

MEETING OF MONTAGUE FINANCE COMMITTEE
Wednesday, January 21, 2026 at 6 PM
This meeting was held via Zoom and recorded:
<https://vimeo.com/982262386>

Finance Committee Chair Dorinda Bell-Upp called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.
Selectboard Member Rich Kuklewicz called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

Finance Committee members present: Chair Dorinda Bell-Upp, Francia Wisnewski, Leigh Rae, Chris Menegoni

Finance Committee members absent: Jennifer Waryas, Fred Bowman, and Josh Bell

Selectboard members present: Rich Kuklewicz, Marina Goldman

Others present: Town Accountant Angelica Desroches, Town Administrator Walter Ramsey, Town Clerk Wendy Bogusz, Airport Manager Bryan Camden

The meeting was recorded by MCTV as well as by Angelica Desroches.

Meeting minutes:

- Ms. Rae moved to approve the minutes of January 14, 2026. Seconded by Ms. Wisnewski and approved.
 - Bell-Upp – Aye, Wisnewski – Aye, Rae—Aye, Menegoni – Aye

FY27 Budget Discussion with Town Clerk:

- Ms. Bell-Upp inquired as to how many elections are currently in the budget. Ms. Bogusz reported that just the main three state, federal, and town elections are currently budgeted. Mr. Kuklewicz stated that the Tech School voting costs would be covered by the school. Ms. Bell-Upp raised the votes for the library building project and the six-town regionalization vote and whether they should be budgeted. Ms. Bogusz replied that she would ask for a reserve fund transfer if one of them ended up being a separate election.
- Ms. Rae inquired about book binding and Ms. Bogusz reported that she has seen it bound in groups of years so she assumes skipping a year of binding would be acceptable. Ms. Rae wondered if notifications could be sent and Ms. Bogusz stated they do not have that capability at this time but that they could investigate it. Ms. Rae discussed sharing printers and Ms. Bogusz informed her that they do send big print jobs to the main printer but that otherwise they must use special paper that would make it difficult for on demand printing.
- Ms. Wisnewski questioned the fluctuations in poll worker wages which Ms. Bogusz reminded was related to number of elections. She inquired about having a budget for training and organization memberships to which Ms. Bogusz stated she had the budget for.

FY27 Budget Discussion with Airport Manager:

- Mr. Camden gave an overview of his budget and stated that the largest increase was in wages due to wage and class adjustments. He reported that most increases are due to the increase in prices in the economy in general.
- Ms. Rae questioned what a work week looks like for Mr. Camden. He discussed that he spends a large portion of his week in the office doing paperwork for the town, federal, and state. Then he is also a “boots on the ground’ employee working on maintenance which includes weather maintenance and repairs to building. He also highlighted the customer service aspect of his job. He reported he usually puts in 60 to 70 hours of work a week. Mr. Ramsey inquired why Mr. Camden did not move his wages to the C scale as the wage and class suggested. He reported that there is not the revenue to support it this year, so they are working on increasing his wages over the next two years.
- Ms. Rae wondered why there was no discretionary line in his budget with how tight the budget seems to be budgeted. Mr. Camden reported that unfortunately the revenue does not support it and that extra would have to come out of taxation, so they are conservative and try not to increase the taxation portion. He believes the airport could use another 20,000 to 30,000 in the budget, but revenues do not support that at this time.
- Ms. Wisnewski noted the increase in the training line. Mr. Camden reported that the airport employee is looking to increase their licenses in the upcoming year and that he is also looking to get lapsed licenses back in compliance this year.
- Ms. Wisnewski asked Mr. Camden to highlight a few good economic development opportunities that the airport has provided the Town. Mr. Camden reported that the traffic at the airport has quadrupled in the last 12 months due to having the lowest fuel costs in the Northeast. He reported that the airport is now working on helping these pilots to gain access to the Town by using electric bikes. Many of the airplanes that land also go into town to get food, which has been what they are focusing on optimizing with the Chamber of Commerce.
- Ms. Bell-Upp again mentioned that the airport seems to be budgeting too low and wants to see another 20,000 to 30,000 in the budget to better support the infrastructure and make sure we are taking care of the town’s assets. Mr. Camden stated he does not delay repairs and that is why they often see overages in his budget. Mr. Kuklewicz mentioned using retained earnings and building that up for repairs. Mr. Camden reported that unfortunately every year retained earnings from previous years are usually voted in to support the current year’s operating budget.
- Ms. Wisnewski and Ms. Bell-Upp highlighted having the airport do more open houses and education of the community. Mr. Camden reported that he has his personal cell phone on the website and is at the airport at all hours for people to come and ask questions to better understand the operations.
- Ms. Rae inquired about the capital projects that are outstanding and their status. Mr. Camden stated that the ramp will be finished in FY27 and that the only capital request he has this year is to upfit a truck. Mr. Camden also highlighted that most of the airport capital projects are covered under state and federal grants.

Updates from Town Administrator

- Mr. Ramsey reported that there was a meeting with the Hampshire County Group Insurance Trust today and that they released a preliminary increase of 16% and also that they are planning

on doing plan changes that would require the town to work with bargaining units through the insurance advisory committee.

Ms. Goldman makes motion to adjourn at 6:58 PM. Seconded by Mr. Kuklewicz and approved.
Kuklewicz – Aye, Goldman – Aye

Topics not anticipated within 48 hours of posting

Ms. Bell-Upp reported that Mr. Bowman has resigned and discussed recruitment timing given that we are currently in a budget cycle.

Next Meeting dates/topics:

- January 28 – Library and Police
- February 5 – Gill-Montague Regional School District
- February 11 – In person meeting to discuss financial forecasting, large projects and FY27 budget
- February 18 – TBD
- February 25 – Selectboard budget recommendations
- March 4 – Vote Schedule I and II and non-CIC articles
- March 11 – CIC/FC/SB Capital requests, CIC report, and votes
- March 18 – SB/FC reconciliation and vote remaining articles
- March 25 – FC final votes
- April 1 – Review backgrounds and begin FC report
- April 8 – FC report finalized
- April 29 – FC Annual Town Meeting prep
- May 2 – Annual Town Meeting

Adjournment

Ms. Rae makes the motion to adjourn at 7:10 PM. Seconded by Ms. Wisnewski and approved.
Bell-Upp – Aye, Wisnewski – Aye, Rae—Aye, Menegoni – Aye

Respectfully submitted,
Angelica Desroches

Documents and exhibits: