

**JOINT MEETING OF THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD, FINANCE COMMITTEE,
AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING
PARTICIPATION VIA ZOOM ONLY
Tuesday, October 12, 2021**

VIMEO Meeting Link: <https://vimeo.com/630979608>

Meeting was opened at 5:30 PM.

PRESENT:

Selectboard: Rich Kuklewicz (Chair), Chris Boutwell, and Matt Lord, Town Administrator Steve Ellis, Executive Assistant Wendy Bogusz, Finance Committee: Jen Audley (Chair), Jennifer Waryas, John Hanold, Fred Bowman, Greg Garrison, Capital Improvements Committee: Greg Garrison (Chair), Fred Bowman, Steve Ellis, Town Planner Walter Ramsey, Town Accountant Carolyn Olsen

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

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

Finance and Capital Improvements Committee Chairs Open their meeting and roll calls taken.

Results of 5th Street Pedestrian Bridge Bidding (Ramsey and Ellis)

Review bid results

Ellis reports the following:

- Construction bids came much higher than expected.
- The base bid came in at \$2.338 million. This does not include street lights and various sidewalk and related improvements on Canal Street.
- We have a 60-day period by which we must award a contract.

Outline funding shortfall and available options

- The project engineer recommends including 10% of the value of the construction bid as additional contingency. This will make the estimated total construction cost \$2,572,000
- With the recommended contingency, we have a \$769,531 gap.
- We have a \$200,000 Special Town Meeting appropriation on the Special Town Meeting Warrant.
- Other available options include Receipts reserved from Sale of Real Estate, Town Capital Stabilization, and FirstLight funds.
- We have the option of directing part of our American Rescue Plan Act funds

Discuss eligibility for ARPA funding

- The Selectboard can move to spend from its ARPA grant money, which does not require any further action on the part of Town Meeting or any other body.
- The maximum figure we can draw from ARPA is \$491,493.

Discussion

- In response to a question by Lord, Olsen suggests having other sources of funding identified before running up against the balance needed.
- In response to a question by Waryas, Ramsey reviews the bid process.

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- In response to questions by Garrison and Kuklewicz, Ellis clarifies the figures for the ARPA award and when those funds are available.
- Olsen clarifies that funds from the Sale of Real Estate can only be used for a project that we would be legally able to borrow for under the statute.
- In response to a question by Hanold, Ellis states there is no additional funding in the engineering section.
- In response to a question by Lord, Garrison states that the CIC does not currently have a good forecast in terms of projects that the ARPA funds might go to.
- Ellis emphasizes he would like the public to know that we have done our due diligence based on all of the guidance available that we have to date.
- Ellis and Mark McClusky (project engineer) explain why we are not rebidding this project.
- Ellis notes that we can submit a future MassWorks grant request for the work on the Canal Street side.

Consider any votes regarding a funding strategy for the project

Boutwell makes the motion that the Selectboard allocate \$491,493 of its available ARPA funding to the 5th Street Pedestrian Bridge and Intersection Improvements Project. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Consider any recommendations to Special Town Meeting relative to the current 5th Street Bridge Article

- Audley would like to clarify what is needed to be prepared to explain to Town Meeting and what questions we think they are going to ask. What do we need to do to get Town Meeting members up to speed during the meeting on Saturday?
- Kuklewicz states we should inform people that there are other sources available (i.e., we could choose to do something in the future that does not require us to use all the \$200,000 that Special Town Meeting might appropriate).
- Audley expresses concern that the background information emphasizes that this project is going to make it possible for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross the bridge; she wants Town Meeting members to know that this \$3,000,000 project is so much more than that.
- Ellis will prepare something to send out in advance to Town Meeting members via email.

Town Administrator's Report

Update on Montague COVID case counts

There were five new cases in the last week, which puts our two-week case count at 11. We are back in the status that we were in this past August.

Update regarding General Pierce Bridge construction schedule

DOT received a proposal from Northern Construction. Because of our advocacy, we are now looking at a revised completion date of May 15, 2023.

Preview: Montague composting study and possible regional collaboration

- During Bob McDonald's tenure, the WPCF was interested in development of a composting capacity.
- WPCF Superintendent Chelsey Little sees this as a critical element of long-term cost control.
- We have an approximately \$25,000 appropriation for a sludge composting study; it might have a regional component for expanding it to include a regional facility.

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- We are going to receive a substantial proposition from the FRCOG to allow us to complete a more robust study.
- Little will give a more complete proposal on the 25th.

Other:

Special Town Meeting to be held outdoors, under a tent, on Saturday, October 16, at the Franklin County Technical School, 82 Industrial Boulevard, Turners Falls, MA

Bowman makes the motion to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting at 6:23 PM. Seconded by Hanold, unanimously approved. Bowman - Aye, Hanold - Aye, Garrison - Aye, Audley - Aye

Ellis makes the motion to adjourn the Capital Improvements Committee meeting at 6:23 PM. Seconded by Bowman, unanimously approved. Ellis - Aye, Bowman - Aye, Garrison - Aye

Boutwell makes the motion to adjourn the Selectboard meeting at 6:23 PM. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye