

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING

VIA ZOOM

Monday, August 31, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Meeting was opened at 6:00 PM. Present were Selectboard members Rich Kuklewicz, Marina Goldman, and Nate Card; Town Administrator Walter Ramsey; Executive Assistant Fern Smith

Approve Minutes: August 24, 2026

Goldman makes the motion to approve the Minutes for August 24, 2026. Seconded by Card, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Card - 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

None

PUBLIC MEETING: Montague Power Choice Electrical Aggregation Plan

Presentation of the draft Aggregation Plan. Public Comment period through September 16, 2026 (30 minutes)

- The Chair opens the Public Hearing.
- MassPowerChoice representative Marlana Patton gives presentation of the draft Aggregation Plan:
 - Introduction to Montague Power Choice
 - Why we are here
 - Montague Power Choice is a form of group electricity purchasing
 - Why participate?
 - Montague Power Choice will not replace Eversource as your electricity utility
 - Three ways to buy electricity in MA
 - How aggregation works
 - Two consumer-friendly choices
 - Changes in electricity supplier and electricity supply price
 - Your primary relationship for electricity will remain with Eversource
 - Participating in Montague Power Choice is EASY
 - What if you have signed a contract with an electricity supplier already?
 - What is the timeline?
 - When/How will I get information?
 - Contact information
 - Public comments now accepted
- In response to a question by Kuklewicz, Patton states that when electricity bids are received, the contract has to be signed that day (there is a two-hour window).
- People with comments can contact the Town Hall.
- The Chair closes the Public Hearing at 6:56 PM.

Licensing

Montague Retreat Center, 34 Chestnut Hill Rd., Montague, MA 01054, requesting One Day Liquor License. Malt Beverages and Wine Only for September 11th, 2026 from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM for private rehearsal dinner. Pending updated Certificate of Insurance

Goldman makes the motion to approve the request for the One-Day Liquor License for Malt and Wine for a private rehearsal dinner. Seconded by Card, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Card - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Fall Special Town Meeting

- **Set Date and Warrant Schedule for Fall Special Town Meeting: Meeting Date October 28, 2026 at 6:00 PM. Close warrant October 5th, 2026. Article Requests Due September 9th, 2026**
Goldman makes the motion to set the date for the Fall Special Town Meeting on October 28, 2026 at 6:30 PM; Article Requests are due by the close of business on September 9th, 2026; the warrant will be closed at the close of business on October 5th, 2026.
- **Pre-Town Meeting Wednesday, October 21, 2026**
There will be a Pre-Town Meeting Wednesday, October 21, 2026.

Special Municipal Election - Great River Regional School District

- **Call Special Municipal Election question for Great River Regional School District on October 6, 2026 from noon to 8:00 PM (to coincide with the Franklin County School District Election)**
Goldman makes the following motion (as read by Kuklewicz) to Call a Special Town Election Pursuant to §3181:

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WHEREAS, on August 25, 2026, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts signed Senate Bill N. 3181, "An Act providing equal opportunity for residents to vote on establishment of the Great River Regional School District " (§3181" or "the Act"), which is not law;

WHEREAS, the Act requires that the Town of Montague place on the ballot, at the first Annual or Special Town Election held after the Act's effective date, the question of accepting the establishment of the Great River Regional School District;

WHEREAS, the Six Town Regionalization Planning Board has recommended that the Towns of Bernardston, Gill, Leyden, Montague, Northfield, and Warwick hold this vote on a single, coordinated date - Tuesday, October 6, 2026 - the same date already scheduled for the Franklin County Technical School District's Special Election, with polling hours of 12:00 PM to 8:00 PM., in order to avoid voter confusion and reduce administrative burden on the Town Clerk;

WHEREAS, the Town's Selectboard, holds the authority to call a Special Town Election and set its date, hours, and location;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED that the Selectboard of the Town of Montague hereby calls a Special Town Election to be held on Tuesday, October 6, 2026, with polling hours of 12:00 PM to 8:00 PM, for the purpose of submitting to the voters the question of accepting the establishment of the Great River Regional School District, in accordance Special Legislation §.3138 "An Act Providing Equal Opportunity For Residents To Vote on Establishment Of The Great River Regional School District," enacted on August 25, 2026.

BE IT FURTHER MOVED that the Board directs and authorizes the Town Clerk, in consultation with Town Counsel, to prepare the official warrant and notice of election - including the ballot question language required by §3181 and to take all other steps necessary to post notice and administer said election in accordance with the law; and

BE IT FURTHER MOVED that the Selectboard is authorized to sign the warrant for said election.

Seconded by Card, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Card - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

- **Vote to opt out of vote-by-mail voting for this election**

Goldman makes the motion to opt-out of voting by mail for the Special Municipal Election for the Great River Regional School District. Goldman - Aye, Card - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Personnel Board

- **Selectboard**

- First reading of FMLA policy**

- Smith asks the Board to look at the FMLA policy. She will bring it back for their acceptance on the 14th.

- **Town Clerk's Office**

- Appointment Craig LeBlanc, Board of Registrars**

- Goldman makes the motion to appoint Craig LeBlanc to the Board of Registrars for a one-year term expiring on 6-30-27.

- Seconded by Card, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Card - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

Town Administrator's Business

- **Updates from Elementary School Building Committee and the MSBA Eligibility Phase for the Elementary School Project**

- The committee has had two meetings.
 - They have assigned Steve Ellis as the Chair.
 - They are working to pull together the budget for a feasibility study.
 - The budget is based on other MSBA projects.
 - The cost exposure to the Town of Montague will be around \$450,000.
 - The committee is in the process of planning a public engagement strategy around the project.

- **Updates on First Street Habitat for Humanity Housing Project**

- The Planning Board granted the permit for the proposed six homes on First Street.
 - Fine details of the site plan are still being worked on.
 - The Design Team is also working on refining the boundary and the alleyway on the other side of the lot.

- **Topics not anticipated within 48-hour posting**

- None

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Next Meeting:

Selectboard Meeting: Monday, September 14, 2026 at 6:30 PM - HYBRID

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