

SUMMARY OF ARTICLES

#	TOPIC	AMOUNT REQUESTED	% OF TOTAL	FUNDING SOURCE
1	Annual Reports			
2	Elected Wages			
3	Appointed Wages			
4	Town Operating Budget	12,747,055	36.08%	Taxation
5	CWF Operating Budget	3,221,303	9.11%	Taxation/Sewer User Fees
6	Airport Operating Budget	425,732	1.20%	Taxation/Sale of RE/Airport Rev
7	Airport Fuel Revolving			
8	Colle Operating Budget	52,250	0.15%	Colle
9	FCTS Assessment	841,660	2.38%	Taxation
10	GMRSD Assessment	12,663,178	35.84%	Taxation
11	Smith Voc and Agr High School	59,000	0.17%	Taxation
12	NAGE and UE Wage and Class	125,154	0.35%	Taxation/Sewer User Fees
13	Library Accessibility/Upgrades	10,000	0.03%	Free Cash
14	<u>CWF Articles</u>			
	Used Mini-Excavator	60,000	0.17%	CWF Retained Earnings
	Generators	67,800	0.19%	CWF Retained Earnings
	Two Thickened Sludge Pumps	104,000	0.29%	CWF Retained Earnings
15	Phase 2-Sewer Collection Rehab	3,000,000	8.49%	CWF/Town Debt
16	DPW 10-Wheel Dump Truck	365,000	1.03%	Free Cash
17	DPW Dump Truck	325,000	0.92%	Town Capital Stabilization
18	<u>DPW Vehicles</u>			
	Camera Van	70,000	0.20%	Free Cash
	Pickup Truck	65,000	0.18%	Free Cash
19	<u>DPW Projects</u>			
	Oakman Street Slope Stabilization	60,000	0.17%	Free Cash
	Non-Chapter 90 Paving	30,000	0.08%	Free Cash
20	Meadow Rd Guardrails	200,000	0.57%	Free Cash
21	DPW Equipment	36,470	0.10%	Taxation
22	<u>Town Project Articles</u>			
	Millers Falls Library Storefront	39,000	0.11%	Free Cash
	Unity Park Upgrades	125,000	0.35%	Free Cash
	Montague Center Complete Streets	91,200	0.26%	Free Cash
23	FRTA Bus Stop	60,000	0.17%	Cannabis Impact Stabilization
24	Keith Footbridge	67,900	0.19%	Canal District Utility Impr Stabilization
25	<u>Annual Transfers to Reserves</u>			
	Conservation Fund	10,000	0.03%	Taxation
	Town Capital Stabilization	231,890	0.66%	Taxation/Free Cash
	GMRSD Stabilization	88,718	0.25%	Taxation/Free Cash
	OPEB Trust Fund	100,000	0.28%	Taxation/Free Cash
26	FirstLight Hydro PILOT			
27	Personal Property Thresholds			
28	Tax Title Payment Agreement			
29	Unclaimed Property			
30	Shea Theater Lease			
31	FRCOG Charter			
		35,342,310	100.00%	

**ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
TOWN OF MONTAGUE
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MAY 7, 2025
Expected Continuation Date May 14, 2025 (if needed)**

MOTIONS

ARTICLE 1. Annual Reports (Selectboard Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to receive the reports of the Officers of the Town and any committees.

PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE

ARTICLE 2. Wages for Elected Officials (Selectboard Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to fix the salaries of all elected officials as required by law for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, as set forth in Schedule I, Elected Officials.

**SCHEDULE I
Elected Officials**

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>FY25 BUDGET</u>	<u>FY26 REQUEST</u>	<u>FY26 RECOMMEND</u>
MODERATOR	500	500	500
SELECTBOARD			
Chairman	2,640	2,640	2,640
Second/Third Members	2,400	2,400	2,400
BOARD OF ASSESSOR			
Chairman	1,980	1,980	1,980
Second/Third Members	1,800	1,800	1,800
BOARD OF HEALTH			
Chairman	1,980	1,980	1,980
Second/Third Members	1,800	1,800	1,800
TREE WARDEN	1,764		

*Changed to appointed STM 2/12/25

PASSED/UNANIMOUS

VOTE

ARTICLE 3. Wages for Appointed Officials (Selectboard Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to fix the salaries of all appointed officials as required by law for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, as set forth in Schedule II, Appointed Officials.

SCHEDULE II

<u>TITLE</u>	Appointed Officials		
	<u>FY25 BUDGET</u>	<u>FY26 REQUEST</u>	<u>FY26 RECOMMEND</u>
<u>ANNUAL STIPENDS</u>			
BOARD OF REGISTRARS (3)	625	625	625
BOARD OF REGISTRARS TOWN CLERK	900	900	900
EMERGENCY MGMT DIRECTOR	6,444	6,444	6,444
ANIMAL INSPECTOR	1,764	1,764	1,764
BARN INSPECTOR	1,400	1,400	1,400
IT COORDINATOR	2,352	2,352	2,352
POLICE IT ADMINISTRATOR	6,000	6,000	6,000
FOREST WARDEN	1,882	1,882	1,882
TREE WARDEN		1,764	1,764
HEARING OFFICER	2,500	2,500	2,500
FARMERS MARKET MANAGER	4,000	3,750	3,750
FARMERS MARKET ASST MANAGER		750	750
SEXTON/PER BURIAL	100.00		
SEXTON STIPEND		2,000	2,000
<u>RATES PER INSPECTION</u>			
ASST. BUILDING INSPECTOR	45.00	45.00	45.00
GAS INSPECTOR	45.00	45.00	45.00
PLUMBING INSPECTOR	45.00	45.00	45.00
ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR	45.00	45.00	45.00
<u>HOURLY RATES</u>			
EXTRA CLERICAL	15.00-18.75	15.00-18.75	15.00-18.75
ELECTION WORKERS	15.00-19.75	15.00-19.75	15.00-19.75
SUMMER HIGHWAY	15.00-18.75	15.00-18.75	15.00-18.75
SNOWPLOW DRIVERS	15.00-27.00	15.00-27.00	15.00-27.00
PART TIME POLICE OFFICERS	29.00-35.00	29.00-37.00	29.00-37.00
PART TIME DISPATCHERS	22.00-27.00	22.00-27.00	22.00-27.00
PARKS & RECREATION	15.00-24.25	15.00-24.25	15.00-24.25
AIRPORT INTERN	15.00-18.75	15.00-18.75	15.00-18.75

**SCHEDULE II
Appointed Officials**

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>FY25 BUDGET</u>	<u>FY26 REQUEST</u>	<u>FY26 RECOMMEND</u>
SHIFT DIFFERENTIALS			
<u>PART TIME POLICE OFFICERS</u>			
SECOND SHIFT	1.00	1.00	1.00
THIRD SHIFT	1.25	1.25	1.25
<u>PART TIME DISPATCHERS</u>			
SECOND SHIFT	0.75	0.75	0.75
THIRD SHIFT	1.00	1.00	1.00
<u>PART TIME CLERICAL/LIBRARIES</u>	0.75	0.75	0.75

NON-UNION EMPLOYEES NOT SHOWN ABOVE (placed on FY25 NAGE Scale)

	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Range FY2025</u>		<u>Range FY2026</u>	
<u>SALARIED</u>		Start	End	Start	End
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR	J	103,470	127,339	103,470	127,339
ASSISTANT TOWN ADMIN	I	94,064	115,764	94,064	115,764
TOWN ACCOUNTANT	G	67,277	82,394	67,277	82,394
TAX COLLECTOR/TREASURER	G	67,277	82,394	67,277	82,394
TOWN CLERK	G	67,277	82,394	67,277	82,394
CHIEF OF POLICE	I	94,064	115,764	94,064	115,764
DPW SUPERINTENDENT	H	85,514	105,239	85,514	105,239
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH	G	67,277	82,394	67,277	82,394
LIBRARY DIRECTOR	G	67,277	82,394	67,277	82,394
CWF SUPERINTENDENT	H	85,514	105,239	85,514	105,239
<u>HOURLY</u>					
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT	E	25.01	30.77	25.01	30.77
POLICE LIEUTENANT	G+8.5%	40.95	45.44	40.95	45.44
POLICE CUSTODIAN	A	16.76	20.62	16.76	20.62

Informational Only: Fiscal Year 2026 budgeted wages –

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR	111,427	EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT	30.77
ASSISTANT TOWN ADMIN	96,417	DPW SUPERINTENDENT	98,687
TOWN ACCOUNTANT	82,394	DIRECTOR OF HEALTH	75,746
TAX COLLECTOR/TREAS	82,394		
TOWN CLERK	77,260	LIBRARY DIRECTOR	82,394
CHIEF OF POLICE*	138,917	CWF SUPERINTENDENT	105,239
POLICE LIEUTENANT	45.44	POLICE CUSTODIAN	20.62

*includes additional 20% educational incentive pay

PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE

ARTICLE 4. Town Operating Budget (Selectboard Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$12,747,055 for the maintenance of the several departments of the Town, said sum to be allocated in accordance with Schedule III, Budget, and for any other necessary charges, with said sum to be raised from Taxation.

Schedule III
Town Operating Budget

DEPARTMENT	BUDGET FY25	REQUEST FY26	SELECTBOARD FIN COMM RECOMMEND FY26
GENERAL GOVERNMENT			
TOWN MEETING	3,180	3,180	3,180
SELECTBOARD	326,230	324,662	324,662
FINANCE COMMITTEE	600	600	600
RESERVE FUND	50,000	50,000	50,000
TOWN ACCOUNTANT	93,000	101,374	101,374
ASSESSORS	186,059	180,122	180,122
TREASURER/COLLECTOR	206,965	208,335	208,335
TOWN COUNSEL	87,475	82,475	82,475
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	92,252	103,352	103,352
SHARED COSTS	93,499	104,930	104,930
TOWN CLERK	237,224	219,144	219,144
PLANNING	140,788	142,394	142,394
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS	700	700	700
PUBLIC BLDG UTILITIES	140,050	145,000	145,000
FARMERS MARKET	5,200	5,700	5,700
TOTAL GENERAL GOVT	1,663,222	1,671,968	1,671,968
PUBLIC SAFETY			
POLICE	2,067,608	2,069,965	2,069,965
POLICE CRUISER	60,000	-	-

Schedule III
Town Operating Budget

DEPARTMENT	BUDGET FY25	REQUEST FY26	SB/FIN COMM RECOMMEND FY26
DISPATCH	410,768	410,868	410,868
BUILDING INSPECTOR	155,082	149,926	149,926
SEALER OF WEIGHTS	7,182	7,182	7,182
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT	6,944	6,944	6,944
ANIMAL CONTROL	23,658	24,185	24,185
FOREST WARDEN	1,882	1,882	1,882
TREE WARDEN	30,474	30,474	30,474
TOTAL PUBLIC SAFETY	2,763,598	2,701,426	2,701,426

PUBLIC WORKS			
DEPT OF PUBLIC WORKS	1,772,006	1,810,284	1,810,284
SNOW & ICE	321,250	324,750	324,750
SOLID WASTE	802,776	835,300	835,300
CHARGING STATIONS	11,980	3,000	3,000
CEMETERIES	32,150	32,150	32,150
TOTAL PUBLIC WORKS	2,940,162	3,005,484	3,005,484
HUMAN SERVICES			
BOARD OF HEALTH	168,004	172,144	172,144
HUMAN SERVICES			
COUNCIL ON AGING	59,272	77,207	77,207
VETERANS' SERVICES	77,897	101,000	101,000
TOTAL HUMAN SERVICES	305,173	350,351	350,351
CULTURE & RECREATION			
LIBRARIES	518,233	521,033	521,033
PARKS & RECREATION	164,826	169,326	169,326
HISTORICAL COMMISSION	500	500	500
WAR MEMORIALS	1,600	1,600	1,600
TOTAL CULTURE/RECREATION	685,159	692,459	692,459
DEBT SERVICE	1,158,857	1,160,025	1,160,025
INTERGOVERNMENTAL	116,874	119,041	119,041
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	2,657,083	2,926,701	2,926,701
GENERAL INSURANCE	119,600	119,600	119,600
TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS	2,776,683	3,046,301	3,046,301
TOTAL TOWN BUDGET	12,409,728	12,747,055	12,747,055

PASSED/MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 5. Clean Water Facility Budget (Sewer Commissioners Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$3,221,303 for the purpose of operating the Clean Water Facility and associated pumping stations, said sum to be allocated in accordance with Schedule IV, CWF Budget, with \$406,188 to be raised from Taxation and \$2,815,115 to be raised from Sewer Revenue.

Schedule IV
Clean Water Facility Budget

SELECTBOARD
FIN COMM

DEPARTMENT	BUDGET FY25	REQUEST FY26	RECOMMEND FY26
CLEAN WATER FACILITY			
Wages & Expenses	2,116,590	2,209,442	2,209,442
Capital Outlay	58,500	58,500	58,500
Debt Service	478,365	485,028	485,028
Employee Benefits	380,719	383,183	383,183
SUBTOTAL CWF	3,034,174	3,136,153	3,136,153
DPW SUBSIDIARY			
Wages & Expenses	85,150	85,150	85,150
SUBTOTAL DPW SUBSIDIARY	85,150	85,150	85,150
TOTAL CWF	3,119,324	3,221,303	3,221,303
PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE			

ARTICLE 6. Airport Budget (Airport Commission Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$425,732 for the purpose of operating the Turners Falls Airport, said sum to be allocated in accordance with Schedule V, Airport Budget, with \$23,372 to be raised from Town Sale of Real Estate, \$99,396 to be raised from Taxation, and \$302,964 to be raised from Airport Revenue.

Schedule V
Airport Budget

DEPARTMENT	BUDGET FY25	REQUEST FY26	SELECTBOARD FIN COMM RECOMMEND FY26
AIRPORT			
Wages & Expenses	255,238	271,625	271,625
Capital Outlay/Local Share	-	-	-
Debt Service	102,775	99,935	99,935
Employee Benefits	61,664	54,172	54,172
TOTAL AIRPORT	419,677	425,732	425,732
PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE			

ARTICLE 7. Airport Fuel Revolving Fund (Airport Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to amend Article II of the Town of Montague General Bylaws, pursuant to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44, Section 53E½, to add a new Section 7, Revolving Funds as shown below, and to establish a spending limit of \$200,000 for the Airport Fuel revolving fund for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2025, which spending

limit to be applicable for each fiscal year until such time as Town Meeting votes, prior to July 1 for the ensuing fiscal year, to increase the same.

Section 7: Revolving Funds

- (a) There are hereby established in the Town of Montague, pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c.44, §53E½, the following Revolving Funds:

Revolving Fund	Spending Authority	Revenue Source	Allowed Expenses
Airport Fuel	Airport Commission	Fees from sale of Airport fuel	Purchase of Airport fuel to be sold and used at the Airport

- (b) Expenditures from each revolving fund set forth herein shall be subject to the spending limits established by Town Meeting or any increase therein as may be authorized in accordance with MGL c. 44, § 53E 1/2.

PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE

ARTICLE 8. Colle Budget (Selectboard Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$52,250 for the purpose of funding the operations and maintenance of the Colle Building, said sum to be raised from Colle Receipts Reserved for Appropriation.

PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE

ARTICLE 9. FCTS Assessment (Franklin County Technical School Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$841,660 for the purpose of paying the Franklin County Technical School District for Montague's share of the assessment for the yearly operation of the Franklin County Technical School, said sum to be raised from Taxation.

PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE

ARTICLE 10. GMRSD Assessment (Gill-Montague Regional School District Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$12,663,178 for the purpose of paying the Gill-Montague Regional School District for Montague's share of the assessment for the yearly operation of the Gill-Montague Regional Schools, said sum to be raised from Taxation.

PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE

ARTICLE 11. Smith Vocational and Agricultural (Town Accountant Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$59,000 for the purpose of providing tuition and transportation for a Montague resident attending Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School, said sum to be raised from Taxation.

PASSED/MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 12. NAGE and UE Contract (Selectboard Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$125,154 for the purpose of funding the implementation of a collective bargaining agreement with United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, Local 274 and National Association of Government Employees for Fiscal Year 2026, with \$98,262 to be raised from Taxation and \$26,262 to be raised from Sewer Revenue.

PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE

ARTICLE 13. Library Accessibility/Upgrades (Library Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$10,000 for the purpose of funding accessibility repairs and upgrades for the Montague Public Libraries, including any and all incidental and related costs, said sum to be raised from Free Cash.

PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE

ARTICLE 14. CWF Mini Excavator, Generators, Thickened Sludge Pumps (Clean Water Facility Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$231,800 for the purpose of the following CWF projects and any and all incidental and related costs, with said sum to be raised from CWF Retained Earnings.

1. \$60,000 to purchase a used mini excavator.
2. \$67,800 to replace the Lake Pleasant generator and the purchase of a portable emergency generator.
3. \$104,000 to replace two thickened sludge pumps.

Mini Excavator Background: The CWF performs many on-site and off-site routine updates and special projects requiring the use of an excavator. The facility is also responsible for managing its own groundskeeping, excavating, and lifting work when necessary. The CWF has borrowed other municipal excavators and spent over \$25,000 on the rental of a small excavator to perform site work on multiple projects for calendar year 2024 and would rather invest that money in the future into purchasing a used excavator to have on site consistently.

NOTE: The facility is not looking to purchase a brand-new excavator, as a used/low hour machine will suffice for the required applications.

PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE

ARTICLE 15. Phase 2 Sewer Collection System Rehabilitation (DPW/Selectboard Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$3,000,000 for the purpose of rehabilitating sewer manholes and sewer pipes to address structural defects and potential sources of inflow and infiltration to the Town's sewer collection system, including but not limited to engineering, bidding, and construction, as well as all other costs incidental and

related thereto, and to meet this appropriation to authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Selectboard, to borrow said sum under General Laws Chapter 44, Sections 7 and 8, and/or Chapter 29C, or any other lawful enabling authority and to issue bonds or notes of the Town therefor; that the Treasurer with the approval of the Selectboard is authorized to borrow all or a portion of such amount from the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust established pursuant to Chapter 29C and in connection therewith to enter into a financing agreement and/or security agreement with the Trust and otherwise to contract with the Trust and the Department of Environmental Protection with respect to such loan and for any federal or state aid available for the project or for the financing thereof; and that the Selectboard, the Public Works Superintendent, or other appropriate local body or official is authorized to enter into a project regulatory agreement with the Department of Environmental Protection, to expend all funds available for the project and to take any other action necessary or convenient to carry out the project; while the entire borrowing will be issued as a general obligation of the Town payable from all sources of revenues, it is anticipated that the principal and interest due on a \$1,200,000 portion of the principal amount of such borrowing shall be repaid in the first instance through sewer user fees; and further to authorize the Selectboard to execute any other documents and/or agreements necessary to effectuate the purposes of this vote.

PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE

ARTICLE 16. DPW 10-Wheel Dump Truck (Department of Public Works Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$365,000 for the purpose of purchasing and equipping a ten-wheel dump truck, including plow, sander, and all incidental and related costs, said sum to be raised from Free Cash.

PASSED/MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 17. DPW Dump Truck (Department of Public Works Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$325,000 for the purpose of purchasing and equipping a dump truck, including any and all incidental and related costs, said sum to be raised from Town Capital Stabilization.

PASSED/MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 18. DPW: Camera Van and Pickup Truck (Department of Public Works Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$135,000 for the following Department of Public Works vehicles, including all equipment and any and all incidental and related costs, with said sum to be raised from Free Cash.

1. \$70,000 to purchase and equip a camera van.
2. \$65,000 to purchase and equip a pickup truck.

PASSED/MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 19. DPW: Oakman Street Slope, Non-Chapter 90 Paving (Department of Public Works Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$90,000 for the purpose of the following Department of Public Works projects and any and all incidental and related costs, with said sum to be raised from Free Cash.

1. \$60,000 to complete the Oakman Street slope stabilization.
2. \$30,000 for the paving of alleys and non-chapter 90 eligible roadways.

PASSED/MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 20. DPW Meadow Road Guardrails (Department of Public Works Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$200,000 for the purpose of replacing guardrails on Meadow Road and any and all incidental and related costs, with said sum to be raised from Free Cash.

PASSED/MAJORITY

44-YES

19-NO

ARTICLE 21. DPW Equipment Account (Department of Public Works Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$36,470 for the purpose of purchasing, equipping, and making major repairs to DPW vehicles and equipment, including all incidental and related costs, said sum to be raised from Taxation.

PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE

ARTICLE 22. Millers Falls Library Storefront, Unity Park Upgrades, Montague Center Complete Streets Design (Selectboard Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$255,200 for the purpose of the following Town projects, including all incidental and related costs, with said sum to be raised from Free Cash.

1. \$39,000 for repairs/renovation to Millers Falls library storefront.
2. \$125,000 for upgrades to Unity Park.
3. \$91,200 for design costs for Montague Center Complete Streets project.

PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE

ARTICLE 23. FRTA Bus Stop Improvements (Selectboard Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$60,000 for the purpose of Franklin Regional Transportation Authority (FRTA) bus stop improvements at Industrial Boulevard and Millers Falls Road, including all incidental and related costs, said sum to be raised from Cannabis Impact Fee Stabilization.

PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE

ARTICLE 24. Keith Footbridge (Selectboard Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$67,900 for the purpose of abating and removing utilities from the Keith footbridge over canal, including all incidental and related costs, said sum to be raised from Canal District Utility Improvement Stabilization.

PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE

ARTICLE 25. Transfers to Reserves (Finance Committee Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the following sums for the purpose of increasing the special purpose funds set forth below, said sums to be raised from Taxation and Free Cash.

Fund	Amount (\$)	Funding Source
Henry Waidlich Conservation Trust Fund	\$10,000	Taxation
Town Capital Stabilization Fund	\$231,890	Taxation, \$131,890 Free Cash, \$100,000
GMRSD Stabilization Fund	\$88,718	Taxation, \$38,718 Free Cash, \$50,000
OPEB Trust Fund	\$100,000	Taxation, \$50,000 Free Cash, \$50,000
Total:	\$430,608	

PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE

ARTICLE 26. FirstLight Hydro Generating Co. PILOT (Selectboard + Assessors Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to authorize the Selectboard and the Board of Assessors to negotiate, enter into and approve a Payment in Lieu of Taxes Agreement known as a "PILOT" or "Tax Agreement" pursuant to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 59 Section 38H(b), or any other enabling authority, between the Town of Montague and FirstLight Hydro Generating Co., its successors, assignees or affiliates, on such terms and conditions and for such period of time as negotiated by the Selectboard and the Board of Assessors, for payment in lieu of taxes related to personal and/or real property associated with an electric generation facility, all as set forth in said PILOT; and further to authorize the Selectboard and the Board of Assessors to take such action as may be necessary to carry out the vote taken hereunder.

PASSED/MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 27. Property Tax Threshold (Board of Assessors Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 59, Section 5, Clause 54 to modify and increase the threshold from \$1,000 to \$10,000 for personal property accounts subject to taxation for any fiscal year beginning on or after July 1, 2025.

PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE

ARTICLE 28. Tax Title Payment Agreements (Treasurer Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to amend the Town's General Bylaws to add a new Section 14B to Article III under Treasurer/Collector, as set forth below entitled "Tax Title Payment Plans", to authorize the Treasurer-Collector to pursue and establish payment agreements for parcels of land in tax title so as to allow delinquent taxpayers to pay off their tax liens over time, as authorized by M.G.L. c. 60 § 62A, as amended by sections 89-91 of Chapter 140 of the Acts of 2024:

Section 14B: Tax Title Payment Plans

- A. Pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. c. 60, § 62A, the Town Treasurer-Collector shall have the authority to enter into written payment agreements with any person entitled to redeem ownership of parcels in tax title which have been taken by the Town as a result of nonpayment of real estate taxes. The payment agreement shall be executed on such terms and conditions for payment of the delinquent taxes, interest and any other costs, fees or charges associated with same, in accordance with M.G.L. c. 60, § 62A and this bylaw. The Treasurer-Collector shall not refuse to enter into agreements with eligible taxpayers.
- B. This bylaw shall apply to all taxpayers with parcels in the following assessment categories of tax title in the Town:
 - 1. Commercial property;
 - 2. Residential property;
 - 3. Industrial; and
 - 4. Open space.
- C. The following conditions must be met prior to the Town entering into a payment agreement:
 - 1. The Town has not filed a petition to foreclose the rights of redemption with the Land Court, and the recording date of the Instrument of Taking recorded in the Franklin County Registry of Deeds must be no more than ten (10) years from the date of the proposed agreement; and
 - 2. All real estate taxes and water/sewer user fees due for the current fiscal year assessed against the parcel must be paid to date.

D. All payment agreements shall comply with the following minimum requirements:

1. The payment agreement shall be for a term of five (5) years; provided, however, that nothing herein shall preclude the taxpayer from completing payments of the amount owed within a shorter period of time;
2. The payment agreement shall include a waiver of fifty percent (50%) of the interest that has accrued in the tax title account, but only if the taxpayer fully complies with the terms of the agreement (no taxes or collection costs may be waived); and
3. The payment agreement shall state the amount of the payment due from the taxpayer at the time of execution of the agreement, which shall be ten percent (10%) of the amount needed to redeem the parcel at the inception of the agreement. The taxpayer must then agree to pay the remaining balance due to the Town in equal monthly installments.

E. During the term of the agreement, the Treasurer-Collector may not bring an action to foreclose the tax title unless payments are not made in accordance with the schedule set out in the payment agreement or timely payments are not made on other amounts due to the Town that constitutes a lien on the same parcel.

F. Nothing in this bylaw shall preempt or preclude the authority of the Treasurer-Collector to accept partial payments or to negotiate and enter into payment agreements authorized by M.G.L. c. 60, §§ 22 and § 22A, or any other statutory authority.

PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE

ARTICLE 29. Unclaimed Property (Treasurer Request)

MOVED: That the town vote to accept the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 200A §9A, which establishes a procedure for the disposition of abandoned funds, i.e. funds not claimed within one (1) year from the date of delivery, including provisions for notice, claims, appeals and disbursements.

Background: This article will allow the Treasurer to have a more streamlined and efficient process for managing funds that are unclaimed. Specifically, it will allow the Treasurer to consider any funds held in the custody of the town to be presumed abandoned unless claimed by the corporation, organization, beneficiary, or person entitled thereto within 1 (one) year after date prescribed. After completing the process requirements spelled out in Mass General Laws, which include a detailed process to attempt to notify the owner of the funds, the funds can be turned back over to the town's general fund if they remain unclaimed.

PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE

ARTICLE 30. Shea Theater Lease (Selectboard Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote, in accordance with MGL c. 30B section 12(b), to authorize the Selectboard to enter into a lease not to exceed ten (10) years for the purpose of permitting use of the property known as the Shea Theater, located at 71 Avenue A, on such terms and conditions and for such consideration as the Selectboard deems in the best interests of the Town.

PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE

ARTICLE 31. Franklin Regional Council of Governments Charter Change (FRCOG Request)

MOVED: That the Town vote to adopt and enact the amendments to the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) Charter, said amendment(s) having been proposed by a two-thirds majority of the weighted vote of the full membership of the FRCOG Council and a majority vote of the FRCOG Executive Committee, with said amendment(s) taking full effect immediately upon adoption by two-thirds of the member towns unless a later effective date is otherwise specified; a copy of the proposed amendments is attached in Schedule, FRCOG Charter Amendment.

PASSED/UNANIMOUS VOTE