

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING

VIA ZOOM

Monday, May 22, 2023 at 6:00 PM

Meeting was opened at 6:00 PM. Present were Selectboard members Rich Kuklewicz, Chris Boutwell, and Matt Lord; Town Administrator Steve Ellis; Executive Assistant Wendy Bogusz; Assistant Town Administrator Walter Ramsey; Town Planner Maureen Pollock; FCRHA Director of Community Development Brian McHugh; Battlefield Grant Advisory Board Chair David Brule; and Department of Public Works Superintendent Tom Bergeron.

Selectboard Chair opens the meeting at 6:00 PM, including announcing that the meeting is being recorded and roll call taken

Approve Selectboard Minutes from May 15, 2023

Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Selectboard Minutes from May 15, 2023 as presented. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - 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

Reorganization of the Board

Election of Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk

Boutwell makes the motion that the Selectboard remain in the positions that they are: Matt Lord as Clerk, Chris Boutwell as Vice Chair, and Rich Kuklewicz as Chair. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Kaitlin John, Representative for the Affordable Connectivity Program

Requesting Use of Public Property, Peskeompskut Park to set up a table to display and hand out tablets for low income residents

Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Request for the Use of Public Property, Peskeompskut Park to set up a table to display and hand out tablets for low-income residents; and to waive the fee to use the park. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Maureen Pollock, Town Planner

- **Mass DOT Safe Passing User Program - Authorization to sign the Memorandum of Understanding**
Boutwell makes the motion to accept the Memorandum of Understanding with Mass DOT as discussed, and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

- **Proposed Market Feasibility Study - Authorization to apply for FY2024 Community Planning Grant Program**

Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the Town Planner to apply for the Proposed Market Feasibility Study as discussed, and to authorize the Chair to sign a letter designating the support of the entire Selectboard. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Little League Kick-Off Parade (not on agenda)

- Bogusz shares that the Little League Kick-Off Parade was canceled due to the rain. It is rescheduled for June 3 with a rain date of June 4. The route has been changed to be a shorter walk. Montague PD and Turners Falls Fire will be taking care of the traffic.
- *Boutwell makes the motion to approve the amended parade route for the Little League Kick-Off Parade and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

Brian McHugh - Public Hearing

Update on the FY20 and FY21 CDBG Programs

- Kuklewicz opens the hearing at 6:30 PM and reads aloud the notice for the hearing.
- McHugh gives an update on the FY20 CDBG Programs:
 - The FY20 grant combined with the Town's program income totaled \$745,938.67.
 - The estimated program completion date is June 30, 2023.

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- The grant money was used for the following: the Housing Rehab Program, Montague Catholic Social Ministries' Families Learning Together Program, LifePath's Meals on Wheels Program, the Brickhouse's Youth Opportunities for Leadership and Momentum Arts Program, Wildflower Alliance's Direct Outreach and Peer Support Programs for People in Recovery, the Hillcrest Park Design Project, and Phase III-A Streetscape Projects.
- There are two housing rehab projects that are currently still open; they had to be halted due to winter.
- In response to a question by Kuklewicz about gaps near the curb in front of Subway, McHugh asks anyone who has questions about the project to let him know so he can make sure they get on the architect's punch list.
- McHugh gives an update on the FY21 CDBG Programs:
 - The FY21 CDBG grant total was \$788,174.
 - The completion date is December 31, 2023.
 - The grant money was used for the following: the Housing Rehab Program, the Montague Catholic Social Ministries' Families Learning Together Program, LifePath's Home Sharing Program (which has been dropped), the Brickhouse's Youth Opportunities for Leadership and Momentum Arts Program, Wildflower Alliance's Direct Outreach and Peer Support Programs for People in Recovery, and Phase III-B Streetscape Projects.
- Kuklewicz declares the public hearing on the update on the FY20 and FY21 CDBG Programs closed at 6:46 PM.

David Brule, Chair of Battlefield Grant Advisory Board

- **Battle of Great Falls Study Updates**
 - Brule states we are in Phase III of the Battlefield study.
 - We have gotten our promise of funding.
 - There are still three miles of the seven miles of the archeology study left to do.
 - Once the archeology is done and finalized, the next step is to do the educational part that we will receive funding for to develop content for narrative, signage, etc. We will more than likely be looking for an indigenous person to write the content.
- **Deliver Board's recommendation to award Principal Investigator services contract for Phase III of the Battle of Great Falls Wissantinnewag - Peskeompskut Site Identification and Evaluation Project to Heritage to Consultants, LLC. (\$60,000)**

Boutwell makes the motion to award the Principal Investigator services contract for Phase III of the Battle of Great Falls Wissantinnewag - Peskeompskut Site Identification and Evaluation Project to Heritage to Consultants, LLC. (\$60,000). Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Authorize Memorandum of Agreement for project participation from Chaubunagungamaug Nipmuck Tribal Historic Preservation Office, Elnu Abenaki Tribal Historic Preservation Office, Narragansett Indian Tribal Historic Preservation Office, Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head Tribal Historic Preservation**

Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the Memorandum of Agreement for project participation from Chaubunagungamaug Nipmuck Tribal Historic Preservation Office, Elnu Abenaki Tribal Historic Preservation Office, Narragansett Indian Tribal Historic Preservation Office, Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head Tribal Historic Preservation; and authorize the Chair to sign it when finalized. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Walter Ramsey, Assistant Town Administrator

One Stop Grant Authorizations:

- **Site Readiness Program: Canal District Mill Demolition and Riverfront Design. Grant Request \$120,000**

Boutwell makes the motion to approve request of the Assistant Town Administrator to apply for the Canal District Site Preparation and Riverfront Reclamation Project Grant Request from the One Stop for Growth Mass Development, and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Rural and Small-Town Development Fund: "Avenue A Combined Sewer Overflow and Buffer Line improvements." Grant Request \$500,000**

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Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the Assistant Town Administrator to apply for the grant for the support of the Avenue A Combined Sewer Overflow and Buffer Line improvements as discussed, and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Walter Ramsey, Assistant Town Administrator and Tom Bergeron, DPW Superintendent

Discussion: Retaining wall at Prospect and Third Streets

- Bergeron and Ramsey explain that the retaining wall at Prospect and Third Streets has collapsed. The Town does not own the property that that wall is on.
- Ramsey spoke with the property owner, who expressed willingness to sell the parcel to the Town or to give whatever permission is needed for the Town to address the issue.
- Bergeron will continue to monitor the situation.
- In response to a question by Kuklewicz, Ramsey states that the owner does not feel responsible for fixing the wall. The history is fuzzy as to who put the retaining wall in.
- Ariel Elan advises buying that parcel of land.

Town Administrator Report

- **Review Election Ballot Question Results. Discuss Transition from Elected to Appointed Town Clerk and Treasurer/Collector Positions**
 - The community did approve the transition of both the Town Clerk's and the Treasurer/Collector's positions from Elected to Appointed positions.
 - The current elected status for the Treasurer/Collector's position is good through the May 2025 election.
 - The Board will have the opportunity at the last meeting in June to make the permanent appointment of Kathern Pierce to Town Clerk.
- **Share Town Comments to EPA/DEP regarding Draft NPDES Permit for Clean Water Facility and Wastewater Collection System**
 - Feedback from several residents regarding the Draft NPDES Permit for Clean Water Facility and Wastewater Collection System is shared on the public record.
 - Ellis states that in the Draft Permit, much of his and CWF Superintendent Chelsey Little's concern relates to schedule and the lack of funding for mandated studies that had been added. There are also some issues related to testing for certain types of PFAS compounds.
 - Ellis shares that Little mentioned that we may need to conduct another local limit study as what we received has changed substantially since the last time it was done.
 - The Town of Gill is identified as a co-permittee and could potentially be subject to new requirements. Ellis suggests removing the co-permittee requirements from the Draft Permit.
 - Ellis suggests that the Permit could be effective by winter of next year.
- **Award Cemetery Ground Maintenance Bid and Execute Contract with Gleason Johndrow Landscaping of Chicopee in the amount of \$23,000**

Boutwell makes the motion to Execute the Cemetery Ground Maintenance Contract with Gleason Johndrow Landscaping of Chicopee in the amount of \$23,000. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Review and Discuss Trash and Recycling Bid Results**
 - We received two bids from our RFP - one from Casella and one from Republic Services.
 - A third would-be bidder (USA Waste and Recycling) had sent a letter saying that they will not do manual collection any longer.
 - The first year of the contract would begin next July.
 - Ellis states that we never really have to award contracts; it's at our discretion whether we choose to do so or not.
 - Boutwell states that the cost is more than what people are actually paying for.
 - Discussion ensues about residents not putting stickers on each trash bag before putting them in the barrels.
 - Ellis suggests that the Selectboard allow him, Bergeron, Jan Ameen, and Brandy to engage with different companies and see if they can negotiate agreements.
 - Kuklewicz states that communication has been the big issue (i.e., when the service misses a pick-up, they should communicate with the users and let them know what they are going to do about it).
 - Ellis suggests financial penalties.

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Executive Sessions:

- **Executive Session in accordance with G. L. c.30A, §21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining as discussion in open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the Chair so declares**
- **Executive Session in accordance with G. L. c.30A, §21(a)(6) to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real estate, Kearsarge**
- The Chair deems that holding such discussions in open session would be detrimental to the Town's position.
- *Boutwell makes the motion to go into Executive Sessions. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

OTHER:

Next Meeting: Selectboard, Tuesday, June 6, 2023 at 7:15 PM, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls and via ZOOM