

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING
1 Avenue A, 2nd Floor Meeting Room, Turners Falls, MA and VIA ZOOM
Monday, February 13, 2023

Present were Selectboard members Rich Kuklewicz, Chris Boutwell, and Matt Lord; Town Administrator Steve Ellis; Assistant Town Administrator Walter Ramsey; Executive Assistant Wendy Bogusz; CWF Superintendent Chelsey Little; DPW Superintendent Tom Bergeron; Town Clerk Deb Bourbeau; BOH Chair Melanie Zamojski, BOH Member Michael Nelson; and Town Planner Maureen Pollock.

Selectboard Chair opens the meeting at 6:30 PM, including announcing that the meeting is being recorded and roll call taken

Approve Selectboard Minutes from January 30 and February 6, 2023

Postponed

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

Sewer Commissioners, Chelsey Little Clean Water Superintendent Discharge Report Monthly Summary

Little displays and summarizes the January Discharge Report. We are still within permit range.

Millers Falls Flow Summary Report (Calendar Year 2022)

- Little displays and summarizes the Millers Falls Flow Summary Report for 2022. We won't have to pay an overage for the year.
- Bergeron shares that Wright-Pierce has just done a Millers Falls study. We have been given manholes that we need to check to possibly have relined for I&I infrastructure. RCAP has been in to do some more testing and will be coming in again next week.

Screw Pumps PLC Failure Update

Chelsea states that two weeks ago, during an update to the alarms, something shorted out in the PLC. She has installed timers so that each pump is going to kick on every hour. We are using one of our mission control units, which is the new remote alarm system that we are upgrading to at the facility.

Out of Town Sludge Receiving Update

Chelsey reports that we were able to install a frac tank in our headworks facility, which holds about 21,000 gallons. Due to an issue in Lowell, we ended up taking in two out-of-town sludge loads (from Sunderland and Hatfield). We are looking at taking in about three 9,000-gallon liquid sludge loads three times a week. Revenue would be anywhere between \$700 - \$825 per 9,000-gallon load, which would be approximately \$109,000/year.

Generator Project Update

An electrician who is interested in bidding on the project advised that they would be willing to install a used generator. We are going to put out to bid for a used generator with certain specifications. If we don't get any good options, we can put it out for the original bid package for a new one.

Review of Lead Collection System Operator's Job Description, Steve Ellis, Tom Bergeron, Chelsey Little

- Ellis summarizes the Job Description of the Lead Collection System Operator: ongoing tracking, monitoring, and response to emergency circumstances that require immediate reporting (that is later subject to review by the Superintendent); ongoing data collection storage in either our spreadsheet-based system, GIS system, etc.; and providing the core reports for review and final embellishment and submission by the Superintendent. The position would require being able to be out in the field and lead whatever team they're put out there with

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- On a heavy-equipment construction site, the hierarchy is the Superintendent, the Foreman, and then the Lead Operator.
- This is a skilled position with a variety of responsibilities, but it does have limits to its authority and responsibility.
- The qualifications include 3 to 5 years of related or similar experiences.
- Ellis states that the person who fills this position is likely to come from the DPW staff, but it does require computer literacy skills, as well as experience with robotic cameras and vac trucks.
- The next steps are the following:
 - 1) Bring the job description to union representatives to get their feedback.
 - 2) Have the Selectboard adopt or amend existing draft.
 - 3) Enter into an MOU, which would need to be created in the Wage and Classification system.
- Ellis states that we would not be hiring someone who is necessarily an expert on the regulations, but who is capable of building a schedule and entering the inspection data when required.
- Discussion about the finances will take place at a future time.

Tom Bergeron, DPW Superintendent

Purchase 2 or more message board signs, \$37,550 (price for 2) from ARPA funds

The Board decides to review the best way to fund the message board funds.

Purchase a 2015 Leeboy Paving Box to replace a 1987 Puckett Power Box, \$53,000 from DPW Discretionary Account

Boutwell makes the motion to approve the purchase of a 2015 Leeboy Paving Box to replace a 1987 Puckett Power Box, \$53,000 from DPW Discretionary Account. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Board of Health, Melanie Ames Zamojski, Chair

- Board of Health Chair calls their meeting to order and roll call taken.
- Intent to Appoint Candaicy David of Turks & Caicos as Montague Health Director**
 - **Review of Credentials**
Nelson reviews a list of David's credentials.
 - **Unique circumstances regarding availability as non-US citizen**
We need to apply for an H-1B Visa for David, which we would need legal assistance with. Ellis has been in preliminary communications with a firm in Northampton.
 - **Request authorization to spend legal counsel funds in support of H-1B Visa application process**
Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the Town Administrator to move forward with research and application for Candaicy David on the H-1B Visa application process. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Any Other BOH Updates**
None
- *Nelson makes the motion to adjourn the Board of Health Meeting at 19:31. Seconded by Zamojski, unanimously approved. Nelson - Aye, Zamojski - Aye*

Mike Kane and Anna Raby, Eversource

Utility Pole Update

- Raby shares that most of the transfers of the poles have been made.
- Comcast has finished all but ten (which still need some additional work).
- Verizon stands with 51 and Eversource has 6

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- There are currently 69 outstanding poles in Montague (as opposed to over 200).

Annie Levine, Great Falls Farmers Market

Approve Use of Peskeompskut Park: Great Falls Farmers Market, Saturdays 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM (includes set up and break down) from May to October 2023

Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Use of Peskeompskut Park: Great Falls Farmers Market, Saturdays 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM (includes set up and break down) from May to October 2023; and waive the fee. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Maureen Pollock, Town Planner

- **Review scope of the Montague City Village Center Plan, technical assistance to be provided from the Complete Neighborhoods Program**
 - The Montague Planning Department is proposing to conduct a zoning, land use, and conductivity analysis of the Montague City Village - particularly the Farren properties and the surrounding properties.
 - The Town wishes to seek community engagement.
 - The consultant (VHB) will help the community understand what can be done under our current regulations, as well as make recommendations that will help the Town to achieve its vision.
- **Execute Memorandum of Agreement with Mass Housing Partnership for participation in the Complete Neighborhoods Program**

Boutwell makes the motion to execute the Memorandum of Agreement with Mass Housing Partnership for participation in the Complete Neighborhoods Program. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Deb Bourbeau, Town Clerk; Eileen Seymour, Treasurer/Collector

Discuss possible transition to appointed Treasurer/Collector and Town Clerk positions

- Bourbeau states that in the 17 years as Town Clerk in Montague, she has seen a lot of big changes. Her workload has become more intricate and she has a lot more responsibilities. Overall, the job has become extremely more complex. At least eight other towns are also looking into transitioning the position to an appointed one.
- Seymour is not available but has sent a letter sharing her opinion that the Treasurer/Collector position should also be transitioned.
- The Board members support the transitions.
- This topic would go onto the Special Town Meeting Warrant as an Article.
- Ellis notes that this change would not signify turnover. Bourbeau's and Seymour's terms do not expire until May 2025.
- Kuklewicz suggests looking into contracts once the transitions are approved.
- John Hanold expresses his support of the transition. He feels one of the reasons for making the Clerk's position to become an appointed one is to enable us to draw from a broader spectrum of applicants when the time comes, and allow us to lay on the position the qualifications that we want.
- Ray Godin expresses his opinion that transitioning would be a bad move and that it should be kept off the Warrant.

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Town Meeting Warrant - To approve and execute March 2, 2023 Special Town Meeting Warrant, attached hereto

Make any recommendations related to the Town Meeting Warrant and Motions

- Kuklewicz reads aloud Article 20.
- *Boutwell makes the motion to place Article 20 on the Special Town Meeting Warrant. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- *Boutwell makes the motion to support the recommendation to move the Town Clerk position from elected to appointed. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- Kuklewicz reads aloud Article 21.
- *Boutwell makes the motion to place Article 21 on the Special Town Meeting Warrant. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- *Boutwell makes the motion to support the recommendation to move the Town Treasurer/Collector position from elected to appointed. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- *Boutwell makes the motion to place all the Warrant Articles as previously reviewed and voted on the Special Town Meeting scheduled for March 2, 2023. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

Wendy Bogusz, Execute Assistant

- **Annual Town Meeting: Article submission deadline for May 6, 2023 Annual Town Meeting, March 16, 2023 at 4:00 PM**
Bogusz reads aloud the notice regarding the 4:00 PM on March 16, 2023 Article submission deadline for the May 6, 2023 Annual Town Meeting,
- **Turners Falls Power Canal Service outage will take place September 25, 2023 through September 30, 2023**
Bogusz states that the Turners Falls Power Canal Service outage will take place Monday, September 25, 2023 through Saturday, September 30, 2023. The town will be drained by 0700 Monday and remain so until Saturday 30.

Town Administrator Report

- **Discussion of ARPA spending strategy and timeline**
 - Ellis states that there is significant concern that there could be a clawback of any unspent or unobligated ARPA funds. He reminds the Town that we have to obligate funds by December 31, 2024 and spend them by December 31, 2026.
 - Kuklewicz states he would like to see a copy of the list of the requests that we could spend ARPA funds on, then discuss this topic at a future meeting.
 - Lord shares that prior to this political issue arising, he was going to suggest that we put the ARPA funds into Capital Stabilization or a similar set of funds. Now with this situation, he is tending toward taking a look at everything that has gone through CIC and Fin Com review that is going up for Annual Town Meeting and spend out of that. And now we have a new list for CIC and Fin Com to look at based on the current ARPA requests.
 - Ramsey states that the Town has encumbered \$1.5 million out of the \$2.4 million, which leaves us \$815,000 of unencumbered ARPA funds. We have at least \$1.9 million in requests of potential projects.
- **Topics not anticipated within the 48 hour posting**
None

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Anticipated Executive Session in accordance with G.L. c. 30A, §21(a)(2) and 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining, as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the Selectboard's bargaining position, and to conduct collective bargaining sessions (NAGE).

- The Chair deems that holding this discussion in open session would be detrimental to the Town's position.
- *Boutwell makes the motion to go into Executive Session in accordance with G.L. c. 30A, §21(a)(2) and 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining, as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the Selectboard's bargaining position, and to conduct collective bargaining sessions (NAGE). Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

OTHER:

Next Meeting:

- Selectboard, Monday, February 27, 2023 at 6:30 PM via ZOOM
- Special Town Meeting, Thursday March 2, 2023 at 6:30 PM TFHS Auditorium, 222 Turnpike Road, Montague