

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING
1 Avenue A, Turners Falls and VIA ZOOM
Monday, December 1, 2025 at 6:30 PM

Meeting was opened at 6:30 PM. Present were Selectboard members Matt Lord, Rich Kuklewicz, and Marina Goldman; Town Administrator Walter Ramsey; Assistant Town Administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller; Police Chief Chris Williams; and soon-to-be Police Chief in Charge Jason Haskins; Executive Assistant Fern Smith; Director of Assessing Adam Tocci; Board of Assessors members Ann Cenzano, Rebecca Sabelawski, and Anne Fisk; and Cemetery Commission Chair Judith Lorei.

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

Winter Parking Ban (*not on agenda*)

Ramsey states that the Winter Parking Ban is in effect as of today through April 1st.

Approve Minutes: Montague Meetings of November 10, 2025; November 17, 2025; and August 11, 2025, Selectboard Retreat Meeting

Goldman makes the motion to approve the Montague Meetings of November 10, 2025; November 17, 2025; and August 11, 2025. Seconded by Kuklewicz, approved. Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Lord - Abstain

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 - Police Chief Transition

- **Recognize Chief Williams for his 30+ Years of service to Montague**
Chief Williams was recognized for his 30+ Years of service to Montague and was presented with gifts from the Town and Representative Blais.
- **Designate Jason D. Haskins as Police Chief in charge (formal pinning ceremony January 8)**
Kuklewicz makes the motion to designate Jason D. Haskins as the Police Chief in charge. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye
- **Issue Town credit card for Jason D. Haskins, Police Chief, in the amount of \$5,000.00**
Kuklewicz makes the motion to issue a Town credit card for Jason D. Haskins, Police Chief, in the amount of \$5,000.00. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye

Richard Martin, Franklin County Tech School Superintendent Informational overview of feasibility study results for reconstruction of the Franklin County Tech School to be funded with support from Mass School Building Authority and district municipalities. Information Here: <http://www.fcts.us/apps/pages/msba>

- Martin summarizes the feasibility study results for reconstruction of the Franklin County Tech School to be funded with support from Mass School Building Authority and district municipalities:
 - Does Franklin County Tech Need a New Facility?
 - Approximate Cost of Rehab
 - Options
 - Existing Site & Conditions
 - Proposed Site Development
 - Floor Plan Progress
 - Exterior Relationships and Connections
 - Evaluation Matrix
 - Cost of Mass Construction
 - Enrollment 10-Year Trend
 - Percentage of High School Graduates Declaring their Intention to go to WORK upon Graduation
 - Competitive Grants outside of the tax base
 - Proposed Project Timeline
 - Montague Project MSBA Assessment
 - Admissions/Lottery Process
 - How the Lottery and Town Quotas Work
- In response to a question by Kuklewicz, Martin explains that we only get reimbursed on educational space. The designers are working hard to maximize our reimbursable space.
- In response to a comment by Ariel Elan, Martin states that the size of the school is dictated by the MSBA. They are looking at enrollment trends.

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Public Hearing held jointly with the Board of Assessors: Fiscal Year 2026 Tax Classification Hearing

- Board of Assessors Chair calls meeting to order at 7:15, and roll call taken.
- **Adam Tocci, Director of Assessing to present rate setting needs and options for distributing tax burden among different classes of property**
Tocci gives presentation on rate setting needs and options for distributing tax burden among different classes of property.
- **Public Comment, Deliberation, and vote to recommend tax rates for FY26**
 - *Lord makes the motion to keep the tax split at CIP Shift at 1.4 for FY26. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye*
 - *Kuklewicz makes the motion to approve Open Space Discount, Residential Exemption, and Small Commercial Exemption. Seconded by Lord, unanimously unapproved. Kuklewicz - Nay, Lord - Nay, Goldman - Nay*
- **Board of Assessors vote to approve the sixth motor vehicle commitment list from the Registration of Motor Vehicles and sign the warrant to be handed to the Treasurer/Collector**
Does not need to be on agenda.
- *Ann Cenzano makes the motion to adjourn the Board of Assessors Meeting. Seconded by Ann Fisk, unanimously approved. Cenzano - Aye, Sabelawski - Aye, Fisk - Aye*

Assistant Town Administrator's Business

- **Authorize Contract with Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. for engineering and design services for the Sewer Collections System Rehabilitation Phase 2 Project. Contract value is \$150,700.00 to be funded by Town Meeting borrowing authorization**
Kuklewicz makes the motion to authorize the authorize Contract with Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. for engineering and design services for the Sewer Collections System Rehabilitation Phase 2 Project; contract value is \$150,700.00 to be funded by Town Meeting borrowing authorization. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye
- **Other Project Updates**
None

Town Administrator's Business

- **Adopt Insurance Opt-Out Program for Municipal Employees**
Postponed for now
- **Review and endorse FY27 Selectboard Budget requests: Town Meeting, Selectboard office, legal counsel, and shared costs, farmers market, veterans, intergovernmental, benefits, insurance, and Colle Building**
 - Ramsey reviews the Selectboard Budget requests (Town Moderator's, Selectboard budget, Town Counsel, shared costs, farmers market, veterans, intergovernmental, employee benefits, insurance, and Colle Building).
 - *Lord makes the motion to endorse the FY27 Selectboard Budget requests as presented. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Lord - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- **Proposal to move cemetery maintenance budget (\$30,000) and responsibility from Cemetery Commission to Department of Public Works**
The Board agrees to support the move of the cemetery maintenance budget and responsibility from the Cemetery Commission to the Department of Public Works.
- **Plans for Golden Cane Recognition event 12/11/25 at 11:00 AM at Senior Center**
There will be a Golden Cane Recognition event on December 11 at 11:00 AM at the Senior Center. There will be entertainment and refreshments.
- **Topics not anticipated in the 48-hour posting requirements/Barrel Stickers**
Barrel stickers are for sale at the Town Hall, Scotty's Convenience Store, and the Montague Village Store. We have moved from a six-month sticker to a full-year sticker

Next Meeting:

Selectboard Meeting: Monday, December 8, 2025 at 6:00 PM via ZOOM

Executive Session pursuant to G.L. c.30a §21(a)(7) to act under the authority of Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 30A, §§22(f), (g), to review and consider acceptance of Executive Session minutes from 11/3/2025 (Bargaining strategy with National association of Governmental Employees)

Kuklewicz makes the motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to G.L. c.30a §21(a)(7) to act under the authority of Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 30A, §§22(f), (g), to review and consider acceptance of Executive Session minutes from 11/3/2025 (Bargaining strategy with National association of Governmental Employees). Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye