

## MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING

1 Avenue A, Turners Falls and VIA ZOOM

Monday, June 1, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Meeting was opened at 6:30 PM. Present were Selectboard members Rich Kuklewicz, Marina Goldman, and Nate Card Schiffbauer; Town Administrator Walter Ramsey; Assistant Town Administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller; Executive Assistant Fern Smith; FCRHRA Community Development Director Brian McHugh; Parks and Recreation Director John Dobosz; and Police Chief Jason Haskins.

### Annual Board Reorganization

#### Elect Selectboard Chair, Vice-Chair, and Clerk

- Goldman makes the motion to nominate Rich Kuklewicz as the Selectboard Chair. Seconded by Schiffbauer, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Schiffbauer - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- Goldman makes the motion to nominate Marina Goldman as the Selectboard Vice-Chair. Seconded by Schiffbauer, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Schiffbauer - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- Kuklewicz makes the motion to nominate Nate Card Schiffbauer as Selectboard Clerk. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Schiffbauer - Aye.

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

### Approve Minutes of May 18, 2026, if available

Goldman makes the motion to approve the Minutes of May 18, 2026. Seconded by Schiffbauer, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Schiffbauer - Aye, Kuklewicz - 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

- Resident Ariel Elan protests having political signs on public property. Ramsey will coordinate with police and DPW to remove them.
- Reporter Jeff Singleton asks to have names placed in front of individuals during the Selectboard meetings. Kuklewicz asks Smith to see to that.

### Community Development Block Grant Business with Brian McHugh, Community Development Director at Franklin Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority

- **Public Hearing for the FY24 Montague CDBG Program to update the public on grant activities being administered by the FCRHRA on behalf of the Town of Montague**
  - Kuklewicz reads aloud the Legal Notice of the Hearing.
  - McHugh states that the Parking Lot Repaving Project came in under budget. There is \$54,000 leftover in that budget. Discussion ensues regarding potential projects toward which the extra funds can be allocated.
  - Goldman makes the motion to reallocate the \$54,320.82 to Housing Rehab for the FY24 CDBG. Seconded by Schiffbauer, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Schiffbauer - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
  - **Request to approve an FY24 grant extension to 12/13/26 to allow additional time to complete grant activities** Goldman makes the motion to approve an FY24 grant extension to 12/13/26 to allow additional time to complete grant activities. Seconded by Schiffbauer, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Schiffbauer - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
  - Public Hearing is closed.
- **Approve Invoice #3 in the amount of \$603 for the period of April 1 to April 30, 2026, payable to Berkshire Design Group, Inc. for bidding and construction oversight for Avenue A Streetscape 5.1 Construction Project**
  - Goldman makes the motion to approve Invoice #3 in the amount of \$603 for the period of April 1 to April 30, 2026, payable to Berkshire Design Group, Inc. for bidding and construction oversight for Avenue A Streetscape 5.1 Construction Project. Seconded by Schiffbauer, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Schiffbauer - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye.
  - The Board gives McHugh the authority to approve engineering invoices.

### Licensing

#### Use of Public Property and Entertainment License, and permission to close Second Street for 2025 Summer Events at Peskeompskut Park and Unity Park including music and movies. Applicant: RiverCulture and Montague Parks and Recreation Department

- Goldman makes the motion to approve the request for the Use of Public Property for the 10th Anniversary of the Skate Park as described. Seconded by Schiffbauer, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Schiffbauer - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

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- *Goldman makes the motion to approve the request by RiverCulture and Montague Parks and Recreation Department for the Use of Public Property and Entertainment License for 2025 Summer Events at Peskeompskut Park and Unity Park including music and movies. Seconded by Schiffbauer, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Schiffbauer - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

### Police Business and Chief Haskins

- **First Reading of Intermunicipal Agreement between the Montague Police Department and the City of Greenfield Fire Department Emergency Management Department regarding the use of City-owned unmanned aircraft system (UAS or drone)**
  - Chief Haskins reviews the Intermunicipal Agreement between the Montague Police Department and the City of Greenfield Fire Department Emergency Management Department.
  - Ramsey has sent the Agreement to Counsel for review.
  - In response to a question by Ramsey, Haskins reviews the financial cost.
- **Police Department Upgrades**
  - Haskins lists the Police Department Upgrades: Modernized systems in record-keeping, filled the three vacancies, improved officer accountability and equipment readiness, increased training and policy alignments with Best Practices, secured multiple grants and external funding, expanded mental health response capacity, strengthened community policing initiatives and relationships, improved facility work environment, improved department morale, did a complete audit and reorganization of the evidence room, established a more robust cruiser maintenance tracking and amortization schedule, implemented an equipment maintenance and accountability tracking system, modernized a lot of the records management, implemented a departmental role call, established an event planning and coordination process, updated union work rules, added a volunteer police internship, became a home base for the Franklin County Cadet Program, secured funding for the full-time School Resource Officer at the high school, transitioned into DTS scheduling and PMAM, began a comprehensive policy review and updates to align with current police in Best Practices, increased the focus on officer development and training through the role call trainings, gone back to some more in-person training and expanded the use of the recommended special trainings, applied for and started looking into several grants, started utilizing the department community room for increased community engagement, began working on addressing resident concerns related to speeding and pedestrian safety, taught First Responder and CPR for the Montague Center Fire Department, coordinated replacement on the HVAC system, repaired holes in the walls, began working with the Tech School on landscaping and beautification, implemented a department-wide equipment tracking and accountability system, updated tasers, added water rescue equipment, and procured funds for the portable radio charging station.
  - Haskins lists his goals for the next 6-12 months: Get the command staff in place, work towards accreditation in Best Practice, look at the body-worn camera system, expand co-responder hours, get equipment problems resolved, and focus on expanding officer training and specialty training.

### Community Electricity Aggregation Program

#### Program overview with Paul Gromer from Peregrine Energy Group

- Gromer reviews the Community Electricity Aggregation Program:
  - Definition of Municipal Electricity Aggregation
  - Program benefits
  - Three ways to buy electricity in MA
  - How aggregation works (before and after the aggregation launches)
  - Participating in an aggregation
  - Stable prices and potential savings
  - Project updates, grant submittals
  - Stable prices and potential savings
  - New consumer-friendly choices
  - Additional program features
  - Key steps
- Gromer answers questions by Elan and Singleton.
- Ramsey states he will have a broker agreement for the Board to review at the next meeting.

### Assistant Town Administrator's Business

- **Announce award of \$852,102 from the Mass DOT Municipal Small Bridge Program for Swamp Road over Goddard Brook repairs**

Nolan-Zeller announces our receipt of the award of \$852,102 from the Mass DOT Municipal Small Bridge Program for Swamp Road over Goddard Brook repairs. We are expecting an agreement in the coming weeks.

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- **Discuss Opportunity Zone 2.0 designation eligibility, selection process**
  - The Mass Executive Office of Economic Development has notified the Town that our main Turners Falls census tract is eligible for updated Opportunity Zone status.
  - Nolan-Zeller defines Opportunity Zone 2.0.
  - We need to fill out a form sometime between now and June 17.
  - The State will make their determination which census tracts they will move forward on for approval by the US Treasury.
  - The finalized list will be effective as of January 1, 2027.
  - The Selectboard gives their approval to move forward.
- **Updates (*not on agenda*)**
  - Regarding the Third Street/Unity Street paving, we are expecting final paving tomorrow. The road will be fully closed tomorrow.
  - Avenue A Streetscape construction is scheduled to start a week from today. This will take 6-8 weeks.
  - Regarding the Montague Center Complete Streets Project, we are moving forward. We have a bid-ready package ready to go. Construction should take place over the summer.
  - Nolan-Zeller is working on funding requests for both the Farren infrastructure design and the sidewalk ramp that would go in front of Upper Bend and Waterway Arts.

**Town Administrator's Business**

- **34 Central Street (Head Start) Lease with Pioneer Valley Community Action ends 8/1/2027. Discuss intentions and timeline to solicit proposals for a new lease**

The Selectboard gives their approval for Ramsey to have a discussion with Head Start regarding a new lease.
- **Set dates for Selectboard strategic planning retreat and Town Staff appreciation lunch**
  - The Selectboard strategic planning retreat is scheduled for Monday, June 29 at 9:00 AM in the Town Hall Annex.
  - The Town Staff appreciation lunch is scheduled for Thursday, August 6 at the airport hanger.
- **Topics not anticipated within the 48-hour posting**

None

**Next Meeting:**

Selectboard Meeting: Monday, June 15, 2026 at 6:00 PM via ZOOM

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