

**SELECTMEN'S MEETING AGENDA
UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM
1 AVENUE A, TURNERS FALLS, MA
MONDAY, September 29, 2014**

Meeting was opened at 7:00 PM in the Upstairs Meeting Room. Present were Selectpersons, Mark Fairbrother, Chris Boutwell, Mike Nelson; Town Administrator, Frank Abbondanzio, Executive Assistant, Wendy Bogusz;

Approve minutes of August 11, 25, September 8, 15 and 22, 2014 if available – None available

Jon Dobosz, Director of Parks & Recreation, Unity Park Accessible Swing Project

Dobosz reads his letter to the Board dated 9/25/14 into the record. A different swing than originally planned will be installed Spring of 2015

Alan Charboneau, TFHS Football Parent, Request Use of public Property Avenue A/Third Street and Turnpike/Turners Falls Road “fill the football helmet” on October 4, 2014 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Charboneau is looking to hold a fundraising event at two intersections in town for Turners Falls football, in conjunction with other school activities scheduled on October 4.

Nelson makes the motion to approve the request by Alan Charboneau, TFHS Football Parent, Request Use of public Property Avenue A/Third Street and Turnpike/Turners Falls Road “fill the football helmet” on October 4, 2014 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM, insurance has been provided, and the Chief has signed off on it with the request to wear bright colors and no children under 17. Seconded by Fairbrother, approved. Boutwell – Aye, Nelson – Aye, Fairbrother - Abstain

Robert Trombley, WPCF Superintendent, FY 2015 Sewer Rate Hearing

Trombley: At a previous Selectboard meeting, 25 August 2014, my estimate of the FY 2015 sewer rates were presented. Since that time a meeting took place between the Town and the Southworth Company to discuss their concerns. The concerns expressed by Southworth were: Business climate for Southworth has been difficult this year; The existing contract between Southworth and the Town notes (section 4 (e)) notes, “surplus revenue accumulated from Normal Sewer User Fees shall be used to reduce the billing rate of all Normal User Fees in the following fiscal year”; The desire to reduce the sewer rates for all sewer users was expressed. The reduction would be accomplished through the use of 80 to 90% of the retained earnings.

The State certified amount of \$486,453 is available to the Town in the RE account from FY 2014. A table showing the use of various amounts of RE and the impact it has on the sewer rates is attached. History does show that varying amounts have been used over the years to mitigate rate increases. For fiscal years 2010 through 2013 the sewer rates did not change. Most recently, FY 2014, these funds were used as follows: Pay & Classification Study; Implementation of collective bargaining agreements; Prior year bills; Reduction of FY 2014 sewer rates; rates increased 3.7%; Emergency repairs to the Industrial Blvd. & Millers Falls Rd. sewer both for FY's 2013 & 2014. Here are my concerns whether we increase, keep the same, or reduce the rates: There is no guarantee that there will be substantial amounts of free cash at the end of any FY. History shows that rate stabilization has been accomplished using significant amounts of RE. The staff at the WWTP has been successful in reducing costs and tapping and expanding new sources of revenue. We feel confident that with Town support this positive trend can continue. An increase of 3.5% over time would serve to reduce the impact of a low amount of available RE in future years. In FY 2015 \$257,500 (53% of available RE) would support this increase. Continuing to build RE into the base may not be supportable long term. Maintaining the same rates as FY 2014 can be accomplished by using \$294,000. This would utilize 60% of available RE. The use of more RE leaves less available for unexpected expenditures and less for the following FY. In managing an aging plant, this is a concern. The Town is considering the establishment of a Stabilization account. At least initially RE would be used to build the account. The WWTP is considering a request to Town Meeting to use RE for several items not presently addressed in the current budget. I am not opposed to maintaining the same rates to assist Southworth and all the other sewer customers but be advised that this builds in another \$36,500 into the budget base for the following fiscal year which may or may not be sustainable based on revenues that can be realistically generated. I do not believe that reducing the rates would serve either the Town or Southworth in the long term. Should we have a bad year and RE is not substantial then we would all have to recover from a reduced rate to a then much higher rate. I would like to avoid this possibility and it is one of the reasons to build a Stabilization account. It is therefore my suggestion that the Selectboard consider either an increase of 3 to 4% or no increase in the sewer rates for FY 2015. The use of RE must be approved by Town Meeting. The first ½ fiscal year sewer rates can be set by the Selectboard contingent upon the Town Meeting vote. Any changes to the rates can be adjusted for the second ½ billing period.

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Present estimate: Rates per 1,000 gallons – 3.5% increase: I. Gill, Southworth & Strathmore; II. Turners Falls, Montague Center, Montague City, Lake Pleasant; III. 12 month Flat Rate; IV. Millers Falls

FY's 2010, 11, 12 & 13	2014	2015 proposed
I \$5.56	\$5.75	\$5.94/1,000 gallons
II \$6.00	\$6.22	\$6.44/1,000 gal.
III \$334	\$344	\$354/ FY
IV \$6.00	\$6.22	\$6.44/FY

Non – Contract Surcharges; Total Suspended Solids \$0.3002 per pound; Biochemical Oxygen Demand \$0.1850 per pound; Septage – no change In Town & Town of Gill = \$75/1,000 gallons; Out of Town = \$80/1,000 gallons. At the 25 August meeting a question was asked as to whether we should increase the septage rates if the sewer user rates increased. I believe the septage rates should remain the same, raising the rates may serve to reduce the number of loads and then also the amount of revenue. This would be a negative impact. Biosolids handling; Cost per dry ton \$310/dry ton. Effective 1 November 2014; Other – no change; Interest Rate – 14% per Annum; Demand Charge - \$5.00; Minimum Bill - \$36.00

Statewide sewer rate figures, calendar year 2012: The statewide 2012 range is \$210 - \$1,440, with an average of \$690 per household. Using the residential rate, 3.5% increase of \$6.44/1,000 gallons, the Montague average household bill based on the state usage figure of 90,000 gallons = \$579; using the actual Montague average flow of 60,178 gallons per residence, then the average annual bill becomes \$388 and the increase to the homeowner over FY 2012 is \$13.00. There may be some changes as I review my work and discuss with the Town Treasure and Accountant before the public hearing.

Fairbrother makes the motion for FY2015, Non – Contract Surcharges; Total Suspended Solids \$0.3002 per pound; Biochemical Oxygen Demand \$0.1850 per pound; Septage – no change In Town & Town of Gill = \$75/1,000 gallons; Out of Town = \$80/1,000 gallons. Seconded by Nelson, approved unanimously. Fairbrother – Aye, Boutwell – Aye, Nelson – Aye

Fairbrother makes the motion to allow Trombley to carryover 40 hours of vacation to next anniversary date. Nelson seconded. Voted unanimously. Nelson – Aye, Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother- Aye

**Pam Tierney, Black Cow Burger Bar, 127 Avenue A, Turners Falls
Special and One Day License - Application, Beer and Wine, Outdoor seating in front of restaurant during
Pumpkinfest, October 18, 2014 from 2:00 PM to 9:00 PM**

Boutwell abstains from this portion of the meeting and moves away from the table. Tierney would like to provide outdoor dining, with alcohol, during the Oct 18 event.

Fairbrother makes the motion to approve the request by Pam Tierney , Black Cow Burger Bar, 127 Avenue A, Turners Falls Special and One Day License - Application, Beer and Wine, Outdoor seating in front of restaurant during Pumpkinfest, October 18, 2014 from 2:00 PM to 9:00 PM Seconded by Nelson, approved Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson - Aye

Jeff Singleton, FRTA Alternate Member

There have been various meetings with the FRTA recently. Following the conversations, Singleton:

- Recommends the FRTA establish a committee now to make recommendations by next May regarding the state-mandated Comprehensive Service Analysis and energy policy
- Recommend making the FRTA assessment part of the FY16 budget process
- Recommend a public process to evaluate potential route change proposals over the coming winter, with a view to implement changes by the next fiscal year (FY16)
- Request FRTA cost out a half-day service expansion for the weekend and provide an explanation of the state funding formula before the FY16 budget discussion starts.

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Fairbrother makes the motion that Frank and Walter meet with Jeff to draft a letter to Tina at FRTA saying we strongly request and recommend an advisory committee be scheduled at the earliest possible moment. Seconded by Nelson. Approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother- Aye, Nelson – Aye

Fairbrother motions that Frank, Walter, and Jeff meet to draft a second letter addressing remaining points and bring it back to BOS to vote on. Seconded by Nelson, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Nelson – Aye, Fairbrother - Aye

**MJ Adams, Director of Community Development FCRHRA
Execute agreement between Town of Montague and FCRHRA CDBG FY14 Professional Services Contract**

Adams reports that the town needs to sign an agreement with FCRHRA, if the Selectboard would like FCRHRA to provide services for CDBG FY14 funds.

Nelson makes the motion to authorize the chair to sign the agreement between Town of Montague and FCRHRA CDBG FY14 Professional Services Contract. Seconded by Fairbrother, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson – Aye

Execute contract with Catlin & Petrovick Architects for Senior Center Planning Study Contract

Adams presented a contract to the Selectboard for Catlin and Petrovick Architects to be selected as the awardee for the senior center planning study.

Nelson makes the motion to sign the contract with Catlin + Petrovick Architects for the Senior Center planning Study project. In the amount of \$60,000. Seconded by Fairbrother, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson - Aye

Chip Dodge, Police Chief

Personnel Board: Hire Debra-Lynn Shedd as fulltime Dispatcher effective 9/30/14, Grade B, Step 1 at \$16.21/hour

Dodge: This candidate is our choice for an open dispatcher position following the interview process.

Nelson makes the motion to hire Debra-Lynn Shedd as fulltime dispatcher effective 9/30/14, grade B, Step 1 at \$16.21/hour. Seconded by Fairbrother, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson - Aye

Personnel Board: Approve Job Description for P/T Police Department Custodian

Dodge: Our current custodian is out on leave. In the process of putting together paperwork to replace him, I released we have no job description for a custodian at the police station.

Fairbrother makes the motion to approve the job description for the P/T police Department custodian. Seconded by Nelson approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Nelson – Aye, Fairbrother - Aye

Request to sign onto Western Mass. Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Agreement

Chief Dodge presented the Western Mass Law Enforcement MAA. There was discussion about when an officer can and cannot, as well as when they should and should not, work under the parameters of the MAA.

Fairbrother makes the motion to sign on to and adopt the Western Mass Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Agreement and review in 11 months. Seconded by Nelson, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Nelson – Aye, Fairbrother - Aye

Execute the contract/agreement between Med Care and The Town of Montague for Ambulance and EMD Services for the Town of Montague Residents.

To be discussed at a later date

Shea Theater

Community Development Discretionary Hearing: Shea Theater Visioning Process, \$1,000

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Abbondanzio: We were hoping to get a \$1000 from the Peer to Peer grant, but unfortunately we did not fit the guidelines of the grant. I am asking tonight for town funds to pay for Ms. J'Anthony's services.

Fairbrother makes the motion to approve the request for \$1,000 from the discretionary fund to pay for the services of Deborah J'Anthony for the Shea Theater visioning process. Nelson Seconded. Approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson – Aye

Appoint Civic Center Commission: Allen Fowler, Jamie Berger, Pam Allan, Suzanne LoManto

Fairbrother makes the motion to appoint Allen Fowler, Jamie Berger, Pam Allan and Suzanne LoManto to the Civic Center Commission. Seconded by Fairbrother, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson – Aye

Set up Visioning Forums

Forums to be set up on November 4 and 11, 2015 from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM at the Shea Theater. A Selectboard representative will be present

Strathmore Mill Complex (Frank Abbondanzio, David Jensen, Walter Ramsey)

Update on Development Options

Abbondanzio: Gives a background history of the property over the past few years. Town's goal is to get the property into the hands of a responsible owner. The tough world economy has hurt our ability to market the building. It's also been tough to market without water, sewer, and electric. Vehicle and pedestrian access are also difficult barriers. There needs to be discussion with First Light about access.

Potential Options:

1. Cut losses and put building on the open market. There is the potential though an irresponsible buyer could emerge and cause great legal issues for the town.
2. Demolish all or some of the buildings, but that is over a \$5 million dollar project. Partial demolition would be difficult with elevation differences of the buildings. There is also concern of undermining the canal wall.
3. Stay the Course. Stabilize the buildings and market them. Continue upgrading infrastructure. Tackle issues with access.

Jensen: There has been some positive interest from RFP's and a number of inquiries. All have failed because of lack of water, sewer, or electricity. Roof repairs needs to be done this year. Long term planning demolishing needs to be done. Lots of asbestos in that building. There are other hazardous wastes in the building. There is now potable water to the building.

Ramsey: Indeck property is in land court and approx.. \$11,000 is owed in taxes.

Nelson suggests that the town look towards removal of hazardous materials. He says this is a logical next step towards both rehabilitation, as well as demolition if that route is ultimately followed. It will need to be done for either next step, so we might as well do it.

Nelson makes the motion for the planning team to look further into hazardous material removal at the Strathmore and report back on October 27, 2014. Seconded by Fairbrother, approved unanimously. Boutwell - Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson - Aye

Town Administrators Report

Topics not anticipated in the 48 hour posting requirement

Abbondanzio: The FRCOG is applying for grant money for the regional dog shelter. There will be more discussion at the next meeting.

Nelson makes the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 PM. Seconded by Fairbrother, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson - Aye