

## MONTAGUE FINANCE COMMITTEE

### Final Minutes

Wednesday, December 14, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

This meeting was held via Zoom and recorded: <https://vimeo.com/981486355>

**PRESENT:** Chair Francia Wisnewski, Vice-Chair Greg Garrison, Clerk Dorinda Bell-Upp, Chris Menegoni, John Hanold, Jennifer Waryas and Fred Bowman, members; Accountant Carolyn Olsen; Town Administrator Steve Ellis, Assistant Town Administrator Walter Ramsey; resident Ariel Elan and Scribe BettyLou Mallet.

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER** – The meeting was called to order by Chair FW at 6:00 p.m. The meeting is being recorded by CO and aired on MCTV. All members present.

**2. REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES – November 9 and December 7, 2022** – All members received the draft minutes of November 9, 2022 and December 7, 2022 for their review. No questions. **On a motion by JH and second by GG, the minutes of November 9, 2022 were approved as written. DB-U, aye; CM, aye; FB, aye; JH, aye; GG, aye; JW, aye; FW, aye.**

**On a motion by GG and second by JH, the minutes of December 7, 2022 were approved as written. DB-U, aye; CM, aye; FB, aye; JH, aye; GG, aye; JW, aye; FW, aye.**

### **3. UPDATE DPW DISCRETIONARY ACCOUNT PROPOSAL FROM CIC**

The Finance Committee members received the draft proposal on the DPW's discretionary account from the CIC for their review. GG stated the CIC met with the DPW's Superintendent Tom Bergeron and discussed how the discretionary account should be utilized. The account will continue to be used for larger repairs and purchasing equipment that they need for work. Anything over \$25,000 should be brought before the Selectboard. Otherwise, the account is to be utilized the same as in past practices. The FinCom members asked a few questions regarding the \$100,000 amount and SE explained he remembers two occasions where it had been cut to \$50,000 or \$75,000 however in general, the account had remained at \$100,000. Walter Ramsey also added that March 1<sup>st</sup> of any given year was established as the cutoff date as it is past the snowplowing season. Also, the discretionary account was utilized as past practice rather than a formal policy.

**On a motion by GG and second by JH, the Finance Committee recommends the Selectboard's approval of the DPW Discretionary Account Proposal submitted by the CIC. DB-U, aye; CM, aye; JH, aye; GG, aye; JW, abstained; FB, aye; FW, aye. (Vote 6 aye; 1 abstention).**

### **4. UPDATES FROM TOWN ADMINISTRATOR**

**FY24 Preliminary Budget Overview** – SE stated the FinCom now has a working budget file. He and CO met today and discussed the budgets that have all been submitted on time. In reviewing the preliminary FY24 budget, the Finance Committee will see overall, it is in pretty good shape. There are several increases to note where CO has inserted key discussion points; i.e. The Clean Water Facility (3.4%) and Airport (35%). The MEDIC budget is no longer needed so therefore, the liability insurance is now under the insurance budget. SE also stated the Selectboard has had conversations regarding the Farmers Market and unanimously approved to proactively support it with sustainable funding rather than short-term with the goal to grow the program. The Committee is asked to review the budget workbook and

submit any questions as well as requests to meet with certain department heads to FW and CO prior to the January meeting.

FW also mentioned to the Committee about the scribe position and will be touching base with JW and SE regarding previous conversations about advertising for the position.

JW asked for a 3-year history as well as a forecast for the Airport Commission as the increase in the draft budget is significant. CO will create information and submit for the FinCom to review.

Walter Ramsey placed a list of capital requests on the screen for the committee to review. He stated there are a total of 21 capital requests and 9 non-capital (less than \$25,000) proposed for the Winter Town Meeting and May Annual Town Meeting. The largest request comes from the Clean Water Facility with the screw pumps replacement as well as the septic receiving station. The Montague Center Park improvements is another request as well as the Colle roof repair. SE encourages the FinCom members to review the Selectboard meeting agendas which are posted every Thursday.

**Historic Use of Free Cash and Options for FY24 Recommendations** – CO spoke with the Committee regarding Free Cash. She shared the historical figures on the screen for the members to review. She explained the use of utilizing Free Cash from 2015 through 2023 and asks the committee at some point during the budget process to follow the policy and discuss how to apportion the Free Cash out.

**5. REVIEW BUDGET CALENDAR** – The members received the latest budget calendar for their review. They are aware it is a work-in-progress but it is a good base to start with. There were no questions.

**6. FUTURE MEETING TOPICS** – The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 4, 2023. FW stated she will be out of the country on January 10 so therefore will not be available for the January 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. GG will Chair the meeting.

**7. TOPICS NOT ANTICIPATED WITHIN 48 HOURS OF POSTING** – None

**8. ADJOURNMENT** – On a motion by FB and second by JH, the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m. DB-U, aye; FB, aye; CM, aye; JH, aye; GG, aye; JW, aye; FW, aye.

Respectfully submitted,

**BettyLou Mallet**  
Scribe

Meeting materials: Agenda 12/14/22; Draft Minutes Montague Finance Committee November 9, 2022 and December 7, 2022; Town of Montague Policy Governing the Expenditure of Discretionary Capital Spending in the Department of Public Works; FY2023 Budget Schedule (v 2022-01-19); Summary of FY22-23 Capital Article Requests.

Finance Committee approved: 01/04/2023