

FINANCE COMMITTEE and SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM, 1 AVENUE A, TURNERS FALLS, MA
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2020
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The Chair opened the meeting

#1 Meeting was opened at 7:01 PM by virtual attendance in the in Upstairs Meeting Room

- **Finance Committee members participating remotely:** Jen Audley, Fred Bowman, Greg Garrison, John Hanold, Chris Menegoni and Francia Wisniewski
- **Selectboard members participating remotely: Rich Kuklewicz and Chris Boutwell (arrived 7:19 PM). Michael Nelson was absent.**
- **Others participating remotely:** Town Administrator Steve Ellis, Town Clerk Deb Bourbeau, Parks Director Jon Dobosz, and Executive Assistant Wendy Bogusz.
- The Chair announced that the meeting is being recorded by the Town of Montague via Zoom and asked if anyone else was recording the meeting. No one else was recording the meeting. Remote participation for both members and the public was provided by Zoom. **The link to the Zoom recording is** <https://vimeo.com/460629357>.

#2 Town Administrator's Updates

- Updates on Financial Policies and Financial Planning Projects. Steve Ellis and Rob Addelson will meet Thursday September 17 to review five draft policies and Steve Ellis, Jen Audley, and Josh lively will meet to discuss Capital Planning on Monday September 21. A first review of the five draft policies by the Finance Committee is anticipated at their September 30th meeting..
- The Capital Improvements Committee will meet on September 23rd, but anticipates continuing to expect submissions by early November.
- The anticipated CARES funding of **\$750,000** for COVID-19 expenses will continue to be clarified. There will be more information on this at the September 21st Selectboard meeting.

#3 FY21 Special Town Meeting Warrant October 13, 2020

Town Administrator Steve Ellis announced a final warrant approval deadline of September 28, with mailing on September 29. Ms. Audley suggested that Town Meeting members be warned to "save the date" sooner. Mr. Ellis presented, for discussion and approval by the Selectboard, the draft warrant for the meeting, which is scheduled for 6:30 PM at the new DPW Garage.

***Articles 10 and 11:** Ms. Bourbeau explained these articles as more efficient for setup and more consistent with other elections; she anticipates final action by the Massachusetts Legislature.

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Selectboard Moved:

To approve and endorse draft Articles 10 and 11 for the Special Town Meeting warrant.

Vote: Kuklewicz –Aye, Boutwell –Aye

* **Article 3:** Mr. Dobosz described this article on the Montague Center Park Survey; the boundary markers are unclear and he is still working on obtaining quotes for a surveying effort. Ms. Audley observed that the job is small, but complicated by involving five parcels. Mr. Kuklewicz raised the issue of raising the amount up to \$7,500 but is willing to wait for the warrant deadline to get a firmer number. Ms. Wisniewski suggested holding off on voting this article until a future meeting, but withdrew the suggestion after review of potential meeting dates.

Selectboard Moved:

To approve and endorse draft Article 3 for the Special Town Meeting warrant.

Vote: Kuklewicz –Aye, Boutwell –Aye

Finance Committee Moved:

To endorse draft Article 3 for the Special Town Meeting warrant, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote: Menegoni–Aye, Bowman-Aye, Wisniewski-Aye, Garrison-Aye, Hanold-Aye, Audley –Aye

*Article 1: Mr. Ellis reviewed the reduction of certain department budgets to help offset the reduction in expected state aid and local receipts. The net impact of a \$109,000 reduction in the town operating budget is the result of:

- Increasing the IT budget by \$4,000
- Increasing the Shared budget for telephone expenses by \$2,000
- Decreasing the Town Counsel budget by \$10,000
- Decreasing the Public Building Utilities budget by \$35,000
- Decreasing the Veterans Services budget by \$10,000
- Decreasing the Employee Benefits budget for health insurance by \$60,000

This article will reduce the use of taxation by \$109,000

Selectboard Moved:

To approve and endorse draft Article 1 for the Special Town Meeting warrant.

Vote: Kuklewicz –Aye, Boutwell –Aye

Finance Committee Moved:

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To endorse draft Article 1 for the Special Town Meeting warrant.

Vote: Menegoni–Aye, Bowman-Aye, Wisnewski-Aye, Garrison-Aye, Hanold-Aye, Audley – Aye

*Article 2: Mr. Ellis reviewed that this article was originally recommended for the Annual Town meeting for both the roof and chimney work. The chimney work that was approved at the Annual Town Meeting has been completed. The roof work still needs to be done, but during the chimney work it was noted that the roof would require more work than originally anticipated. Therefore the amount for roof repairs has since been increased from \$40,000 to \$50,000.

Selectboard Moved:

To approve and endorse draft Article 2 for the Special Town Meeting warrant.

Vote: Kuklewicz –Aye, Boutwell –Aye

Finance Committee Moved:

To endorse draft Article 2 for the Special Town Meeting warrant, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote: Menegoni–Aye, Bowman-Aye, Wisnewski-Aye, Garrison-Aye, Hanold-Aye, Audley – Aye

* **Article 4:** Mr. Ellis described this article for Shea Theatre Fire Protection costs as a town responsibility resulting from a thorough inspection of the theatre. Ms. Wisnewski stated that she was a member of the Shea Board of Directors, but would still vote.

Selectboard Moved:

To approve and endorse draft Article 4 for the Special Town Meeting warrant.

Vote: Kuklewicz –Aye, Boutwell –Aye

Finance Committee Moved:

To endorse draft Article 4 for the Special Town Meeting warrant, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote: Menegoni–Aye, Bowman-Aye, Wisnewski-Aye, Garrison-Aye, Hanold-Aye, Audley – Aye

* **Article 5:** Mr. Ellis described this article as a legal necessity to treat the Bond Premium realized on the sale of bonds for building the Department of Public Works Garage. The sponsor of the Article is changed to the Town Accountant.

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Selectboard Moved:

To approve and endorse draft Article 5 for the Special Town Meeting warrant.

Vote: Kuklewicz –Aye, Boutwell –Aye

Finance Committee Moved:

To endorse draft Article 5 for the Special Town Meeting warrant.

Vote: Menegoni–Aye, Bowman-Aye, Wisnewski-Aye, Garrison-Aye, Hanold-Aye, Audley –
Aye

* **Article 6:** Mr. Ellis described this article as a recurring annual article. Comcast makes a payment to the town for the benefit of MCTV, but the town is required to make a formal appropriation in order to pay it to MCTV.

Selectboard Moved:

To approve and endorse draft Article 6 for the Special Town Meeting warrant.

Vote: Kuklewicz –Aye, Boutwell –Aye

Finance Committee Moved:

To endorse draft Article 6 for the Special Town Meeting warrant.

Vote: Menegoni–Aye, Bowman-Aye, Wisnewski-Aye, Garrison-Aye, Hanold-Aye, Audley –
Aye

* **Article 7:** Mr. Ellis described this article as a combination of six separate articles for expeditious approval, most of them detailed in material presented (for information only) at the Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Hanold proposed that they be divided into three articles, with no changes to titles or amounts, to highlight the different origins. Discussion revealed that either the subdivision or original combination were acceptable, but Ms. Audley proposed that the two cannabis–related lines be segregated since this is the first year they have occurred. Mr. Kuklewicz observed that in the future they will automatically be directed to the destination funds. The new breakdown would be:

Article 7A:

1. \$73,652 from Free Cash to the Town Capital Stabilization Fund, representing the FY20 revenue from Cannabis Sales Tax
2. \$35,791 from Free Cash to the Cannabis Impact Fee Stabilization Fund, representing the FY20 revenue from Cannabis Impact Fee revenue.

Article 7B

1. \$61,507 from Taxation to the Town General Town Stabilization Fund

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2. \$82,259 from Taxation and \$118,000 from Free Cash, totaling \$200,259 to the Town Capital Stabilization Fund
3. \$50,000 from Taxation and \$68,000 from Free Cash, totaling \$118,000 to the OPEB Trust Fund.
4. \$39,185 from Taxation to the GMRSD Stabilization Fund
5. \$68,000 from Free Cash to the FCTS Stabilization Fund

Selectboard Moved:

To approve and endorse draft Article 7 for the Special Town Meeting warrant, but splitting it into two articles, one for the revenues from Cannabis sales tax and impact fees for \$109,443, and one for the remaining appropriations into stabilization funds and the OPEB trust fund, for \$486,951.

Vote: Kuklewicz –Aye, Boutwell –Aye

Finance Committee Moved:

To endorse draft Article 7 for the Special Town Meeting warrant, but splitting it into two articles, one for the revenues from Cannabis sales tax and impact fees for \$109,443, and one for the remaining appropriations into stabilization funds and the OPEB trust fund, for \$486,951., with funding sources as noted above. Vote: Menegoni–Aye, Bowman-Aye, Wisniewski-Aye, Garrison-Aye, Hanold-Aye, Audley –Aye

* **Article 8:** This article restores funding of the Reserve Fund to the level appropriated at the Annual Town Meeting, after an emergency appropriation by the Finance Committee on August 24, 2020. The sponsor of the article is changed to the Finance Committee.

Selectboard Moved:

To approve and endorse draft Article 8 for the Special Town Meeting warrant.

Vote: Kuklewicz –Aye, Boutwell –Aye

Finance Committee Moved:

To endorse draft Article 8 for the Special Town Meeting warrant, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote: Menegoni–Aye, Bowman-Aye, Wisniewski-Aye, Garrison-Aye, Hanold-Aye, Audley –Aye

* **Article 9:** This article combines \$32,000 for design tasks and \$50,000 for construction costs for resolution of remaining Burn Dump spending. Mr. Ellis described the proposed separation of

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funding between Free Cash and Capital Stabilization as aligning the construction costs more closely with prior appropriations for construction.

Selectboard Moved:

To approve and endorse draft Article 9 for the Special Town Meeting warrant.

Vote: Kuklewicz –Aye, Boutwell –Aye

Finance Committee Moved:

To endorse draft Article 9 for the Special Town Meeting warrant, to be funded with \$32,000 from Free Cash and \$50,000 from Town Capital Stabilization.

Vote: Menegoni–Aye, Bowman-Aye, Wisnewski-Aye, Garrison-Aye, Hanold-Aye, Audley – Aye

#4 Topics not anticipated within the 48-hour posting requirements

None

The next meeting will be September 30, 2020

#8 Motion to Adjourn

Selectboard Moved:

To adjourn at 8:31 PM.

Vote: Kuklewicz –Aye, Boutwell –Aye

Finance Committee Moved:

To adjourn 8:32 PM.

Vote: Menegoni–Aye, Bowman-Aye, Wisnewski-Aye, Garrison-Aye, Hanold-Aye, Audley – Aye

Respectfully submitted by John Hanold

List of Documents and Exhibits:

- Draft Warrant for October 13, 2020 Special Town Meeting (below)
- Detail of revenue reductions and budget reductions proposed dated September 13, 2020.
- Proposed Funding Sources for Warrant

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**SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
TOWN OF MONTAGUE
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
October 13, 2020**

Franklin, ss.

To either of the Constables of the Town of Montague in the County of Franklin:

GREETING:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby directed to notify and warn the Inhabitants of the Town of Montague qualified to vote in Town affairs to meet in the Montague DPW Garage, 128 Turners Falls Road, Turners Falls, Massachusetts, on Tuesday, October 13, 2020, at 6:30 P.M. and to act on the following articles and any motions which may be presented.

ARTICLE 1. To see if the Town will vote to amend the vote taken under Article #6 of the June 13, 2020 Annual Town Meeting, which appropriated \$10,481,863 for the maintenance of the several departments of the Town, said sums to be allocated in accordance with Schedule III, Budget, by reducing the amount to be raised by taxation by \$109,000, so that the total amount raised by taxation is reduced from \$10,481,815.70 to \$10,372,815.70, and to amend **Schedule III: Town Operating Budget**, as shown on the **Revised Schedule III: Town Operating Budget**, set forth below, with all other line items remaining unchanged, or to pass any vote or votes in relation thereto.

Revised Schedule III: Town Operating Budget

Dept. #		Article #6 06/13/20 FY21	Revised FY21
	GENERAL GOVERNMENT		
151	Town Counsel	90,000	80,000
155	Information Technology	58,100	62,100
159	Shared Costs	72,759	74,759
190	Public Bldg Utilities	141,320	106,320
	HUMAN SERVICES		
543	Veterans' Services	98,400	88,400

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MISCELLANEOUS		
910	Employee Benefits	2,298,057 2,238,057
Total Town Operating Budget		10,481,863 10,372,863

ARTICLE 2: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow, or otherwise provide the sum of \$50,000, or any other amount, for the purpose of replacing the Council on Aging roof and any other necessary exterior repairs, including any and all incidental and related costs, or pass any vote or votes in relation thereto.

(Council on Aging Request)

ARTICLE 3: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow or otherwise provide the sum of \$5,000, or any other amount, for the purpose of hiring professionals to survey the parcels comprising Montague Center Park in support of its future redevelopment or use, and anything incidental or related thereto, or to pass any vote or votes in relation thereto.

(Parks & Recreation Commission Request)

ARTICLE 4: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow or otherwise provide the sum of \$4,000, or any other amount, for the purpose of making necessary improvements to the Shea Theater fire protection system, and anything incidental or related thereto, or to pass any vote or votes in relation thereto.

(DPW Request)

ARTICLE 5: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide the sum of \$820.49, or any other amount, which represents the net premium paid to the Town upon the sale of the Town's \$5,785,000 DPW Facility Bonds dated January 22, 2020, to pay costs of the DPW facility authorized by the vote of the Town passed March 29, 2018, and to reduce the amount authorized to be borrowed for such project by such amount, as set forth in M.G.L. c. 44, §20 or any other applicable law, or pass any vote or votes in relation thereto.

(Treasurer Request)

ARTICLE 6: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow or otherwise provide the sum of \$12,500, or any other amount, for the purpose of purchasing and installing cable related equipment for MCTV and anything incidental or related thereto, or pass any vote or votes in relation thereto.

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(Selectboard Request)

ARTICLE 7: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow or otherwise provide the following sums, or any other amount, for the purpose of increasing the special purpose funds set forth below, or pass any vote or votes in relating thereto.

Fund	Amount
Town General Stabilization Fund	\$61,507
Town Capital Stabilization Fund	\$273,911
Town OPEB Trust Fund	\$118,000
Town Cannabis Impact Fee Stabilization Fund	\$35,791
GMRSD Stabilization Fund	\$39,185
Franklin County Technical School Stabilization Fund	\$68,000
Total:	\$596,394

(Finance Committee Request)

ARTICLE 8. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow or otherwise provide the sum of \$50,000, or any other amount, for the purpose of increasing the Fiscal Year 2021 Reserve Fund budget, or pass any vote or votes in relation thereto.

(Selectboard Request)

ARTICLE 9. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow or otherwise provide the sum of \$82,000, or any other amount, for the purpose of obtaining engineering, design, permitting, bidding, oversight and construction services related to the capping of the former Montague Burn Dump, and anything incidental or related thereto, or pass any vote or votes in relation thereto.

(Selectboard Request)

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Article 10. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectboard to petition the General Court for special legislation to change the date of the Annual Town Election from the third Monday in May of each year to the third Tuesday in May each year, or pass any vote or votes in relation thereto.

The petition for special legislation shall take the following form; provided, however, that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Select Board approves amendments to the bill before enactment by the General Court which are within the scope of the general public objectives of the petition, or pass any vote or votes in relation thereto.

AN ACT RELATIVE TO THE DATE FOR THE ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION IN THE TOWN
OF MONTAGUE

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in the General Court
assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:*

SECTION 1. Section 1 of Chapter 9 of the Acts of 1974 is hereby amended by striking the word "Monday" in the first sentence and replacing it with the word "Tuesday".

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

(Town Clerk Request)

Article 11. To see if the Town will vote to amend Section 2 from the Town's General Bylaws, relative to the date of the Annual Town Election, as show below, provided, however, that any amendments approved pursuant to this article shall not take effect unless and until the Legislature enacts amendments to Chapter 9 of the Acts of 1974 relative to the date of the Annual Town Election, as set forth in Article 10 of the Warrant for this Town Meeting, or pass any vote or votes in relation thereto.

The bylaw amendment will strike section 2 of the Town's General Bylaws, which currently reads as follows:

ANNUAL AND SPECIAL MEETINGS

Section 2: The annual meeting for the election of Town officers required by law to be elected by ballot shall be held on the first Monday in March of each year. *(This section was rescinded at a

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Special Town Meeting on 11/15/1973, by the following act passed by the General Court on February 22, 1974.)

Chapter 9, Acts of 1974, "An act relative to the dates of the Annual Town Election and Town Meeting held in the Town of Montague". Be it enacted as follows: Notwithstanding the provisions of any general or special law or by-law of the Town of Montague to the contrary, said Town shall hold the Annual Town Meeting for the election of Town officers and the determination of such matters as by law or vote of the Town are required to be elected or determined by official ballot on the third Monday in May of each year. All other business shall be considered at a meeting to be held on the first Saturday of May of each year. Separate warrants may be posted for said election and business meetings.

And replace it with the following:

ANNUAL AND SPECIAL MEETINGS

Section 2: Notwithstanding the provisions of any general or special law or by-law of the Town of Montague to the contrary, said Town shall hold the Annual Town Meeting for the election of Town officers and the determination of such matters as by law or vote of the Town are required to be elected or determined by official ballot on the third Tuesday in May of each year. All other business shall be considered at a meeting to be held on the first Saturday of May of each year. Separate warrants may be posted for said election and business meetings.

(Town Clerk Request)