

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING

1 Avenue A, Turners Falls and VIA ZOOM

Monday, June 2, 2025 at 6:30 PM

Meeting was opened at 6:30 PM. Present were Selectboard members Rich Kuklewicz, Matt Lord, and Marina Goldman; Town Administrator Walter Ramsey; Assistant Town Administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller; Parks and Recreation Director Jon Dobosz; and Town Planner Maureen Pollock.

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

Approve Minutes: Selectboard Meeting: May 19, 2025

Lord makes the motion to approve the Selectboard Meeting of May 19, 2025 as presented. Seconded by Kuklewicz, approved.

Lord - 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 Ron Michonski expresses concern that individuals are speeding on his road. He asks that a crosswalk and a center sign be placed between Dell and Henry. In addition, he would like the current speed limit to be decreased to 30 mph. He states that he has parked his car on the street, but has been told by police that he needs to move it or have it towed. Ramsey will follow-up on this issue with the Police Chief and the DPW Superintendent.

Annual Reorganization of the Selectboard (vote to elect Chair, Vice Chair, and Clerk)

- Kuklewicz reads aloud a proclamation recognizing and expressing gratitude to Chris Boutwell for his 15 years of service to the Town.
- *Kuklewicz makes the motion to elect Matt Lord as the Selectboard Chair, Rich Kuklewicz as Vice-Chair, and Marina Goldman as Clerk. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye*

Review and approve Summer Schedule

Kuklewicz makes the motion to accept the 2025 Summer Meeting Schedule as presented. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye

Jon Dobosz, Parks & Recreation Director

Opening of Montague Center Playground, ribbon-cutting June 7 (rain date: June 14)

Dobosz announces the opening of the Montague Center Playground. The ribbon-cutting will take place at 1:00 PM on June 7, with June 14 as a rain date.

Maureen Pollock, Town Planner

Montague City/Farren Lot re-zoning project status update

- Pollock shares that there was a community workshop on April 17. There will be a follow-up community workshop on Tuesday on June 10 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. This will be a debrief of the April workshop.
- Emily Innes and Paulo Ramos Martinez from Innes Associates give a brief presentation:
 - Montague City Zoning Studies
 - Who's Who
 - Projects
 - Timeline
 - Past Plans
 - 2024 Village Center Vision
 - Report Public Meeting #1
 - Exercise A: What Did We Learn?
 - What Can We Regulate in District, and Why?
 - Exercises, Part A: Land Use and Public Space
 - How Uses are Regulated by District and Why
 - Exercises, Part A: Land Uses and Scale
 - Exercise B: What Did We Learn?
 - Exercises, Part B: The Map: Applying "Zoning"
 - Exercises, Part B: The Map
 - Public Meeting #2 (Getting to Zoning - Focus on the Farren Site)
 - Testing the 2024 Village Center Vision
 - Current Zoning
 - Future Zoning
 - Questions for Participants

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○ Questions for You

- In response to a question by Lord, Innes states that in determining a "high economic value development that would possibly be in Western Massachusetts," they base it on how well the participants use the particular site.
- In response to a question by Jeff Singleton, Innes states that the upcoming meeting will be just about the Farren site.

Jenny Vanderbilt, Greats Falls Farmers Market

- **Request authorization to place 2 large sandwich board signs and a flag sign along Avenue A and 7th Street to be displayed during the Farmers Market on Saturdays 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM**
Kuklewicz makes the motion to authorize placing 2 large sandwich board signs and a flag sign along Avenue A and 7th Street to be displayed during the Farmers Market on Saturdays 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM; and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye
- **Request authorization to have Swanson's Stash House mobile mending truck parked on Avenue A or 6th Street during the Farmers Market on Saturdays from 9:00 AM and 1:00 PM. It is a mobile mending truck that people can enter to have items mended and to learn**
Lord states that the Board does not need to authorize what is already allowed.

Personnel Board

- **Authorize employment contract extension with Police Chief Chris Williams through December 31, 2025 (Grade B Step 10, \$118,172 base pay)**
Kuklewicz makes the motion to authorize the employment contract extension with Police Chief Chris Williams through December 31, 2025 (Grade B Step 10, \$118,172 base pay). Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye
- **Authorize Employment Contract with Wendy Bogusz for position of Town Clerk for period July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2028 (Grace C, Step 3, \$75,857)**
Kuklewicz makes the motion to authorize the Employment Contract with Wendy Bogusz for the position of Town Clerk for period July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2028 (Grace C, Step 3, \$75,857). Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye
- **Hiring plan for the Selectboard Executive Secretary and transition plan for the Town Clerk**
 - Ramsey states that the advertisement for the Executive Secretary will go out later this week.
 - The title and the pay scale will be the same.
 - We will do an internal review with a committee before presenting the Board with the final candidates.
 - Bogusz is proposing having one integrated Town Clerk office, which would be better for the flow. Ramsey is already discussing with DPW whether or not any of that can be done in-house.
- **Discuss options to shift non-union personnel to new wage charts**
 - Ramsey summarizes his proposal to shift non-union personnel to new wage charts.
 - The Board is in agreement.
 - Ramsey will come back for more discussion.

Assistant Town Administrator's Business

- **Authorize statements of support for Community One Stop for Growth applications (Avenue A traffic signal replacements, First Street Brownfield Clean-up, and Housing Production Plan development)**
Kuklewicz makes the motion to authorize the statements of support for Community One Stop for Growth applications as presented. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye
- **Execute Letter of Support for grant application proposal by Jess March: Underutilized Properties Program - 149-151 Third Street**
Kuklewicz makes the motion to execute the Letter of Support for the grant application proposal by Jess March: Underutilized Properties Program - 149-151 Third Street. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Lord - Aye
- **South Street Bridge completion and upcoming bridge projects**
 - The South Street Bridge project is now complete. The bridge is now open.
 - The DPW will be resurfacing some of the surrounding stretches of South Street sometime within the next fiscal year.
 - The Swamp Road Bridge was closed today as the DPW has been doing some patch work and will be reopened tomorrow. We have a completed design for that bridge.
 - The design for the North Leverett Road Bridge is almost fully complete and is going to be on the Transportation Improvement Plan next year.
- **Municipal ADA Improvement Program Grants (not on agenda)**
Lord makes the motion to authorize the Assistant Town Administrator to apply for grants from the Municipal ADA Improvement Program. Seconded by Goldman, unanimously approved. Lord - Aye, Goldman - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

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- **Other project updates**

The front entrance to the Town Hall is now open. The subcontractor still needs to install two sections of railing. There is now improved accessibility getting into the building from the four parking spaces on the First Street side.

Town Administrator's Business

- **Announce Execution of Amendment to Land Development Agreement with Power Street LLC for 15 Power Street**
 - Ramsey announces the Execution of Amendment to the Land Development Agreement with Power Street LLC for 15 Power Street.
 - We put a hard stop to the date of December 2034. If the developer fails to make the improvements by that time, the Town can retake ownership of that property.
 - There is also an agreement that the Town would consider conveying an easement for utilities over the Railroad Salvage property.
- **Annual Town Meeting Date Survey Feedback**
 - Ramsey shares that most people prefer having the Annual Town Meeting on a Saturday.
 - The next Town Meeting will be on the first Saturday in May.
- **Discuss summer priorities**

Ramsey lists his summer priorities now that the Selectboard meetings are on a biweekly schedule:

 - 1) Finalize of the union contracts
 - 2) Facilitate transitions of the Town Clerk office, the Selectboard Executive Secretary, and the Director of Assessing
 - 3) Continue the FirstLight PILOT negotiations
 - 4) Release the Shea Theater RFP
 - 5) Select an architect for the Library Visibility Project
 - 6) Work on the Strathmore Demolition Project
 - 7) Get funding for the First Street Housing Project
 - 8) Prepare for the Fall Special Town Meeting
- **Topics not anticipated within 48-hour posting requirements**

None

Other

- **Sink Hole**

In response to a question by Kuklewicz, Ramsey states he, the Fire Chief, the DPW Superintendent, the Board of Health, the Building Inspector, and a Conservation Agent went to the 42 Canal Street sink hole and will continue to monitor it. They have notified all the relevant parties.
- **Employee Summer Picnic**

In response to a question by Kuklewicz, Ramsey states that we are hoping to have an Employee Summer Picnic in late August.

Next Meeting:

Selectboard: June 16, 2025 at 6:30 PM via ZOOM

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