

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING

VIA ZOOM

Monday, January 12, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Meeting was opened at 6:00 PM. Present were Selectboard members Matt Lord and Marina Goldman; Town Administrator Walter Ramsey; Assistant Town Administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller; CWF Superintendent Chelsey Little

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

Approve Minutes: Selectboard Meeting, January 5, 2026, if available

Goldman makes the motion to approve the Minutes for the Selectboard Meeting of January 5, 2026. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye.

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

In response to a question by resident Lizbeth Irving, Lord suggested she contact a member of the Capital Improvements Committee (i.e., Greg Garrison or Ariel Elan).

Chelsey Little, Sewer Commission

- **Abatement request for 17 Hillside Avenue, Turners Falls**

Lord makes the motion to abate the 2nd half FY23, full year FY24, full year FY25, and 1st half of FY26 sewer bills for 17 Hillside Avenue, Turners Falls. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Lord - Aye, Goldman - Aye

- **Mechanic position request update**

Chelsey summarizes the Mechanic position maintenance responsibilities (Pump Station Check Valve Rehab, Hose and Pump Trailer, Aeration Tank Slide Gates, Plant Dehumidifier, Chlorine Contact Tank Valve, Pump Compressor Rehab).

- **Screw Pump Project Update**

- Little states that they were able to commission the Screw Pumps during the week of December 15. Everything went smoothly.
- They had to have their bypass pumping set up for the next two to three weeks.
- The engineers did a final walk-through and came up with punch-list items for the contractor.
- US CARD is currently working on closing out the agency loan and releasing the grant funds for the Town.
- The project has come in within the budget.

- **Permit summary for November and December 2025**

Little summarizes the Permit summary for November and December 2025. Everything looks good.

Montague Center Complete Streets Public Information Session

- Nolan-Zeller gives some background on the Montague Center Complete Streets Program.
- Bowman representative Paul Furgal summarizes the project.
- In response to a concern expressed by a resident:
 - Furgal states that the location of the two speed tables were previously located at an earlier phase based on the previous phase coordination that had taken place. He states that drainage concerns were factored into determining the locations of the speed tables.
 - Nolan-Zeller adds that the locations were thought to be advantageous due to the fact that they're on a straightaway in the heart of the downtown corridor.
- In response to a question by resident Sage Winter, Furgal states that shared-use paths are more expensive. The project was limited to a half-a-million-dollar grant.
- Winter makes some recommendations to the design (i.e., extending curbs, connecting pathways, addressing gratings at drainage locations, and extending a trench drain). Furgal states that these are things that can be discussed with the Town officials.
- In response to concerns expressed by a resident, Furgal states that a pair of rapid-flashing beacons will be placed at the Main Street and Center Street crossing, and a regular cross walk sign will be placed at a location further south. Adding a raised crosswalk further north on Main Street would need to be addressed by the Town officials.
- In response to a question by resident Geordie Morris, Furgal states that typically with their projects, wording is included in the contract to make sure homeowners and abutters will be made aware of what potential disturbance they may be in the vicinities.
- Elan states that she thinks the entire design should be "scrapped" because it's not addressing the major problem:
 - Cars start to speed up at the railroad, barrel around the Book Mill, and barrel through the village center. The real hazard is coming from the north.
 - Speed bumps should be put up as far north as possible.

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- With regard to raising crosswalks, by the time someone is slowing down at the crosswalk, they are hitting someone on the crosswalk. She feels the right solution is putting a warning mid-way down the block that there is going to be a speed bump (as they do in Amherst).
- In response to a question by a resident, Nolan-Zeller states that what we have now are some draft engineering documents. The goal of this exercise is to take the comments received, look into them, then make adjustments if possible. This same resident feels that we need fewer raised crosswalks and more speed tables to slow down traffic. She also expresses dismay about "sign pollution."
- In response to a comment by a resident, Furgal states that determining whether another speed table is needed can be re-evaluated.
- A resident suggests scrapping all the intersectional alignments around the corner and putting the money into a speed bump on the north end of the common.
- Lord states that before the bridge was out, plenty of 18-wheelers used Center Street as a cut-through. Once the bridge is back, this design would make more sense for Center Street.

Town Administrator's Business

- **Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Development Updates**
The only budget update is that Ramsey, Goldman, and Urkiel are trying to come up with a more sustainable solution for how to manage the planters.
- **FRCOG Requests for 2026 District Local Technical Assistance**
Goldman makes the motion to advance to FRCOG our top three priorities for the District Local Technical Assistance as ambulance regionalization, engagement with regional dispatch study, and support for the Downtown Coordinator position. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye
- **Receipt of Letter of Intent from Montague Community Cable, Inc. to continue providing PEG Cable Services. Current agreement expires June 30, 2026**
Ramsey shares that we received a Letter of Intent from Montague Community Cable, Inc. to continue providing PEG Cable Services. With the Selectboard's approval, Ramsey will draft up an agreement with MCTV.

Next Meeting:

Selectboard Meeting: Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at 6:30 PM via ZOOM - Tentative

Selectboard Meeting: Monday, January 26, 2026 at 6:30 PM via ZOOM

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