

**MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING
VIA ZOOM
Monday, November 27, 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; Administrative Assistant Angie Amadon; Treasurer/Collector Eileen Seymour; Town Assessor Karen Tonelli; and Board of Assessors members Ann Cenzano, Ann Fisk, and Rebecca Sabelawski.

Selectboard Chair opens the Selectboard meeting, including announcing that the meeting is being recorded and roll call taken

Board of Assessors Chair opens the FY24 Tax Classification Hearing, including announcing that the meeting is being recorded and roll call taken

Approve Selectboard Minutes from November 6 and 13, 2023, if available

Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Selectboard Minutes from November 6 and 13, 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

Karen Tonelli and Board of Assessors

FY24 Tax Classification Hearing

- Tonelli reviews the FY24 Tax Classification Presentation.
- *Boutwell makes the motion to continue with the Split Tax Rate or CIP Shift as we have in the past years. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- *Boutwell makes the motion to set the CIP Shift Rate at 1.30 as outlined on the documentation. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- *Boutwell makes the motion to approve the option of an Open Space Discount of up to 25%. Seconded by Lord, unanimously unapproved. Boutwell - Nay, Lord - Nay, Kuklewicz - Nay*
- *Boutwell makes the motion to exercise the Residential Exemption. Seconded by Lord, unanimously unapproved. Boutwell - Nay, Lord - Nay, Kuklewicz - Nay*
- *Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Small Commercial Exemption. Seconded by Lord, unanimously unapproved. Boutwell - Nay, Lord - Nay, Kuklewicz - Nay*
- Tonelli notifies the Selectboard that the FY24 Excess Levy Capacity is \$1,265,947.00.

Cenzano makes the motion to adjourn the Board of Assessors Meeting. Seconded by Fisk, unanimously approved.

Cenzano - Aye, Fisk - Aye, Sabelawski - Aye

Cindy Bayer, Rustic Romance, 26 East Main St., Millers Falls

1 Day Beer & Wine License, Sip N' Shop, February 9, 2024

Boutwell makes the motion to approve the request of Cindy Bayer, Rustic Romance, 26 East Main St., Millers Falls for the 1 Day Beer & Wine License, Sip N' Shop, February 9, 2024. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved.

Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Personnel Board

Judith Lorei, Cemetery Commission

Discuss Proposed Cemetery Sexton Position

Boutwell makes the motion to endorse the creation of a Cemetery Sexton Position as a stipended position, and to ask the Cemetery Commission to prepare a document to outline the duties of such. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Cemetery Commission Professional Office Support

- The Board decides that the Selectboard Office will support and service the administrative home for the Cemetery Commission.
- Lord would like it incorporated in somebody's job description (i.e., Town Administrator, ATA, or Executive Assistant) as we're are going through the Wage and Classification Study.

**MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING
VIA ZOOM
Monday, November 27, 2023 at 6:30 PM**

Eileen Seymour, Treasurer/Collector

Treasurer/Collector's Office Staffing Plan and Budget Impact for FY25

- Seymour states she is looking to outsource our bills, which will save a lot of money in the long run.
- Seymour summarizes a plan in which the Administrative Assistant, Angie Amadon, would put in some extra hours in the Treasurer/Collector's Office if needed. She states she has the money in her budget.
- *Boutwell makes the motion to endorse the Budget Proposal for FY25 as discussed with the Treasurer/Collector. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

Steve Ellis, Town Administrator

Wage and Classification Study Updates

All employees have completed their position questionnaires describing their job responsibilities. The next step in the process will be to hold interviews with the employees who hold each of the varying types of positions that are in the Town's classification system.

Town Administrator's Business

- **EOHED Celebration and Announcement of Rural & Small Town and Site Readiness Grant Program Awards at the Shea Theater December 5**
We will be serving as a host site for the EOHED Celebration and Announcement of Rural & Small Town and Site Readiness Grant Program Awards at the Shea Theater December 5. State Representatives and Public Officials have been invited to this event.
- **State Economic Development Plan Updates**
We are expecting that the Governor's Office will release an Economic Development Plan in final form for consideration by the legislature. Ellis states that when the plan is released, we will see features that are really important to rural Massachusetts specifically.
- **Acceptance of Town Request for Community Engineering Corps Assistance**
We have received formal communication from the Community Engineering Corps. In the immediate term they will support staff understanding, capacity, and preparedness to take the templates that are developed through our reporting project.
- **Preliminary indications re State FY25 Unrestricted General Government Aid**
Ellis shares that Governor Healey's administration has not indicated that they will tie Unrestricted General Government Aid specifically to the rate of growth that the Commonwealth is seeing in revenues. The State revenues have not been performing well to date. We will need to watch for the possibility of 9C cuts.
- **CASL Form and DocuSign Protocols**
As had been decided a few meetings ago, all DocuSign documents go directly to Rich Kuklewicz. Ellis states that some of these forms would more suitably be signed by other individuals (i.e., the Treasurer/Collector). He suggests a possible remedy: We could change our practice to have the Chair be the one who signs as the person authorizing signatures, and then have the Town Administrator be the default signee of these contracts, with the project manager being a secondary signee as well as the Treasurer/Collector.
- **Topics not anticipated in the 48 hour posting requirements/ZBA Executive Session**
The Board is invited to an Executive Session in concert with the ZBA on Wednesday evening. Expected start time is 7:00 PM. Walter Ramsey will be representing Ellis.

Boutwell makes the motion to adjourn at 8:05 PM. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye