

## MONTAGUE FINANCE COMMITTEE

**Wednesday, February 26, 2025 at 6:00 PM**

This meeting will be held remotely.

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86523275284>

Meeting ID: 865 2327 5284

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,85916016153# US (Chicago)

+16465588656,,85916016153# US (New York)

### Meeting Being Recorded

### Votes May Be Taken

Recordings are archived at <https://vimeo.com/mctvchannel17/videos>

1. 6:00 Call to order, including announcing that the meeting is being recorded, roll call, welcome to visitors, and guidelines for participation.
2. 6:01 Review of meeting minutes of February 19, 2025
3. 6:05 Non-CIC articles
  - a. Conservation Commission - \$10,000
  - b. Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School - \$59,000
  - c. Network Equipment - \$20,000
  - d. Library Accessibility/Upgrades - \$10,000
  - e. Pay and Class Implementation - \$200,000
  - f. Appropriation to OPEB - \$50,000
  - g. Appropriation to Capital Improvement Stabilization - \$131,890
  - h. Appropriation to GMRSD Stabilization - \$38,718
4. 6:30 Capital Improvement Committee updates
5. 6:45 Updates from Town Administrator
6. 6:55 Topics not anticipated within 48 hours of posting
7. 7:00 Next meeting dates
  - a. 3/5/25 – Final Vote Sch I & Sch II
  - b. 3/12/25 – CIC/FC/SB meeting – capital requests, CIC report, votes
  - c. 3/19/25 – FCTS, SB/FC reconciliation, vote remaining articles
  - d. 3/26/25 – FC Final Votes and report
8. 7:05 Adjourn



## Town of Montague SPECIAL ARTICLE REQUEST NON-CAPITAL EXPENSE

*This form is intended for use with financial requests that do not meet the standards established for "capital projects" which are generally limited to building repair, vehicles, and equipment costing >25,000 and lasting > 5 years.*

**Ask is for...**

**O Winter STM  
O FY26 ATM**

***Please complete this form in its entirety!***

Department:	<b>Conservation Commission, Planning &amp; Conservation Department</b>	Submitted by:	Maureen Pollock, Planning Director and Mark Fairbrother, Conservation Commission Chair
Item/Project Cost:	\$10,000	Date Prepared:	12/9/2024
Item/Project Title:	Supplement to Waidlich Memorial Conservation Fund		

### 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 \$10,000 or any other amount for the purpose of supplementing the Waidlich Memorial Conservation Fund, or pass any vote or votes in relation thereto.

Description: *(Provide a full description of the item or service to be purchased. This will be used for background information. Use attachments as needed.)*

The Conservation Commission is requesting to supplement the existing balance of \$37,626.80 in the Waidlich Conservation Fund with an additional \$10,000. The fund is used to leverage the protection of priority farmland and other open space as identified in the current Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Town Meeting has supported the Henry Waidlich Conservation Trust Fund for over 40 years. The fund is dedicated to the purpose of protecting important land and resources in Montague. It is stewarded by the Conservation Commission. Expenditures from this fund have helped protect over 500 acres of the Town's most important agricultural properties from development since 1989. Since 2000, the town has leveraged \$16 of funding from outside sources for every dollar contributed by the Waidlich Conservation Fund.

The fund was last used in 2020 to purchase an Agriculture Preservation Restriction on 36 acres of prime farmland off Old Greenfield Road. In that instance, the fund's investment of \$32,500 leveraged \$392,500 from Mass Department of Agriculture and Franklin Land Trust to protect high priority farmland with an iconic tobacco barn.

The availability of these funds allows the Conservation Commission to be nimble and responsive to sometime rapidly moving real-estate opportunities. The fund does accept donations and bequests.

Enter response

Have you received an estimate as a basis for cost? (yes/no)

--

- If yes, please attach estimate

Are grant or other funds available to offset cost? (yes/no)

--

Please specify grant program/source of funds

--

Value of the offset

\$
----

Probability of availability

%
---

Will this be a lease or a recurring expense? (yes/no)

n/a
-----

If yes, over how many years:

--

If yes, will payment vary (yes/no; attach payment plan):

--

Will this item or project replace old equipment? (yes/no)

n/a
-----

If replacement, estimate surplus value:

\$
----

Is this expected to require other investments? (yes/no)

--

Increased(+) /decreased(-) operational cost (if no, "0")

\$ + / -
----------

Increased(+) /decreased(-) equipment or material cost (if no, "0")

\$
----

Why is it essential that the Town makes this purchase in the coming fiscal year?

The fund was drawn down significantly in 2020 due to the purchase of a 36 acre Agriculture Preservation Restriction. The current balance of \$37,626.80 is likely not enough for another similar scale preservation project. The Commission's strategy is to build the fund back up to a target goal of \$50,000 through annual appropriations from Town Meeting and/or private donations.

**Relative Priority**

Overall priority of this item or project to the Town

Critical

High

Moderate

Low

If you are submitting more than one project, how does this rate relative to the others

First

Second

Third

Fourth or Lower

Comments on relative priority:

-----

Final recommendation of Finance Committee:

Support

Not Support

Comments on Recommendation:

Final recommendation of Board of Selectmen:

Support

Not Support

Comments on Recommendation:



**Town of Montague**  
**SPECIAL ARTICLE REQUEST**  
**NON-CAPITAL EXPENSE**

**Ask is for...**

**O Winter STM**  
**X FY26 ATM**

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***Please complete this form in its entirety!***

Department:	N/A	Submitted by:	Angelica Desroches
Item/Project Cost:	\$59,000	Date Prepared:	12/9/24
Item/Project Title:	Smith Vo-Tech		

**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 \$59,000, or any other amount, for the purpose of providing tuition and transportation for a Montague resident attending Smith Vocational School, or pass any vote or votes in relation thereto.

**Description:** *(Provide a full description of the item or service to be purchased. This will be used for background information. Use attachments as needed.)*

Montague will have a resident attending Smith Regional Vocational Technical School in the fall of 2025. The student will enter the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, so there are two additional years of costs. The request is based on the FY25 tuition with a 10% increase and transportation is based on 180 days of school at a cost of \$200/day. Numbers may be adjusted as better information is received.

**Enter response**

**Have you received an estimate as a basis for cost? (yes/no)**

- *If yes, please attach estimate*

**Are grant or other funds available to offset cost? (yes/no)**

	NO
Please specify grant program/source of funds	
Value of the offset	\$
Probability of availability	%

**Will this be a lease or a recurring expense? (yes/no)**

n/a

If yes, over how many years:

If yes, will payment vary (yes/no; attach payment plan):

**Will this item or project replace old equipment? (yes/no)**

n/a

If replacement, estimate surplus value:

\$

**Is this expected to require other investments? (yes/no)**

NO

Increased(+) /decreased(-) operational cost (if no, "0")

\$ + / -

Increased(+) /decreased(-) equipment or material cost (if no, "0")

\$

**Why is it essential that the Town makes this purchase in the coming fiscal year?**

The Town is legally required to pay these expenses.

**Relative Priority**

Overall priority of this item or project to the Town

Critical

X

High

O

Moderate

O

Low

O

If you are submitting more than one project, how does this rate relative to the others

First

O

Second

O

Third

O

Fourth or Lower

O

Comments on relative priority:

-----

Final recommendation of Finance Committee:             Support                             Not Support

Comments on Recommendation:

Final recommendation of Board of Selectmen:             Support                             Not Support

Comments on Recommendation:



**Town of Montague**  
**SPECIAL ARTICLE REQUEST**  
**NON-CAPITAL EXPENSE**

*This form is intended for use with financial requests that do not meet the standards established for "capital projects" which are generally limited to building repair, vehicles, and equipment costing >25,000 and lasting > 5 years.*

**Ask is for...**

**O Winter STM**  
**O FY26 ATM**

***Please complete this form in its entirety!***

Department:	Libraries	Submitted by:	Caitlin Kelley
Item/Project Cost:	\$10,000	Date Prepared:	11/26/2024
Item/Project Title:	5-Year Accessibility Repairs and Upgrades Plan		

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 \$10,000 or any other amount for the purpose of funding the **accessibility repairs and upgrades for the Montague Public Libraries**, or pass any vote or votes in relation thereto.

Description: (Provide a full description of the item or service to be purchased. This will be used for background information. Use attachments as needed.)

As part of a Libraries Transforming Communities grant, the Montague Public Libraries developed a five-year Accessibility Plan. The facilities portion of the plan calls for the implementation of most of the recommendations made by the town's 2018 ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan for the town's three libraries. These recommendations have been broken down by fiscal year. FY26' upgrades will focus on implementing ADA-compliant indoor and outdoor signage at all three library locations, handrail repair and upgraded door handles at the Carnegie Library, a designated ADA parking space and grab bar installation at the Millers Falls Branch Library, and repair of the wheelchair ramp and various handrails at the Montague Center Branch Library. Please see the attached spreadsheet for a full list of repairs by location and anticipated completion year.

While I had initially proposed the funding as a new line item in the libraries' operating budget, requesting funding as a non-capital request will allow the DPW, who will be facilitating the repairs and upgrades, and I to be more nimble in selecting projects and finishes. Working with the DPW will allow the libraries to implement necessary upgrades at a lower cost than if the libraries were to put these projects out to bid.

**Enter response**



**Have you received an estimate as a basis for cost? (yes/no)**

**No, but Sam agreed that \$10k should be sufficient**

- *If yes, please attach estimate*

**Are grant or other funds available to offset cost? (yes/no)**

no

Please specify grant program/source of funds

Value of the offset \$

Probability of availability %

**Will this be a lease or a recurring expense? (yes/no)**

n/a

If yes, over how many years:

If yes, will payment vary (yes/no; attach payment plan):

**Will this item or project replace old equipment? (yes/no)**

n/a

If replacement, estimate surplus value: \$

**Is this expected to require other investments? (yes/no)**

no

Increased(+) /decreased(-) operational cost (if no, "0") \$ + / -

Increased(+) /decreased(-) equipment or material cost (if no, "0") \$

**Why is it essential that the Town makes this purchase in the coming fiscal year?**

While an accessible parking space was added to the Carnegie Library and the driveway there was repaved, to great effect, most of the recommendations for the libraries from the 2018 ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan have not been implemented. As Montague's population ages, and more and more of our library patrons struggle with things like uneven stairs, heavy doors, and icy ramps, it feels important to make the building safer and more accessible for all.

**Relative Priority**

Overall priority of this item or project to the Town

Critical

High

Moderate

Low

If you are submitting more than one project, how does this rate relative to the others

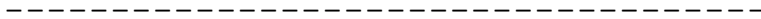
First

Second

Third

Fourth or Lower

Comments on relative priority:



Final recommendation of Finance Committee:

Support

Not Support

Comments on Recommendation:

Final recommendation of Board of Selectmen:

Support

Not Support

Comments on Recommendation:

## Montague ADA Self-Evaluation & Transition Plan

### Montague ADA Self-Evaluation & Transition Plan Montague Center Library (17 Center Street) (formerly known as Old Montague Town Hall)

Location	Floor	Room	Element	Type	Photo	Issues	Current	Recommendations	Priority	Timeframe	Cost	Responsible	FY
<b>Approach and Entrances</b>													
Side Parking Lot			Ramp		732	Railing is rusty and bent and too low in places.		Replace railing with one that is between 34"-38" high and does not end abruptly.	High	Short	\$\$\$	DPW	26
			Ramp		733	Surface of ramp is uneven with large cracks.		Repave ramp and add side barrier that prevents wheelchair casters or crutch tips from falling.	High	Short	\$\$	DPW	26
			Ramp		733	Librarian notes that in winter snow/ice fall from roof onto ramp.		Explore relocating ramp to a safer location or installing a protective roof over ramp. Or explore	High	Short	\$\$\$	DPW	26
Main Front Entrance			Railings		737	Handrails on front steps end abruptly posing an unsafe protrusion.		Replace railings with ones that do not end abruptly.	Medium	Short	\$\$	DPW	26
			Stairs		736	Step risers are too high and variable.	9"-9.5"	Step risers should not exceed 7" and should be uniform height.	Low	Medium	\$\$	DPW	29
Front Vestibule			Threshold		738	Ramp in vestibule has a threshold >1/4".		Install a beveled edge to ramp so that vertical threshold is not more than 1/4"	High	Short	\$	DPW	27
<b>Parking</b>													
Side Parking Lot			Accessible Parking	Signage	731	Sign for accessible parking is too low and does not specify that space is Van Accessible.	45"	Raise height of sign to 60" and install sign denoting that space is Van Accessible.	High	Short	\$	DPW	26
<b>Access to Goods and Services</b>													
Service Desk			Service Desk		741	Service desk is too high with no toe/knee clearance underneath.	40" tall & 4" in depth	Replace service desk so that height does not exceed 36" and has 17"-25" of depth underneath.	High	Short	\$\$	DPW	30
			Service Desk			Insufficient clearance behind service desk due to furniture.	22"	Relocate furniture to allow a minimum of 32" width behind desk.	Low	Short	\$	DPW	30
Computer Area			Computer Desk		742	Bottom of keyboard tray is too low to allow wheelchair access.	24"	Remove or raise keyboard tray so that there is a minimum of 27" under the table.	High	Short	\$	DPW	29
Children's Area			Ramp	Threshold	748	Ramp to children's area has a high threshold.		Add a bevel on the ramp threshold so there is a more seamless transition for steeper slope.	High	Short	\$	DPW	27
Main Bathroom			Sink			There is exposed piping under the sink.		Cover the piping under the sink with protective materials.	High	Short	\$	DPW	28
			Signage		750	Signage is not properly located for bathroom and is not tactile with braille.		Relocate signage to the wall on the latch side of the door and install tactile sign with braille.	High	Short	\$	DPW	26
Second Floor			Stairs		747	This space was historically used as a gymnasium but now only sporadically used for storage. It is only		Install a chair lift or elevator to access this space.	Low	Long	\$\$\$	DPW	30*

**FY26 Finance Policy Guidelines/Calculations**

[TOC](#)

FY24 Operating Revenues:			
Net Levy less excluded debt PLUS actual State Aid PLUS local estimated receipts			
	Net Levy		Source
	Gross Levy	21,907,526.09	Recap P1
	Allow A & E	(400,780.84)	Recap p 2
	Excluded Debt	<u>(1,205,071.00)</u>	Recap DE1
#1	Levy to use	20,301,674.25	
For Actual State Aid plus local receipts, backed into #:			
	Total GF Rev	26,868,083.54	EOY Budget Report
	Transfers In	(553,589.50)	EOY Budget Report
	PP revenue	(3,934,830.66)	EOY Budget Report
	RE revenue	(17,755,465.28)	EOY Budget Report
	Tax Lien/Foreclosure re	<u>(93,873.27)</u>	EOY Budget Report
#2	State Aid + LER	4,530,324.83	
FY24 General Operating Revenues (PYGOR)			
	Sum of #1, #2	24,831,999.08	

Total Stabilization Funds plus Free Cash shall be maintained at 5-10% of PYGOR			
	FY24 GOR	24,831,999.08	
	5%	1,241,600.00	Minimum
	10%	2,483,200.00	Maximum
		1,388,324.00	Free Cash 7/1/24
		<u>4,033,515.79</u>	Available Stabilizations 7/1/24 (non-sewer)
		5,421,839.79	Total
			21.83% % of PYGOR

General Stabilization Fund to be maintained at minimum of 5% PYGOR			
	FY26 Minimum	1,241,600.00	
	Current balance	<u>1,288,747.99</u>	5.19%
	need to add	<b>(47,147.99)</b>	

Annually appropriate 0.3% of PYGOR to General Stabilization as part of operating budget	
.3% PYGOR	<b>74,496.00</b>

Capital Improvement Stabilization Fund :should have annual appropriation of 0.2% PYGOR	
.2% PYGOR	<b>49,664.00</b>