

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING

VIA ZOOM

Monday, March 17 2025 at 6:30 PM

Meeting was opened at 6:30 PM. Present were Selectboard members Rich Kuklewicz and Chris Boutwell; Town Administrator Walter Ramsey; Executive Assistant Wendy Bogusz; Assistant Town Administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller; and FCRHA Director of Community Development Brian McHugh.

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

Approve Minutes: Selectboard Meeting March 3 and 10, 2025 if available

- *Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Minutes of March 3, 2025 as presented. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Boutwell, - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- Approval of March 10 Minutes postponed

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

None

Personnel Board

- **Appoint Jenna Petrowicz, CO-OP Student from Franklin County Technical School as temporary employee of the DPW Department, \$15.00/hour, effective 3/31/2025, 9 hours per day, Monday through Thursday every other week until 5/29/2025**
Boutwell makes the motion to appoint Jenna Petrowicz, CO-OP Student from Franklin County Technical School as temporary employee of the DPW Department, \$15.00/hour, effective 3/31/2025, 9 hours per day, Monday through Thursday every other week until 5/29/2025. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Boutwell, - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Appoint Deb Bourbeau to Town Clerk Consultant (Temporary), effective 3/17/2025, up to 10 hours per week @ \$45.06/hour. Term ends June 30, 2025**
Boutwell makes the motion to appoint Deb Bourbeau as a temporary Town Clerk Consultant, effective 3/17/2025, up to 10 hours per week @ \$45.06/hour; term ends June 30, 2025. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Boutwell, - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Assistant Town Administrator's Business

- **Award and Execute Lease Agreement with Center for Responsive Schools, Inc. for Colle Building, 85 Avenue A, Turners Falls. Lease term is three (3) years, through May 31, 2028, with total rent value of \$28,896.00**
*Boutwell makes the motion to award and execute the Lease Agreement with Center for Responsive Schools, Inc. for Colle Building, 85 Avenue A, Turners Falls; Lease term is three (3) years, through May 31, 2028, with total rent value of \$28,896.00. **Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved.** Boutwell, - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- **Authorize Memorandum of Understanding with Commonwealth Electrical Technologies, LLC, for participation in the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center**
Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the Authorize Memorandum of Understanding with Commonwealth Electrical Technologies, LLC, for participation in the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center; and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Boutwell, - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Other Updates**
 - The Annex Solar Panel installation is underway.
 - The contractor for the Avenue A construction for the next step of Streetscape is going to be bringing some equipment this week. Start-up construction will begin later this month.

Town Administrator's Business

- **FY26 Budget Updates: GMRSD School Resource Officer, status of capital requests, DPW discretionary fund**
 - The Gill-Montague School District has proposed to not have the School Resource Officer in their budget next year. Effectively the receipts that the Town gets is going to be reduced by \$65,000. If this goes through, that police officer will return to the Montague Police Force as a patrol person and possibly a community resource officer.
 - DPW Superintendent Sam Urkiel will be coming next week to discuss (1) the purchase of a 10-wheel dump truck, (2) guard rail replacement on Meadow Road in Montague Center; and (3) the DPW discretionary fund.
 - Negotiations with UE and NAGE are progressing well. Ramsey is confident that we will be able to build that into the budget for Annual Town Meeting.
- **Annual Town Meeting Article Submission deadline: 3/19/2025**
The deadline for Town Meeting Article Submissions is this Wednesday at the end of the day.

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- **Authorize submittal of FirstLight Sustains Grant for \$5,000, to produce and install 3 interpretive signs along the bike path depicting the pre-colonial and King Phillips war history and authorize expenditure of up to \$2,000 from Community Development Discretionary Account for a total project cost of \$7,000**
Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the submittal of FirstLight Sustains Grant for \$5,000, to produce and install 3 interpretive signs along the bike path depicting the pre-colonial and King Phillips war history and authorize expenditure of up to \$2,000 from Community Development Discretionary Account for a total project cost of \$7,000. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Boutwell, - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Topics not anticipated in the 48-hour posting requirements**
None

FY2025 Montague Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application Public Hearing

- McHugh reads aloud the notice for the FY2025 Montague Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application Public Hearing.
- McHugh goes over each of the programs: The Brickhouse Community Resource Center's Youth Education and Prevention Program; LifePath's Elder Self-Sufficiency and Stability Program, Meals on Wheels Program, and Wellness Checks; the Heart Wing's Center's Families Learning Together Strong Program; and Wildflower Alliance's program that provides support and advocacy to Montague residents that are in recovery.
- LifePath workers discuss the Meals on Wheels, Shine, and Healthy Living Programs.
- McHugh discusses the Avenue Streetscapes Improvement Project.
- In response to a question by Singleton, McHugh states that the grant cap went down by \$100,000. The Housing Rehab Program was shelved this year. The construction projects that are over \$250,000 require the BABA Act.
- *Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the Housing and Redevelopment Authority to submit the CDBG Application on behalf of the Town of Montague for no more than \$850,000. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Boutwell, - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- *Boutwell makes the motion to authorize signatures on grant application submissions documents that can only be produced once approved budget is entered in EOHLIC's Grant Management System. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Boutwell, - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- *Boutwell makes the motion to authorize execution of the FY25 CDBG Contract between the Town of Montague and the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC), if awarded. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Boutwell, - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

Executive Session in accordance with G.L. c. 30A, §21(3) To discuss strategy with respect to litigation with FirstLight Power, Inc. if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigation position of the public body and the Chair so declares

- The Chair deems that holding this discussion in public would have a detrimental effect on the Town's position.
- *Boutwell makes the motion to go into Executive Session in accordance with G.L. c. 30A, §21(3) To discuss strategy with respect to litigation with FirstLight Power, Inc. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Boutwell, - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

Next Meeting(s):

- **Wed, March 19, 2025 at 6:00 PM via ZOOM with Finance Committee**
- **Selectboard, Monday, March 24, 2025, at 6:30 PM via ZOOM**