

## MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING

1 Avenue A, Turners Falls and VIA ZOOM

Tuesday, March 2, 2026 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; Executive Assistant Fern Smith; and Town Planner Maureen Pollock.

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

### Approve Minutes: Selectboard Meetings, February 17 and 23, 2026, if available

*Kuklewicz makes the motion to approve the Minutes for the Selectboard Meetings of February 17 and 23, 2026. Seconded by Goldman, approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - 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

- Ariel Elan she was disappointed that the Chair did not allow public comment during the Jewish Federation discussion. She encourages residents to read the article in the Montague Reporter, as well as expresses her wishes regarding this issue.
- A resident, Matt Atwood, expresses his confusion and disappointment regarding the Selectboard's vote to adopt the Jewish Federation's policy.
- With regard to the Jewish Federation's policy, a resident, Dave Jensen), expresses his confusion regarding the definition of "adopted." He urges the Selectboard to withdraw the motion and engage in a public forum.
- A resident Maureen Kimball represents a group that is asking for help regarding the disastrous condition of their mobile home park.
- Resident Ang Roell states he takes issue with policy being determined from a letter that is sent by an organization that is not immediately in our community.
- Resident Will Quale urges the Selectboard to engage further with residents, particularly Jewish residents and constituents, and to not endorse the acts that were supported via HRA definition.

### Thomas Taaffe, Executive Director, Brick House Community Resource Center

#### Authorize Letter of Support for the Brick House United Way application

*Goldman makes the motion to authorize the Letter of Support for the Brick House United Way application. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Lord - Aye*

### Maureen Pollock, Planning Board

- **Request City Village Center Redevelopment/Farren Project Updates & Request Transfer of \$800 into ULI TAP from Community Development Discretionary Account**
  - The Attorney General informed us last week that the Farren Project has been approved and will become effective starting on March 13.
  - *Lord makes the motion to authorize the transfer \$800 from the Community Development Discretionary Account in order to pay for the Urban Land Institute's Technical Assistance Program that is happening here at Town Hall and the Shea Theatre next Tuesday, March 10th. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Lord - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- **Update on Farren site (*not on agenda*)**

We are now starting to work on this year's phase, which is the Farren Neighborhood Zoning and Design Guidelines Project. There will be a community-wide workshop on Tuesday, March 31st, at 6:00 PM at the Shea.

### Personnel Board

- **First read of draft Personnel Policy Manual**
  - Kuklewicz would like some more time to digest the draft.
  - Goldman suggests that each Board member take a different section.
  - Lord's preference is that each member do an independent review and if there are things that each feels need further discussion, the Board can discuss this in three weeks.
  - Ramsey will draft a warrant Article.
  - Lord suggests having KP look at this if we have the money in the Legal Budget.
- **Health Insurance Updates**
  - Last week the Hampshire Group Insurance Trust met and took a vote that is going to set next year's health insurance rates. They went with an option that is going to result in a 12.48% rate increase in FY27. There will be some proposed plan design changes that would involve adding in deductibles and increasing some co-pays.
  - Treasurer/Collector Eileen Seymour will be coming to the Selectboard next week to talk about the process in terms of working with the unions to adopt the changes.

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- Ramsey states that we are still actively trying to obtain a quote from the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association. Once we have that, we can compare it to GIC.

**Town Administrator's Business**

**Invitation from Senator Comerford to participate in Rural and Declining Enrollment Schools Week of Action from March 9 to 13 and to authorize statement of support for proposed bill S.314 "An Act to Provide a Sustainable Future for Rural Schools"**

- Lord will work with Ramsey on making some edits to the draft letter.
- Goldman suggests having a picture of the Selectboard members to go with the letter of support.
- Lord would like to get a panel of all of the people who have come before us to talk about these problems.

**Next Meeting:**

Selectboard Meeting: Monday, March 9, 2026 at 6:30 PM via ZOOM

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