

# MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING

## VIA ZOOM

**Monday, April 1, 2024 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; Administrative Assistant Angie Amadon; Police Chief Chris Williams; DPW Superintendent Tom Bergeron; Building Inspector Bill Ketchen; Parks and Recreation Director Jon Dobosz; and Council on Aging Director Roberta Potter.

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

### Approve Minutes:

- **Selectboard Meeting March 25, 2024**

*Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Minutes of March 25, 2024 as presented. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

- **Finance Committee and Selectboard, March 20, 2024**

*Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Finance Committee and Selectboard Minutes of March 20, 2024. 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

### Chris Williams, Chief of Police

#### **Review and Approval of Hiring and Selection Policy & Procedure No. 1.20**

*Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Hiring and Selection Policy & Procedure No. 1.20, effective date April 2, 2024. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

### Tom Bergeron, DPW Superintendent

#### **Review and Approve Stantec Contract for Engineering of South Ferry Road Box Culvert Installation**

*Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Stantec Contract for Engineering of South Ferry Road Box Culvert Installation, and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

### Personnel Board

#### **Personnel Status Change Notice:**

- **John Dempsey, Reserve Officer, \$32.65/hr effective 3/14/2024**

*Boutwell makes the motion to appoint John Dempsey as a Reserve Officer, \$32.65/hr effective 3/14/2024. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

- **Todd Michon, Reserve Officer, \$29.00/hr effective 3/14/2024**

*Boutwell makes the motion to appoint Todd Michon as a Reserve Officer, \$29.00/hr effective 3/14/2024. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

- **Receipt of Letter of Resignation from Tom Bergeron, effective June 27, 2024**

*Boutwell makes the motion to accept with regret the Letter of Resignation from Tom Bergeron, effective June 27, 2024. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

- **Appoint Jamie Carey, Building Department Administrative Assistant**

*Boutwell makes the motion to appoint Jamie Carey as the Building Department Administrative Assistant. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

- **Appoint Karen-Casey-Chretien Temporary Administrative Assistant April 2 to April 25, 2024, Grade B, Step 11 @ \$23.72/hr (for training)**

*Boutwell makes the motion to appoint Karen-Casey-Chretien as a Temporary Administrative Assistant April 2 to April 25, 2024, Grade B, Step 11 @ \$23.72/hr (for training). Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

- **Appoint Jacob Goldman to Branch Library Assistant at the Millers Falls Branch, Grade A, Step 2 @\$16.35/hr**

*Boutwell makes the motion to appoint Jacob Goldman to Branch Library Assistant at the Millers Falls Branch, Grade A, Step 2 @\$16.35/hr. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

- **Appoint Amber Korby to Cemetery Commission Sexton effective 4/2/2024, \$100.00 per burial**

*Boutwell makes the motion to Appoint Amber Korby to Cemetery Commission Sexton effective 4/2/2024, \$100.00 per burial. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

### Natalie Blais, State Representative

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### Discussion of Town Legislative Priorities

- Roads and Bridges: Blais states that on Wednesday the House will be taking up the Chapter 90 bill, which does provide the \$200 million for Chapter 90. It also includes \$25 million for rural roads. It has \$150 million that is split between different programs. The Secretary of Transportation was given an overview of the challenges that we are seeing in Franklin County. She was taken on some dirt roads, during which maintenance of dirt roads, small bridges, and culverts were discussed.
- Education Funding: Blais explains that the Secretary pointed out that 96 districts get 80% of the Student Opportunity Act Funding. The Regional Schools Caucus in the State House has been pushing for a package of items discussed at a recent Ways and Means hearing, including regional schools transportation, rural school aid, minimum per-pupil-aid number, non-residential vocational transportation, and an increase to the inflation factor. Discussion ensues regarding school choice issues.
- Water Infrastructure: Several wastewater challenges were brought up involving our sewer collection system, the treatment plant, the facilities that were built and expanded, necessary studies, single-shift operations, and sludge management. Blais states that she and Comerford had a meeting about wastewater treatment and how they can help communities.
- Solar Project Interconnection Fees: Blais states that the Utilities are now having to produce reports to tell the Commonwealth what they are doing to transition to a green energy future. Submitted plans are being reviewed by the Grid Modernization Advisory Council to help us get a plan in place. The Chair of Telecommunications, Utilities, and Energy met with a group of constituents, where a Montague resident brought up what happened to the airport. There is a Commission on Clean Energy, Infrastructure Siting, and Permitting that released its report which Blais suggests the Selectboard take a look at. Kuklewicz expresses his hope that the State will look at what we are going to do with the infrastructure as it ages.
- Mill Demolition-Land Reclamation Program: Blais states that there is a group convening just to discuss this topic.
- Fully Fund and Increase Land Valuation in the State PILOT Land Program: Blais states that five years ago, the auditor did a report and it was determined that there was a \$30 million gap in terms of what payments ought to be and what they were. The gap has been closed in the last three budget cycles. The legislation that Blais offered to change the formula was reported favorably out of committee.
- Support a Municipal Building Authority: The bill that Blais and Comerford introduced to create a Municipal Building Authority was extended, but is still pending.
- Disaster Relief Fund (not on agenda): Blais and Comerford introduced a bill to create a Disaster Relief Fund. The governor included a version of that proposal in her budget.

### Jon Dobosz, Director of Parks & Recreation

- **Blacksmith Shop Building Evaluation Contract - Metcalfe Associates**  
*Boutwell makes the motion to enter into the Evaluation Contract with Metcalfe and Associates for the Blacksmith Shop evaluation for \$33,500. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- **Copier Contract & Lease - Aztec Office Technology & Elm City Capital Addendum**  
*Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Copier Contract & Lease - Aztec Office Technology & Elm City Capital Addendum as discussed, and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

### Host Community Agreement Amendment

- **Options for 253 Farmacy Cannabis Host Community Agreement**
  - Lord states that he had agreed to take a look at various Host Community Agreements, the special permits, and model template to see where we might land in terms of odor control.
  - One of the things that is necessary in an agreement is an explicit list of all applicable taxes. There is a waiver form where it is not required, which Lord feels is arbitrary and capricious.
  - Lord presents materials that he feels are best for the Town regardless of what the CCC's template and guidance say. This includes odor provisions. There is a potential for the CCC to reject this. He states that we could present an HCA that we feel may be rejected, and it would still allow them to continue on with the process.
  - Ellis feels that this would not result in any discontinuity in 253 Farmacy's overall operation, but it would potentially prevent them from getting to their medical license quite as fast.
- **Timeline for Amended HCA with FlowerPower, Inc.**  
The license renewal date for FlowerPower, Inc. is June 7th. Ellis states we have outlined a wide set of sections in the existing agreement that would not be admissible.

### Assistant Town Administrator's Business

- **Discussion: Council On Aging Siding and Painting**
  - Ramsey states that this summer the Franklin County Sheriff's Office will be painting the entire exterior of the Council of Aging at no labor expense to the Town. The Town would provide the materials.

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- The siding is in poor condition. The back side needs to be replaced. There are also some spot repairs that need to be done. There is about \$22,000 leftover in an existing appropriation for the roof that could be used for this purpose. The estimate, however, is upwards of \$50,000. Ramsey would like to get some hard quotes. Potter says we've been waiting to do this work for three years.
- **Discussion: FY 25 Grant strategy**  
Postponed until next week.
- **Report on Farren Property Site Visit**  
Ramsey states that he and Ellis went to the Farren site and met with representatives from Associated Buildings Wreckers as well as Trinity Health. They are in the process of bringing in some loam. They are also going to seed the site. There is a depression behind the garage building, which they would like Town officials to take a look at to make sure that it will be left in a state that is going to be acceptable to the Town.

#### **Town Administrator's Business**

- **Announce/Request approval to accept a \$75,000 Asset Management Planning Grant from the Clean Water Trust for a Wastewater Asset Vulnerability Study**  
Ellis shares that we will receive a \$75,000 Asset Management Planning Grant from the Clean Water Trust for a Wastewater Asset Vulnerability Study. We are working with Wright-Pierce on some final paper work (i.e., cataloguing assets and taking geocoordinates and characteristics of the remaining portions of our sewer system, manholes, etc.).
- **Update on Trash & Recycling Transition Planning with Casella**
  - We are in active conversations with Casella. Everything appears to be ready to go for July 1st.
  - At this point in time, they will adopt our existing route structure.
  - They also intend to make a \$5,500 community donation to support RiverCulture activities.
- **Topics not anticipated in the 48 hour posting/Wednesday Bridge Work**  
The contractor who is working on the white bridge will be removing project scaffolding on Wednesday.

#### **Executive Session**

##### **Executive Session under G.L. c.30a, §21(A)(6) to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real estate, GMTA Garage, 382 Deerfield Street, Greenfield**

- The Chair deems that holding this discussion in open session would be detrimental to the Town's position.
- *Boutwell makes the motion to go into Executive Session under G.L. c.30a, §21(A)(6) to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real estate, GMTA Garage, 382 Deerfield Street, Greenfield. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

#### **Next Meeting:**

- Selectboard, Monday, April 8, 2024 at 6:00 PM, via ZOOM