

SELECTBOARD AND BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING
Due to COVID-19 Public Participation is by Zoom
March 8, 2021

Remote Zoom Meeting was opened at 6:30 PM. Present were Selectpersons Rich Kuklewicz, Michael Nelson, and Chris Boutwell, Town Administrator Steve Ellis, Executive Assistant Wendy Bogusz, Board of Health Chair Al Cummings, Director of Public Health Daniel Wasiuk, WPCF Superintendent Chelsey Little, DPW Superintendent Tom Bergeron, FCRHRA Director of Community Development Brian McHugh, Cultural Council Chair Rachel Teumim, Town Planner Walter Ramsey, Planning & Conservation Clerk Suzanne LoManto, Police Chief Chris Williams, and Special Town Meeting Moderator Chris Collins.

Selectboard Chair opens the meeting, including announcing that the meeting is being recorded and roll call taken.

Board of Health Chair opens the meeting, roll call taken.

Approve Minutes:

Joint Selectboard and Board of Health: February 22, 2021

- *Boutwell makes the motion that the Selectboard approve the Minutes for the Joint Selectboard and Board of Health Meeting: February 22, 2021. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- *Boutwell makes the motion that the Board of Health approve the Minutes for the Joint Selectboard and Board of Health Meeting: February 22, 2021. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Cummings - Aye*

Public Comment Period: Individuals will be limited to two (2) minutes each and the Selectboard will strictly adhere to time allotted for public comment

None

Chelsey Little, WPCF Superintendent

First Half of FY2021 Sewer Abatement

Boutwell makes the motion to abate the bill for 12 G Street Turners Falls. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously unapproved. Boutwell - Nay, Nelson - Nay, Kuklewicz - Nay

COVID-19 Updates and Action Items

- **Update on Montague COVID case counts**
Active cases from February 21 through March 6 = 5; cumulative cases from October 1, 2020 through March 6, 2021 = 205; total positive cases from March 1, 2020 through March 6, 2021 = 234.
- **Update on Vaccine Eligibility & County Clinics**
 - On March 11, K-12 educators, childcare workers, and K-12 school staff will be eligible for vaccine appointments. Individuals ages 65 and over are eligible, as are individuals with two co-morbidities, as well as staff at the senior housing center.
 - The Executive Office of Elder Affairs wanted to see if we are willing to receive vaccines and work directly with the Housing Authority for the vaccination of their residents. The Board of Health did decide to do that. We will be doing clinics onsite for them this Wednesday and Thursday. We did receive 100 doses. Montague Housing Authority only needs 70, which leaves us with 30 doses. A small clinic at the annex was held for eligible individuals on the waiting list. Another larger clinic will be held tomorrow at the annex for approximately 20 individuals.
 - Discussion ensued regarding the supply of versus the demands for the vaccine and the frustration this has caused.
- **Montague Vaccination Clinic Event, March 12 & 13**
 - Ellis states that the FRCOG had requested 1,000 shots as part of the central county distribution plan. The Town of Orange is now part of the distribution plan. Montague will only be receiving 290 shots, not 500 as we had hoped. Therefore, we have reduced our clinic days to Friday only, from 9:00 to 2:00. The FRCOG, working with the Medical Reserve Corps, is providing most of the staffing for that.
 - Linda Dunlavy from FRCOG explains how Orange became part of the Franklin County distribution plan.
 - Dunlavy clarifies that we had actually ordered 800 shots for the Montague clinic and 600 for the Orange clinic. We received 500 and made the decision to divide the shots between both clinics proportionate to the request that was made.

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- Dunlavy explains that regarding receiving information from the State, she cannot assure that there will be a reliable and efficient system as we are subject to changing rules far too often.
- Only 25% of the vaccinations can be reserved specifically for the Franklin County residents.
- **Review of Updated State Guidance or Orders**

We are in Step 2, Phase 3 effective March 1st. Continued re-openings include the following:

 - Indoor performance venues may open to 50% capacity, 500 person maximum limit
 - Musical performances are allowed in restaurants
 - Restaurants are no longer limited insofar as capacity limits as long as tables are six feet apart, but can have no more than six people per table and need to maintain the 90-minute time limit per table
 - Fitting rooms in retail businesses may open
 - Gathering limits will change on March 22
 - Sanitizing, wearing masks, and maintaining the 6-foot distance continue to be emphasized

Boutwell makes the motion to adjourn the Board of Health Meeting. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Cummings - Aye

Personnel Board

Nelson goes off-line temporarily due to technical issues.

- **Reappoint Steve Ellis to Montague Retirement Board, 3 year term, 5/23/21 to 5/22/24**

Kuklewicz makes the motion to reappoint Steve Ellis to the Montague Retirement Board, 3 year term, 5/23/21 to 5/22/24. Seconded by Boutwell, approved. Kuklewicz - Aye, Boutwell - Aye
- **Consider DPW request for 2 new grounds staff in FY22**
 - Bergeron states that he originally was going to ask for permission to hire two new grounds staff, but decided instead to ask the Board to make the following considerations:
 - increase the budget from \$6,000 to \$12,000 in order to hire 2, possibly 3 grounds staff from May through September, who can possibly come in also during the winter to keep sidewalks clear
 - increase Tree Warden's budget by \$10,000 in order to hire tree crews to trim the trees on the sides of the road
 - Two of the grounds crew are retiring, one in August and the second within a year.
 - Boutwell would like to go with summer help.
 - Nelson feels that given the uncertainty of the coming fiscal year, he is supportive of Bergeron's plan.
 - Kuklewicz asks Bergeron to send his proposal to Jen Audley so she can discuss it with the Finance Committee.
 - Ellis shares that this revision would potentially shave \$100,000 off the budget.

Brian McHugh, Director of Community Development, FCRHRA

- **Execute letter to Mark Southard re: FY20 Montague CDBG Response to Special Conditions**

Boutwell makes the motion to execute the letter to Mark Southard re: FY20 Montague CDBG Response to Special Conditions, and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Spinner Park Update**
 - Resumption of restoration will take place next week.
 - The site needs to be re-established, which includes getting the fence back in order, pulling up the asphalt, and excavating material that had filled in during the wintertime.
 - The plumber will be the first one to come in, to work on the pads for the plumbing control box and the electrical control box.
 - The granite is ready to be delivered. McHugh and Bergeron will discuss the possibility of storing the granite in Town.
 - Once the subsurface work is done, the installation of the benches can begin which McHugh estimates will begin in a month.
 - McHugh will have a firm schedule within the next two weeks.

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Execute Mass. Cultural Council grant for Local Cultural Council Allocation for the Montague Cultural Council, \$6,600

- Teumim lists the projects that the Cultural Council will be supporting.
- *Boutwell makes the motion to execute the Mass. Cultural Council grant for Local Cultural Council Allocation for the Montague Cultural Council, \$6,600, and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

Annabel Levine, Great Falls Farmers Market

- **Request to use Peskeompskut Park, every Wednesday, May to October, 1:00 PM to 6:15 PM for Farmers Market**

Boutwell makes the motion to approve the use of Peskeompskut Park every Wednesday, May to October, 1:00 PM to 6:15 PM for the Farmers Market. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

- **Execute Food Security Infrastructure Grant, for products to low income individuals and families by investing in equipment that enables SNAP/EBT payments, \$1,150.40**

Boutwell makes the motion to execute the Food Security Infrastructure Grant, for products to low income individuals and families by investing in equipment that enables SNAP/EBT payments, \$1,150.40, and authorize the Chair to sign any required documents. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

- LoManto expresses gratitude to Annabel Levine for the all work she has done during the pandemic.

Cassandra Holden, Laudable Productions

Entertainment Permit, Barbes in the Woods Festival, 27 Center Street, Montague, August 21, 2021, 3:00 PM to 11:00 PM

- LoManto expresses full support of Laudable Productions.
- Kuklewicz encourages work to be done to deal with the concerns raised the last time the production was held (i.e., noise complaints by some of the abutters in the neighborhood and traffic challenges on Center Street).
- Williams states that the last time the event was held, parking was a big concern. The parking spots in the fields on Old Greenfield Road had not been utilized. He wishes that the concert was scheduled on a different weekend from Old Home Days.
- Kuklewicz suggests tabling the motion until Chief Williams, Laudable Productions, and a representative of Old Home Days are able to discuss a way to deal with the parking and traffic issues.
- Kyle Homstead from Laudable Productions states that other folks have expressed interest in being parking partners, so he believes a parking plan can be developed.
- Nelson and Homstead express the necessity of keeping things moving forward as minimizing the lead time is crucial for event-planning.

Walter Ramsey, Town Planner

- **Issue Notice of Award to A.J. Virgilio Construction, Inc., for the Chestnut Loop Bridge Removal and Replacement Projects in the amount of \$365,788**

Boutwell makes the motion to issue the Notice of Award to A.J. Virgilio Construction, Inc., for the Chestnut Loop Bridge Removal and Replacement Projects in the amount of \$365,788. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

- **Authorize Grant funding request to the Municipal Culvert Assistance Program in the amount of \$16,280 for design and permitting of a culvert replacement on South Ferry Road**

Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the Grant funding request to the Municipal Culvert Assistance Program in the amount of \$16,280 for design and permitting of a culvert replacement on South Ferry Road. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

- **Review and authorize "MA One Stop for Growth" Expression of Interest for proposed projects relating to the Canal District redevelopment, downtown parking management, master planning, CSO separation, and light industrial expansion at Sandy Lane**
 - Ramsey reviews the proposed projects to consolidate for the State's "MA One Stop for Growth" movement:

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- 1) Turners Falls Canal District redevelopment (advancing partial demolition plans, executing the current MassWorks grant, restoring the 6th Street Bridge, and doing some more strategic planning).
 - 2) Combined Sewer Overflow Separation and Repair (resolving ongoing issues with influent line, funding construction)
 - 3) Downtown Turners Falls Parking Management Study (hiring an expert to see how the Town manages its parking and to make recommendations)
 - 4) Montague Comprehensive Plan Update (updating master plan as ours dates back to 1999; the State requires updates every 10 years)
 - 5) Sandy Lane Industrial Area Expansion (assessing potential for additional industrial space behind the transfer station)
- o *Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the Town Planner to continue with the application for the "MA One Stop for Growth" and authorize the Chair to sign the necessary documents. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

Jeff Singleton

FRTA Updates

- An FRTA Board meeting is scheduled for March 19.
- Singleton reviews two proposals: (1) that the FRTA Board request that the appropriate Department of Transportation officials explain why the FRTA is the only regional transit authority in the State without weekend service; (2) that the Advisory Board discuss and vote on the final draft of the Comprehensive Regional Transit Plan and include a recommendation that the FRTA set as a key goal increasing the ridership base of the transit system to include more people and families with automobiles.
- *Boutwell makes the motion that the Selectboard endorse both proposals as presented by Jeff Singleton for discussion at the next FRTA Advisory Board Meeting. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- Ellis agrees with the Selectboard's decision, and makes note of the fact that Singleton has made sure that the Executive Board is fully engaged in these conversations.

Town Administrator's Report

- **Debriefing of Special Town Meeting**
 - o Ellis expresses gratitude to all the people involved in making the event a success, especially Chris Collins, Wendy Bogusz, Deb Bourbeau, Carolyn Olsen, and Horace Moody.
 - o Collins also thanks Bogusz, and states he feels the meeting went relatively smoothly despite a few glitches during the V voting process.
 - o Each member of the Selectboard agrees that the meeting went well.
 - o Singleton suggests adopting some mechanism for receiving feedback from Town Meeting members.
- **Planning for Annual Town Meeting**
 - o Nelson suggests that the Annual Town Meeting in May can also be done in the same way given the success of the Special Town Meeting.
 - o Boutwell asks if there will be one big meeting or two smaller meetings.
 - o Kuklewicz wonders if it would be better to put off the meeting for a couple of weeks to see if it is possible to do another outdoor meeting.
 - o Ellis states that there is a strong incentive for the Town to lock its budget in by the middle of June.
 - o Bogusz feels that scheduling the meeting later may lead to run-ins with graduations. She also states that if a tent needs to be rented, it would be better to have the rain date scheduled for the day after the meeting (Sunday).
 - o Collins asks if the high school gymnasium is a possibility.
 - o Ariel Elan prefers to have an in-person meeting outdoors.
 - o Jen Audley suggests looking into the possibility of a drive-up meeting.
 - o Nelson expresses concern that people might get "antsy" if they have to sit in their car for 6-7 hours.
 - o John Hanold states that ventilation may not be an issue for indoor venues as by that time, most people will have been vaccinated.
 - o Kuklewicz suggests polling the Town Meeting members for their input.
 - o Audley suggests not counting on most people being vaccinated by the time of the meeting.

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- **FY2022 Chapter 90 Funding Announcement**
The Town will receive \$487,446 in Chapter 90 funds, which is essentially a level fund.
- **Consider Key Topics for meeting with Legislative Delegation**
We will be having a conversation with Representative Blais and Senator Comerford on Monday, March 22 during the first half-hour of the Selectboard meeting. Ellis gives the Board a summary of key topics that he put together. Kuklewicz suggests looking through the list, then presenting all the topics to the legislators but talking only about two or three of them.
- **Cannabis Impact Fee Discussion**
 - Ellis states that as the Town Meeting Warrant is set at the end of March, which necessitates a decision from the Board on whether they would like him to include any specific requests for appropriation out of the Cannabis Impact Fee Stabilization Account, which has just over \$200,000.
 - Kuklewicz would like to postpone this topic until next week or the week after.
- **Topics not anticipated in 48-hour posting**
 - **Railroad Salvage Hazards Removal Project**
Ellis has learned from the EPA project site manager that the hazards removal project has begun and should be completed by the fall. He encourages residents to stay away from the location.
 - **Joint Meeting with Parks & Recreation**
Ellis states that the Selectboard may receive a request for a possible joint meeting next week with Parks and Recreation to discuss the Soap Box Derby event.

Other/Trash Pick-Up

Nelson and Boutwell remind residents to put their trash out the night before their pick-up day as the trucks start very early in the morning.

Boutwell makes the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:04 PM. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye