

**MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING
VIA ZOOM
Monday, October 16, 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; Assistant Town Administrator Walter Ramsey; Executive Assistant Wendy Bogusz; DPW Superintendent Tom Bergeron; CWF Superintendent Chelsey Little; Parks and Recreation Director Jon Dobosz; Finance Committee Members Francis Wisniewski, Dorinda Bell-Up, and John Hanold; and Town Planner Maureen Pollock.

Approve Selectboard Minutes from September 25, 2023 and October 2, 2023

Boutwell makes the motion to approve the minutes of September 25, 2023. Seconded by Lord, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Lord – Aye, Kuklewicz – Aye

October 2, 2023 Minutes to be approved at the 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

E. Cunha asks if there will be public comment during the Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity topic; Kuklewicz responds yes.

Chelsey Little, Clean Water Facility Superintendent

Authorize DOER Grant Application Submission for Hydroelectric Feasibility Study for \$6,000. Chair to Sign Attachment B.

Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the DOER Grant Application Submission for Hydroelectric Feasibility Study for \$6,000; and to authorize the Chair to Sign Attachment B. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Facility Upgrade Discussion - Future Planning

- Little begins the Facility Upgrade Discussion. She states we need to upgrade one of the sections of the facility, which is currently unhealthy and is eating away at equipment.
- The members of the Board are in agreement.
- Kuklewicz suggests we can create a roadmap in an upcoming in-person meeting.
- Ramsey states it needs to get on the Capital Plan. He intends to assist with this project.
- We are waiting for feedback from the HVAC consultant.

CWF Featured in TPOs (Treatment Plant Operator's) October Cover Story

Little shares that our article in the Treatment Plant Operator's October edition was chosen as the cover story.

Abstract of Industrial Pretreatment Accepted for Presentation at NEWEA's (New England Water Environment Association's) Annual Conference

Little shares that the NEWEA has accepted her Abstract of Industrial Pretreatment. She will be a speaker at their Annual Conference in January.

Discharge Report Monthly Summary for September

- Little displays the Monthly Summary for September and states everything looks good.
- There was some emergency maintenance, which will be reported on October's Monthly Summary.

Tom Bergeron, DPW Superintendent

Sewer Collection Operations Report

- Bessette has done over 22,000 feet of pipe-cleaning so far this year.
- Bessette met with the ARCAP representative, and they started going over the GIS system and it is being added into the Towns system so Bessette has the information available to him.

Lead Collection System Operator Percent Time on Sanitary Sewer

Bergeron reviews the percentage of time Bessette spends on Sanitary Sewer. He states that if he can hire two more Truck Driver/Laborers, he will be more able to have another individual work with Bessette during the day.

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Dell Street/Fairway Ave Erosion Investigation

There is significant erosion at Dell Street/Fairway Ave. Bergeron states that when the ground freezes and once we get the right permits, we will rebuild the drainage walls to slow down the rush of water.

Montague City Road Construction Update

Davenport Construction will start doing work on November 1st. They will put catch basins in to help alleviate the water that is already there. Bergeron hopes that their work will be done in time for the DPW to put blacktop down, which needs to be done by the end of November.

Strathmore Mill Updates

- 21 windows have been boarded up.
- "Fallen Debris" signs have been put outside of the building.
- "No Trespassing" signs will be put out.
- Bergeron states he has not received any quotes to work on the roof.
- Ellis states that he received an initial quote to make Building #2 as watertight as possible from a roof perspective, which was \$165,000. He feels it is a lot of money to put into a building that is in this state of disrepair.

Personnel Board - Review of Finance Committee Stipend Recommendations

- Wisniewski reviews the Finance Committee Stipend Recommendations for FY 2025:
 - Approach to Review
 - Specific Positions
 - Board Stipends
- The Selectboard members express that the stipends are well-deserved and thank the Finance Committee for their work.

Jon Dobosz, Director of Parks and Recreation

Use of Public Property:

Sawmill River 10k for Monday, January 1, 2024

Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Registration for Assembly for the Sawmill River 10k for Monday, January 1, 2024. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Montague Soap Box Races for Sunday, June 2, 2024

Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the Use of Public Property for the Montague Soap Box Races for Sunday, June 2, 2024. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Megan McDonough, Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity Executive Director

Review of concept plans for development at First Street

- Plans for development of First Street Affordable Housing project include lining up funding, doing preliminary design and development, and moving forward with receiving the property from the Town.
- An informal community meeting was held at the end of September. There was a concern expressed regarding 2nd Street residents parking along the 1st Street alley.

Request consideration of reducing units from 6 to 5

McDonough displays and reviews a potential plan that would reduce the units from 6 to 5, but would provide more parking.

Discussion (not on agenda)

- In response to a question by Boutwell, McDonough states that the new plan would provide 12 parking spaces as opposed to only 6.
- In response to a question by Lord, McDonough states that the minimum household income to purchase one of these homes was \$30,000/year at the last project. The maximum varied with family size, up to 60% of the area median income.

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- In response to a question by Lord, McDonough explains that everyone who meets the eligibility criteria is put into a lottery.
- In response to comments by Ellis, McDonough states that the spacing of the homes would get tweaked.
- Pollock mentions that McDonough met with various Town departments to review the conceptual plan. She states that if the plan is modified, she would be happy to set up another tech review with the Police Department, the Fire Department, the Building Inspector, and DPW.
- Hanold urges the Board not to give more consideration than necessary for the lack of parking and to focus on the purpose of the project.
- Edite Cunha feels that the idea of losing a family housing unit in the interest of parking is insulting to families that are housing-insecure.
- Lord states that he does not want to move away from the 6-unit plan and explains his reasoning.
- Kuklewicz lists more things to consider with the modified plan; he prefers the original plan.
- Boutwell feels we should stick with the original plan.

*Boutwell makes the motion to stay with the original plan of 6 units. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved.
Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

Assistant Town Administrator's Business

Execute Order of Taking for South Street Bridge Replacement Project: 5 Year Temporary Construction Easement affecting 9 South Street owners Elliot and Carol Allis (4,237 Square Feet)

*Boutwell makes the motion to execute the Order of Taking for South Street Bridge Replacement Project: 5 Year Temporary Construction Easement affecting 9 South Street owners Elliot and Carol Allis (4,237 Square Feet).
Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

Environmental Protection Agency FY24 Brownfields Cleanup Grant Opportunity - Strathmore Mill Partial Demolition.

Application due November 13

- Ramsey reviews the Environmental Protection Agency FY24 Brownfields Cleanup Grant Opportunity - Strathmore Mill Partial Demolition.
 - The local match requirement is waived for this current round.
 - This would not fund the entire demolition of the mill, but we have plans for a partial demolition which would cost about \$2.6 million. We can apply for this.
 - The primary purpose for this fund is to abate hazardous waste.
- Discussion
 - In response to a question by Boutwell, Ramsey states that in order focus on this grant, he can push back discussions about the availability of industrial and commercial land in Town.
 - Lord and Kuklewicz are in favor of applying for this grant.
 - Ellis states that this shows the Town's commitment to the various State and Federal partners that we are trying to rally in support of this.

Closeout of Montague Center (Old Town Hall) Masonry project

The Montague Center Masonry project is complete and was successful.

Invitation from Jo Comerford to participate in 86th Citizen's Legislative Seminar

Ramsey shares that Senator Comerford has invited him to attend the 86th Citizen's Legislative Seminar to represent the Town.

Town Administrator's Business

Town Meeting Recap and Follow-ups

- Ellis states that the Town Meeting went well.
- One issue discussed was the collection system reporting. Ellis and Bergeron are meeting on Wednesday with the Mass Rural Water Association's grant recipients, who may be able to provide some assistance to us.

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Farren Care Center Property Donation Updates

- We received access to the original Phase 1 and Phase 2 studies that were completed for the project. There were no significant findings. There were areas of the property including the parking lot across Montague City Road that were not part of the original study. Negotiation will be extending the original Phase 1 and Phase 2 work to encompass those areas.
- We are working with KP Law to make sure that we engage the services of Title Counsel.

Six Town Regional Planning Board Financial Report Meeting Invitation

- The Six Town Regional Planning Board is looking into the question of whether creating a bigger regional district at the middle- and high-school level would make sense.
- Study results point to favorable educational programming impacts from the merger.
- They have invited the Selectboard and Finance Committees to participate at an in-person meeting on Tuesday, November 14 in Gill where the Board would have an opportunity to hear the results of the financial analysis and to give feedback. Kuklewicz, Boutwell, and Lord intend to attend.

Falls Fest Reminder, Event on Saturday, October 21

The Falls Fest will take place on Saturday, October 21. The streets will be closed between 3rd St. and 7th St. Volunteers will be putting structures in place for the event beginning on Friday.

Boutwell makes the motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye