

**SELECTBOARD and BOARD OF HEALTH**  
**Police Advisory Community Engagement**  
**and Equity and Use of Force**  
**Due to COVID-19 Public Participation is by Zoom**  
**May 10, 2021**

Remote Zoom Meeting was opened at 6:30 PM.

**PRESENT:**

Board of Selectmen: Chair Rich Kuklewicz, Michael Nelson, Chris Boutwell

Town Administrator Steve Ellis

Executive Assistant Wendy Bogusz

Board of Health: Chair Al Cummings, *Michael Nelson, Chris Boutwell*

Director of Public Health Daniel Wasiuk

WPCF Superintendent Chelsey Little

Town Clerk Deb Bourbeau

Treasurer/Collector Eileen Seymour

Library Director Linda Hickman

Council on Aging Director Roberta Potter

Town Planner Walter Ramsey

Police Advisory Community Engagement Group: Chair Chris Pinardi, Colin Mitchell, Kwamane Harris, *Michael Nelson*

Police Advisory Equity and Use of Force Group: Chair Ariel Elan, Maddox Sprengel, Faith English, Deborah Frenkel, *Rich Kuklewicz*

**VIMEO Link:** <https://vimeo.com/547789349>

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: May 3, 2021**

- *Boutwell makes the motion that the Selectboard approve the Minutes for the Joint Selectboard and Board of Health Meeting: May 3, 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: May 3, 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**

- Terri Capucci expresses concern about speeding issues on Country Club Lane as there are 15 children that live on the street.
- Kuklewicz would like to do more research and have this topic discussed at the 5/24 meeting.

**Personnel Board**

- **Appoint Patricia Holloway, WPCF Administrative Assistant, NAGE Grade B, Step 3, 20 hrs/wk, effective 5/17/21**  
*Boutwell makes the motion to appoint Patricia Holloway, WPCF Administrative Assistant, NAGE Grade B, Step 3, 20 hrs/wk, effective 5/17/21. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- **Appoint Charlene Langenback, Assistant Treasurer/Collector, NAGE Grade D, Step 6, 35 hrs/wk, effective 5/15/21**  
*Boutwell makes the motion to appoint Charlene Langenback, Assistant Treasurer/Collector, NAGE Grade D, Step 6, 35 hrs/wk, effective 5/15/21. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

**Deb Bourbeau, Town Clerk**

**June 22, 2021 Town Election Warrant - To approve and execute, as attached**

- Bourbeau announces that ballots are here and resident voters can vote by mail due to COVID.
- The election has been postponed to June 22.
- Nelson reads aloud the Town Election Warrant.
- *Nelson makes the motion to post the Town Election Warrant as read. Seconded by Boutwell. Nelson - Aye, Boutwell - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

**COVID-19 Update and Action Items**

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- **Update on Montague COVID case counts**  
Active cases from April 25 through the week ending May 8 equals 13; cumulative from October 1, 2020 through May 8, 2021 equals 277; total number of positive cases from March 1, 2020 through May 8, 2021 equals 306.
- **Review of Updated State Guidance or Orders**
  - Effective today (as part of Phase 4 Step 2 Reopening Plan), large venues (indoor and outdoor stadiums) are allowed at 25% capacity.
  - Some outdoor industries (amusement parks, theme parks, water parks) can operate at 50% capacity.
  - Road races and other large outdoor organized athletic events are permitted.
  - Youth and adult amateur sports tournaments will be allowed for moderate- and high-risk sports.
  - Singing will be permitted indoors.
  - Safety plans have to be submitted to the local Board of Health or DPH.
- **Update on Vaccine Clinics**
  - The Board of Health gave vaccinations to homebound individuals in 10 locations last week. This was the first dose of Moderna.
  - We are hoping to get an additional supply of doses if we feel that we need to administer the vaccine to other individuals.
  - FRCOG implies that we will be able to get more than 10 doses for the second round of shots.
  - Greenfield is holding a few more clinics this week, but the final clinic at the John Zon Senior Center is Friday, May 13. They will be transitioning to the drive-through at GCC for 2nd doses from May 17-25.

**Linda Hickman, Library Director**

**Request opening Montague Center Library from 1 day to 2 days a week by appointment and more fully open Millers Falls Library 2 days a week**

*Boutwell makes the motion to approve the opening of Montague Center Library from 1 day to 2 days a week by appointment and more fully open Millers Falls Library 2 days a week. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

**Roberta Potter, Council on Aging Director**

**Request the COA be allowed to offer fitness classes by reservation when Montague is in the State's yellow COVID risk category**

*Boutwell makes the motion to approve the request that the COA be allowed to offer fitness classes by reservation when Montague is in the State's yellow COVID risk category. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

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

**Walter Ramsey, Town Planner**

- **FY21 Complete Streets Grant. Sidewalks on Montague, Turnpike, and Keith Streets. Review design and authorize procurement services agreement with FRCOG**
  - Ramsey reviews the updated project design, which includes several changes.
  - Abutters have been notified and sent a copy of the plans.
  - Cost estimates are 20% higher than what was initially estimated. Ramsey suggests asking the bidders for prices for both cement and hot-mix asphalt sidewalks.
  - Discussion ensues regarding the lifespan of concrete versus asphalt.
  - The Board decides to possibly have a further discussion about obtaining extra money (i.e., Chapter 90 funds) in order to maintain the plans to use concrete.
  - *Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the procurement services agreement with FRCOG. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- **Mass DOT Shared Streets and Spaces Grant opportunity. Authorize application for grant funds to make current, painted sidewalk and curb extension in vicinity of 151 Third St. permanent**  
*Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the Town Planner to proceed with the application for grant funds to make current, painted sidewalk and curb extension in vicinity of 151 Third St. permanent. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

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**Police Advisory Committees**

- Community Engagement Committee Chair opens meeting, roll call taken
- Equity and Use of Force Committee Chair opens meeting, roll call taken

**Police Advisory Groups to share an overview of their research processes and the resulting findings and recommendations.**

The Selectboard and both advisory-group chairs thanked the advisory group members for their work, and thanked the police department command staff, Chief Chris Williams and Lt. Chris Bonnett, for their work in providing the committees with all of the information they requested.

Chris Pinardi, chair of the Police Community Engagement Advisory Group, noted that the findings and recommendations of both committees overlapped significantly, even though the two groups worked independently throughout the process. In his view, the most important findings were:

--“We didn't find a systemic problem, in terms of race relations, racism, those kinds of things, and equity in policing. In my opinion, both groups came up with nothing in terms of any findings for that.

--“The other big takeaway .... especially for our group, is we want our police dept. to be more accessible. We want them to be more available to the public, but we're not giving them the tools to do that. Regardless of what uniform they wear or don't wear, their staffing doesn't allow them to do some of the things that we want them to do.”

The Police Community Engagement group's work centered on a voluntary, anonymous survey in which anyone could participate. More than 400 responses were received; and the committee's report includes charts and graphs breaking down responses by race, age group, residency, and evaluation of police performance in Montague. [Responses, including comments from individual participants, are included in the group's report\*, published on its committee page at [montague-ma.gov](http://montague-ma.gov).]

- \* [Wendy, even better if you could link their report right here.]
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Ariel Elan, facilitator of the Police Equity & Use of Force Advisory Group, described the extensive information and lengthy interviews that the police department (MPD) provided for the committees – including the department's complete *Policies & Procedures Handbook*, training manual, and four years' worth of detailed information on arrests, uses of force, and traffic stops – all broken down by race, ethnicity, age, residence, and other demographic characteristics. Elan urged members of the public to view this information in this committee's report and at <https://www.montague-ma.gov/g/77/Police-Equity--Use-of-Force-Advisory-Group>

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She noted key findings from the police data: the MPD averages 19,000 calls a year, 2% of which result in an arrest; and that 1/10<sup>th</sup> of 1 percent of all calls lead to a use of force. The committee learned that the MPD's stated approach to their work is "de-escalation under all circumstances", and that officers avoid arresting individuals and pulling them into the legal system, whenever there are other ways allowed by law that harm can be prevented. She also

encouraged members of the public to contact not only the two advisory groups, but also Chief Williams and Lt. Bonnett directly, with questions or concerns.

○

Members of both advisory groups expressed appreciation for the information they had received from police and members of the public; and also expressed concern about any problems or complaints in the community that the research did not uncover. Some recommended that a professional-level survey of Montague residents be conducted in the future.

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Some members of the Equity/Use of Force group emphasized their perspective that whatever needs police currently serve in Montague should be part of a larger examination of all of the social, health, and economic needs residents struggle with, and what are the best ways the Town can address those needs and struggles?

○

The police chief and lieutenant stated their openness to continue exploring how their work can best serve the community, and acknowledged that some people will have issues of trust and legitimacy toward police, regardless of the findings in these or any other reports. Lt. Bonnett said that he hopes anyone who has felt afraid or uncomfortable to bring a problem to the department's attention will feel encouraged, as a result of the committees' work and these discussions, to come forward and use the process that is in place for resolving complaints.

Town Administrator Steve Ellis noted that an important development that has already arisen from the advisory groups' work is that the Town of Montague, in cooperation with Greenfield and Deerfield and Clinical Support Options will have grant support for a co-response mental-health professional who will work actively with our police force to respond to mental-health calls, starting this fall.

○

Selectboard members said that these conversations and public input should continue, starting with a public forum for questions and input regarding the advisory groups' reports, at the next Selectboard meeting, May 17. Mediator and facilitator Paula Green, who helped the Selectboard to develop the two advisory groups and the focus of their work, will facilitate this discussion.

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The Board will take steps to make the advisory groups' reports available in Spanish.

○

**Chris Williams, Chief of Police**

**Review of new/revised police policies**

- The Board would like more time to review the new/revised police policies before they vote to approve them.
- Chief Williams states that the Board has 30 days to review the policies before they go into effect.

**Town Administrator's Report**

- **Traffic Mitigation Strategy at 5th Street Bridge/Turners Falls Road and Canal Street**
  - Mass DOT is beginning a process of investigation which involves monitoring traffic.
  - The Town shared with them some data-collection results.
  - One option suggested by Mass DOT is including a signal at the light.
  - Our traffic enforcement is dealing with the changes in traffic patterns created by the closing of the General Pierce Bridge.
- **Notice of Redistricting Hearing**

The Legislature is engaged in a redistricting process. There is a hearing on May 24 at 5:30 that is focused on Congressional District #2, which covers our community. Those who wish to testify in person need to sign up by Wednesday.
- **Topics not anticipated in 48 hour posting**

None

**Upcoming Meetings:**

- Selectboard Meeting, **MONDAY, May 17, 2021, 6:30 PM** via Zoom
- Annual Town Meeting, **SATURDAY, MAY 22, 2021, 9:00 AM**, Franklin County Tech School, 82 Industrial Blvd., Turners Falls
- Pre-Town Meeting review with Finance Committee, **WEDNESDAY, May 12, 2021, 6:00 PM** via Zoom

*Boutwell makes the motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye.*