

Dear Town Meeting Member,

This letter is in support of the Assistant Town Administrator (ATA). I regret that I cannot present my position in person, but I am thankful for the opportunity to present it in the town meeting materials.

I am a thirty-year Montague resident; I serve and have served on various Montague committees; I am a town meeting member and an entrepreneur. These factors influence my support of the ATA.

Over the last decades, I have worked with, consulted with, and supported our town administrators. Over that time, I realized the near-impossible task of our town administrators to move Montague beyond minimally maintaining essential services, town assets and balancing the budget. The ATA position will break this operational stagnation and allow Montague to grow its capacity and return value to the community.

The ATA position would be considered an investment in the private sector—a senior management position designed to grow an enterprise and its value. This work cannot be delegated to various departments and should be compensated commensurate with expected professional responsibilities and outcomes. Failing to “invest” does not return value; it constrains results, often producing adverse outcomes. I know this from experience.

As an example of positive investment—the town has already invested in a part-time but essential position—the assistant planner. This position has greatly improved the town’s ability to attract additional funding and manage multiple grants. The assistant planner has returned multiples of its cost to Montague in the form of grant monies. The ATA position is designed to yield even more value by proactive action on grants, bids, infrastructure, personnel management, and resource allocation.

As chairperson of the Capital Improvements Committee (CIC) and vice-chair of the Finance Committee (FINCOM), I see the immediate value of the position. I am also aware that this was not a position hastily designed but given thoughtful construction through extensive discussion. The ATA has the support of the select board, and partial support of FINCOM. The CIC did not vote on the position.

I recognize there are opposing views on the ATA position. Cost concerns, a desire for more deliberation—exploration. These issues will all be debated in today’s annual town meeting. My position is that the benefits of the ATA position greatly outweigh the perceived negatives of this position. I strongly recommend that town meeting members support the ATA and secure a more prosperous future for Montague.

With kind regards,

Gregory Garrison  
Chairperson CIC  
Vice-Chair FINCOM  
Precinct 6 Town Meeting Member