

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING

VIA ZOOM

Monday, July 21, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Meeting was opened at 6:00 PM. Present were Selectboard members Matt Lord, Rich Kuklewicz, and Marina Goldman; Town Administrator Walter Ramsey; Assistant Town Administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller; RiverCulture Director Suzanne LoManto; and Library Director Caitlyn Kelley.

Selectboard Chair opens the meeting, including announcing that the meeting is being recorded and roll call taken

Approve Minutes: Montague Meetings of June 21 and July 7, 2025, if available

Kuklewicz makes the motion to approve the Minutes of June 21 and July 7, 2025. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved.

Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye

Public Comment Period: Individuals will be limited to two (2) minutes each and the Montague will strictly adhere to time allotted for public comment

None

Use of Public Property Requests

- **RiverCulture request for permission for a bike parade related to Fairy Day, Saturday, 8-16-2025. The route is on Avenue A from 62 Avenue A to Peskeompskut Park from 2:00 - 2:15 PM. Rain date is 08-17-2025**
Kuklewicz makes the motion to approve the Use of Public Property by RiverCulture for a bike parade related to Fairy Day, Saturday, 8-16-2025; the route is on Avenue A from 62 Avenue A to Peskeompskut Park from 2:00 - 2:15 PM; rain date is 08-17-2025. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye
- **Allison Cooke of Montague Elks Lodge Requests Use of Public Property for 5K race and 1.4-mile fun run to benefit Montague Elks #2521, on September 13, 2025, from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM, rain or shine**
Kuklewicz makes the motion to approve the Use of Public Property for a 5K race and a 1.4-mile fun run to benefit Montague Elks #2521, on September 13, 2025, from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM, rain or shine. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye

Personnel Board

- **DPW**
Appoint Jason Kingsbury to DPW Grounds Maintenance Lead Effective 7-21-2025, Grade F, Step 2 at \$26.70 per hour
Kuklewicz makes the motion to appoint Jason Kingsbury to DPW Grounds Maintenance Lead Effective 7-21-2025, Grade F, Step 2 at \$26.70 per hour. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye
- **POLICE**
 - **Accept Resignation of Jacob Lapean as Detective and appoint him as Patrolman, Grade P, Step 8 @ \$33.16 per hour. Formerly Detective, Grade D, Step 8 @ \$35.97 per hour**
Goldman makes the motion to accept the Resignation of Jacob Lapean as Detective and appoint him as Patrolman, Grade P, Step 8 @ \$33.16 per hour; formerly Detective, Grade D, Step 8 @ \$35.97 per hour. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Lord - Aye
 - **Authorize Cell Phone Stipend for Brian Pfister of the Police Department at current rate of \$5.77 per week**
Goldman makes the motion to authorize the Cell Phone Stipend for Brian Pfister of the Police Department at the current rate of \$5.77 per week. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Lord - Aye
- **LIBRARIES**
 - **Accept Resignation of Joshua Lively from Library Building Steering Committee**
Goldman makes the motion to accept the Resignation of Joshua Lively from the Library Building Steering Committee. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Lord - Aye
 - **Appoint Sue Richardson as Substitute Library Assistant for the Montague Public Libraries, filling in as necessary for library staff who have called out, \$15.00/hour, effective 7-22-2025**
Kuklewicz makes the motion to appoint Sue Richardson as a Substitute Library Assistant for the Montague Public Libraries, filling in as necessary for library staff who have called out, \$15.00/hour, effective 7-22-2025. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye
 - **Appoint Elaine Moe and Amy Love as Substitute Library Assistants for the Montague Public Libraries, filling in as necessary for library staff who have called out, \$15.00/hour, effective 7-22-2025**
Lord makes the motion to appoint Elaine Moe and Amy Love as Substitute Library Assistants for the Montague Public Libraries, filling in as necessary for library staff who have called out, \$15.00/hour, effective 7-22-2025. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye
 - **Appoint Kimber Gray as Community Relations Coordinator for the Montague Public Libraries, 13.5 hours/week, \$25.01/hour effective 7-22-2025**

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Kuklewicz makes the motion to appoint Kimber Gray as the Community Relations Coordinator for the Montague Public Libraries, 13.5 hours/week, \$25.01/hour effective 7-22-2025. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye

- **Appoint Lisa Davol to Library Steering Committee**

Goldman makes the motion to appoint Lisa Davol to the Library Steering Committee. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Lord - Aye

- **Authorize Cell Phone Stipend for Caitlin Kelley of the Montague Public Libraries at current rate of \$5.77 per week**

Goldman makes the motion to authorize a Cell Phone Stipend for Caitlin Kelley of the Montague Public Libraries at the current rate of \$5.77 per week. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Lord - Aye

Liquor Licensing Hearing, El Nopalito Restaurant, 196 Turners Falls Road, Montague

Alteration to the On-Premise All Alcohol Beverages Liquor License (Restaurant). The proposed 281 square foot patio area will be located on the south side of the building with a seating capacity of up to 32 patrons. The floor plan is available in the Selectboard's Office

- Chair opens the Liquor Licensing Hearing.
- *Goldman makes the motion to approve the Alteration to the On-Premise All Alcohol Beverages Liquor License (Restaurant); the proposed 281 square foot patio area will be located on the south side of the building with a seating capacity of up to 32 patrons. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Lord - Aye*

Informational Presentation and Discussion on Montague's potential participation in Climate Leader Communities Program (with Montague Energy Committee)

- Regional Green Communities Coordinator Chris Mason gives an information presentation on Montague's potential participation in Climate Leader Communities Program:
 - Policy Background (Climate Act 2021, Strategy to Achieve Net-Zero Carbon Emissions)
 - Overview of Climate Leader Communities Program (What Climate Leaders Offer, Requirements for Certification, Decarbonization Roadmap: Zero Over Time)
 - Specialized Stretch Code (Base, Stretch, and Specialized - 3 Options, Massachusetts Building Energy Code Adoption by Municipality, History of HERS ratings in MA energy, Specialized vs. Stretch code, Specialized Residential Code: Solar PV sizing, Small residential incentives, Information on Town website, Specialized Energy Code Resources)
- In response to a request by Lord, Mason gives more details about the Small residential incentives (Single Family vs. Small multi-family).
- Energy Committee Member Sally Pick states that operating an all-electric home is less expensive than operating a mixed-fuel home.
- Pick shares that the Massachusetts Climate Bank is doing PILOTs on all-electric housing for affordable housing and mixed income.

Cable Television License Renewal Public Hearing (with Cable Advisory Committee)

Held in accordance with 207 CMR 3.05 to review the terms of a proposed cable television renewal license agreement with Comcast of Massachusetts/Virginia, Inc.

- Chair opens the Cable Television License Renewal Public Hearing.
- Counsel Bill August reviews Cable Television License Renewal.
- *Kuklewicz makes the motion that acting in the capacity as the statutory cable television license Issuing Authority pursuant to MGL 166A, and finding that the cable license renewal proposal of Comcast reasonably meets the cable-related renewal needs and interests of the public and Town; and finding that Comcast's financial and technical qualifications, and Comcast's local programming channels, facilities and services are reasonable to meet Town cable license needs; and based on the recommendation of the Town's Cable Advisory Committee to approve the proposed Comcast renewal franchise, the Montague Board of Selectmen hereby approves and shall execute the proposed Montague Comcast renewal license effective September 1, 2025. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye*

Assistant Town Administrator's Business

- **Authorize Agreement with Weston & Sampson for First Street Remediation oversight services. Contract value is \$49,980 to be funded by Chapter 40R Zoning Incentive Payment**
Kuklewicz makes the motion to authorize the Agreement with Weston & Sampson for First Street Remediation oversight services, and authorize the Chair to sign it; contract value is \$49,980 to be funded by Chapter 40R Zoning Incentive Payment. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye

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- **Authorize Contract with All Star Abatement, Inc. for hazardous material abatement services at Strathmore Footbridge. Contract value is \$38,000.00 to be funded by Town Meeting appropriation**
Goldman makes the motion to authorize the Contract with All Star Abatement, Inc. for hazardous material abatement services at Strathmore Footbridge; contract value is \$38,000.00 to be funded by Town Meeting appropriation. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Lord - Aye
- **Approve Letter of Thanks to Rep. Natalie Blais and Rep. Susannah Whipps for \$50k earmark to Gill-Montague Council on Aging**
Goldman makes the motion to approve the Letter of Thanks to Rep. Natalie Blais and Rep. Susannah Whipps for the \$50k earmark to Gill-Montague Council on Aging. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Lord - Aye
- **Request authorization to apply for MassDEP State Revolving Fund Loan Program for Collections System Rehab - Phase 2**
Kuklewicz makes the motion to approve the request by the Assistant Town Administrator to apply for the MassDEP State Revolving Fund Loan Program for Collections System Rehab - Phase 2. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye
- **Request authorization to apply for Municipal Decarbonization Planning Assistance Grant from Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER)**
Lord makes the motion to authorize the Assistant Town Administrator to apply for the Municipal Decarbonization Planning Assistance Grant from Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER). Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye
- **Announce selection of intersections at Main & School Street in Montague Center for rectangular rapid flashing beacons provided by Mass DOT**
Nolan-Zeller announces that the Town of Montague was selected by Mass DOT to receive rectangular rapid flashing beacons for the intersection at Main Street and School Street in Montague Center.
- **Parking lot re-paving updates: Third Street, Fourth Street, Hillcrest School, Town Hall**
Nolan-Zeller states that the parking lots at Third Street, Fourth Street, Hillcrest School, and Town Hall will be getting new pavements. These are funded by the CDBG Program and capital requests.
- **Downtown District Coordinator update**
Nolan-Zeller shares that Montague Center resident Christian Laplante has been hired as the Downtown District Coordinator.
- **Other Updates/Resident's appreciation**
Nolan-Zeller shares a resident's expressed appreciation to the Board for improving the accessibility of some of the Town's infrastructure.

Town Administrator's Business

- **Vote on Plan to Transition non-union employees to new FY26 Wage and Classification Plan**
Lord makes the motion to accept Proposal A as presented to transition non-union employees to new FY26 Wage and Classification Plan. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye
- **Authorize Letter of Request to Franklin County Technical School to continue the Tree Nursery and Arboriculture Training Program**
Goldman makes the motion to send the Letter of Request to Franklin County Technical School to continue the tree nursery and arboriculture training program. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Lord - Aye
- **Topics not anticipated in the 48-hour posting requirements**
 - **Fireworks**
There will be fireworks this Saturday at Barton Cove for the Christmas in July Celebration.
 - **Truck Breakdown**
Casella had a truck break down on Friday. They were able to get caught up the next day.

Next Meeting:

Selectboard, Monday, August 4, 2025 at 6:30 PM, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA and via ZOOM

Goldman makes the motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Lord - Aye