

**MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING
VIA ZOOM
Monday, December 4, 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; CWF Superintendent Chelsey Little; Library Director Caitlin Kelly; DPW Superintendent Tom Bergeron; and Police Chief Christopher Williams.

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

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

Lord shares that he thanked Representative McGovern for calling for a Cease Fire between Israel and Hamas. He has also written to other government officials asking them to do the same.

Approve Selectboard Minutes from November 20 and 27, 2023, if available

- *Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Selectboard Minutes from November 20, 2023 as presented. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- Approval of Minutes from November 27 postponed

Declare Winter Parking Ban

Bergeron reviews the Winter Parking Ban, which is now declared to be in effect.

Caitlin Kelly, Library Director

- **Update on Mass Public Library Construction Program application process**
 - Kelly reviews the State Grant Program application process, the application timeline, community feedback, and additional opportunities for public engagement.
 - In response to a question by Jeff Singleton, Kelly states that there is a possibility that the State will disapprove the addition to the Carnegie Library.
 - In response to a question by Singleton, Kelly states that the current application is focused on solely improving the Carnegie Library. However, as part of the application, she is required to provide a comprehensive plan for library service. The current plan is to not do anything to the branches.
 - In response to a question by Lord, Kelly shares that we have had 200 responses to the survey.
 - The Board gives their approval for Kelly to continue on the current path.
- **Libraries Transforming Communities (LTC): Accessible Small and Rural Communities**

Kelly reviews the grant for Libraries Transforming Communities (LTC): Accessible Small and Rural Communities, which would help provide library services for the seniors in our community.
- **"Beyond Library Walls" - Serving Tweens and Teens**

Kelly explains the "Beyond Library Walls" service, which supports Tween and Teen mental health. They are applying for a grant for \$15,000.

Chelsey Little, CWF Superintendent

Montague Generator Project RFP#1 Revised Response. Execute Change Order 1001 with Collins Electrical Co. Inc., in the amount of \$25,000 to change from an integrated automatic transfer switch (ATS) to a stand-alone ATS in order to improve lead times.

Boutwell makes the motion to execute Change Order 1001 with Collins Electrical Co. Inc., in the amount of \$25,000 to change from an integrated automatic transfer switch (ATS) to a stand-alone ATS in order to improve lead times. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Personnel Board

- **Appoint Joanne Palhete, Temporary DPW Custodian, 12-19 hours/week, effective 12/11/2023**

Boutwell makes the motion to approve the temporary hiring of Joanne Palhete as the DPW Custodian, 12-19 hours/week for approximately six months, effective 12/05/2023. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Town Administrator Succession and Transition Plan**
 - Ramsey announces that he is interested and committed to succeeding Steve Ellis as Town Administrator.
 - Kuklewicz has no doubt that Ramsey would be an excellent candidate and would like to focus on the Assistant Town Administrator position.

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- Lord agrees in focusing on the recruitment process for the ATA.
- Boutwell adds that when Ramsey came 13 years ago, he came to us through the university. He was filling in as the Town Planner.
- Kuklewicz and Lord share that they have received communication from several individuals supporting Ramsey for the Town Administrator role.
- The Board asks Ellis and Ramsey to come up with a plan on how to move forward with the search for an ATA.
- Kuklewicz would like to see some overlap (i.e., six weeks).
- Kuklewicz suggests that one of the Board members should be on the Search Committee.
- Ellis states that it is within the Board's authority to make a hire from within internal staff. He is supportive of Ramsey succeeding him.

ATA Business

- **Execute Master Purchase Agreement with Alliance Clean Energy, Inc. for the Town Hall Annex Solar Project (\$192,930.52 - funded from ARPA)**

Boutwell makes the motion to execute the Master Purchase Agreement with Alliance Clean Energy, Inc. for the Town Hall Annex Solar Project (\$192,930.52 - funded from ARPA). Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

- **Green Communities FY23 Annual Report**

Boutwell makes the motion to accept the Green Communities FY23 Annual Report as discussed with the Assistant Town Administrator, and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

TA Business

- **Review of Proposed FY25 Selectboard Budget Submissions**

Ellis reviews the Proposed FY25 Selectboard Budget Submissions:

- Town Meeting Budget (\$200 increase)
- Selectboard Budget (2.5% increase)
- Legal Counsel Budget
 - Discussion ensues regarding enforcement of preventing "nuisance issues" (i.e., residents leaving free couches outside, residents owning too many unregistered cars, etc.)
 - Ellis suggests asking the Building Inspector and Health Director to come in and share their strategies.
- IT Budget (14.60% increase, 95% of which is for the IT consultant)
- Shared Costs
- Farmers Market Budget
- Veterans Budget (Ellis defines "Ordinary Assistance")
- Intergovernmental Budget (6.8% increase)
- Insurance Budget
- Colle Budget

- **Execute Agreement in the Amount of \$50,000 with Wright Pierce for a Wastewater Collection System Capacity Management, Operations and Maintenance (CMOM) Plan**

Boutwell makes the motion to execute the Agreement in the Amount of \$50,000 with Wright Pierce for a Wastewater Collection System Capacity Management, Operations and Maintenance (CMOM) Plan; and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

- **Reminder of EOED Grant Award Celebration at the Shea Theater, December 5**

Ellis reminds the Board of the EOED Grant Award Celebration at the Shea Theater, December 5 at noon.

- **Authorization to Vote on Behalf of Town at MIIA Annual Meeting January 20, 2024**

Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the Town Administrator Vote on Behalf of Town at MIIA Annual Meeting January 20, 2024. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

- **Topics Not Anticipated Within 48 Hours of Posting/Mass Broadband Grant Program**

Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the Chair to sign the MBI Broadband Infrastructure Gap Network Grant Program Letter that the Town Administrator presented. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

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