

**MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING
1 Avenue A, Turners Falls and VIA ZOOM
Monday, May 11, 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; Assistant Town Administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller; and Town Planner Maureen Pollock.

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

Approve Minutes of May 4, 2026, if available

Goldman makes the motion to approve the Minutes of May 4, 2026. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - 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

None

Public Meeting: Draft Analysis of Brownfield Clean-Up Alternatives for the Strathmore Mill Demolition Project (EPA Brownfields Grant requirement)

- Todd Kirton from Tighe and Bond reviews the Draft of the Brownfield Clean-Up Alternatives for the Strathmore Mill Demolition Project.
- In response to a question by Lord, Kirton states that there was discussion of removal of soil, which does not need to happen.
- In response to a question by a resident (Will), Kirton states that some of the bricks may be re-used for Building 9.
- In response to a question by a resident (Janelle), Nolan-Zeller states that we have spent a lot of time with Tighe and Bond talking about historical mitigation measures. Kirton states that a staff member will be reaching out to Janelle.

June 24, 2026 Special Election

- **Consider pursuant to G.L. c.54, §42C and §64, to place the following Debt Exclusion ballot question on the June 24, 2026 local Special Election Warrant:**
Shall the Town of Montague be allowed to exempt from the provisions of proposition two and one-half, so-called, the amounts of required to pay for the bond issued in order to fund the assessment, planning, feasibility and/or design, permitting, constructing, equipping, and furnishing a new main library to be located at 38 Avenue A in Turners Falls, and for all other costs incidental or related thereto.
Ramsey states that approving the warrant will also approve the Debt Exclusion ballot question.
- **Execute June 24, 2026 Special Election Warrant, attached hereto**
Lord makes the motion to approve the following Special Election Warrant for Town of Montague, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, June 24, 2026: (Lord reads aloud Special Election Warrant); seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye

Maureen Pollock, Planning Director

Finalization of Open Space and Recreation Plan and request for Selectboard endorsement

- Pollock reviews the Open Space and Recreation Plan.
- In response to a question by resident Betty Tegal, Pollock states that this plan will not affect the 2018 ADA Transition Plan. However, it supports the mission of making public spaces universally designed and accessible for everyone.
- Ramsey states that these plans help with grant funds.
- *Goldman makes the motion to endorse the draft Open Space and Recreation Plan for submission to the State agencies. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Lord - Aye*

Personnel Board

- **Amendment #1 to Police Chief Contract with Jason Haskins - administrative clarifications surrounding leave and stipend disbursements**
Kuklewicz makes the motion to approve Amendment #1 to Police Chief Contract with Jason Haskins as discussed. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye
- **Second Reading of the Personnel Policy Manual, vote to adopt**
Goldman makes the motion to adopt the Personnel Policy Manual as presented excepting the redundant reclassification section. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Lord - Aye

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Assistant Town Administrator's Business

- **Discuss strategy related to redevelopment of the former Farren site: Public Infrastructure Grants, Development Request for Proposals**
 - The Town continues to receive generous assistance from Mass Housing Partnership.
 - We will be requesting a grant for between \$300,000 and \$500,000 from the State's Public Infrastructure Program to cover design, engineering, and permitting costs for the infrastructure build-out.
 - The infrastructure would include construction of the internal public roadway and utilities within the site, as well as an extension of the Canal side rail trail.
 - We intend to put out the RFP for developers this summer.
- **Grant strategy for other projects seeking funding through Community One Stop for Growth programs**
 - Nolan-Zeller, Ramsey, and Pollock are thinking of applying to Community One Stop for Growth for three distinct projects: (1) the Farren site, (2) a Downtown Turners Falls way-finding signage system, and (3) the installation of an accessible ramp in front of 102-112 Avenue A.
 - *Lord makes the motion to authorize the Assistant Town Planner and associated Town Hall staff to apply for grant funding through One Stop for Growth and any other applicable State grant funding for the projects as presented. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Lord - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- **Other project updates**

None

Town Administrator's Business

- **Authorize Fourth Amendment to Purchase and Sale Agreement with Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity for First Street Housing Development. Extends Agreement through 12/15/2026**

Goldman makes the motion to authorize the Fourth Amendment to the Purchase and Sale Agreement with Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity for First Street Housing Development; extending the Agreement through 12/15/2026. Seconded by Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Lord - Aye
- **Sheffield/Hillcrest School MSBA (Mass School Building Authority) Eligibility Period started May 1, 2026 - Discuss timeline and establish charge for Hillcrest and Sheffield Elementary Building Committee (ESBC).**
 - Ramsey states that the MSBA has invited the District and Town into a 270-day eligibility period during which there are several things that the Town needs to do in order to meet the criteria to be formally entered into the MSBA Building Program.
 - We have until June 30th to create a School Building Committee to be made up of 11 voting members. This committee will consist of the Town Administrator, one Selectboard member, a member of the Finance and/or Capital Planning Committee, up to two members of the Gill-Montague Regional School District, the Superintendent, the Facilities/Operations Official, one of the principals, and a teacher or up to two residents with knowledge of the educational mission. This committee would end up staying together if the project ends up going into the MSBA Program.
 - The feasibility study needs to be financed and authorized by January 26, 2027.
 - In response to a question by Lord, Ramsey states that according to the Mass School Building Authority, we are looking at a cost range between \$1.5 and \$2 million for a feasibility study. The MSBA would reimburse the Town approximately 78%.
 - Concerns regarding this project were expressed by Ariel Elan, Betty Tegal, and Rich Kuklewicz.
 - *Goldman makes the motion to authorize the Building Committee charge and appointment with the subsections as presented in the memorandum in the materials today. Seconded to Kuklewicz, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Lord - Aye*
- **Topics not anticipated within 48-hour posting requirement**
 - **Turners Falls Water Department repairs**

The TF Water Department will be doing some water line repairs on the 18th and 19th. They will be closing a section of Third Street (from Kostanski Funeral Home to the L Street intersection). Traffic will be rerouted.
 - **Day of Remembrance**

This Saturday will be the DCR Day of Remembrance. The unveiling of the signs on the bike path will take place at 10:30 AM, and the commemoration ceremony will take place at 12:30 PM at the Discovery Center.

Executive Session: M.G.L. c.30A, Sec. 21(a)(2) to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel, specifically to review the performance and contract terms for the Town Administrator, Walter Ramsey

- The Chair deems that holding such discussion in open session would be detrimental to the Town's position.

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- *Lord makes the motion to go into Executive Session under M.G.L. c.30A, Sec. 21(a)(2) to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel, specifically to review the performance and contract terms for the Town Administrator, Walter Ramsey. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Lord - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

Next Meeting:

Selectboard Meeting: Monday, May 18, 2026 at 6:30 PM via ZOOM