MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING

1 Avenue A, Turners Falls and VIA ZOOM
Monday, November 23, 2026
AGENDA

Join Zoom Meeting: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84178567353

Meeting ID: 841 7856 7353 Password: 170054 Dial into meeting: +1 646 558 8656

This meeting/hearing of the Selectboard will be held in person at the location provided on this notice. Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting. Please note that while an option for remote attendance and/or participation is being provided as a courtesy to the public, the meeting/hearing will not be suspended or terminated if technological problems interrupt the virtual broadcast, unless otherwise required by law. Members of the public with particular interest in any specific item on this agenda should make plans for in-person vs. virtual attendance accordingly.

Topics may start earlier than specified, unless there is a hearing scheduled

Meeting Being Taped **Votes May Be Taken**

1. 6:30PM Selectboard Chair opens the meeting, including announcing that the meeting is being recorded and roll call taken

2. 6:30 Approve Minutes: Selectboard Meetings: 11-16-2026 if available

3. 6:30 **Public Comment Period:** Individuals will be limited to two (2) minutes each and the Selectboard will strictly adhere to time allotted for public comment

4. 6:32 **Public Hearing held jointly with the Board of Assessors: Fiscal Year 2027 Tax Classification Hearing**
   - Adam Tocci, Director Assessing to present rate setting needs and options for distributing tax burden among different classes of property.
   - Public Comment, Deliberation, and vote to recommend tax rates for FY27.
   - Board of Assessors vote to approve the sixth motor vehicle commitment list from the Registry of motor Vehicles and sign the warrant to be handed to the Treasurer/Collector.
   - Board of Assessors vote to approve a recommitment that includes three motor vehicle excise tax bills from calendar years 2010 and 2011

5. 7:32 **Licensing: Sawmill Race**
   - **Use of Public Property-** Sawmill River 10k Road Race, Thursday, January 1, 2026, from 9:00am to 1:00pm starting at Montague Center Village, as requested by Patrick Pessati of Sugarloaf Mountain Athletic Club

6. 7:05 **Personnel Board/ Sewer Commissioners**
   - Accept resignation of Superintendent Chelsey Little, effective December 11,2026
   - Authorize status change for Tim Little to serve as CWF foreman on a temporary basis $36.90/hr effective 11/19/2026
   - Discuss CWF leadership transition strategy and long-term management options

7. 7:45 **Town Administrator's Business**

- Trash Sticker Policy roll-out
- Reminder: Winter Parking Regulations Effective December 1, 2026
- MIIA renewal for FY28 at 0% increase and FY29 at 2.5% increase.

Next Meeting

Selectboard Meeting: Monday, November 30, 2026, at 6:30pm via ZOOM

TOWN OF MONTAGUE

FY2027 TAX CLASSIFICATION PRESENTATION
November 23rd, 2026 6:30 p.m.

Tax classification allows communities to have separate tax rates for different classes of property and allows the Selectboard to decide on an annual basis as to whether or not to shift the tax burden from one class of property to another. Should the Board decide to shift the tax burden, they must adopt a residential factor which will determine the percentage of the tax levy to be paid by the residential property owners. This results in two different tax rates (known as a "split tax rate"). Shifting the burden from the residential taxpayers to the commercial, industrial and personal property (CIP) taxpayers does not change the total levy to be taxed, but rather it changes the allocation of the tax levy to be borne by each class. Historically, the Montague Selectboard has voted to shift the rate since the mid-1980s.

Notable Changes

The FY2027 property tax levy is $24,431,819.27 which represents an increase of $821,668.34 or 3.04% over last year's levy of $23,610,150.93. The levy is the revenue a community can raise through real and personal property taxes. The property tax levy is the largest source of revenue for most cities and towns. Other revenue sources other than property taxes include funds received from the state, local excise and other receipts.

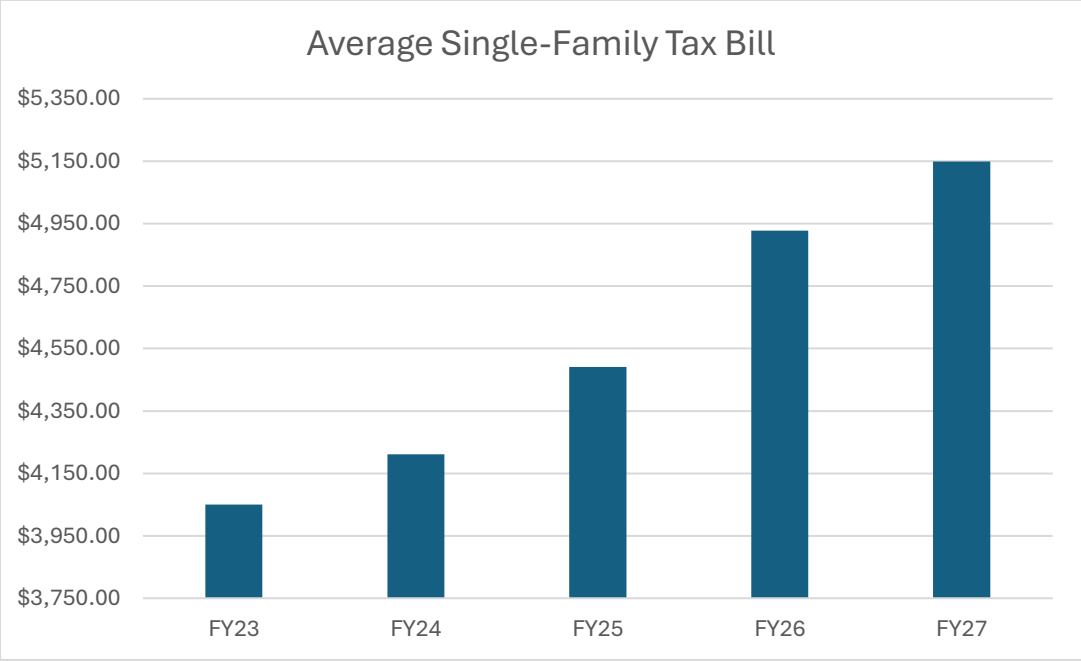
Total taxable valuation in Montague for all classes of property for FY2027 exceeds a billion dollars and totals $1,399,229,095 which is an increase of $80,314,643 (6.09%) from the previous year. We continue to see significant increases in the residential sector of the real estate market, not only in Montague but throughout the Commonwealth.

The average assessment of a single-family residence in Montague is $348,594.63 up $22,895.58 from last year's average of $325,699.05. A total of 51 sales of single-family residences (with sale prices ranging from $185,000 to $685,000) were analyzed to determine the FY2027 assessed values.

Tax Shift Options

The four options when setting a multiple tax rate are:
● a tax shift from residential and open space to business property owners (see chart pg. 3)
● an open space discount that shifts taxes from open space to residential property owners
● a residential exemption that shifts taxes on lower valued owner-occupied residential property to other residential property owners
● a small commercial exemption that shifts taxes on small business property to other commercial and industrial property owners.

A factor of .8452 was voted last year and resulted in a residential rate of $15.13 and a commercial/industrial/personal rate of $25.06. Should a similar shift be voted this year, the estimated residential rate would decrease by $0.36 to $14.77. The CIP rate (commercial/ industrial/personal property) would decrease by $0.27 to $24.79. Without a shift, a single rate would yield $17.46 for all classes of properties. Using the average assessment for a single-family home previously mentioned and the tax rate of $14.77 the annual property taxes for a single family in town would be $5,148. Last year's average single family residential tax bill was $4,928 with the resulting increase being an additional tax of $462,819.25. This represents a 4.48% increase from last year's average tax bill for a single-family residence. The chart below illustrates the increasing trend for these tax rates since fiscal 2023.



The table below lists options in .5% increments with a range of 35% to 50% shift to the CIP classes

CIP Shift	Res Factor	Res Tax Rate	CIP Tax Rate
1.3500	0.8717	$15.22	$23.57
1.3550	0.8699	$15.19	$23.66
1.3600	0.8681	$15.16	$23.75
1.3650	0.8663	$15.13	$23.83
1.3700	0.8644	$15.09	$23.92
1.3750	0.8626	$15.06	$24.01
1.3800	0.8608	$15.03	$24.10
1.3850	0.8589	$15.00	$24.18
1.3900	0.8571	$14.97	$24.27
1.3950	0.8553	$14.93	$24.36
1.4000	0.8534	$14.90	$24.45
1.4050	0.8516	$14.87	$24.53
1.4100	0.8498	$14.84	$24.62
1.4150	0.8479	$14.81	$24.71
1.4200	0.8461	$14.77	$24.79
1.4250	0.8443	$14.74	$24.88
1.4300	0.8424	$14.71	$24.97
1.4350	0.8406	$14.68	$25.06
1.4400	0.8388	$14.65	$25.14
1.4450	0.8369	$14.61	$25.23
1.4500	0.8351	$14.58	$25.32
1.4550	0.8333	$14.55	$25.41
1.4600	0.8314	$14.52	$25.49
1.4650	0.8296	$14.49	$25.58
1.4700	0.8278	$14.45	$25.67
1.4750	0.8259	$14.42	$25.75
1.4800	0.8241	$14.39	$25.84
1.4850	0.8223	$14.36	$25.93
1.4900	0.8204	$14.33	$26.02
1.4950	0.8186	$14.29	$26.10
1.5000	0.8168	$14.26	$26.19

**The highlighted line represents the adoption of a similar minimum residential factor that was adopted in FY2026*

Open Space Discount

This option allows a discount of up to 25% of land that is maintained in a natural condition. Since there is currently no land classified as Open Space in Montague, this discount is not recommended by the Board of Assessors.

Residential Exemption

This option allows a discount to property that is the principal residence of a taxpayer. The discount cannot exceed 20% of the average assessed value of residential properties. This option would *increase* the residential rate and shift the burden to multi-family and second homeowners. Currently only 20 of 351 communities in Massachusetts have adopted this exemption. This option makes sense only if a community has a significant percentage of non-owner-occupied properties which Montague does not. This exemption is not recommended by the Board of Assessors.

Small Commercial Exemption

This option allows for a 10% discount to certain commercial properties that meet criteria established by the state. Only businesses that have been certified by the Massachusetts Department of Workforce Development as having no more than an average of ten employees in the previous year would be eligible. It is important to note that the owner of the property (not the actual business owner) benefits from this exemption and is not required to pass any savings to the qualified business. The tax burden is redistributed to the non-qualifying commercial property owners in the form of a higher tax rate. A review of Assessor's records shows that most of the businesses eligible are rented by tenants who would not benefit from this exemption, therefore, this exemption is not recommended by the Board of Assessors.

Excess Levy Capacity

Under Proposition 2 ½ a community may choose to set its levy at any amount below or equal to its levy limit. When a community sets its levy below the limit, the difference between the levy and the levy limit is referred to as excess levy capacity. Currently, Montague's excess levy capacity is **$1,042,271**.

Exhibit A- Sample of Tax Rate Shifts & Corresponding Levies for an average single-family home, small commercial property, and a large industrial property.

Average Single-Family Home ($348,594)

CIP Shift	Res Factor	Res Tax Rate	FY27 Tax Bill
1.35	0.8717	15.22	$5,305.61
1.42	0.8461	14.77	$5,148.74
1.5	0.8168	14.26	$4,970.96

Top Quartile Single-Family Home ($625,000)

CIP Shift	Res Factor	Res Tax Rate	FY27 Tax Bill
1.35	0.8717	15.22	$9,512.50
1.42	0.8461	14.77	$9,231.25
1.5	0.8168	14.26	$8,912.50

Small Commercial Property ($200,000)

CIP Shift	Res Factor	Res Tax Rate	FY27 Tax Bill
1.35	0.8717	23.57	$4,714.00
1.42	0.8461	24.79	$4,958.00
1.5	0.8168	26.19	$5,238.00

Large Industrial Property ($6,000,000)

CIP Shift	Res Factor	Res Tax Rate	FY27 Tax Bill
1.35	0.8717	23.57	$141,420.00
1.42	0.8461	24.79	$148,740.00
1.5	0.8168	26.19	$157,140.00

Board of Selectmen
Town of Montague
1 Avenue A
Turners Falls, MA 01376

(413) 863-3200 xt. 108
FAX: (413) 863-3231

REGISTRATION FOR ASSEMBLY, PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION, OR USE OF PUBLIC PROPERTY
(Not for Peskeompskut Park or Montague Center Common)

All information must be complete. This form must be returned to the Board of Selectmen within a minimum of 10 days prior to the assembly.

Name of applicant: Patrick Pezzati

Address of applicant: 144 Dry Hill Rd Montague MA 01351

Phone # of applicant: 413-575-9110

Name of organization: Sugarloaf Mountain Athletic Club

Name of legally responsible person: Patrick Pezzati

Location of assembly: Montague Center Common Hall, streets around Montague Center

Date of assembly: 1/1/2027

Time of assembly: Begin: 9 AM End: 1 PM

Number of expected participants: 100

If a procession/parade:

Route: Start on Main - Greenfield - Ferry - Meadow - Old Sunderland - end on Main

Number of people expected to participate: 100

Number of vehicles expected to participate: none or 1 lead car

Subject of demonstration: annual Sawmill River 10K race

Attach a copy of your insurance policy or liability binder indicating a minimum policy of $1Million Individual/$3Million Group.

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Signatures:

Police Chief: Jason D. Hall Date: 11/18/26

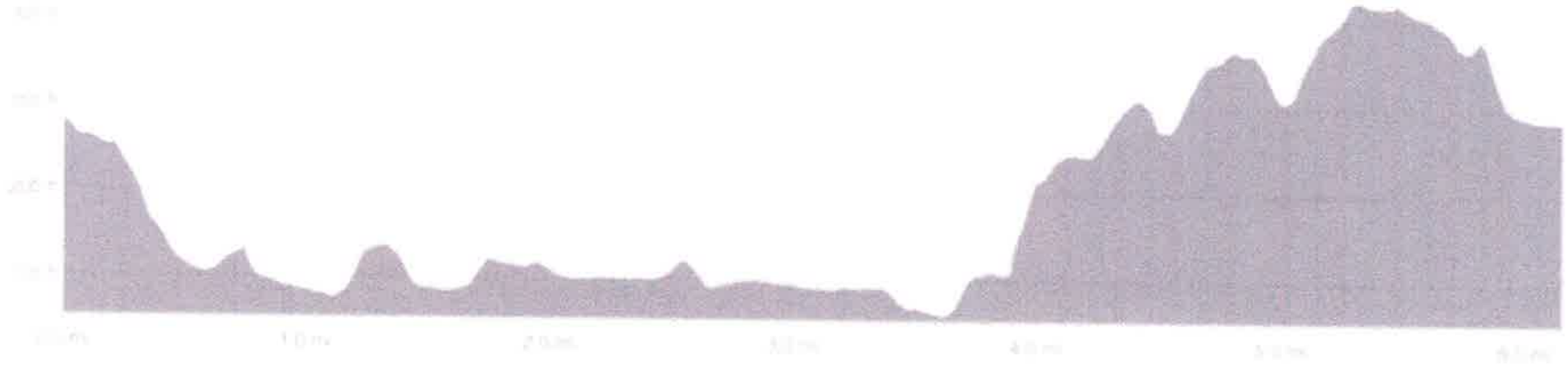
Comments/Conditions:

Board of Selectmen, Chairman: Date:

Comments/Conditions:

Route and Elevation





November 12, 2026

Walter Ramsey, Town Administrator

Town of Montague

1 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376

Dear Walter,

Please accept this letter as formal notice of my resignation from my position as Superintendent of the Montague Clean Water Facility, effective December 11th, 2026. I regret that my departure is more sudden than I would have liked. My family requires my attention, and I am unable to provide the extended notice I would otherwise wish to give.

It has been an honor to serve the residents of Montague since March of 2020. I'm proud of what my team has accomplished in that time. I'm equally proud that we helped the community better understand and appreciate the essential work wastewater operators do to protect public health and the environment.

None of this would have been possible without the dedication of my staff, as well as the support of the Sewer Commission/Selectboard, fellow Town Departments, Boards, Committees, and residents. I have been fortunate to work alongside a skilled, hardworking team in Montague, and I am grateful for the trust placed in me over the years.

I plan on being available to assist with a smooth transition. Please let me know how I can be most helpful during this time.

I don't yet know what the future holds for me, but I will always cherish my career serving Montague and the relationships I've built here. Thank you for the opportunity and for your support over the years.

Sincerely,



Chelsey Little, BSBS MPH

Superintendent, Montague Clean Water Facility

Town of Montague
Personnel Status Change Notice
Rate Changes

Authorized Signature: _____ Employee # 1263

General Information:

Full name of employee: Timothy Little

Department: CWF

Title: Temporary Foreman Effective date of change: November 19th, 2026

Grade/Step/COLA Change:

Union: U.E.

Current Pay: Grade E Step 8 Wage Rate: $35.65 (hourly)
Wage Rate: _____ weekly
Weekly Incentive: _____ (Police Only)

New Pay: Grade _____ Step _____ Wage Rate: $ _____ (annual/~~hourly~~)
Wage Rate: _____ weekly
Weekly Incentive: _____ (Police Only)
Wage Rate: _____ 1st week if different
Wage Rate: _____ last week if different

Stipends
For: _____ Wage Rate: _____ (annual)
Weekly Amount: _____
Wage Rate: _____ 1st week if different
Wage Rate: _____ last week if different

For: $1.25 Wage Rate: 1.25 (hourly)
Weekly Amount: _____
Wage Rate: _____ 1st week if different
Wage Rate: _____ last week if different

Notes: Temporary Foreman pay increase of $1.25/hour per CBA

Copies to:

_____ Employee _____ Department _____ Board of Selectmen
_____ Treasurer _____ Accountant _____ Retirement Board

MIIA
Nonprofit
Locally based
Member driven
Serving Massachusetts communities since 1982

MIIA Member Services
15 Cabot Road
Woburn MA 01801-1003
TEL (800) 526-6442
FAX (781) 376-9907
www.emiia.org

November 11, 2026

Mr. Walter Ramsey
Town Administrator
Town of Montague
1 Avenue A
Turner Falls, MA 01376

Re: 2 Year Guarantee Proposal

Dear Walter:

The Town of Montague is an important member of the MIIA programs. Due to the overall success of our programs and your favorable loss history, we are able to offer you a renewal proposal for FY28 and FY29 which includes a rate change of 0% for FY28 and up to 2.5% for FY29. We are pleased to offer this renewal proposal for your property, liability and workers compensation coverages.

Your overall contributions may reflect updated exposures, such as changes in building values, number of vehicles, expenditures, payrolls or experience modification factors. This offer is being made to a limited number of MIIA members and is contingent on maintaining a favorable loss ratio for all lines of coverage below 60% through FY29.

MIIA is the non-profit insurance provider established in 1982 to deliver insurance cost stability for Massachusetts communities. We provide extensive risk management solutions including health, dental, vision, property, liability and workers compensation insurance to more than 410 cities, towns and other public entities in Massachusetts.

By accepting our proposal, you will continue to benefit from stable costs from MIIA's consistently superior coverages and services. In order to accept our offer, please sign and return the enclosed copy of this letter to our office before November 25, 2026. We appreciate your continued commitment to the MIIA programs.

Sincerely,

Sean

Sean Harper
Account Executive