

TOWN OF MONTAGUE
SELECTBOARD MEETING
BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

Monday, January 24, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

This meeting was held via Zoom and recorded: <https://vimeo.com/669807223>

PRESENT: Rich Kuklewicz, Chair; Chris Boutwell and Matt Lord, members; Steve Ellis, Town Administrator; Wendy Bogusz, Executive Assistant;

OTHERS PRESENT: Jeff Singleton, Montague Reporter; Police Chief, Chris Williams; Greg Garrison, Capital Improvements Committee; Walter Ramsey, Town Planner & Conservation Agent; residents who called in to express their opinion on the Farren Property Forum.

1. **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER-** The meeting was called to order by Chair, Rich Kuklewicz. The meeting is being held via Zoom and recorded and aired on MCTV. All members present.
2. **PUBLIC COMMENT** – There was no public comment.
3. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 18, 2022** . The members received and reviewed the minutes. **Chris Boutwell made the motion to approve the minutes of January 18, 2022 as revised. Seconded by Matt Lord. Matt Lord, aye; Chris Boutwell, aye; Rich Kuklewicz, aye.**
4. **JOINT MEETING WITH THE BOARD OF HEALTH – No members present**
5. **COVID – 19 UPDATES** – The weekly update for COVID-19 was placed on the screen for all members to review. Steve Ellis spoke with the Board regarding this document. There was a decline this week from 274 to 206. Steve mentioned that the State is differentiating the cases whether the individuals have COVID and are admitted or if the individual has been admitted into the hospital and then contracted COVID. The statistics are showing 50/50. Steve also described the categories of vaccination histories through age groups. The greatest frequency is 18-35 years of age.

Steve also gave an update on the batch of testing kits and distribution. The town moved to purchase 1,000 test kits with ARPA funding. Focus was to be distributed through human service agencies to the disadvantage residents. When the test kits were purchased, they were to have a shelf life of 12 months however when received, they appeared to be several months old; the majority shows as May 2022 expiration date. There is still a strong need for these kits. Steve will work with EMT's to distribute throughout the town with the COA, Parks and Recreation and Library as well as the Town Hall Annex. At the Town Hall Annex, these kits will be distributed on a first come-first serve basis. Locations will be available first come-first serve and the Annex will

be 12-3 p.m. on Friday. Needs to be Montague residents only as every community in the area will distribute to their own town. This information will be posted on the Facebook page.

Jeff Singleton spoke with the Board wondering why the Board of Health is not participating in the distribution of the test kits instead of Steve being involved. Steve did not want to speak on behalf of the Board of Health but did say it was a collegial agreement with the EMT's to participate in this distribution for this Friday.

6. CHRIS WILLIAMS – POLICE CHIEF -

Chief Williams spoke with the Board about three new policies for discussion. Sick leave usage, temporary light duty assignments and traffic control officer policies. The sick leave usage and temporary light duty assignment policies have been reviewed by the Union as well as Counsel and a few revisions have been made. The traffic control officers are new and a few smaller towns in the area have adopted a similar policy. The traffic control officers description is within this policy. Any police officer or firefighter are qualified for this position. Guards from the House of Correction have received training through the academy and can also be considered traffic control officers. There were no questions from the Board for the Chief regarding these three policies.

Chair, Rich Kuklewicz entertained a motion to accept the following policies as presented: Sick Leave Usage, policy No. 2.25; Temporary Light Duty, policy no. 2.26 and Traffic Control Officers policy No 4.20. **Chris Boutwell made a motion to accept the policies as written to become effective January 25, 2022, seconded by Matt Lord. No questions. Matt Lord, aye; Chris Boutwell, aye; Rich Kuklewicz, aye.**

7. GREG GARRISON – CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE

Greg Garrison, Chair of the CIC, spoke to the Board about the 500 Avenue A award. All 4 bids came in with the criteria necessary. Nova Real Estate, LLC was recommended due to the fact that their proposal met the criteria as well as the measuring criteria had the highest points. Nova's primary focus is to have small businesses in the building, they had a good reuse plan. It was a very difficult decision as Nova along with the second group had a good reuse plan but Nova ended up with the highest rating. The timeline to initiate the plan was explained to the Board by Walter Ramsey who described the RFP. The Board is pleased that there were 4 local developers who bid for this project and thanks the CIC for their hard work to come to this recommendation. **Chair, Rich Kuklewicz proposes to make a motion to accept the recommendation to award the right to purchase 500 Avenue A to Nova Real Estate, LLC. Chris Boutwell made the motion and seconded by Matt Lord. No other comments. Matt Lord, aye; Chris Boutwell, aye; Rich Kuklewicz, aye.**

8. BRIAN MCHUGH, FCRHRA

Execute Authorization to Disburse No. 2, Invoice #2021-187-2, Avenue A Streetscape Phase III, Berkshire Design Group \$5,025.00.

Brian spoke with the Board about disbursement No. 2 for the bidding phase for the Streetscape Design for 25% of the bidding fee of \$5,025.00. **Chris Boutwell made the motion and seconded by Matt Lord to authorize the distribution of payment #2, Invoice #2021-187-2 for the Avenue A Streetscape Design. Matt Lord, Aye; Chris Boutwell, aye; Rich Kuklewicz, aye.**

Update on Avenue A Streetscape Bid Process – Brian reported that the bids are due tomorrow and he should be able to come back in a week or two to report and update. The Board hopes to receive some competitive bids.

9. FARREN PROPERTY REUSE FORUM

Walter spoke to the Board on the February 7th meeting process and thoughts to execute the ideas. Walter asked the Board what their thoughts were on their outcome of that meeting. He gave the Board some of his thoughts on the context of the discussion and the opportunity to have a two-way discussion with the public who will attend. Steve Ellis also mentioned that this meeting would be a respectful conversation and a positive outcome as to how the building or buildings can be used.

Chris Boutwell feels the discussion has been pretty well covered. Matt Lord feels the Board is broadly on the same page and looking to have a positive relationship with Trinity. Matt's goal for the forum is to let the public know of the very limited set of tools for the Board and the Town in general to influence this particular parcel. He would like to have a productive discussion and greater set of shared goals with the public.

Rich would also like the discussion to be a positive one and if the building is removed, that the town retain it and develop it into a great revitalization of that neighborhood.

The Board approves Walter's thoughts on how he'd like to frame the discussion of this forum.

Jeff Singleton questioned the process and thinks it has shifted. The Chair and Steve stated that the goal has always been what the community would like to have done with this building as well as the Board does have limitations.

Rich Kuklewicz called upon several residents who participated in this meeting and their concern about this property. The individuals who called in request more data as well as their concern of the bias shown by the Town Planner for this particular property. The Board feels that the questions being asked should be brought up at the Forum on the 7th.

10. CANNABIS IMPACT FEE FUNDED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Community-based Substance Abuse Prevention Program Grant RFQ

- **Award program grant to the Brick House for two iterations of the Strengthening Families Program**

Steve explained that the Town went through a very competitive RFP process and received one proposal from the Brick House. They have the trained staff and location for local residents who may benefit from this program of Strengthening Families.

- **Execute contract with the Brick House for \$40,390**

The contract work is in the process for \$40,390 and implemented in a Spring Program and a Summer-based Program.

Rich asked if members from the Brick House can come to an upcoming meeting and not effect the scheduling of this proposal? Steve will schedule to have them join in a future meeting.

Discussion of expected special article requests for cannabis impact funding at May Annual Town Meeting

- **School-based licensed substance abuse counselor**
- **Other possibilities**

Steve spoke to the Board about the Licensed substance abuse and drug counselor that was discussed at the Annual Town Meeting. G-M and Franklin Tech would like to propose models for full-time resource available for the next year. Steve received information on cannabis impact funding and it shows an increase in investment in the near term if revenues increase at this level.

The Board would like to hear from both school districts and how this helps them and how the Town can proceed with this funding. Steve asks for any conversations regarding this funding be directed to Matt Lord due to Steve's wife's position in the school district.

11. EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT BUSINESS

Upcoming Meeting Schedule

Wendy gave the Board meeting dates as follows:

January 31 – Gill-Montague Regional School District presentation of school budget

February 7 – Farren Property Reuse Forum

February 14 – Discussion on ARPA Funding

February 28 at 5:30 Tech School Presentation on their budget

March 3 – Special Town Meeting

There will also be a pre-town meeting process scheduled within the coming month as well.

12. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S BUSINESS

- **FRTA Construction Schedule**

An expected schedule of work from FRTA was placed on the screen for the Board to review. The clearing and footings are in place. There is an April timeframe for the building erection. It is anticipated to do sidewalks, sewer, paving early in July so there will be some disruption but feels it will go smoothly. It is hoped to have early completion in early November. It may be aggressive but it is doable. There may be a new lease in the upcoming months with FRTA and its

real estate. Jeff Singleton would like to have a public session to discuss this construction with the FRTA.

- **GMTA Update**

- **Town Meeting Update – Warrant and Procedures**

Steve spoke to the Board on the extension request. Counsel has reviewed the bill and has given the okay to move forward. House 4345 is the Bill and Steve does not know if it effects other towns.

Steve sent information to the Board what is proposed for the 15 Articles on the Town Meeting. Most of these are financial in nature and Steve asks the Board to review and think about these articles and the possibility of trimming the content for a remote meeting timeframe of the process. Steve also mentioned that the Moderator will not be able to participate so therefore, another town resident will be needed to fill this position.

- **Topics not anticipated in the 48 hour posting**

Steve did not have any additional information to discuss with the Board.

13. OTHER – Anticipated meeting Tuesday, January 25, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom – continue budget discussions.

Anticipated meeting Monday, January 31, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom with presentation of the school district.

14. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Chris Boutwell and seconded by Matt Lord, the meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m. Chris Boutwell, aye; Matt Lord, aye; Rich Kuklewicz, aye;

Respectfully submitted,

BettyLou Mallet
Scribe