

MONTAGUE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Accessible Via Zoom Only

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83065170159?pwd=Z7ioCPjgbTdgow0p6jUGAIDGL9WZA1.1>
Meeting ID: 830 6517 0159 Passcode: 853626

Wednesday, January 29, 2025, 3:30 pm

In Attendance:

CIC Members: Gregory Garrison (GG), Chris Menegoni (CM), Lynn Reynolds (LR), Jason Burbank (JB), Ariel Elan (AE) (arrived at 3:36PM)

Town Staff: Christopher Nolan-Zeller (CNZ) – Assistant Town Administrator

Meeting called to order 3:30PM, GG Presiding

1. Call to Order and Approve any outstanding meeting minutes: 1/22/25

MOTION to approve the minutes of 1/22/25, by GG, LR Seconded. CM-AYE, GG- AYE, LR- AYE, JB-AYE, AE-ABSENT. MOTION PASSED

2. Review of Committee report to February 12, 2025 Special Town Meeting

MOTION to approve the report to Special Town Meeting as presented by CM, LR Seconded. CM-AYE, GG- AYE, LR- AYE, JB-AYE, AE-ABSTAIN. MOTION PASSED

3. Review of Selectboard Capital Article Requests to Annual Town Meeting
 - a. FRTA bus stop improvements (Industrial Blvd/Millers Falls Rd) (\$60,000)

CNZ presented the request, explaining that this project was majority-funded by a state grant awarded to the Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA), but a \$60,000 gap was present between the grant award and the cheapest of four engineering alternatives provided by Fuss & O'Neill on FRTA's behalf. The Selectboard had suggested this project as an appropriate use for some of the Town's remaining funds from the Cannabis Impact Fees collected after the opening of 253 Pharmacy, which abuts the site.

AE asked whether additional funds were available from Cannabis Impact Fee revenue to support a different alternative which could include bus shelters. CNZ responded that it appeared there was more than enough funding in this account to cover more than the cheapest alternative, if that was desired.

LR asked whether the bus stop was busy. CNZ responded that FRTA had provided ridership data for the two fixed routes that service these two stops, which revealed they are used on a frequent and consistent basis.

GG expressed support for having this request be expanded to fund Alternative #2, which includes bus shelters rather than Simme seats, due to availability of Cannabis Impact Fee funds. AE expressed agreement.

JB asked whether a shelter could be added later if the other improvements took place initially. GG responded that it should be feasible, and could make a good project for welding/sheet metal students at Franklin County Technical School (FCTS) to build the shelters and bolt them in place. CNZ agreed to discuss this proposal with Fuss & O'Neill.

MOTION to recommend the article as presented, and to strongly encourage the future installation of bus shelters through either an appropriation or FCTS resources, AE Seconded. CM-AYE, GG- AYE, LR- AYE, JB-AYE, AE-AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

b. Montague Center Complete Streets Design (\$91,200)

GG asked for clarification that the \$91,200 was exclusively requested to fund design costs and not construction. CNZ responded that this was correct.

AE asked whether other engineering quotes had been solicited. JB emphasized this, noting that the quote provided was equal to about 20% of estimated construction costs, which seems high.

AE suggested the Committee vote this today, but be prepared to explain that due diligence is being done to reduce the design costs for this project.

MOTION to recommend \$91,200 to fund the design costs for the Montague Center Complete Streets project by GG, CM Seconded. CM-AYE, GG- AYE, LR- AYE, JB-AYE, AE-AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. Review slate of all capital requests: updates and discussion

GG noted that the 2003 dump truck requested for replacement by the DPW still seems to be in decent shape, and he felt it could sustain at least one more year, noting this was preferable to needing to bond for the \$365,000 purchase.

CM expressed agreement, noting that this truck had a new cab installed in recent years, and only exhibited normal wear and tear. He noted a desire to know what other upgrades would be necessary to keep the truck functioning another few years, and noted that the DPW's fleet appears to be functioning well.

AE expressed skepticism over whether repair would be worthwhile, and noted that the item would not have been added to the previous 5-year capital plan if not truly needed. AE requested reconvening with the DPW Superintendent.

GG explained that FY26 capital requests totaled about \$4.8 million, with \$3 million of that being the sewer re-lining project that would require borrowing. He added that the Capital Stabilization Fund had a balance of about \$2.5 million, and if the 10-wheel dump truck were removed, the balance would stay above \$1 million.

CM agreed that the DPW Superintendent should be invited for a brief discussion at the start of the next meeting. JB recommended asking for a repair history of each of the two trucks. AE agreed, noting that recent winters have been unpredictable.

LR asked if the committee should be concerned about price increases due to inflation. GG noted that rising costs and interest rates were more for the Finance Committee to be concerned with, rather than CIC. AE noted that CIC's role in vetting the prudence of requests is impactful to the Finance Committee.

5. Next steps in the FY26 Capital Planning Cycle

GG explained the committee would meet the following week to vote recommendations on the remaining articles, requesting the full packet of requests be included with next week's meeting materials. GG recommended including the previously-approved letter to Special Town Meeting also be distributed at Annual Town Meeting.

6. Topics not anticipated in the 48 hour posting requirements

None.

7. Establish next meeting date(s)

The next meeting would be virtual at 3:30PM on 2/5.

8. Adjournment

MOTION to close the meeting at 4:22PM by GG, LR Seconded. CM-AYE, GG-AYE, LR-AYE, AE-AYE, JB-AYE. MOTION PASSED

Respectfully Submitted,

Christopher Nolan-Zeller