

# **MONTAGUE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE**

## **MEETING AGENDA**

### **Meeting Accessible Via Zoom Only**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86041506632?pwd=TnpctboYY1nr3>

[3AZAbD7mOalQcG5Ag.1](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86041506632?pwd=TnpctboYY1nr3) or Phone: (646) 931-3860

**Meeting ID: 860 4150 6632      Passcode: 068549**

**Wednesday, April 9, 2025 from 3:30 to 5:00 pm**

#### **Votes May Be Taken**

1. Call to Order and Approve any outstanding meeting minutes: 1/29/25; 2/5/25
2. Review and vote outstanding capital requests
  - a. DPW Replace 2007 Ford F-150 pickup (\$65,000)
  - b. Keith Footbridge Abatement (\$67,900)
3. Review of committee report to May 2025 Annual Town Meeting
4. Next steps in the FY27-31 5-year capital plan update
5. Topics not anticipated in the 48 hour posting requirements
6. Set next meeting date and time
7. Adjournment

# 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

# MONTAGUE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE

## Meeting Minutes

### Meeting Accessible Via Zoom Only

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88366365837?pwd=RCK20VO2m7lxsIG74BkB1tXjuHDCeL.1>

**Meeting ID: 883 6636 5837 Passcode: 982186**

**Wednesday, February 5, 2025, 3:30 pm**

#### **In Attendance:**

CIC Members: Gregory Garrison (GG), Chris Menegoni (CM), Ariel Elan (AE), Lynn Reynolds (LR) (arrived at 3:51PM), Jason Burbank (JB) (arrived at 4:00PM)

Town Staff: Christopher Nolan-Zeller (CNZ) – Assistant Town Administrator, Sam Urkiel (SU) – Public Works Superintendent

#### **Meeting called to order 3:37PM, GG Presiding**

1. Call to Order and Approve any outstanding meeting minutes: 1/29/25

CNZ explained that minutes from the previous meeting had not been finalized yet, and requested their approval be tabled to the next meeting.

2. Discussion with DPW Superintendent Sam Urkiel; review of vehicle replacement requests
  - a. Replace 2003 International 7400 10 wheel dump truck (\$365,000)
  - b. Replace 2002 International 4900 dump truck (\$325,000)
  - c. Replace 2001 Ford E450 camera van (\$70,000)
  - d. Replace 2007 Ford F-150 pickup (\$65,000)

GG asked how urgent the two dump truck replacements were, and how often they were utilized.

SU responded that these trucks were used for winter treatment on major roads. With changing regulations for the purchase of diesel trucks, towns are being encouraged to purchase these vehicles now, due to the necessity of having functional equipment, and the impracticality of fully-electric plow trucks.

AE asked for clarification on whether both trucks were on the capital plan for replacement this year. SU responded that they were.

GG thanked SU for explaining the regulatory situation, noting that the Finance Committee would further review this request. SU reiterated that with the state considering adoption of the Advanced Clean Truck rule, purchasing heavy-duty vehicles could soon become more complicated and expensive.

AE asked about diesel emissions. SU responded that these vehicles require Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF), which is nitrogenous and traps some emissions from being released. He added that the state would likely exempt plow vehicles if the Advanced Clean Truck rule is adopted, but this is uncertain.

AE asked about the difference between the two trucks requested for replacement. SU responded that both have similar uses, including plowing, spreading, asphalt and gravel hauling, and the moving of trailers and equipment.

AE asked if both trucks are used concurrently for snow removal. SU responded that they were, and the installation of a wingplow extended the plowable area so fewer passes were necessary.

CM asked if other vehicles could have a wingplow attachment. SU responded that only the 10-wheelers can handle this, and the department is still waiting for the new 10-wheel truck that was ordered last year.

LR asked whether recent federal activities were affecting any of the department's operations. SU answered that he expected his department to be relatively unaffected.

AE asked when the new 10-wheel was expected to arrive. SU responded that the cab and chase have been built, and we are waiting on the body, then paint, with a hopeful arrival date of May-June.

CM asked for an update on the prospect of seeking grant funding to replace the F-150 currently used for errands with an electric vehicle. SU responded that this vehicle has 175,000 miles on it, but runs well, and expressed that it could be an excellent fit for an electric replacement. GG noted that the Ford Lightning could be purchased for \$67,200. SU noted that this amount could be reduced by taking advantage of incentives.

### 3. Review and vote all Capital Article Requests to Annual Town Meeting

*MOTION to recommend the Clean Water Facility (CWF) request to purchase a used mini-excavator for \$60,000 by AE, CM Seconded. CM-AYE, GG-AYE, LR-AYE, AE-AYE, JB-ABSENT. MOTION PASSED*

*MOTION to recommend the CWF request for a portable emergency generator for \$30,000 by AE, CM Seconded. CM-AYE, GG-AYE, LR-AYE, AE-AYE, JB-ABSENT. MOTION PASSED*

*MOTION to recommend the CWF request for the Lake Pleasant station generator for \$37,800 by AE, CM Seconded. CM-AYE, GG-AYE, LR-AYE, AE-AYE, JB-ABSENT. MOTION PASSED*

*MOTION to recommend the CWF request for two (2) thickened sludge pump replacements for \$104,000 by AE, CM Seconded. CM-AYE, GG-AYE, LR-AYE, AE-AYE, JB-ABSENT. MOTION PASSED*

*MOTION to recommend the Department of Public Works (DPW) request for Phase 2 of the sewer collection system rehabilitation project for \$3,000,000 by AE, LR Seconded. CM-AYE, GG-AYE, LR-AYE, AE-AYE, JB-ABSENT. MOTION PASSED*

*MOTION to recommend the DPW request for replacement of the 2003 International 7400 10-wheel dump truck with wingplow and spreader for \$365,000 by AE, GG Seconded. CM-AYE, GG-AYE, LR-AYE, AE-AYE, JB-ABSENT. MOTION PASSED*

*MOTION to recommend the DPW request for replacement of the 2002 International 4900 dump truck for \$325,000 by AE, LR Seconded. CM-AYE, GG-AYE, LR-AYE, AE-AYE, JB-ABSENT. MOTION PASSED*

*MOTION to recommend the DPW request for replacement of the 2001 Ford E450 camera van for \$70,000 by AE, GG Seconded. CM-AYE, GG-AYE, LR-AYE, AE-AYE, JB-ABSENT. MOTION PASSED*

GG requested that voting on the replacement of the 2007 F-150 pickup be delayed until CNZ had worked with SU to evaluate grant opportunities.

*MOTION to recommend the DPW request for Oakman Street slope stabilization for \$60,000 by AE, LR Seconded. CM-AYE, GG-AYE, LR-AYE, AE-AYE, JB-AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.*

GG recommended that the \$200,000 requested for Meadow Road guardrail replacement be included in bonding.

*MOTION to recommend the DPW request for Meadow Road guardrail work for \$200,000 by AE, CM Seconded. CM-AYE, GG-AYE, LR-AYE, AE-AYE, JB-AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.*

No vote was taken on the DPW Discretionary fund request, as a final number would be based on the balance of this fund as of March 1, 2025.

*MOTION to recommend the DPW request for alley and non-Chapter 90 road paving for \$30,000 by AE, CM Seconded. CM-AYE, GG-AYE, LR-AYE, AE-AYE, JB-AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.*

*MOTION to recommend the Libraries' request for Millers Falls Library storefront renovation for \$39,000 by AE, LR Seconded. CM-AYE, GG-AYE, LR-AYE, AE-AYE, JB-AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.*

*MOTION to recommend Parks & Recreation's request for Unity Park playground improvements for \$125,000 by AE, LR Seconded. CM-AYE, GG-AYE, LR-AYE, AE-AYE, JB-AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.*

*MOTION to recommend the Selectboard's request for FRTA bus stop improvements at Industrial Blvd and Millers Falls Rd for \$60,000 by LR, AE Seconded. CM-AYE, GG-AYE, LR-AYE, AE-AYE, JB-AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.*

*MOTION to recommend the Selectboard's request for Montague Center Complete Streets Design for \$91,200 by CM, LR Seconded. CM-AYE, GG-AYE, LR-AYE, AE-AYE, JB-AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.*

4. Next steps in the FY26 Capital Planning Cycle

CNZ and GG would work on drafting the CIC's report to Annual Town Meeting. The committee would reconvene in March to discuss an update to the 5-year capital plan.

5. Topics not anticipated in the 48 hour posting requirements

None.

6. Establish next meeting date(s)

The next meeting would be remote and held jointly with the Finance Committee at 5:30PM on 2/26.

7. Adjournment

*MOTION to close the meeting at 4:35PM by GG, LR Seconded. CM-AYE, GG-AYE, LR-AYE, AE-AYE, JB-AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY*

Respectfully Submitted,

Christopher Nolan-Zeller





## Annual Town Meeting

### SPECIAL ARTICLE REQUEST – CAPITAL EXPENSE

Budget Year  
**FY 26**

*This form is intended for use with capital article submissions  $\geq$  \$25,000 with a lifespan of 5+ years. For major building projects, please consult the Town Administrator.*

***Please complete this form in its entirety! Initial Submission due 10/31/2024.***

Check Here if this an expedited request for Winter 2024 Special Town Meeting

Department: Selectboard Submitted by: Chris Nolan-Zeller

Item/Project Cost: \$67,900 Date Prepared: 04/07/2025

Item/Project Title: Keith Footbridge Abatement

#### Proposed Article Wording:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow, or otherwise provide the sum of **\$67,900**, or any other amount, for the purpose of abating and removing utilities from the Keith footbridge over canal, including any and all incidental and related costs, or pass any vote or votes in relation thereto.

#### Detailed Description for Background Materials: *(Provide a full description of the item or service. Use attachments as needed.)*

As part of the proposed demolition project of the former Strathmore Mill site at 20 Canal Road, the Keith footbridge, spanning the Power Canal and connecting the complex to Canal Street, will need to be removed.

The footbridge is owned by FirstLight Hydro Generating Co., who have agreed to fund and procure construction services for its removal. However, the Town is responsible for mitigating hazardous materials on the Town-owned utility lines which are located on this bridge. The requested funds are necessary for the engineering and abatement associated with removing asbestos-containing materials from the Town's utility lines on the footbridge.

After the removal of hazardous materials, DPW staff will cut and cap the utility lines, after which the bridge will be ready for removal by FirstLight's contractors.

**Scoping Questions**

**Yes**

**No**

*Please elaborate in the comments box at bottom of the page*

Do you have a written estimate or proposal for the scope of work?  
*If yes, attach the estimate*

Is there a lease option for this expense?

Will this item or project replace a capital asset?

Will this create ongoing costs or savings?

Will this leverage grant or other external funding?

Is this request identified on the Capital Improvement Plan?

**Describe how the project/ purchase will be managed**

*Who will manage procurement and execution of the project? Will external resources be required for design, engineering, procurement, or construction oversight?*

Procurement will be managed by the Assistant Town Administrator, with assistance from the Town’s project engineers at Tighe & Bond, who will also be tasked with providing design services for the abatement, as well as construction oversight.

**Why is it essential that the Town makes this investment now?**

*Make your argument for why this project is necessary and timely. Articulate the benefits of the project. If necessary, describe the consequences of inaction.*

The demolition project for the former Strathmore Mill complex in the Canal District of Turners Falls is based on the threat posed to the community by the presence of these unsafe and decaying structures. The buildings on the site are in the initial stages of collapse, and must be addressed in a timely fashion to prevent the immense harm to the health and safety of residents, as well as to the ecology of the Connecticut River, if an unplanned collapse were to occur. Abatement of hazardous materials on the Town-owned utility lines of the Keith footbridge is a necessary prerequisite to further construction work on the project.

**Relative Priority** : Your assessment of the how important this is to the Town at the present time.

Critical Importance  
XOX

Highly Important  
O

Moderately Important  
O

**Comments and additional information:**



# Montague Capital Improvements Committee

## May 2025 Annual Town Meeting Report

Approved by the CIC X/X/2025

### I. Background

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The Capital Improvements Committee (CIC) received requests and began meeting with Montague department heads and regional school district leaders beginning in December 2024 to evaluate capital needs as outlined in their Special Article Requests. The Special Article Request forms that were adopted and implemented in 2017 continue to serve as the framework for outlining and presenting the capital needs of each department.

This year's report of recommendations summarizes the committee's findings following several months of meetings, research, and deliberation and relies upon the same approach to evaluation developed last year. The grading system, explained below, is consistent with that used in past years.

This year the CIC initially received twenty (20) capital article requests. Over the course of four months, the proposers were brought in for presentation and discussion of their requests. Through these discussions, and as pertinent information became available, some of the original requests were reformulated, combined, disaggregated, withdrawn, or otherwise modified. This report presents the final slate of seventeen (17) capital requests and the CIC's recommendations following its investigation into said requests. Although we have been fortunate to make substantial capital investments in recent years due to favorable economic conditions, there is a large backlog of deferred capital needs. These costs cannot be funded in the operating budget without impacting service delivery.

The CIC's long-term planning strives to stabilize the tax impact of major projects through careful project scheduling, strategic reserve fund creation, and appropriate debt management.

## II. Approach to Evaluation of Requested Articles

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### ***Defined Criteria/Rationale Used in Assessing Special Article Requests***

***Public Safety:*** Does the capital improvement rectify a safety concern or otherwise prevent a potential public safety issue?

***Cost Avoidance:*** Will the capital improvement save the town financially?

***Service Interruption:*** Does the capital improvement prevent an interruption in services?

***Other-*** Any other reason identified and relevant by the CIC.

### **Grading System**

***Recommend:*** Given appropriate budget space, the committee believes that the capital improvement should be funded. The CIC evaluation does not formally consider the question of financial capacity, which is left to the Finance Committee and Selectboard.

***Recommend with Reservations:*** The committee would generally recommend the capital improvement but may find that elements of the project scope are unclear or incomplete, that it lacks a convincing professional cost estimate, or doesn't address or account for some long-term needs and concerns of the town.

***Does not Recommend:*** The committee does not recommend moving forward with the capital improvement as presented. This may be due to the nature or timing of the project, the apparent need for the project, the availability of scope or cost information, or other reasons.

### III. Recommendations on Requested Articles

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#### 1. Summary Table of Fiscal Year 25 Submissions and Recommendations

The table below offers a summary view of special article requests and CIC recommendations for FY24 capital project spending. Overall, spending associated with recommended articles equals \$648,092. These recommendations are further explained in section II.

##### Summary of Final Motions/Recommendations

Request	Amount	Approved	Vote
Clean Water Facility- Purchase Used Mini-Excavator	\$ 60,000	Yes	5-0
Clean Water Facility- Portable Emergency Generator	\$ 30,000	Yes	5-0
Clean Water Facility- Lake Pleasant Station Generator	\$ 37,800	Yes	5-0
Clean Water Facility- Thickened Sludge Pump Replacement (x2)	\$ 104,000	Yes	5-0
Public Works/Selectboard- Phase 2 – Sewer Collection System Rehabilitation	\$ 3,000,000	Yes	5-0
Public Works – Replace 2003 International 7400 10 Wheel Dump Truck	\$ 365,000	Yes	5-0
Public Works- Replace 2002 International 4900 Dump Truck	\$ 325,000	Yes	5-0
Public Works – Replace 2001 Ford E450 Camera Van	\$ 70,000	Yes	5-0
Public Works- Replace 2007 Ford F-150 Pickup	\$ 65,000	Yes	5-0
Public Works – Oakman St Slope Stabilization	\$ 60,000	Yes	5-0
Public Works- Meadow Rd Guardrail Work	\$ 200,000	Yes	5-0
Public Works – Equipment and Major Repairs (Discretionary)	\$ 36,470	Yes	5-0

Public Works- Alley and Non-Ch90 Road Paving	\$ 30,000	Yes	5-0
Millers Falls Library Storefront Renovation	\$ 39,000	Yes	5-0
Unity Park Playground Improvements	\$ 125,000	Yes	5-0
FRTA Bus Stop Improvements (Industrial Blvd/Millers Falls Rd)	\$ 60,000	Yes	5-0
Montague Center Complete Streets Design	\$ 91,200	Yes	5-0
Keith Footbridge Abatement	\$ 67,900		

## 2. FY24 Articles Recommended for Consideration by Annual Town Meeting

**CWF Purchase Used Mini-Excavator (\$60,000):** The CWF performs many on-site and off-site routine updates and special projects requiring the use of an excavator. The facility is also responsible for managing its own groundskeeping, excavation, and lifting work when necessary. The CWF has borrowed other municipal excavators and spent over \$25,000 on the rental of a small excavator to perform site work on multiple projects for calendar year 2024, and would rather invest that money in the future into purchasing a used excavator to have on site consistently.

**Cost avoidance:** This equipment will create cost-savings by allowing the department to avoid rental costs, which would otherwise be needed frequently for staff to handle in-house projects.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade. **Recommend***

### **CWF Portable Emergency Generator (\$30,000)**

The current back-up portable generator is circa 1981 and is overdue for replacement. A recent inspection performed by the service technician, PowerGen Technologies LLC, has recommended replacement as parts on the 1981 generators have become obsolete and cannot be replaced if the generators fail. DEP/MGL also requires operable and serviceable generators at all wastewater pumping stations in order to prevent a backup and discharge of untreated sewage during power outages. The portable generator is a redundant back-up power supply to any out-of-service fixed generators located at any of the eight (8) pump stations.

**Public Safety:** A portable generator is needed in case of emergencies or inoperability of any of the fixed-location generators at the pumping stations. If a fixed-location generator fails, the portable unit is deployed to keep the system functioning, preventing unsanitary and costly backups and discharges of untreated sewage.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade. **Recommend***

### **CWF Lake Pleasant Station Generator (\$37,800)**

As part of the planned continuation of the nine (9) pump station generator replacements, this generator serves the Lake Pleasant Rd pump station in Lake Pleasant and is circa 1981. The current generator at this station was originally a portable generator that was made semi-permanent due to a previously failed stationary generator.

An inspection performed by the service technician, PowerGen Technologies LLC, has recommended replacement as parts on the 1981 generators have become obsolete and cannot be replaced if the generators fail. DEP/MGL also requires operable and serviceable generators at all wastewater pumping stations in order to prevent a backup and discharge of untreated sewage during power outages.

**Public Safety:** A replacement generator is needed to keep the system functioning in case of power outages or interruptions, preventing unsanitary and costly backups and discharges of untreated sewage.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

### **CWF Thickened Sludge Pumps Replacement x2 (\$104,000)**

The CWF has historically utilized three (3) thickened sludge pumps to pump sludge from the gravity thickener and two (2) sludge holding tanks to feed liquid sludge to the press for dewatering, and/or feed liquid sludge to a 9,000-gallon tanker for disposal. Since the loss of the papermills, the facility no longer needs to utilize all three (3) pumps, needing only the use of two (2). (Redundancy is required as per MGL)

The old pumps are piston style pumps circa 1981 (drives from 2010) and are an outdated and extremely dangerous pump style, having exterior rotating parts which pose a serious safety risk of death or serious injury to staff.

(Mentioned in a recent Dept of Labor Standards/OSHA inspection February 2024.) This old-style pump also requires higher level of maintenance requirements as opposed to several other pump styles due to its wear parts. The typical life expectancy of a piston pump is 10-20 years, depending on how well it has been maintained and how many hours in operation.

The update will replace two (2) of the pumps with an appropriate pump style, replace some of the deteriorated piping on both the inlet and discharge sides of the pump with stainless steel, and update controls. CWF staff will procure the equipment and perform the demolition and installation of the pumps in-house. The third pump will be completely removed from service and disposed of as per Town Policy/MGL.

If the pumps are not replaced, they face imminent failure, which would prevent the facility from removing sludge/solids, which will in turn cause a significant non-compliance with permitted solids removal requirements with EPA/MA DEP.



**Public Safety:** The current piston-style system is outdated and no longer considered safe for CWF staff. In addition, the risk of inoperability of the facility if the pumps were to fail creates an environmental and health hazard to the Connecticut River, while also burdening the Town with liability for fines and penalties.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: Recommend*

### **Phase 2 – Sewer Collection System Rehabilitation (\$3,000,000)**

As part of the Town’s combined sewer overflow (CSO) LTCP update, the Town contracted with the engineering firm Wright-Pierce to develop short and long-term implementation plans for improving the maintenance, operation, and condition of its wastewater collection system. The requested funding is needed to complete the work that has been designated as either Priority 1 or Priority 2 in need of completion. Completing this work within a 10-year period is a condition of the Town’s National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, meaning that implementing this rehabilitation is the Town’s legal obligation.

This work includes the rehabilitation of 15 pipes (4,867 linear ft.) in Turners Falls, as well as 22 pipes (4,592 linear ft.) in Millers Falls, in addition to the rehabilitation of 74 manholes in Millers Falls. Phase 2 is a continuation of the ongoing Phase 1, which is expected to be completed by Spring 2025, and includes the rehabilitation of 53 manholes. Phase 1 has been funded through a \$500,000 Rural / Small Town Development Grant from the state.

**Service Interruption:** The Town is obligated under its NPDES permit to implement the repairs identified in the LTCP. The work identified by the project engineer as being Priority 1 or 2 is essential to the continued functionality of the Town’s wastewater collection system, of which much of the current infrastructure is 75-100 years old. Currently, several areas of excessive inflow and infiltration lead to undue strain on operations by increasing the overall volume of water in the system. Especially during heavy rainfall events, this also increases the likelihood of CSO discharges, which are an environmental and health hazard, and can further expose the Town to liability for noncompliance with its NPDES permit.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: Recommend*

### **DPW Replace 2003 International 7400 10 Wheel Dump Truck (\$365,000)**

At 22 years old, the current truck has reached the end of its useful life. Replacement of this vehicle is needed for year-round highway maintenance including clearing winter roads and hauling construction materials to and from job sites.

**Service Interruption:** Purchase will replace an aging 2003 International 7400 with wing plow and spreader. The truck has undergone significant repairs including replacement of the dump body in 2017. This replacement request follows the capital improvement plan, which recommends a 20-year replacement cycle for large dump trucks to help the Town avoid

unpredictable repair costs, service interruptions, and difficulty finding parts for outdated vehicles.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

#### **DPW Replace 2002 International 4900 Dump Truck (\$325,000)**

At 23 years old, the current truck has reached the end of its useful life. Replacement of this vehicle is needed for year-round highway maintenance including clearing winter roads and hauling construction materials to and from job sites.

***Service Interruption:*** Purchase will replace an aging 2002 International 4900 with spreader. This replacement request follows the capital improvement plan, which recommends a 20-year replacement cycle for large dump trucks to help the Town avoid unpredictable repair costs, service interruptions, and difficulty finding parts for outdated vehicles.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

#### **DPW Replace 2001 E450 Camera Van (\$70,000)**

The DPW's camera van contains special closed-circuit television (CCTV) equipment, allowing staff to monitor the Town's sewer collection system for problems as well as for regular inspection reports. The current van dates back to 2001, and was originally an ambulance prior to its acquisition by the department. This purchase will replace the current van with a new vehicle.

***Service Interruption:*** The 2001 van is beyond the capital improvement plan's recommended 12-year replacement cycle for most vehicles to help the Town avoid unpredictable repair costs, service interruptions, and difficulty finding parts for outdated vehicles.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

#### **DPW Replace 2007 Ford F-150 pickup (\$65,000)**

The DPW currently utilizes a 2007 Ford F-150 for use primarily by its custodian to travel between Town buildings while transporting cleaning supplies and equipment. The truck is also used at various times for the movement of furniture and goods between Town facilities. This purchase will replace the current truck with a new vehicle. Additionally, the department views this vehicle as an excellent opportunity for electrification, and intends to pursue grant funding to replace it with an electric vehicle.

***Service Interruption:*** The 2007 truck is beyond the capital improvement plan's recommended 12-year replacement cycle for most vehicles to help the Town avoid unpredictable repair costs, service interruptions, and difficulty finding parts for outdated vehicles.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

### **DPW Vehicles and Equipment Fund (\$36,470)**

This fund provides accessible funding for the DPW superintendent to fund purchases of and/or major repairs to DPW vehicles and equipment. Expenditures from this fund are governed by a new Policy adopted in 2022. That policy requires selectboard approval for any expenditure exceeding \$25,000. The policy also indicates that the fund should be replenished at Annual Town Meeting to an amount not to exceed \$100,000, based on the amount in the fund as of March 1. Due to the high volume of other DPW capital requests for FY26, the Selectboard voted to recommend the fund be replenished to the reduced level of \$75,000.

Based on a balance of \$38,530 in the DPW discretionary account as of March 1, this appropriation is expected to return the total DPW discretionary fund balance to approximately \$75,000 at the end of the current fiscal year.

The DPW vehicle/equipment inventory is current and in good condition. The anticipation of large unexpected expenses is not anticipated—but may still occur. The CIC’s preference is for requests for light pickup trucks be included in the normal capital improvements schedule instead of through the discretionary account. This is due to the cost of new light-duty trucks now approaching and even exceeding \$70,000.

**Service Interruption:** Should a vehicle or large piece of equipment fail (without this appropriation) it is quite possible that said equipment could remain out of service, potentially hindering snow removal or disrupting time-sensitive construction project while the Town identifies a method to appropriate funding to repair or replace.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

### **DPW Alley and Non-Ch90 Road Paving (\$30,000)**

The condition of most of our alleyways is poor to fair. Alleys have been traditionally undermaintained because they are not eligible for state Chapter 90 funds (traditionally the source for funding pavement projects). The alleys are important for public safety and sanitation.

The DPW intends to conduct the paving “in-house” using DPW equipment and labor.

**Public Safety:** The alleys in the densely developed downtown are important for public safety and sanitation.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

### **Millers Falls Library Storefront Renovation (\$39,000)**

Recent improvements to this Library branch have included new HVAC installation and replacement of both the windows and backdoor. However, one impediment to the building's energy efficiency is the glass storefront on the front of the building. The storefront leaks cold air in the summer and hot air in the winter. The glass makes the immediate area around it quite hot from the spring through early fall and creates an uncomfortable “fishbowl” effect for library staff and patrons. Additionally, the front door regularly lets in water during heavy rains, which has led to interior floor damage. The current door is not accessible.

It is the intention of this project to replace the storefront with a regular building façade, incorporating large, but standard-sized windows in keeping with the aesthetic of the neighborhood and an ADA compliant automatic front door. This project is estimated to cost \$39,000.

This project was first explored several years ago. Though it was at first designated an FY27 project, the timing of this request has been swapped with the Carnegie Library roof project, given the likelihood of a major construction project involving that building. Additionally, new flooring was recently installed---it would be prudent to prevent further rain seepage from entering the building and damaging this new flooring.

**Cost Avoidance:** This project will create cost savings in the form of reduced energy consumption for the building. It will also help prevent expensive repairs from the continued infiltration of water into the building via the entryway.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

### **Unity Park Playground Improvements (\$125,000)**

This project will include the replacement of the rubber, pour-in-place (PIP) surfacing as well as the tube slide in the Unity Park playground. The current PIP surface is beyond its useful life and has been cracking and pulling up in numerous areas due to high traffic. There is approximately 2,500 sq. feet of PIP surfacing that must be replaced. A new tube slide will replace the current one that was purchased and installed in 2000 and is also beyond its useful life.

Unity Park is not only the most popular public park in Montague, but it is also one of the most popular play areas in Franklin County. The playground receives constant patronage, which speaks to the importance of committing to routine maintenance. The life of rubber pour-in-place surfacing is approximately ten years, and the current PIP surface is original to Phase 1 of the Unity Park Improvement Project from 2012, so it is slightly beyond its useful life. The replacement of this surface is not only critical to the safety of our patrons but also maintains

ADA regulations relative to public play spaces. Attempts have been made in the last couple of years to patch torn areas, but these efforts have resulted in less-than-acceptable results.

The current blue tube slide is one of the most popular and beloved items in the playground area. Unfortunately, it is also quite old, and even pre-dates the tenure of the Parks & Recreation Director as it was installed in the year 2000. The accepted life of playground equipment is approximately fifteen years. The Parks & Recreation Department has started to invest more time, energy and resources into maintaining the slide over the last couple of years, and this item should be replaced to ensure the safety of all users.

**Public Safety:** If not replaced, the worn PIP surfacing constitutes a tripping hazard, and the dated tube slide will present a possible safety risk for patrons of the park.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

### **FRTA Bus Stop Improvements (Industrial Blvd/Millers Falls Rd) (\$60,000)**

The Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA) was awarded a grant from MassDOT's Shared Streets and Spaces program in the amount of \$178,376 to fund improvements to the two bus stops on either side of Millers Falls Road at the intersection with Industrial Boulevard. Proposed improvements included four possible alternates, consisting of either Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB) or HAWK Beacons for pedestrian crossing, and of either Simme-Seats or bus shelters for the comfort and convenience of transit users.

A deficit of \$57,287 exists between the grant award and the project engineer's opinion of probable cost for the least expensive of the four alternates, which includes RRFBs and Simme-Seats. As a result, the FRTA is now approaching the Town and other stakeholder organizations, such as the Franklin Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority (FCRHRA), to request assistance with funding this shortfall.

If the FRTA is unable to secure sufficient additional funds to support the project, there is a risk that the grant funds would need to be surrendered and the project would not move forward. The project as designed would improve safety for all users at a bus stop location served by two bus routes (23, 32), at an intersection which becomes quite busy during peak hours.

**Public Safety:** The current configuration of this intersection lacks any pedestrian facilities, despite the fact that the bus stops on both sides of the street are utilized by passengers of two bus routes which experienced a combined ridership of over 28,000 during FY24. Riders looking to access the Airport Industrial Park, Franklin County Technical School, or the Franklin County Regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority from the eastbound stop must cross Millers Falls Road, with a posted speed limit of 40 miles per hour and no crosswalk.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

### **Montague Center Complete Streets Design (\$91,200)**

The Town applied for and was awarded the sum of \$499,682.80 from MassDOT's Complete Streets program to support three improvements in Montague Center. These include North Street/Main Street/Town Common improvements, bicycle accommodations on Main Street, and improvements at the FRTA bus stop on Main Street in Montague Center. While the grant is eligible to fund construction phase services, including administration and oversight, other necessary expenses must come from other sources.

The Town has received quotes to provide the additional services that are necessary for the projects to move forward. Items that require funding include Final Design (\$74,400), Project Specifications (\$6,400), and Bid Documents and Bid Tabs (\$10,400), totaling \$91,200.

The substantial award from MassDOT for these three projects in Montague Center presents a rare opportunity to leverage outside resources for improving vehicular, pedestrian, and bicyclist safety in the village center. Allowing these projects to advance presents significant cost savings as compared to the Town relying on its own capital funds to cover nearly \$500,000 worth of construction costs on these essential improvements. This area has been the subject of several discussions related to local traffic safety in recent years, with community input identifying traffic calming and bike/pedestrian safety improvements in this neighborhood as top priorities.

**Public Safety:** The high speed of motorists travelling through the Montague Center village has been a topic of concern among local residents for several years. The primary motivation behind the Town's successful grant application was to implement traffic-calming measures that will improve the safety of the road for vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and bicyclists, reducing the risk of serious and fatal collisions.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

### **Keith Footbridge Abatement (\$67,900)**

As part of the proposed demolition project of the former Strathmore Mill site at 20 Canal Road, the Keith footbridge, spanning the Power Canal and connecting the complex to Canal Street, will need to be removed.

The footbridge is owned by FirstLight Hydro Generating Co., who have agreed to fund and procure construction services for its removal. However, the Town is responsible for mitigating hazardous materials on the Town-owned utility lines which are located on this bridge. The requested funds are necessary for the engineering and abatement associated with removing asbestos-containing materials from the Town's utility lines on the footbridge.

After the removal of hazardous materials, DPW staff will cut and cap the utility lines, after which the bridge will be ready for removal by FirstLight’s contractors.

**Public Safety:** The demolition project for the former Strathmore Mill complex in the Canal District of Turners Falls is based on the threat posed to the community by the presence of these unsafe and decaying structures. The buildings on the site are in the initial stages of collapse, and must be addressed in a timely fashion to prevent the immense harm to the health and safety of residents, as well as to the ecology of the Connecticut River, if an unplanned collapse were to occur. Abatement of hazardous materials on the Town-owned utility lines of the Keith footbridge is a necessary prerequisite to further construction work on the project.

**FY25 Request Review**

While not relevant to the development of the FY26 Annual Town Meeting warrant, the CIC wishes to provide a summary of capital article requests that were submitted as part of the FY25 Capital Requests Cycle. Each of these projects received funding as requested in the FY25 budget year, with authorization received at either the Annual Town Meeting in May 2024 or Special Town Meeting in February 2025.

Submitted by	Project Description	Appropriation	CIC
CWF	Montague Center Pump Station Rehab	\$283,000	RECCOMEND
CWF	Conference Room/Break Room Renovation (Main Generator Project Phase 2)	\$48,500	RECCOMEND
DPW	Equipment and Major Repairs (Discretionary)	\$64,218	RECCOMEND
DPW	Replace 10 Ton Trailer	\$40,401	RECCOMEND
DPW	Town Hall Parking Lot Rehabilitation	\$296,000	RECCOMEND
DPW	Alleyway Paving	\$30,000	RECCOMEND
DPW	Manhole and Sewer Pipe Re-lining	\$78,500	RECCOMEND
DPW	10 Wheel Dump	\$365,000	RECCOMEND
GMRS	Hillcrest Pavement and Sidewalks	\$175,500	RECCOMEND
Libraries	New Main Branch Feasibility Study	\$150,000	RECCOMEND
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$1,531,119</b>	

## **FY27 Preview**

The CIC discussed several projects in great detail that were not included in the FY26 slate of capital requests. These article were not ultimately ready for the CIC to recommend to Annual Town Meeting, but the CIC expects to receive updated requests for upcoming Town Meetings.

- GMRSD Sheffield Admin repointing/exterior work
- GMRSD Sheffield Admin window replacements
- GMRSD Sheffield Admin ADA restrooms
- GMRSD New Elementary School Feasibility Study (match for leveraging MSBA grant)
- CWF Secondary and primary clarifiers upgrade
- Off-road sewer lines relining
- Swamp Road bridge rehab match (for leveraging MassDOT Small Bridge grant)
- Avenue A traffic signal replacements (2)

## **6 Year Capital Plan**

The updated 6-Year Capital Plan is in the process of being developed. The CIC is currently taking inventory from all existing studies of capital assets (facilities, utilities, roads, vehicles, etc) to develop a central, prioritized capital plan with a 6-year planning horizon.

Respectfully,

Gregory Garrison, Chair

Jason Burbank

Ariel Elan

Chris Menegoni

Lynn Reynolds