

**MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING
1 Avenue A, Turners Falls and VIA ZOOM
Monday, March 4, 2024 at 6:30 PM**

Meeting was opened at 6:30 PM. Present were Selectboard members Rich Kuklewicz, Chris Boutwell, Matt Lord; Town Administrator Steve Ellis; Assistant Town Administrator Walter Ramsey; Executive Assistant Wendy Bogusz; Administrative Assistant Angie Amadon; Police Chief Chris Williams; BOH Director Ryan Paxton; and FCRHA Director of Community Development Brian McHugh.

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

Approve Minutes of February 26, 2024

Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Minutes of February 26, 2024 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

Personnel Board

Appoint Christopher Smerz from Patrol Officer to Detective, Grade D, Step 7 (previously Grade P, Step 8), effective March 3, 2024

Boutwell makes the motion to appoint Christopher Smerz from Patrol Officer to Detective, Grade D, Step 7 (previously Grade P, Step 8), effective March 3, 2024. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Appoint Geneva Bickford, Administrative Assistant to the Board of Health, NAGE Union, Grade B, Step 4, 35 hours, \$20.76/hour, effective March 18, 2024

Boutwell makes the motion to appoint Geneva Bickford, Administrative Assistant to the Board of Health, NAGE Union, Grade B, Step 4, 35 hours, \$20.76/hour, effective March 18, 2024. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Ryan Paxton, Board of Health Director

Update regarding consideration of Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District Membership

- Paxton shares that the BOH held a public commentary period regarding the Pioneer Mosquito Control District. Information was provided regarding the district's current offerings of services, operating principles surrounding Mosquito Control Districts in Massachusetts, and some background information surrounding proposed legislation that would vastly change the governance of Mosquito Control Districts.
- The Montague residents that attended generally had expressed some level of opposition to the application of mosquito pesticides in Montague.
- The BOH carried a motion to notify the Selectboard that the BOH is investigating how the Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District might fit into current mosquito control plans for the community and how the BOH can support those goals.
- The BOH further recommended that the Selectboard take no further action until further advisement can be provided by them, particularly with respect to the proposed legislation.
- Kuklewicz states that we made a decision a few years ago, we had a lot of good participation, and this decision is where it needs to be. He agrees that as the BOH hears more around the bills, they advise us as a Selectboard.
- In response to a question by Jeff Singleton about investigating the claim that joining the Mosquito Control District would increase our chances of aerial spraying, Paxton states that the BOH will wait as the principles that govern the Mosquito Control District will change quite substantially if this legislation is passed.

Brian McHugh, FCRHRA

To award FY22.23 MONTAGUE CDBG Avenue A Streetscape Phase IV Design Project to Berkshire Design Group, and to execute a contract with them in the amount of \$70,800

Boutwell makes the motion to award the FY22.23 MONTAGUE CDBG Avenue A Streetscape Phase IV Design Project to Berkshire Design Group, and to execute a contract with them in the amount of \$70,800; and to authorize

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the Chair to sign any necessary documents. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

To authorize Payment #4 to Berkshire Design Group for Hillcrest Playground in the amount of \$2,312.00

Boutwell makes the motion to authorize Payment #4 to Berkshire Design Group for Hillcrest Playground in the amount of \$2,312.00. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Assistant Town Administrator's Business

Award Montague Center Library/Old Town Hall Window Replacement contract to Diversified Construction Services, LLC for \$132,829; to be paid out of existing ARPA appropriation

Boutwell makes the motion to award the Montague Center Library/Old Town Hall Window Replacement contract to Diversified Construction Services, LLC for \$132,829; to be paid out of existing ARPA appropriation. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Authorize Site Readiness Grant Agreement with MassDevelopment in the amount of \$132,700 to advance design of the Strathmore Mill demolition and Canal District Riverfront Redevelopment Plan

Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the Site Readiness Grant Agreement with MassDevelopment in the amount of \$132,700 to advance design of the Strathmore Mill demolition and Canal District Riverfront Redevelopment Plan; and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Town Administrator's Business

Update on Utility Progress Removing Double Poles

- The Municipal Empower Act is now going to the Senate and the House, and includes something that would put penalties in place to force utilities to remove their double poles in a more timely fashion.
- Ellis has requested an update on all the double poles in our community. There are 104 of them throughout Montague.

Discuss Selectboard Town Annual Report Content

Ellis provides and reviews a general content outline for the Town Annual Report. He and Ramsey will work on finalizing it.

STRPB Update: Regional Agreement Sub-Committee Member Needed

Dorinda Bell-Upp and Lord are willing to serve on the two Sub-Committee seats for the Town.

Services for Former Health and Planning Department Assistant, Anne Stuart

- Ellis shares that Anne Stuart passed away on February 6. She had officially retired on June 30 of last year, but helped transition the new staff member through around November 1st. There will be a service for her on Sunday, March 17.
- *Boutwell makes the motion to dedicate a blank page of minutes to the memory of Anne Stuart. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- Ellis suggests building something in the landscaping in front of Town Hall that would be a tribute to former Town employees that have passed.

Topics not anticipated in the 48 hours posting

None

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This page is in honor of our friend and colleague Anne Stuart who unexpectedly passed away on February 6, 2024



ANNE STUART

May 20, 1968 - February 6, 2024

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Next Meetings:

- **Finance Committee/Selectboard/Capital Improvements Joint Meeting, and subsequent Executive Session March 6, 2024**
- **Airport Informational Session, March 7, 2024 at 6:00 PM, via ZOOM**
- **Selectboard, Monday, March 11, 2024 at 6:00 PM, via ZOOM**
- **Special Town Meeting, Thursday, March 24, 2024 at 6:30 PM at the Turners Falls High School, 222 Turnpike Road, Montague**
- **Selectboard, Monday, March 18, 2024 at 6:30 PM, via ZOOM**
- **Finance Committee/Selectboard Joint Meeting, March 20, 2024 at 6:00 PM via ZOOM**

*Boutwell makes the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:14 PM. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved.
Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*