

**SELECTMEN'S MEETING
UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM
1 AVENUE A, TURNERS FALLS, MA
MONDAY, November 13, 2017**

Meeting was opened at 7:00 PM in the Upstairs Meeting Room. Present were Selectpersons Chris Boutwell, Michael Nelson, Rich Kuklewicz, Town Administrator Steven Ellis, and Executive Assistant Wendy Bogusz. Kuklewicz makes introduction and announces meeting is being taped.

Approve Selectmen minutes of October 23, 30 and November 6, 2017 if available

- *Nelson makes the motion to approve the minutes of October 23, 2017. Boutwell seconded, unanimously approved. Nelson - Aye, Boutwell - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- *Nelson makes the motion to approve the minutes of October 30, 2017. Boutwell seconded, unanimously approved. Nelson - Aye, Boutwell - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- *Nelson makes the motion to approve the minutes of November 6, 2017. Boutwell seconded, unanimously approved. Nelson - Aye, Boutwell - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

Public Comment Period: Individuals will be limited to two (2) minutes each and the Board of Selectmen will strictly adhere to time allotted for public comment

Tegal shared that she and Ellis have had conversations regarding creating a Disability Commission. The Board decided to have some internal discussions and put it on the agenda for an upcoming meeting.

Mik Muller, Montague WebWorks

Presentation of new Town of Montague Website

Muller gave a presentation for the new website, and will be available at Town Hall once a week for the next five weeks so that people can come and ask him questions.

Michael Sullivan, Superintendent of Schools

Update on GMRSD Medicaid reimbursement situation

Sullivan: The school district has a \$900,000 problem related to Medicaid reimbursement. We're in the middle of negotiating a repayment plan and are legally pursuing having our medical billing company pick up this cost fully as opposed to the district needing to do it. The Federal Government allows states to use part of their Medicaid funding to pay for Medicaid services provided during the school day. Things like occupational therapy, physical therapy, feeding tubes, etc. qualify for Medicaid reimbursement. In 2009 some of the rules about what was reimbursable changed. At that same time the District Administration changed their service provider that assists with the billing. So in 2009, we've been following New England Medical Billing's lead in putting in for reimbursements, which included almost all of the paraprofessionals that work in the district. In April of 2017 we found out that many of the expenses associated with those paraprofessionals were not reimbursable. I called for a special meeting of the school committee and we made the information public. I found a firm with specialization in this area and the lawyer said, "You guys have 60 days within which you need to tell Mass Health that you think you've been receiving reimbursements you don't qualify for going back in time." We did that, but upon investigation we determined that almost 50% of the reimbursements we've been receiving have not been allowable, going back to 2009, to the tune of \$930,000. Mass Health said this does need to be paid back. So we're trying to figure out what kind of schedule of reimbursements we might be able to come up with. They've given us an oral commitment about the number of years that they want to provide us, but it isn't established in writing. Our lawyer has contacted New England Medical Billing and said, "We feel you're responsible for this situation," and so we will see how that plays out. I'm optimistic about the district not completely bearing the burden of responsibility for this. We've switched back to the Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative as of July 1st.

Bob McDonald, WPCF Superintendent

WPCF Status Updates and Projects to consider

McDonald: Through the month of September, we showed approximately a 50% sludge reduction. We continue to waste, and part of that was to get better control of our effluent quality. We felt that we had too many pounds in the system to handle. So we're hauling out 2-3 loads a week, and we're also composting. Going into October, things were running well until we got hit with 8-9 inches of rain. In that time period, we also got hit with a load of septic. We are planning this month to shift a little bit of how we run the process. Dr. Park at UMass has a process called ASSR, which is similar to what we run, and which we're going to incorporate into our treatment plant. Its outcome is the same that we're looking for (50% to 70% sludge reduction), but his is a little more controlled and a little more engineered than our process.

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McDonald presented a pamphlet that gives a history of the plant including some updates and that goes through what will be done in the month of November. The pamphlet will be handed out at a meeting on Wednesday at 10:00 AM with Dr. Parks, Grant Weaver, representatives from Mass CEC and Mass DEP, and some staff members.

McDonald: Looking toward the future, I talked with Greenfield Wastewater and with the Greenfield Director of Public Works and we're exploring the idea of collaborating on doing a coop anaerobic digester. We hope that if we do this, we would have a place to bring our sludge for free. We met with South Deerfield's Sewer Board last week and gave them a brief overview and proposal. I also want to meet with the Sewer Board here and invite Greenfield to come and explain their ideas. I'm not abandoning the Montague process. If the State says, "Stop doing the Montague process until you do major upgrades," I want to be able to compare the cost of doing an anaerobic digester versus us trying to do millions of dollars of upgrade and put us in a good position to protect our future. Once we get the towns involved together, we'll go to our State Representatives to see what kind of funding we can get. It can be anywhere between \$5 a \$9 million to build the digester, but if we split that four ways, our pay-off would be seven to ten years. I'd like to have a meeting by the end of November. Regarding the Solar Array, JK Muir is almost done with the feasibility study. Next week I'm going to apply for grant funding for the solar array. Also, the USDA gives good funding for renewable energy. The solar array would provide approximately 25% of the power for the treatment plant, which could be a reduction in budget by about \$40,000 to \$50,000 a year. Regarding the Millers Falls sewage, we have six years left in our contract in which our present sewage is going to Erving. If we did a new force main and install a small pump station, the payoff could be seven to nine years.

Execute Industrial Hauled Waste Permit with Lowell Regional Wastewater Utility

Nelson makes the motion to execute the Industrial Hauled Waste Permit with Lowell Regional Wastewater Utility. Boutwell seconded, unanimously approved. Nelson - Aye, Boutwell - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Bruce Hunter, FCRHRA

FY17 Montague CDBG - Sign Professional Services Contract for Rutter's Park Design Project; Town of Montague and GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc., \$57,400

Nelson makes the motion to authorize the Chair to sign the Professional Services Contract between the Town of Montague and GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc., for Rutter's Park Design Project in the amount of \$57,400. Boutwell seconded, unanimously approved. Nelson - Aye, Boutwell - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Town Administrator's Report

Update on Contract for professional services relative to Internal Investigation

The Town has entered into a contract for professional services with APD Management related to our ongoing internal investigation and the investigation has formally commenced.

Update on Boarding of Strathmore Building

The boarding is ongoing at the Strathmore Building and the building should be sealed up in the next week or so.

Topics not anticipated in the 48-year period

Ellis: The Town of Montague has been looking for over a decade at what the cost and building design would be for a new DPW facility. That committee had initially expected to share a proposal with the Town at the Annual Town Meeting last year. The proposal simply wasn't ready. They did get a lot of feedback from the community. They've been working along with Tighe and Bond over the course of the summer and early fall. Last Wednesday the Board moved to bring a particular proposal to the Town for placement on what we anticipated would be a February Town Meeting agenda. The cost of the building would be considerable; \$11.1 million is the initial projection. It makes certain conservative assumptions around what a final building design would be. All the figures would be further specified in an additional design phase. They made their decision looking at two options. One was in the vicinity of \$9.6 million, which had the building forgoing a number of design elements that the committee believed strongly were not the right compromises for the community to make given what was a marginal savings. The vote was unanimous. They will be bringing to a joint meeting of the Selectboard, the Finance Committee, and the Capital Improvements Committee on November 29th greater detail relative to what the specs and considerations are. It's my responsibility to emphasize to the public that we need a cost-effective solution. They agonized over the choices and

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did not see another appropriate solution that would give the Town what it needs at a dramatic savings from that figure. Lastly, this would result in the Town's abandonment and ability to dispose of and put to productive reuse their existing facility.

Other

Appoint Tom Sullivan to Tree Advisory Committee until June 30, 2018

Boutwell makes the motion to appoint Tom Sullivan to the Tree Advisory Committee until June 30, 2018. Nelson seconded, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Singleton: There's going to be a Battlefield Grant meeting summarizing the most recent findings of the study at Turners Falls High School on Thursday at 7:00 o'clock. Also, I was up at Dry Hill Cemetery and took the alternate route proposed. The cemetery has been cleared significantly.

Upcoming Events

- **Notice of Informational Meeting - Spinner Park Improvements:** Wednesday, November 15, 2017 at 6:00 PM in the Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls
- **Effective December 4, 2017 Thursday recycling and trash collection day will be changed to Friday for the following streets:** Unity Street from 1st Street to Millers Falls Road, Spring Street, Prospect Street, Central Street, Chestnut Lane, Park Street, Maple Street, Pleasant Street, Chestnut Street, Goddard Avenue, Riverside Drive, Grove Street, Hillside Avenue, Worcester Avenue, Broadview Heights, Wrightson Avenue, and Madison Avenue.

The next regularly scheduled Selectmen's Meeting will be held on Monday, November 20, 2017 at 7:00 PM at the Montague Town Hall, Upstairs Meeting Room, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA

Nelson makes the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 PM. Boutwell seconded, unanimously approved. Nelson - Aye, Boutwell - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye.

Documents and Exhibits:

- WPCF Status Updates and Projects to consider
- Industrial Hauled Waste Permit with Lowell Regional Wastewater Utility Contract
- FY17 Montague CDBG – Sign Professional Services Contract for Rutter's Park Design Project; Town of Montague and GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc. \$57,400
- Contract for professional services relative to Internal Investigation
- Appointment for Tom Sullivan to Tree Advisory Committee until June 30, 2018