioning at the best level possible.

Let me move onto our long-term replacement plan. Moving Franklin County to the statewide 800 MHz emergency communication system appears to be the most logical path forward although there are many issues to resolve. Significantly, a transition to the statewide system would eliminate our collective ownership and maintenance responsibility other than purchase and maintenance of portables and mobiles (hand-held and vehicular equipment for public safety personnel) and, to be clear, that is in itself a significant responsibility and cost – each unit ranges from \$4,000 to \$7,500. EOPSS is cautiously supportive of the concept. We see our next steps to be:

- Secure radios from Motorola to test coverage of the 800 MHz system. Every community will receive 4 radios for three days to test coverage. If we are able to secure the radios by July 30, Gill's testing period is scheduled to occur from 8/23-26. If this schedule

changes, we will be back in touch. It will be very important for Gill to participate fully in this testing so that your emergency personnel can assess whether coverage is improved, especially given the current gaps you note. Coverage gaps will be mapped by the FRCOG, which will help to inform infrastructure and network decisions and refine cost estimates.

- Secure letters of support from all FC Boards of Selectmen and police and fire departments. Your 7/18/17 letter will be the first to go into the file.
- Develop a model for initial and ongoing financial commitment from Franklin County municipalities. Your suggestions of pursuing grants is a good one and we will research opportunities for FEMA, USDA and other funding.
- Develop an emergency transition plan in case our existing system cannot be maintained adequately to protect our responders and citizens.
- Continue to work with and support EOPSS in their efforts and continue to work with our legislators.

The FCECS Oversight Committee meets monthly on every third Thursday. I've just asked FRCOG staff to post the minutes from each meeting on the FRCOG web site within a week of a meeting. We think this is the best way for your Board to stay informed of the Committee's actions and the system's status. In addition, the system's status is regularly on the agendas of the regional first responder discipline meetings (FC Police Chiefs, FC Fire Chiefs, etc.).

Again, thank you for your letter. We share your concerns and your priority. I hope you will work with us to protect our system and our emergency personnel. I would be happy to attend a Select Board meeting and discuss any of these issues further.

Sincerely,



Linda Dunlavy

C Senator Stan Rosenberg
 Representative Susannah Whipps
 Senator Adam Hinds
 Representative Stephen Kulik
 Representative Paul Mark
 Chief Davis Hastings
 Chief Gene Beaubien
 FCECS Oversight Committee

TOWN OF GILL

M A S S A C H U S E T T S



www.gillmass.org

July 18, 2017

Ms. Linda Dunlavy, Executive Director
Franklin Regional Council of Governments

Franklin County Emergency Communications System Oversight Committee
12 Olive Street, Suite 2
Greenfield, MA 01354

Dear Ms. Dunlavy and Members of the Oversight Committee:

At its July 10th meeting the Gill Selectboard received a “boots on the ground” update, so to speak, from our Fire Chief and a part-time Police Officer on the current operational status of the Franklin County Emergency Communication System (FCECS). While the FCECS wasn’t the primary reason they attended the meeting, it was clearly a topic of deep concern.

During the meeting recent FCECS radio transmissions to Gill emergency personnel from Shelburne Control were re-played for the Selectboard. We heard a 10-15 second message so filled with static and cut-outs not a single word could be understood. Other messages were just series of one or two words interspersed with garbled noise. The Police Officer described a recent morning driving in the cruiser on Main Road when he could not reach anyone by calling out on the radio. Had he been in trouble, he was on his own to fend for himself.

Lives are at stake! Lives of citizens who are in need of a prompt and accurate response from emergency services. Lives of our emergency responders who rely on their radios to call for backup or call for additional resources. We are one failed radio transmission away from tragedy.

While there are a few pockets of decent radio reception in Gill, much of the Town, including our Public Safety Complex, are in dead zones or areas with so much static as to make most radio transmissions unintelligible. We understand these kinds of dead zones are typical in many of the towns in Franklin County.

It has been suggested towns should start thinking about withholding the FY19 assessments for FCECS unless the quality of radio transmissions drastically improve in the last half of 2017 and the beginning of 2018. We would hesitate to take such an extreme course of action, as the FCECS is the only system we have and our public safety officials rely on it daily, to whatever extent it is functioning. We share the widespread hope that the substantial increase in the assessments for FY18 will bring about equally substantial improvements in radio quality.

We read with great interest the section on Franklin County Emergency Communication System replacement in the *July 2017 FRCOG Council Meeting Updates* that was emailed to various town officials on July 13th in advance of the Council meeting on July 20th. The recent work on the GPS Timing Clocks has had little to no effect in Gill, and we have our fingers crossed that the antenna replacement this fall will improve radio transmissions in our town.

The section of the update on the long-term replacement plan is also interesting and encouraging. Is there a role in that process for officials from MEMA or FEMA? Are those agencies potential sources of funding or equipment? Could a regional or several multi-town applications for various FEMA grants be successful?

The FCECS is a critical tool used and relied upon every day by the emergency responders in our county. Given its vital importance, we respectfully suggest that these written updates happen monthly and be emailed to every Selectboard member, Police Chief, Fire Chief, Emergency Management Director, and Town Admin in the county.

Sincerely,

Gill Selectboard
Randy Crochier, Chair
John Ward
Greg Snedeker

Cc: Senator Stan Rosenberg (email)
Representative Susannah Whipps-Lee (email)
Senator Adam Hinds (email)
Representative Stephen Kulik (email)
Representative Paul Mark (email)
Chief David Hastings, Gill Police Department
Chief Gene Beaubien, Gill Fire Department