

**SELECTMEN'S MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 30, 2008**

Tape #29-08

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Meeting was opened at 7 PM held in the Upstairs Meeting Room. Present were Selectpersons Allen Ross, Pat Allen, Patricia Pruitt; Town Administrator Frank Abbondanzio

Approve Minutes of June 2, 9 and 16, 2008

Allen made a motion to approve the minutes of Monday, June 2, 2008 with corrections. Seconded by Pruitt. Approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.

Allen made a motion to approve the minutes of Monday, June 9, 2008 with corrections. Seconded by Pruitt. Approved with two ayes, and one abstention. Allen – Aye, Pruitt - abstained, Ross – Aye.

Allen made a motion to approve the minutes of Monday, June 16, 2008 with corrections. Seconded by Pruitt. Approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.

Police Building Committee

Pruitt made a motion to authorize the Police Building Committee to approve grant spending for grants other than the CDBG Grant. Seconded by Allen. Approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.

Acceptance of Deed from the Fire District

Allen made a motion that, having accepted the deed, the Select Board members sign the said deed for parcel 2 from the Turners Falls Fire District to the Town of Montague for the Police Station Project. Seconded by Pruitt. Approved Unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.

Robin Paris, Shea Theater and Theresa Miner, Montague Elks

Sponsorship of Tines & Tunes Event. This issue has been cancelled. Matter has been handled. No further action required.

Personnel Board, Vote whether or not Non-Union personnel are to receive steps as of 7/1/08

Ross: This is part of an issue that is far from simple. There was a need or a desire to control our personnel expenses and there was a discussion about who in the Town's employ should receive steps and which steps are we obligated by the contract to give, what are in the process of being negotiated and how does one category affect another category. Later on tonight we are also going into Executive Session to review a few specific contracts which are non-union contracts. My understanding is that information in that contract is going to affect our ability to respond consistently to steps of non-union personnel. So, what we would like to do is, unfortunately for some people who are here, delay item 4 of the Personnel Board until after we come out of the Executive Session that will occur after we go through the Town Administrator's Report. I cannot give an exact time for that at this time.

John Reynolds: Will you decide it tonight?

Ross: We will make a response tonight, exactly what the decision is going to be, I really don't know at this point. I know this is important and frustrating for staff. We also have to be able to write paychecks by Monday morning of this coming week, so we have to come to some decision about how big the checks should be. I am going to defer Item 4 until after we come out of Executive Session.

Town Administrator's Report

Award Property recently auctioned by Douglas Auctioneers

Allen suggested that this subject be discussed closer to its scheduled time of 7:40 PM since more individuals might arrive for that subject. Meeting will continue with other topics and then we will return to the property auction.

Appoint Representative to FRTA Advisory Board

FRTA is looking for a letter stating the person or persons appointed to the FRTA Advisory Board, and any alternate, for FY'09 (July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009).

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Allen made a motion to appoint Allen Ross as the FRTA Advisory Board member and Frank Abbondanzio as the alternate member. Seconded by Pruitt. Discussion followed. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.

Appoint Greening Committee

People who are interested in being on this Committee: Tim VanEgmond, Chris Mason, Jason Burbank, Paul Voiland, Sally Pick, Carlyn Saltman, Chris Sawyer-Laucanno, David Detmold, Pam Hanold, Robert Setka.

Allen made a motion to appoint these people (minus Chris Sawyer-Laucanno) to our Montague Energy Committee. Pruitt stated that she thinks that Chris Sawyer-Laucanno sent in a letter changing his mind. Seconded by Pruitt. Discussion followed. Letter from Chris Mason had a request to have five on the Committee rather than seven. All the people listed here will probably not be able to make all of the meetings. There is at least one person who might end up being an alternate. Chris also sent information about a Commission, which is pretty mature at this point, but is something that we would like the Committee to look at. We should talk with these interested people and then we will see what the charge should be to this committee. Approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.

Abbondanzio: We just found out about an Energy Grant. This Committee might get involved in selecting potential projects for those grant funds.

Approve Reserve Fund Transfer for Legal Expenses

Abbondanzio: I am requesting the maximum of \$12,000. A lot of this will depend upon final billing. We requested final numbers from both Labor Counsel and our Town Counsel. This is for the legal account. The original amount appropriated was \$41,600, which was appropriated for both the Town Counsel and for the Labor Attorney. This year, we had an excessive amount used out of that fund. Particularly because of the three annual Town Meetings to which it is required that Town Counsel be present for a minimum number of hours. It was more expensive than in a normal year anyway with all the contracts coming up for renewal. We are going to have to go to the Finance Committee for a transfer.

Allen made a motion that we request \$12,000 from the Finance Committee to Account #001-5-151-5302 for Town Counsel – Legal. Seconded by Pruitt. Approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.

There will be a detail of spending available at the Finance Committee Meeting

Updates

Trash Barrel Stickers are on sale for \$78.00 at the Collector/Treasurers' Office which is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. This sticker is good from July 1, 2008 – December 31, 2008.

Sign

Allen would like to have a sign saying "Welcome to Turners Falls – Home of the State Champions". We've got 1942 Baseball Team, I am not sure what year the Golf Team won the State, and our incredible Softball Team which has won four of the last five years' State Championships. We are putting together a Committee and obviously we will do some fund raising. We need help as to where we will get a sign. I know that the Pioneer sign was actually constructed by a parent of one of the students who was on the team. If anyone knows where we should go to obtain a sign, please let me know. Call me through the Town Hall next week. Also, if anyone is interested in being on the Committee, let me know. This sign would be a permanent sign posted at at least one entry route to the Town.

Montague Center Fireman's Assoc. Assembly and Public Demonstration, July 3, 2008

Allen made a motion to approve the use for Assembly and Public Demonstration for the Montague Center Firemans Association, the Montague Center Ball Field on July 3rd, 2008, from 6:30 PM until midnight with fifty plus participants. Seconded by Pruitt. Approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.

Request for a license to put a sign (or an object) in a right-of-way from the Northeast Foundation for Children

Carolyn Sailor is asking for a six bike rack behind the Shea Building. Would be daily and year round. (*No one made a motion, but it was seconded by Pruitt*). Discussion followed as this issue should be run by Tom

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Bergeron. Request has been placed on hold, pending approval by Tom Bergeron. *Approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.*

Request for Assembly and Public Demonstration from the Miller's Pub

Ed Tolzdorf and Tammy Berard, for July 12, 2008 from 1 PM to 3 PM. They expect 150 people. This is the Benefit Bike Run – Richard A. Robleski Scholarship Run from Frontier School. Applicant will contact DPW for road closing materials and will notify the neighborhood. The Police Chief has signed this. Discussion followed with the noise level of this run being brought up. Ross suggested that one of our Public Health people be there for the duration of time to listen to the noise. If there is an issue, the Police can be called in.

Again no one made a motion, but it was: Approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.

Award Property recently auctioned by Douglas Auctioneers

Ross: The auction was a highly successful event. We had some discretion about accepting all bids. We reviewed them today and accept all except a few.

Douglas Bilodeau read the letter he sent to the Board of Selectmen dated June 27, 2008. Letter is on file in the Selectmen's Office in the Town Hall.

- **74-78 J Street (Lot 31, Map 3)** property sold for \$27,300.00. Property was purchased by Richard Young, 84 Federal St., Millers Falls, MA.

Allen made a motion that the Select Board approve and sign the agreement between Richard Young and the Town for 74-78 J Street for \$27,300.00. Seconded by Pruitt. The amount that we are announcing is the amount that was bid plus a buyer's premium of 5%. The Town figure will be \$26,000.

- **25 Rod Shop Rd. (Lot 57, Map 19)** This was the property that had the unrecorded easement for the Bike Path. The purchaser was fully aware of that because it was made known prior to the auction, also during the auction, and he was not concerned about it. His thoughts were that he was going to leave it vacant anyway. Property was acquired by Adam T. Marchacos and/or his assignee/s, 246 Silver St., Greenfield, MA for \$7,350.00.

Ross: This was one property that we decided not to sell.

Douglas Bilodeau: We returned his deposit and with a letter saying that the property was not accepted.

Allen: We are assuming, of course, that the Buyer Premium is still there.

Douglas Bilodeau: No, I don't get paid unless we sell. Is there any reason for it not to be sold?

Ross: There were questions about multiple uses for that property, and we thought that there were possibilities that the Town felt were more important than selling it.

- **15 Rod Shop Rd. (Lot 64, Map 12)** Property sold for \$14,700.00 to James L. Bent, 75 North Division St., St. Johnsville, NY 13452 (Property has a big tower on it and a big building).

Allen made a motion to accept the bid for \$14,700.00 for 15 Rod Shop Rd. (Lot 64, Map 12) from James L. Bent and the Town of Montague. Seconded by Pruitt. Approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.

- **Letourneau Way (Lot 108, Map 14)** Property sold for \$1,050.00 to Kari Ann Wiles, 16 Letourneau Way, Turners Falls, MA.

Allen made a motion to accept the bid of \$1,050.00 for Letourneau Way (Lot 108, Map 14) from Kari Ann Wiles and the Town of Montague. Seconded by Pruitt. Approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.

- **Greenfield Rd. (Lot 28, Map 26)** Property sold for \$23,100.00 to Edward Wong, 1 Laurel St., Greenfield, MA

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Allen made a motion to place "on hold" the price of \$23,100 for Greenfield Rd., Lot 28, Map 26, to Edward Wong, and the Town of Montague, for up to one month. Seconded by Pruitt. Ross: We want to look into some more detail about the potential taking of the land. Approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.

Douglas Bilodeau: The only question I have is that I have to get back to him with results. If he says he wants to back out of the deal, he can back out of it.

Ross: My understanding is that is a risk that we take.

- **Rear Meadow Rd. (Lot 17, Map 42)** Property sold for \$23,100.00 to Steve Hoegner, P.O.Box 1852, North Adams, MA

Allen made a motion to accept the bid of \$23,100.00 for rear Meadow Rd. (Lot 17, Map 42) with Steve Hoegner and the Town of Montague. Seconded by Pruitt. Approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.

- **46 Dry Hill Rd. (Lot 28, Map 45)** Property sold for \$61,950.00 to Sonam Lama or assignee, 261 Greenfield Rd., South Deerfield, MA

Allen made a motion to accept the bid of \$61,950.00 for 46 Dry Hill Rd. between the Town of Montague and Sonam Lama. Seconded by Pruitt. Approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.

- **Main St. near Kells Rd. (Lot 50, Map 48)**

Doug Bilodeau: Property was withdrawn from the sale. There were five interested parties, who signed up and were interested, should the property become available. Of the five parties, I interviewed several of them and they were solely for conservation. They didn't want anybody to put a swimming area in there.

- **Ripley Rd. (Lot 55, Map 52) and rear Ripley Rd. (Lot 57, Map 52)** (the rear property was a land-locked piece of property). Property sold for \$94,500.00 to Samuel H. Lovejoy, 46 Main St., Montague, MA.

Allen made a motion to accept the bid of \$94,500.00 for Ripley Rd. (Lot 55, Map 52) and rear Ripley Rd. (Lot 47, Map 52) between the Town of Montague and Samuel H. Lovejoy. Seconded by Pruitt. Approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.

- **Richardson Rd. (Lot 44, Map 53)** Property sold for \$4,725.00 to William J. Sieruta, 453 St., Montague, MA
Allen made a motion to put "on hold" for two weeks the purchase or sale of Richardson Rd. (Lot 44, Map 53) for \$4,725.00 to William J. Sieruta. Seconded by Pruitt. Approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.

Ross: We have some issues with this and want a little time to pursue. Lot of wet land.

Doug Bilodeau: The party is aware of that and the under-bidder is also an abutter and they are both aware that the electric company has a right of way through it.

Allen: I was very impressed how the whole morning was handled and thought you did an excellent job.

Doug Bilodeau: I will notify all the people and get all the contracts out to Kopelman & Paige and the lawyers for these buyers, and notify both Mr. Wong and Mr. Sieruta. Is the next Selectmen's meeting in two weeks?

Allen: Yes, it is.

Doug Bilodeau: We'll meet then and after that for the following one. If you need any maps of any properties, I will gladly get them for you. The Electric Company was also notified about that.

Jeanne Golrick: Is the 5% Buyer Premium on all these different properties that we sold, the only fee that the Town pay to the auctioneer and the lawyer?

Doris Bilodeau: The auctioneer's fee comes from the buyer. The Town really has no expense.

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Town Administrator's Report

• **Discuss process for appointments to Airport Commission**

Ross: Sometime ago we voted as a Select Board to increase the Airport Commission from five to seven. There was some concern about whether there would be a residency requirement. It was eventually brought to Town Meeting and the vote there did not support a residence requirement. In a discussion about expanding the Airport Commission, and even before the decision to expand it, there were a lot of concerns about conflicts of interest and making sure that votes on the Airport Commission could go forward without undue complications and that was mostly in regards to lease conflicts; people that were either owning hangars or renting hangar space. So, we took our time, partly just because there were a lot of other things on our busy agenda and asked for people who had an interest in being on our Airport Commission to submit letters of interest. I think, fortunately over time, there were a number of letters of interest, and some from local, some from surrounding communities, some from people that fly, some from people who don't fly and that is where we are at. My sense is that we were going to discuss just a little bit about how we might evaluate the various interested parties and then make a decision at our next meeting.

Allen: What do you think our process should be?

Ross: There are about seven interested people. I think there has been a fair amount of interest in trying to keep things as local as possible if we could, and to avoid complications that might arise from conflicts of interest. In getting feedback from other sources, I had a sense that people who weren't necessarily pilots would have something to add to the discussion. I personally found that that the polarized atmosphere around the Airport over the last couple of years was certainly not very enjoyable for pilots or commissioners, and I think it was quite time consuming for everybody and it didn't seem to make the Airport very attractive nor did it enhance its' function. So, my interest is in people who can function well in a group, who might have an awareness that the Town has certain needs to try and make the Airport as self-sufficient as possible, that they can listen to people with difference of opinions, who can compromise, who are aware of legalities and who have some experience working with Town Departments and Town Government. I guess that is basically it; looking for a way to civilly and constructively move the Airport forward. I think fortunately from looking at the applications that we have and the letters of interest, that we have a possibility of really adding to the skill set and to the ability of trying to make it a more gratifying place for every participant. I think we have the possibility of having an airport that is going to contribute to the Town. I see that everybody has a list, they read it, they can contact who they think might be good candidates and then at the next meeting, and I am open to suggestions on this, that we ask the individual Select Board members who they think they might be for. Then we vote on it.

Discussion held regarding whether or not the Board of Selectmen should hold interviews for the positions on the Airport Commission and whether or not the Airport Commission was going to be involved in the process. A list of candidates will be forwarded to the Airport Commission and Airport Manager for their feedback and review. Individual Selectboard members will gather information about the candidates and establish their own criteria of what values they feel is important, then prioritize them to be voted publicly at the next meeting.

Airport Other

Peter Golrick: Some paperwork came across my desk late Friday afternoon, so it was too late to get it on the agenda and it is the annual Grant Assurances that I would ask you to sign. In the past you have had Town Counsel review them before signing. I am not sure exactly what the process is. These are the standard Grant Assurances for the Airport for the up-coming grant.

Abbondanzio: Peter, is there any change at all in the wording?

Golrick: I think it is a little bit different. I see they have some page sections corrected and on the back page, they don't have some other persons' name listed as the Chairman of the Airport Commission.

Pruitt: Is all the engineering work or whatever you get done at this point, on the project, paid directly from the grant?

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Golrick: Yes. The engineering work is paid for out of the grant and that is what helps. Gale Associates does most of the engineering work for us, and we always have an independent estimate done, so they give us what they propose to do with the dollars and give us a second copy with no dollars in it. We take that copy and hire one of several independent estimators. They go and they will plug in what they feel the numbers are. That is how we make sure that we are getting a fair contract. The engineering is all covered in the grants.

Ross: Is there a time limit on that?

Golrick: I think that Matt and FAA would like to have it back before the end of the next month. If you can do that at the next meeting that would be great. Once you get it done, I have to get it signed. I have to do it in front of Wendy to get it notarized. I have to have copies of my minutes authorizing me to do something.

Allen: Made a motion to go into Executive Session for Collective Bargaining with the understanding that we will come out afterwards into open session as a Personnel Board to vote. Seconded by Pruitt. Approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.

9:38 PM

Allen made the motion to go out of Executive Session. Seconded by Pruitt, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.

Allen makes a motion to grant step increases to non-union employees for the coming year with the understanding that all employees will be treated with parity, apropos step increases. Step increases will be granted to all non-union employees provided funding is coming from the departmental budget. Seconded by Ross, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.

Allen makes a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Pruitt, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.