

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING VIA ZOOM

Monday, September 21, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Meeting was opened at 6:30 PM. Present were Selectboard members Rich Kuklewicz, Marina Goldman, and Nate Card; Town Administrator Walter Ramsey; Assistant Town Administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller; Airport Manager Bryan Camden; Town Accountant Angelica Desroches; and Airport Commission Members Gary Collins and Joshua Lively.

Approve Minutes: September 14, 2026, if available

Goldman makes the motion to approve the Minutes for September 14, 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

Turners Falls Airport Commission Business

• Quarterly Check-in with Airport Manager Bryan Camden and Airport Commissioners

➤ Financial performance

- Camden shares that our operations numbers are up.
- The \$5 million grant for the Apron Project was awarded about a month ago.
- The Airport lost a long-term tenant, who had been contributing about \$30,000/year in revenue.
- Upgrades include renovating the facilities loading dock and working on entrance and exit points of the building.
- Work was done on the security alarm system.
- Unplanned expenditures include getting the newly vacant space into some sort of safe industry standards.
- Some small storage/business tenants have moved out.
- We have an operating deficit of \$38,550.27 for FY26.
- One of the several Articles the Airport is looking at for the Special Town Meeting is going to be to fund the operating deficit for FY26.

➤ Grant reimbursement status

Camden shares that he made an error when he submitted for reimbursement on a couple of the portions of grants, which has led to a delay in getting the reimbursements to the Town. This has led to a backlog which led to a discussion on our need to have some kind of funding in place to cover these grants.

➤ Capital projects

- Camden states we have a lingering list of capital projects that are not financially feasible.
- Capital projects include roof repairs for two of our facilities.

➤ Revenue projections

- Camden states that we have a significant amount of interest from the market in general for battery energy storage.
- We have three spaces that we need to get re-leased.
- We have some mixed-use potential property around the facility.
- Camden states that it is time to push for non-aeronautical revenue sources to offset what we are drawing from the Town.
- We are working on an RFP for hosting or co-sighting cellular communication equipment on one of the two obstruction beacons that the airport owns.
- We have ample property that would be ideal for mixed-use storage.

➤ Major leases and agreements

- Solar Energy Storage doesn't seem to be moving forward due to Eversource
- Largest tenant is leaving sometime this year by December
- Another tenant may increase footprint

➤ Any anticipated need for additional Town support

- Camden emphasizes that the Airport needs to have a minimum of 5 hours a week of clerical support.
- Kuklewicz states that there may be a way to roll in help from Eileen Seymour and her staff involving having an office where there is somebody during standard Town business hours that can pick up some of the financial tasks (i.e., collecting, credit card transactions, etc.).
- Card expresses his appreciation to Camden for his candor and shares his feeling that nobody should be working six 12-hour days on a regular basis. He hopes we are able to find some way to give Camden some relief.
- Goldman encourages Camden to ask for what he needs. She wonders if an extra five hours of work is what he really needs.

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- In response to a request by Goldman, Lively explains that the Commission oversees Camden's decisions which he needs the Commission's votes for. He feels that Camden is a "whiz kid at the Airport" and that he always comes back with amazing ideas for expansion, etc.; and that because of Camden, the airport has now become an inviting place.
- Collins expresses that he is proud of Camden and sees what he goes through.
- In response to a question by Elizabeth Irving, Camden states the Airport has two full-time employees: himself and someone that started as a co-op employee from the Tech School. The second position is dedicated to the grounds maintenance, the equipment maintenance, and lining up with contractors. It is a struggle to have someone in the co-op position that would be good inside the office.
- Ariel Elan suggests looking into: (1) business administration or accounting interns from GCC, (2) the Tech School or the jail for roof repair help, (3) a fire-prevention plan for battery storage, and (4) Eversource for the solar issues.
- **Town Administrator's Proposed Financial and Administrative Oversight Model**
Ramsey summarizes a model for support from Town Hall to help the Airport be at a financial sustainable point:
 - The first priority would be to reconcile the grants.
 - There will be monthly check-in meetings between Ramsey, Camden, and Desroches.
 - Other priorities include formalizing reimbursement standards, doing monthly operating reports, reviewing capital projects, monitoring revenue and taking corrective action when there are shortfalls, and identifying municipal subsidies annually.

Special Town Meeting October 28

First Reading of Warrant and requested Articles

Art	Proponent	Request	Purpose	Source
1	Accountant	\$1,643.02	Authorize Prior Year (FY26)	Free Cash
2	Accountant	\$38,550.27	Municipal Airport FY26 Operating Deficit	Free Cash
3	Accountant	\$15,000	Municipal Airport FY27 anticipated shortfall	Free Cash
4	Accountant	\$61,502.31	Close out old grant deficits	Free Cash
5	Cemetery Commission	\$12,032	Grounds work and sexton stipend	Sale of Plots
6	Parks/Police	\$16,300	Non-capital equipment and projects	Free Cash
7	School Building	\$1,750,000	Elementary School Building Feasibility Study	Borrowing
8	Selectboard	Non-financial	Authorize Senior Tax Work-Off Program	
9	Selectboard	Non-financial	Authorize 30-year lease of 34 Central St.	

- Kuklewicz reads aloud the above list.
- Regarding Article 7, Ramsey suggests inviting the Elementary School Building Committee to the October 5 Selectboard Meeting.
- The next step is for Ramsey to formalize the Warrant and send it to Counsel for review. He intends to come back with a final version for the Selectboard's approval on October 5.

Elections Business

- **Execute October 6, 2026 Special Election Warrant for Franklin County Tech School, attached hereto**
 - Goldman reads aloud the October 6, 2026 Election Warrant for the Franklin County Tech School.
 - *Goldman makes the motion to execute the October 6, 2026 Special Election Warrant for Franklin County Tech School, attached hereto. Seconded by Card, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Card - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- **Execute October 6, 2026 Special Election Warrant for Great River Regional School District, attached hereto**
 - Card reads aloud the October 6, 2026 Special Election Warrant for Great River Regional School District.
 - *Card makes the motion to execute the October 6, 2026 Special Election Warrant for Great River Regional School District. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Card - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- **Execute 2026 State Election Warrant, attached hereto**
Postponed until next week.
- **Vote by mail clarification for October 6 Special Municipal Election (Great River Regional School District)**
Ramsey states that the vote of the Selectboard to opt-out of the vote-by-mail is null. The ballots are being produced and will be sent out to residents.

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Assistant Town Administrator's Business

- **Announce United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development (USDA RD) loan/grant for Sewer Collections System Rehabilitation Phase 2**

Nolan-Zeller announces that we received a loan/grant combination from the USDA Rural Development Agency. The amount of the grant award is \$1,197,000 and it is matched with a loan of \$1.9 million.

- **Library design update**

- We continue to have biweekly meetings with the architect and the owner's project manager.
- The Library Steering Committee convenes about once a month and has been diving into building details such as lighting, flooring, and interior design.
- We've engaged Eversource's Mass Save consultant for a conversation on how we can take advantage of some of their energy-saving rebates.
- The possibility of using some of the bricks from the Strathmore for the library was discussed. This may not be feasible.

- **Strathmore Demolition Project status update**

- We are continuing on the most recently updated timeline, which is bidding this fall with the expectation that we will have a demolition contractor on board for the spring, to be able to start work in time for the 2027 construction season.
- Nolan-Zeller states that we need to bid this as a building project rather than as a public works project, which necessitates having an owner's project manager. We have solicited responses from interested OPM firms.

- **Montague Center Complete Streets construction progress**

- The project is underway.
- They've started to install the raised crossway at the northern end of the Town Common.
- This week, they will be working on drainage.
- We are on track to finish construction by late October.

- **Ave A Streetscape status update**

Avenue A is substantially complete. We are very pleased overall with how the work has come out.

Town Administrator's Business

- **Recommendation for Farren property surplus designation (330-340 Montague City Road, Parcel ID No. 12-0-044 and 356 Montague City Road, Parcel ID No. 12-0-044A; and authority to release Development Request for Proposals**

Goldman makes the motion to declare the Farren property surplus (330-340 Montague City Road, Parcel ID No. 12-0-044 and 356 Montague City Road); and authorize the release for a Development Request for Proposals with the change noted that the parcel identified on the map as 1 will be a price of \$10,000 and the parcel identified as 2 will be a price of \$30,000. Seconded by Card, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Card - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

- **Soapbox Derby Sunday, September 27, 2026 updates**

- The Soapbox Derby is this Sunday.
- They are looking for volunteers.
- They have 30 racers signed up.
- The race is from noon to 3:00 PM.
- First Street will be closed that morning between 7:00 AM and 5:00 PM.

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

- **Superintendent Search Committee**

The Gill-Montague School District has reopened their Superintendent Search Committee. They are looking to fill a few seats.

- **Buddy Bench Program**

There's a Buddy Bench Program to establish one of the Peskeompskut Park benches to become a Buddy Bench.

Emergency Executive Session pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, §21(a)(3) to discuss litigation strategy in the case of Snow, Deborah et al vs. Town of Montague, Franklin Superior Court, CA No. 2678CV00056, if discussing the matter in open session will have a detrimental effect on the Town's litigation position and the Chair so-declares

- The Chair deems that holding this discussion in open session would be detrimental to the Town's position.
- *Goldman makes the motion to go into Executive Session. Seconded by Card, unanimously approved. Goldman - Aye, Card - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

Next Meeting:

Selectboard Meeting, Monday, September 28, 2026 at 6:30 via ZOOM