

**MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING with the
CABLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
1 Avenue A, Turners Falls and VIA ZOOM
Monday, June 17, 2024 at 6:00 PM**

Meeting was opened at 6:00 PM. Present were Selectboard members Rich Kuklewicz, Matt Lord, and Chris Boutwell; Town Administrator Steve Ellis; Executive Assistant Wendy Bogusz; Assistant Town Administrator Walter Ramsey; Cable Advisory Committee Members Jason Burbank, Rich Kuklewicz, Ryne Hager, and Kristi Bodin; Comcast Representative Eileen Leahy; Town's Cable Counsel Bill August; and CWF Superintendent Chelsey Little.

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

Cable Advisory Chair opens the meeting, and roll call taken

**Comcast License Public Needs Ascertainment Hearing
Opportunity for the Public and Interested Persons to Comment Relative to Public and Town Needs as they Relate to Comcast Cable Television, PEG Access Services and Cable-Related Matters in Connection with the Town of Montague Comcast Cable License Renewal Process**

- Kuklewicz reads aloud legal notice.
- In response to a question by a resident (Lovejoy), August states that there is not an automatic 3-year renewal. The parties would focus on getting a new deal.
- Kathy Schermerhorn shares her experience with MCTV taping an event at the Shea Theater, stating she was very pleased.
- Matt Attwood shares his support of MCTV. He is in favor of "lots of resources going to MCTV."
- A resident Stacy Langknecht from the Brickhouse shares her support for continuing the contract.
- A resident David Harmon shares his support for MCTV, especially taping the government meetings.
- David Detmold expresses his approval of how MCTV has been rewarding to the Town. He discusses the Earth Day Rally during which MCTV staff got on their bikes to tape the event. He also comments on MCTV documenting historic gatherings of Native American people.
- The primary videographer of the Town of Gill Janet Massucci shares her feeling that it is very important to record town meetings.
- RiverCulture Director and Planning Department member Suzanne LoManto expresses support for MCTV relicensing.
- In response to a question by a resident Jackie Stein, Kuklewicz states that today's meeting is specifically related to cable, not the internet portion.
- In response to a question by Ellis, August states that there is no circumstance under which the Town could negotiate to have revenues from other business sources other than cable fund its cable access operation. He states that the Federal courts have repeatedly said that the cable acts only allows municipal and State licensing authorities to negotiate revenues, franchise fees as a percentage of the cable service revenues, and not the telephone or internet. There are bills pending to change that.
- A resident Kristy states that one of the things that is a tremendous resource is being able to go back and watch the meeting where the issue was discussed.
- MCTV Producer Ben shares how much he enjoys working with the community and being a part of it.
- MCTV Board President Dana Faldas states he is proud of what the board has done and shares his feeling that the more resources we have, the more we can do with them.
- MCTV Board member Liz Walber comments on the value of having broadcast government meetings as well as the constant flow of information to older and homebound residents. She also states that video and moving-image media is current.
- Ellis reads aloud two letters of support, one from the Shea Theater Arts Center and one from MCTV Editor and Producer Hannah Brookman.
- Ellis shares that the Cable Advisory Committee has received a group of elderly residents from Sunrise Terrace who are deeply concerned by rates and are respectfully requesting a senior discount.
- Ellis discusses (1) the dramatic increase in the expectation of the accessibility of governmental meetings and other events over our PEG access channels, (2) the increased focus in the legislature in making permanent the hybrid meeting requirements, (3) the demand for meetings rooms that have television broadcast capabilities, and

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(4) the importance of our PEG access provider to continue to invest in the wide variety of technology tools required to do remote broadcasts.

- In response to a question by Montague Reporter reporter Jeff Singleton, Ellis states that there is a line on the subscribers' bill for what the local access station gets (44:12).
- In response to a question by Singleton, Ellis states that he doesn't think that it is the Cable Advisory Committee's role to promote the use of cable TV and the purchase of subscriptions. However, there have been specific FCC decisions or conversations that the CAC has weighed in on.
- Janet Massucci clarifies that "Your bill is what your bill is. What we negotiate is what percentage of that is going towards public access."
- Ramsey shares that we received some written testimony in support of MCTV from the Montague Reporter.
- The Selectboard is in the process of planning a new meeting space in the Town Hall, which would be a larger venue that is technology-ready. We are looking at the funding from Comcast as a source for the technology costs of the new meeting room.
- In response to a question by August, Ellis states that part of our goal with the new room is to provide MCTV a location where they can record special events and productions.
- Tina Mahaney from Gill-Montague Regional Schools expresses the school committee's gratitude for MCTV's work.
- Lovejoy states that MCTV has been an incredible support for the Town. He points out that when this first started, the "kitty of money" was very small; it has grown over the ten years and has been able to "spread its wings and have the material to operate correctly."
- Ellis shares that the Town of Montague's Selectboard has approved our submittal of a Letter of Support for a grant application for the GAP Grant that was run from the Mass Broadband Institute. The grant was not awarded to us.
- Eileen Lahey states that we are now in the process of filing in the second round. She also mentions that there is a senior discount in Montague.

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

Approve Minutes: Selectboard Meeting June 3 and 10, 2024 if available

- *Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Minutes of June 3, 2023 as corrected. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- Approval of the June 10, 2024 minutes postponed

Chelsey Little, CWF Superintendent

- **Discuss Operations Building main water line and water meter emergency repairs**
 - The Water Department found that the water meter was faulty. Everything needs to be taken apart in order to repair the damage. We are waiting for quotes.
 - Since we have to feed chlorine between April and the end of October, we can switch over to our plant effluent (water that has already been cleaned), but this means that we would need to use more chemicals.
 - Kuklewicz suggests that the plumber may need to work out a bypass solution.
- **Execute FY25 Agreement with Franklin County Solid Waste Management District (FCSWMD) for the management of regional sludge disposal received and treated by Montague Clean Water Facility**
Lord makes the motion to execute the FY25 Agreement with Franklin County Solid Waste Management District (FCSWMD) for the management of regional sludge disposal received and treated by Montague Clean Water Facility. Seconded by Kuklewicz, approved. Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye, Boutwell - Abstain
- **Update on FCSWMD regional sludge revenues + \$83,281 for FY24**
Little gives an update on FCSWMD regional sludge revenues.
- **Approve contract amendment with Quantified Ventures for an additional \$5,000 for additional sewer rates structure support and implementation**

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Boutwell makes the motion to approve the contract amendment with Quantified Ventures for an additional \$5,000 for additional sewer rates structure support and implementation; and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

- **Permit Summary for May 2024 (wet weather blending events: 0)**
Little shares that everything is in the green and looks great.

Personnel Board

Amendment to prior request: Appoint Jackson Pendleton to CWF Summer help/Franklin County Tech School Co-op at \$15.00/hour, effective June 18th, 2024

Boutwell makes the motion to appoint Jackson Pendleton to CWF Summer help/Franklin County Tech School Co-op at \$15.00/hour, effective June 18th, 2024. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Executive Assistant Business

Alcohol Beverage Licensing - Recent changes in Law

- **Mixed Drinks Accompanying Take-Out Food Orders**
Section 12 Licenses can now send out two drinks if someone is buying food.
- **Outdoor Alcoholic Beverage Service**
 - We no longer have to send permits for Outdoor Alcoholic Beverage Service to ABCC. The Selectboard can make the decision, then notify ABCC. We would need a new form.
 - Kuklewicz feels that the wording needs to be such that the service would be regulated as if it was inside the facility.
 - Bogusz reads aloud the wording.
 - We would need to notify the abutters.

Assistant Town Administrator's Business

- **Execute FY24 RDF grant Contract Amendment for Avenue A CSO and Buffer Line Improvement**
Boutwell makes the execute the FY24 RDF grant Contract Amendment for Avenue A CSO and Buffer Line Improvement, and authorize the Chair to sign the appropriate documents. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Execute Change Order in the Amount of \$794.68 with Diversified Construction Services, LLC for the Montague Center Library Window Project**
Boutwell makes the motion to execute the Change Order in the Amount of \$794.68 with Diversified Construction Services, LLC for the Montague Center Library Window Project; and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Town Administrator's Business

Farren Care Center Property Acquisition

- **Execute Real Estate Donation Agreement between the Town of Montague and the Farren Care Center, Inc. relative to 330-340 Montague City Road (Parcel ID No. 12-0-044), 356 Montague City Road (Parcel ID No. 12-0-44A), and vacant land described as Parcel ID No. 12-0-051**
Boutwell makes the motion execute the Real Estate Donation Agreement between the Town of Montague and the Farren Care Center, Inc. relative to 330-340 Montague City Road (Parcel ID No. 12-0-044), 356 Montague City Road (Parcel ID No. 12-0-44A), and vacant land described as Parcel ID No. 12-0-051. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Execute Gift Agreement in the Amount of \$100,000 between the Town of Montague and the Farren Care Center, Inc. relative to 330-340 Montague City Road (Parcel ID No. 12-0-44), 3546 Montague City Road (Parcel ID No. 12-0-44A), and vacant land described as Parcel ID No. 12-0-051**
Boutwell makes the motion to execute the Gift Agreement in the Amount of \$100,000 between the Town of Montague and the Farren Care Center, Inc. relative to 330-340 Montague City Road (Parcel ID No. 12-0-44), 3546 Montague City Road (Parcel ID No. 12-0-44A), and vacant land described as Parcel ID No. 12-0-051. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

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- **Execute Quitclaim Deed between the Town of Montague and the Farren Care Center, Inc. relative to 330-340 Montague City Road (Parcel ID No. 12-0-044), 356 Montague City Road (Parcel ID No. 12-0-44A), and vacant land described as Parcel ID No. 12-0-051**
Boutwell makes the motion to execute the Quitclaim Deed between the Town of Montague and the Farren Care Center, Inc. relative to 330-340 Montague City Road (Parcel ID No. 12-0-044), 356 Montague City Road (Parcel ID No. 12-0-44A), and vacant land described as Parcel ID No. 12-0-051. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- *Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the Town Administrator to execute any documents which may be necessary to complete the closing of the Farren property. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

Other

- **Follow-up Discussion of Canal District Bridge Conceptual Plans**
 - Lord feels that Mass DOT was explicit in their recommendation of having the bridge moved to 40 feet and their recommendation that the Town consider 42 Canal a total taking. He believes that their recommendation is the best way for the Town to move forward and hopes that the work that happens will benefit the use of the building after construction.
 - Kuklewicz states that he spoke to several people who understand construction, bridges, etc., and they were all adamant that even a 4% grade is a lot.
 - Ellis and/or Ramsey will work on involving KP Law in a future discussion.
- **Notice of National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor (NIETC) Designation Process - Proposal Includes Town of Montague**
 - Ellis shares that the National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor (NIETC) Designation Process involved identifying 10 nationwide areas as strategically in need of reliable improvements and potentially giving support for what is viewed as adequate transmission over a longer period of time. The stretch that we are part of is approximately 60 miles long; it is understood that this would generally conform to existing transmission line structures.
 - The issuance of the preliminary list of potential NIETCs was done on May 8.
 - They are looking for a comment period. The submission window closes on June 24 at 5:00 PM.
 - The regional planning authorities are all intending to submit some comments.
 - In Phase 3 there will be in-depth evaluation and preparation of draft designation reports and draft environmental documents, which is supposed to be accompanied by significant public engagement.
 - The Board delegates Ramsey to look through what FRCOG is working on and asks him to confer with Lord if necessary.
- **Topics not anticipated in the 48 hour posting/Softball Team announcement**
Ellis shares that the Turners Falls Girls Softball Team has just won their 11th State title.

Next Meeting:

Selectboard, Monday, June 24, 2024 at 6:30, via ZOOM

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