



# **SELECTBOARD AGENDA & MEETING NOTICE**

**May 11, 2020**

***Location: Teleconference - access info in the agenda***

\*\*\*Indicates item added after the 48 hour posting

**bold underlined** time = invited guest or advertised hearing  
(all other times are approximate)

This meeting is being conducted remotely by all participants due to the State of Emergency related to COVID-19 and under the “Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting, G.L. c. 30A, §20” issued by Governor Baker on 3/12/20. FreeConferenceCall.com is being utilized for the teleconference. It is audio only. Anyone wishing to participate may call 712-775-7031 and then enter the Access Code of 883-045-865. The toll-free number is 844-800-5000 – the Town is charged by the minute per caller, so please use this only when necessary.

5:30 PM Call to Order (If the meeting is being videotaped, announce that fact. If remote participation will occur, announce member & reason, & need for roll call voting)

## COVID-19 Topics

- Updates from weekly conference call with Gill’s Emergency Management Team
- Request from Northfield Mount Hermon School to extend temporary closure of Mount Hermon Road

## Old Business

- Review of Minutes from 4/27

## New Business

- Request from Beth Giannini, FRCOG for letter in support of nominating the Mohawk Trail for designation as a state scenic byways in the national America's Byways program
- Other business as may arise after the agenda has been posted.
- Public Service Announcements, if any

## Warrants:

FY20 # 23 – reviewed & signed by the Chair on 4/28; Payroll \$23,396.94, Vendors \$64,267.07

FY20 # 24 – to be reviewed & signed by the Chair and reported on at the next meeting

## Adjournment

## **Other Invitations/Meetings:**

Date	Time	Event	Location
5/25		Memorial Day holiday	
Tues 5/26	5:30 PM	Selectboard meeting	TBD

## Ray Purington/Gill Selectboard

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**From:** Timothy McKinney <tmckinney@nmhschool.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 04, 2020 4:20 PM  
**To:** Ray Purington/Gill Selectboard  
**Subject:** Re: temporary closure of Mount Hermon Road

Dear Ray Purrington,

Northfield Mount Hermon School is dedicated to the safety and well being of our community during the COVID-19 pandemic. For the last two months all traffic has been directed through Lamplighter Way and the other entrances have been closed to with the approval of the Selectboard. This has greatly improved our ability to limit vehicle traffic and visitors.

With the new requirements issued on May 1, 2020 by Governor Baker requiring the use of masks or face coverings in public situations when appropriate social distancing measures are not possible, it is imperative that we continue to have the ability to limit access to the campus as we plan for the potential return of students in the Fall.

The school would like to extend the closure of Mount Hermon Road for an indeterminate amount of time until we can assure the health and safety of our students and residents. NMH will continue to work in cooperation with Town officials to determine the right time to remove the blocks and gates.

Could you please add this request to the agenda for the upcoming Selectboard meeting.

Sincerely,

**Tim McKinney** | Director, Environmental, Health, Safety, and Security  
Northfield Mount Hermon School

On Wed, Mar 18, 2020 at 3:34 PM Ray Purington/Gill Selectboard <[administrator@gillmass.org](mailto:administrator@gillmass.org)> wrote:

Hi Tim,

This email is a followup to our phone conversation yesterday regarding the Selectboard's decision to allow NMH's request to temporarily close both ends of Mount Hermon Road to vehicle traffic. In their discussion at Monday night's Selectboard meeting, they noted the State of Emergency in place for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as well as the State of Emergency declared for the Town of Gill earlier in that meeting. They understand the importance to NMH to be able to limit and control vehicle access to the school campus during the coronavirus epidemic. It is recognized that all property on both sides of Mount Hermon Road is owned by NMH, which reduces the likelihood the road is used by the general public except for school-related access.

It was also noted the Police Chief and Fire Chief/Emergency Management Director support NMH's request, with the caveat the gate be locked using a number combination lock and not a keyed lock or a dial combination lock. The Highway Superintendent was present during the Selectboard's discussion and offered no objections to the plan to block the road.

By unanimous vote the Selectboard agreed to allow NMH School to temporarily close the north and south ends of Mount Hermon Road at the intersections with Main Road, so long as the School's actions meet the approval of the Fire, Police, and Highway Departments. The approval is for a period of 60 days (through May 15<sup>th</sup>). If the School would like to keep the road closed beyond the 60 days, please provide a written request to me by May 7<sup>th</sup> and I will include it as an agenda item for the Selectboard's meeting on May 11<sup>th</sup>.

Stay safe and stay healthy. This, too, shall pass.

Ray

Ray Purington

Town Administrator

Town of Gill

325 Main Road

Gill, MA 01354

P: 413 863 9347 F: 413 863 7775

[administrator@gillmass.org](mailto:administrator@gillmass.org) [www.gillmass.org](http://www.gillmass.org)

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**Tim McKinney** | Director, Environmental, Health, Safety, and Security  
Northfield Mount Hermon School  
p: 413-498-3539  
[tmckinney@nmhschool.org](mailto:tmckinney@nmhschool.org)

One Lamplighter Way, Mount Hermon, MA 01354 [nmhschool.org](http://nmhschool.org)



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# TOWN OF GILL

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



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

## SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

*April 27, 2020*

The meeting was conducted remotely by all participants due to the State of Emergency related to COVID-19 and under the “Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting, G.L. c. 30A, §20” issued by Governor Baker on 3/12/20.

Called to Order: The teleconference meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM.

Members Present: John Ward, Greg Snedeker and Randy Crochier      Members Absent: None

Others Present: Ray Purington, Town Administrator; George Brace, Gene Beaubien, and Vicky Jenkins

COVID-19 Topics: All departments – fire, police, and public health – have been generally status quo over the last two weeks. On April 23<sup>rd</sup> the Fire Department conducted its first drill night since the stay-at-home order began, doing pumper training at the boat ramp in small teams with proper social distancing. The department has also been participating in drive-by birthday celebrations for residents. On the public health front, Randy reported the Franklin County area is beginning to experience signs of spring fever and “quarantine fever”, with popular tourist destinations like Shelburne Falls seeing an increase in visitors. The Community Tracing Collaborative is also starting its work to trace and track contacts by people diagnosed or exposed to COVID-19. The spring issue of the Gill Newsletter, which will be delivered later this week, contains a list of resources available to assist people during the COVID-19 pandemic and the related financial fallout.

Green Communities Grant Application: Vicky Jenkins, Chair of the Energy Commission, participated in the teleconference to update the Selectboard on the status of the application for the Green Communities competitive grant. The due date is May 1<sup>st</sup>, and Jenkins plans to have everything ready to submit on April 29<sup>th</sup>. She explained there are still some questions around the energy figures and cost savings for the air source heat pump project for the Town Hall. However, the figures are what we received from the energy consultant assisting with the project, so we will “give it a shot!” Regarding the grant narrative for the electric vehicle charger, Randy suggested a sentence be added that points out how staying at home, with the accompanying reduction in vehicle use, has improved air quality on a global level. If a significant portion of the world’s gasoline- and diesel-powered vehicles were replaced with electric vehicles, a similar, and perhaps permanent, result could be expected. Getting off fossil fuels does make a difference. Jenkins left at 5:53 PM.

Warrant for June 22<sup>nd</sup> Town Election: Randy made a motion, seconded by Greg, to sign the warrant for the June 22<sup>nd</sup> town election. The roll call vote was unanimous in the affirmative. Absentee ballots should be ready to be mailed out on April 29<sup>th</sup> for any resident who requests one. A lockable drop box was purchased for Town Hall and will be installed later this week. Randy noted the postage for mailing absentee ballots can be tracked as a COVID-19 expense that is reimbursable by FEMA.

2020 Lawn Mowing Contract: Randy announced he will abstain from the discussion as his brother-in-law was one of the bidders. The Selectboard discussed a resident’s comments related to the frequency of mowing lawns, and decided the existing language in the bid letter and award letter was sufficient to cause the mowing contractor to not “over mow.” Greg made a motion, seconded by John, to award the 2020 lawn mowing contract to the low bidder, Artscape Landscaping. The vote was taken by roll call: Greg – Aye, John – Aye, Randy – Abstain. The motion passed.

6-Town Regionalization Planning Grant: Greg reported it is unlikely the regionalization planning grant will be extended beyond the June 30<sup>th</sup> “hard deadline.” The Planning Committee is working hard toward completing the grant and is making good progress, despite being slowed down for several months waiting for financial information from the Pioneer Regional School District.

Warrant: John reported he reviewed and signed the FY 2020 warrant # 22 on April 15<sup>th</sup>, with totals of \$21,990.59 for payroll, and \$34,774.70 for vendors.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 PM.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by Ray Purington, Town Administrator*

*Signed copy on file. Approved on 05/11/2020*

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Randy Crochier, Selectboard Clerk

## Ray Purington/Gill Selectboard

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**From:** Beth Giannini <Giannini@frcog.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 07, 2020 2:14 PM  
**To:** 'Ray Purington/Gill Selectboard'  
**Subject:** RE: Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway  
**Attachments:** nsbpnationalwebinar.pdf

Hi Ray,

I pulled together a few links to information on the Federal Highway Administration's website that would be helpful. This links to information about the Scenic Byway Program on the Federal Highway Administration website.

<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/byways/>

The following link has information about the FHWA's solicitation of nominations and I have also attached a PowerPoint that was a presentation given about the national nomination and the process of applying.

[https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/scenic\\_byways/](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/scenic_byways/)

And this link is to the listing on the FHWA website for the Connecticut River Scenic Byway which is the only byway in Massachusetts that is currently designated as a National Scenic Byway (and is also in Erving). National designation gets the byway on the website.

<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/byways/byways/2487>

Let me know if there are additional questions or if I can provide more information.

I am working on putting together a sample letter of support that I will send to you later today or tomorrow.

Thanks  
Beth

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**From:** Ray Purington/Gill Selectboard <administrator@gillmass.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 6, 2020 5:06 PM  
**To:** Beth Giannini <Giannini@frcog.org>  
**Subject:** RE: Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway

Hi Beth,

Great timing – I do the Selectboard’s agenda tomorrow for their May 11<sup>th</sup> meeting, which is the only scheduled meeting between now and the deadline on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Any links or attachments you can provide to help explain the program would be appreciated. And if you have a sample support letter, I wouldn’t say no...

Ideally I’d have Gill’s Historical Commission weigh in, but they don’t have a meeting scheduled between now and the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Ray

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**From:** Beth Giannini [<mailto:Giannini@frcog.org>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 06, 2020 3:50 PM  
**To:** 'administrator@gillmass.org' <[administrator@gillmass.org](mailto:administrator@gillmass.org)>  
**Subject:** Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway

Hi Ray,

I hope that all is well.

The Federal Highway Administration is soliciting nominations for designation of state scenic byways to the national America's Byways program. America’s Byways are part of the National Scenic Byways Program, a collaborative effort established to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States.

We would like to nominate the Mohawk Trail for this designation, and are seeking support from the towns along the Byway. As far as we are aware, this is a one-time solicitation, so it is not known if and when nominations would be sought again in the future. The Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway (Route 2) is already a state designated Scenic Byway, and the designation to America’s Byways would be an additional honor. The Mohawk Trail was established as an auto touring route in the early days of car travel, and is the perfect candidate for nomination to America’s Byways. This designation would mean that the Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway would be included in a list of Byways that are on the National Scenic Byway website, which would enhance its profile and help elevate it as an economic development, tourism or preservation engine.

Because the America’s Byways program is honorary, and does not restrict the Byway or the properties along it in any way. The designation may provide opportunities in the future for technical assistance, funding or recognition to support tourism related economic development. There is currently no specific funding available through the program, but there could be opportunities in the future. Decisions for inclusion in America’s Byways are based on archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational, and scenic qualities, all of which the Mohawk Trail abounds. We believe the Mohawk Trail is worthy of the additional recognition as a nationally significant road, and we’d like it to be ready for potential funding opportunities should they arise. The Connecticut River Scenic Byway is currently the only nationally designated Scenic Byway in Massachusetts. All of the other Massachusetts Byways are state designated.

**The nomination to the National Scenic Byway America’s Byways program is due on June 1, 2020. We are seeking the town’s feedback and a letter of support by May 22,**

**2020.** We realize that this is a tight turnaround, but unfortunately dissemination of information about the program was impacted by the current COVID-19 situation. I am happy to discuss this further with you on the telephone and work out the logistics of receiving your town's support, if you are interested. I am working remotely, but please email me and we can arrange a time to talk.

Thank you for your attention and assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,  
Beth

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# TOWN OF GILL

MASSACHUSETTS



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

May 12, 2020

Danielle E. Blackshear, Transportation Specialist  
Office of Human Environment, Livability Team  
Federal Highway Administration  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Ms. Blackshear:

The Gill Selectboard strongly supports the designation of the Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway as a National Scenic Byway as part of the American's Byways program. The Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway is rich in archeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and scenic resources, and is worthy of recognition as a regionally and nationally significant route.

The story of the Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway celebrates the history, heritage, and natural beauty of the area. The Mohawk Trail was constructed as a scenic auto touring route in the early years of car travel, and retains the feel of that era. There are many sites and resources along the route that highlight the rich history of the byway. The Mohawk Trail travels through towns and villages that grew during the industrial revolution, and have retained the character of this important heritage. It travels through a landscape of distinct natural beauty along the way from the Connecticut River Valley to the Berkshire Mountains in the northwestern corner of Massachusetts. The corridor is especially rich in natural resources which attract visitors to the abundance of outdoor recreation. In Gill, the Mohawk Trail is the gateway to town with views of farms fields, forest and the Connecticut River.

A national designation of the Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway to American's Byways will ensure that these important resources are recognized and shared with Byway travelers, and support efforts by our local communities to boost economic development and tourism. I urge you to support the designation of the Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway as an American's Byway Program National Scenic Byway. Thank you for your attention and assistance in this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Ray Purington  
Town Administrator