

# MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING

1 Avenue A, Turners Falls and VIA ZOOM

Monday, December 2, 2024 at 6:30 PM

Meeting was opened at 6:30 PM. Present were Selectboard members Rich Kuklewicz, Matt Lord, and Chris Boutwell; Town Administrator Walter Ramsey; Executive Assistant Wendy Bogusz; Assistant Town Administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller; Police Chief Chris Williams; and Town Accountant Angela Desroches.

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

**Approve Minutes: Selectboard Meeting November 18 and 25, 2024**

- *Boutwell makes the motion to approve the minutes of November 18, 2024 as presented. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- **Approval of November 25 minutes postponed**

**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

## Personnel Board

**Swearing in of Lawrence "Larry" Arthur Akim, Patrol K-9 Officer**

- Officer Ruddock introduces and gives some background on Patrol K-9 Officer Lawrence Arthur Akim.
- The Board welcomes Officer Larry to the ranks and thanks Officer Ruddock for his dedication and work.

**Personnel Board - Proposed FY26 Personnel Expansions**

**Judith Lorei - Cemetery Commission Chair**

**Proposed changes to the Cemetery Sexton position**

- Lorei explains the reasons for the requested changes to the Cemetery Sexton position (including making it a stipended position).
- In response to a question by Lord, Lorei shares that caretakers of some of the private cemeteries have unofficially asked for help and that the Town may soon be in a position to start considering including the Cemetery Sexton position as part of the staff.
- This issue will be discussed with the Finance Committee.

**Angelica Desroches, Town Accountant**

**Proposed changes to Financial and Payroll Management Software**

- *Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the Town Accountant and Town Administrator to move forward with Harper's Payroll Services. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye.*
- *Boutwell makes the motion to move forwarded with the VADAR System with the fee as discussed, and if available we will use grant funding implementation. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye.*
- *Boutwell makes the motion that if grant funding becomes available, we authorize the Town Accountant and/or Town Administrator to apply for the Community Compact Grant to cover implementation. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye.*

**Assistant Town Administrator's Business**

**Review of ARPA expenditures, approval of memoranda of understanding for the following accounts with unspent funds**

- **225-5-128-5800-013 - Clean Water Facility Septage Receiving Station Upgrades - \$35,869.00**  
*Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the MOU for the Clean Water Facility Septage Receiving Station Upgrades in the amount of \$35,869.00, and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye.*
- **225-5-128-5800-032 - Clean Water Facility Screw Pump Contingency - \$88,923.00**  
*Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the MOU for the Clean Water Facility Screw Pump Contingency in the amount of \$88,923.00, and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye.*

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**Other Project Updates**

- The award for bids on the CWF Aeration Diffuser Project is going to be ready by next week.
- Nolan-Zeller, the Town Planner, the RiverCulture Director, and Assistant Planner attended a regional stakeholders meeting hosted by FRCOG for the Rural Downtown District Management Project. The FRCOG is piloting a project using a \$100,000 Rural Development Fund Grant.
- Bids are opening this Thursday for the Turners Falls Manhole Rehabilitation Project.
- The deadline for submitting capital requests has now passed. CIC is going to begin their regular-meeting schedule this month.

**Town Administrator's Business**

**Review of FY26 Selectboard Departmental Budget Submittals**

- Ramsey reviews the FY26 departmental budget submittals.
- The Selectboard approves submitting these to Finance.

**Announce Winter Parking Ban**

- The Winter Parking Ban is in effect from December 1st through April 1st, 2025.
- Town-wide there is no parking overnight on the streets with the exception of Downtown Turners Falls with the Special Winter Parking Regulations.
- All the details are on the Town's website.
- The Blue Light System is fully functional for this year.

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

None

**Other (not on agenda)**

Kuklewicz states that the Casella app is not correct on holiday weekends. Ramsey will ask Casella to get their app synchronized.

**Executive Session - Police Chief Contract Extensions**

**Executive Session in accordance with G.L. c. 30a, § 21 (a)(2) to conduct contract negotiations with Police Chief, Chris Williams; votes may be taken**

- The Chair deems that holding this discussion in open meeting would be detrimental to the Town's position.
- *Boutwell makes the motion to go into Executive Session in accordance with G.L. c. 30a, § 21 (a)(2) to conduct contract negotiations with Police Chief, Chris Williams; votes may be taken. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye.*

**Next Meeting:**

Selectboard, Monday, December 9, 2024 at 6:30 PM via ZOOM