

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING
1 Avenue A, Turners Falls and VIA ZOOM
Monday, October 2, 2023 at 6:30 PM

Meeting was opened at 6:30 PM. Present were Selectboard members Rich Kuklewicz, Chris Boutwell, and Matt Lord; Town Administrator Steve Ellis; Assistant Town Administrator Walter Ramsey; Executive Assistant Wendy Bogusz; DPW Superintendent Tom Bergeron; RiverCulture Director Suzanne LoManto; Police Chief Chris Williams; Library Director Caitlin Kelley; and FCRHA Director of Community Development Brian McHugh.

Selectboard Chair opens the meeting at 6:30 PM.

Approve Selectboard Minutes from September 25, 2023

Postponed until next meeting.

Public Comment Period: Individuals will be limited to two (2) minutes each and the Selectboard will strictly adhere to time allotted for public comment

- A resident expresses concerns about sidewalk disrepair on Montague City Road from Walnut Street to Turnpike Road. Bergeron will follow-up.
- In response to a question by a resident, Ellis states that the State is responsible for funding repairs on the South Street Bridge and the Center Street Bridge. Ramsey states that South Street Bridge should be done by next summer. A detour route has been established.

Tom Bergeron, DPW Superintendent

Winter Parking Ban Flashing Beacon Proposal

- Bergeron explains the necessity of a Winter Parking Ban Flashing Beacon. He has contacted a company that supplies signs with strobe lights; these would attach to the mast of signal lights and can be remotely turned on for snow events. Two signs with a five-year service plan will cost \$3,930 apiece. We need one for Avenue A on Third Street and Avenue A on Seventh Street to start. Bergeron wonders if we can use ARPA money?
- The Board asks that Tom use his existing budget to pay for this and not ARPA funds; Bergeron agreed.
- The Board approves Bergeron's plan.

Personnel Board

- **Appoint Robert Bessette to DPW Heavy Equipment Operator, UE Grade D, Step 8, \$26.74/hour, effective 9/25/23**
Boutwell makes the motion to appoint Robert Bessette to DPW Heavy Equipment Operator, UE Grade D, Step 8, \$26.74/hour, effective 9/25/23. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Request for cell phone stipend for Kyle Bessette, \$5.77/week, effective 10/2/23**
Boutwell makes the motion to approve the request for a cell phone stipend for Kyle Bessette, \$5.77/week, effective 10/2/23. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Appoint Elena Pepe-Salutric, Substitute Library Assistant, \$15.00, effective 10/3/23**
Boutwell makes the motion to appoint Elena Pepe-Salutric, Substitute Library Assistant, \$15.00, effective 10/3/23. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Appoint Jeffrey Bache, Alternate Gas/Plumbing Inspector, 1 year term, until 6/30/24**
Boutwell makes the motion to appoint Jeffrey Bache, Alternate Gas/Plumbing Inspector, 1 year term, until 6/30/24. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Appoint Todd Weed, Alternate Electrical Inspector, 1 year term, until 6/30/24**
Boutwell makes the motion to appoint Todd Weed, Alternate Electrical Inspector, 1 year term, until 6/30/24. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Affirm Personnel Board Role in Classification and Compensation Study**
 - Ellis reviews the suggested Personnel Board Role in the Classification and Compensation Study.
 - The project will be driven by a consultant, who will work with the staff to come up with an amended structure.
 - Kuklewicz prefers that Ellis and Ramsey take the lead, but states he would not mind being a sounding board.
 - Lord states that there are portions of this study in which the Town staff is very heavily engaged; he would like to feel that the staff has somebody looking out for them and is willing to be that person.
- **Consider Any Updates on Request Regarding STM Longevity Article**

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The Board decides to continue with the Article as is at this point in time.

Caitlin Kelley, Library Director

Request to close Center Street in front of Montague Center Library, for an outdoor concert on Wednesday, October 11, 2023 from 4:30 PM - 7:45 PM

Boutwell makes the motion to close Center Street in front of Montague Center Library, for an outdoor concert on Wednesday, October 11, 2023 from 4:30 PM - 7:45 PM. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Suzanne LoManto, RiverCulture Director

- **Requests approval to participate in "Making it Public" a training sponsored by the New England Foundation for the Arts.**
- **Execute Letter of Support to NEFA Selection Committee**
- *Boutwell approves the RiverCulture Director's request to participate in "Making it Public" a training sponsored by the New England Foundation for the Arts, and authorize the Chair to sign the Letter of Support to the NEFA Selection Committee. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

Mark Wisnewski, Rendezvous

Entertainment License request for Falls Fest, Parking Lot at Third Street, October 21, 2023, 2:00 PM to 8:30 PM

Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Entertainment License for Falls Fest, Parking Lot at Third Street, October 21, 2023, 2:00 PM to 8:30 PM. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Consider Avenue A Street Closure Options and Amendment to Falls Fest Use of Public Space Permit for 2023 Falls Fest

Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Amendment to the Falls Fest Use of Public Space Permit for 2023 Falls Fest with regard to the Closure of Avenue A between 7th and 3rd street, with further blockade of the parking spaces on the block of Avenue A between 3rd and 2nd. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Brian McHugh, Director FCRHRA

FY21 Montague CDBG Programs:

- **To authorize payment #12 to Berkshire Design Group in the amount of \$4,527.60 for Construction Administration for the FY21 Montague Avenue A Streetscapes Improvement Construction Project**
Boutwell makes the motion to authorize payment #12 to Berkshire Design Group in the amount of \$4,527.60 for Construction Administration for the FY21 Montague Avenue A Streetscapes Improvement Construction Project. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **To authorize signature on Budget Revision #2, to move \$1,857.17 in uncommitted (4C) Housing Rehabilitation Funds and \$2,116.00 in uncommitted (6C) Infrastructure Construction Funds into 6A Program Delivery of Infrastructure Project**
Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Budget Revision #2, to move \$1,857.17 in uncommitted (4C) Housing Rehabilitation Funds and \$2,116.00 in uncommitted (6C) Infrastructure Construction Funds into 6A Program Delivery of Infrastructure Project; and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

FY22.23 Montague CDBG Programs:

- **To authorize the Town to sign the Executive Office for Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC)-approved Professional Services Agreement with Franklin County Regional Housing and Rehabilitation Authority to administer the programs funded by the FY22.23 Community Development Block Grant**
Boutwell makes the motion to execute the Agreement between the Town of Montague and the Franklin County Regional Housing and Rehabilitation Authority as discussed, and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **To authorize the Town to sign the EOHLC-approved Professional Services Agreement with the 5 social service agencies being funded by the FY22.23 CDBG Program**

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Boutwell makes the motion to execute the EOHLC-approved Professional Services Agreement with the 5 social service agencies being funded by the FY22.23 CDBG Program, and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

- **To award the fixed fee contract to Berkshire Design Group, Inc. for the Bidding and Construction Administration for the Hillcrest Neighborhood Park Construction Project**

Boutwell makes the motion to award the fixed fee contract to Berkshire Design Group, Inc. for the Bidding and Construction Administration for the Hillcrest Neighborhood Park Construction Project, and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Assistant Town Administrator Business

- **Announce \$71,400 Green Community Grant Award for LED lighting upgrades of Montague Center streetlights and contribution toward the purchase of an electrical vehicle for Inspectional Services. Request authorization to execute forthcoming grant agreement**
Boutwell makes the motion to execute the Green Community Grant in the amount of \$71,400 as discussed. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Recommendation to award the Town Hall Annex Roof Solar PV System Project to Alliance Clean Energy (ACE Solar) in accordance with the Request for Proposals issued 7/19/2023. 75kW System is proposed at cost of \$192,930.52. System to be funded by existing ARPA appropriation.**
Boutwell makes the motion to award the Town Hall Annex Roof Solar PV System Project to Alliance Clean Energy (ACE Solar) in accordance with the Request for Proposals issued 7/19/2023; 75kW System is proposed at cost of \$192,930.52; system to be funded by existing ARPA appropriation. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Burn Dump Capping - Unilateral Administrative Order response and engineering expense**
 - Last month the Town received a Unilateral Administrative Order from the Mass DEP Wetlands Division related to the proposed capping and stormwater design aspect that the Town is going through.
 - At this point we have an approved design by DEP.
 - The additional design work has increased the construction cost of the project. Kearsarge is currently getting quotes from other vendors.
 - The cost on the design end has increased by \$20,000, which the Town is responsible for. We have approximately \$25,000 in the Unexpected Engineering Special Article appropriation.
 - The Town has 30 days to commence construction.

Town Administrator Business

- **Discuss Preparations for FY25 Budget Cycle**
 - Ramsey put out the Capital Improvement Request Schedule this past week.
 - The Town Departments will be submitting their requests by November 1st for the Winter Special Town Meeting and the Annual Town Meeting.
 - The school district has until December 1st to submit their requests.
 - The Selectboard has defined key elements of the budget through pre-analysis of consideration of personnel requests over the last two years. With regard to the Wage and Classification Compensation Study, there is a question as to the approach that the Board would prefer to take relative to new programmatic and personnel initiatives to the extent that they want to look at implementation of changes to the compensation schedule for existing employees.
 - Kuklewicz would like to keep a tighter message to our department heads about budgeting to see if there are areas that we can tighten up on.
 - Lord agrees with Kuklewicz, stating that there has been growth in spending and although the outcomes have been beneficial, the trend line is something that would not be sustainable.
- **Authorize Signing of \$17,400 MA DEP Sustainable Materials Recovery Program (SMRP) Municipal Recycling Dividend Program Grant**
Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the \$17,400 MA DEP Sustainable Materials Recovery Program (SMRP) Municipal Recycling Dividend Program Grant, and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **MA Fair Share Tax Spending Plan - Positive Implications for Road & Bridge Funding through expansion of Ch 90-type aid**

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The MA Fair Share Act (the Millionaire's Tax) was passed last year. The State came up with a \$1 billion spending plan. There is one line that offers direct infusion of resources to the Town of Montague through a commitment of road and bridge funding. This is a \$100 million supplement to Chapter 90 funds. This would mean that our \$483,000 annual appropriation would be increased by 50% (approximately \$240,000).

- **\$2M Federal Earmark Request for Collection System Improvements Does Not Survive Federal Appropriations**

Ellis shares that the \$2M Federal Earmark Request for Collection System Improvements did not survive Federal appropriations. The good thing is that we have the attention of our Federal delegation. We hope to hear back for some other collection system grant applications that we have pending.

- **Topics Not Anticipated**

- **Environmental Assessment.** Ellis and Ramsey have been following up on the environmental assessment at the Farren anticipate being able to bring written agreements to the Board within the next few weeks.
- **Annex Renovation.** Kuklewicz discusses the idea of an annex renovation in order to have more meeting space. He would like to continue pursuing this issue.

OTHER:

Upcoming Meetings:

- Special Town Meeting, October 10, 2023 at 6:30 PM, Turners Falls High School Theater, 222 Turnpike Road
- Selectboard Meeting, Monday, October 16, 2023 at 6:00 PM, via ZOOM

*Boutwell makes the motion to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:14 PM. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved.
Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*