

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD MEETING

1 AVENUE A and VIA ZOOM

Monday, April 28, 2025 at 6:30 PM

Meeting was opened at 6:30 PM. Present were Selectboard members Rich Kuklewicz, Matt Lord, and Chris Boutwell; Town Administrator Walter Ramsey; Executive Assistant Wendy Bogusz; Assistant Town Administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller; Police Chief Chris Williams; Town Planner Maureen Pollock; Airport Director Bryan Camden; and Treasurer/Collector Eileen Seymour.

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

Approve Minutes: Selectboard Meetings, April 14, 2025 and 22, 2025

Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Minutes of Selectboard Meetings of April 14 and 22, 2025. 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

- **Tree Replacement**

Resident Leonore Analise requests that a tree that was removed from in front of her house last year be replaced. She asks that no tree be removed without a hearing if it is not a danger to public safety. Ramsey will follow through with the Tree Warden.

- **Celebration of Labor and Democracy**

- Resident Joanna Rueter announces the Celebration of Labor and Democracy event on May 1 from 5:00 to 6:00 PM.
- Chief Williams states that there had been numerous complaints from upset citizens at the Raise a Ruckus for Democracy event in April. The complaints included the amount of people, the noise level, and the illegal parking.

Airport Commission

Airport Commission Quarterly Meeting

- Eversource is still actively engineering the design portion of the Industrial Boulevard Rehabilitation Project.
- The Apron Paving Project is in the second phase (design bid portion). It is currently being delayed due to some lingering environmental impact study reports.
- In response to a request by Kuklewicz, Camden states that air traffic over a densely populated area is supposed to remain 600 to 1,000 feet above ground level. In our area, since it is sparsely populated, air traffic is supposed to remain 500 feet and above ground level.
- In response to a question by Kuklewicz, Camden states that the National Ground Training Unit training days are typically Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, the valley is used for training by Fixed Wing Aircraft out of Westover.
- Boutwell states that he was told that occasionally a plane goes over that sounds like it is need of a muffler. Camden states he would need dates, times, and locations, as well as a description of the aircraft to identify it.
- In response to a request by Lord, Camden states that the folks that have previously been developers are still an invested party. They have all their documents in place to submit to the Town when the interconnect is approved with Eversource. They are not going to be seeking a deferred-tax pilot program.

Chris Williams, Chief of Police

Execute Contract between the Town of Montague and the Franklin County Sheriff's Office for Regional Animal Control Services

Boutwell makes the motion to execute the Contract between the Town of Montague and the Franklin County Sheriff's Office for Regional Animal Control Services, and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

John Morin, Bikes Fight Cancer

Request for Use of Public Property on June 14, 2025 from 8:30 AM to 1:00 PM for Bikes Fight Cancer Charity Ride

Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Use of Public Property for the Bikes Fight Cancer event on June 14, 2025 from 8:30 AM to 1:00 PM for Bikes Fight Cancer Charity Ride. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Personnel Board

- **Execute Employment Agreement with Eileen Seymour for the Treasurer/Tax Collector position effective May 20, 2023 through May 30, 2026. Grade G, Step 10, \$82,394.00**

Boutwell makes the motion to execute the Employment Agreement with Eileen Seymour for the Treasurer/Tax Collector position effective May 20, 2023 through May 30, 2026; Grade G, Step 10, \$82,394.00. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

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- **Accept Letter of Resignation from Annie Levine as Great Falls Farmers Market Manager effective April 28, 2025**
Boutwell makes the motion to accept with regret and appreciation for her service the Letter of Resignation from Annie Levine as the Great Falls Farmers Market Manager effective April 28, 2025. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Appoint Jenny Vanderbilt to Great Falls Farmers Market Manager effective April 29, 2025 at a stipend wage of \$3,000.00 per year, to be paid monthly over a 12-month period.**
Boutwell makes the motion to appoint Jenny Vanderbilt as the Great Falls Farmers Market Manager effective April 29, 2025 at a stipend wage of \$3,000.00 per year, to be paid monthly over a 12-month period. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Appoint Harry Kuenzel to Alternate Electrical Inspector effective April 29, 2025, for a 1-year term. Expires 6/30/25**
Boutwell makes the motion to appoint Harry Kuenzel as an Alternate Electrical Inspector effective April 29, 2025, for a 1-year term; expires 6/30/25. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Appoint Ethan Thrower, CO-OP student from Franklin Country Technical School, as temporary employee of the DPW Department, \$16.50/hour, effective 5/5/2025, 9 hours per day, 4 days a week until 6/27/2025**
Boutwell makes the motion to appoint Ethan Thrower, CO-OP student from Franklin Country Technical School, as a temporary employee of the DPW Department, \$16.50/hour, effective 5/5/2025, 9 hours per day, 4 days a week until 6/27/2025. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Maureen Pollock, Planning Director

- **Announce receipt of Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs Planning Grant of \$34,000 - For technical assistance in preparing Town's ten-year Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP)**
 - Pollock announces the receipt of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs Planning Grant of \$34,000 for technical assistance in preparing the Town's five-year Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). Once the new plan is complete and approved by the Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs, Montague becomes eligible to apply for a variety of grants to help fund the implementation of the plan.
 - *Boutwell makes the motion to accept the Energy & Environmental Affairs Planning Grant and authorize the Chair to sign any associated documents. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- **Announce MVP 2.0 Seed Project - Window Insert Community Build Project**
Pollock announces and explains the MVP 2.0 Seed Project:
 - The Montague's MVP 2.0 Core Team has selected a Window Insert Community Build Project.
 - The Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs has agreed to fund this project at \$50,000 to implement over the next 12 months.
 - This project aims to promote energy efficiency and comfort in homes of low-income home owners and tenants.
 - They will be looking for volunteers as well as a stipended coordinator to help with this project.

Assistant Town Administrator's Business

- **Review and authorize Contract Amendment with Tighe & Bond for Alternative Design #2 - Proposal for Demolition at the Strathmore Mill Complex. Amendment value is \$17,250.00 to be funded by FY24 State earmark from Department of Conversation & Recreation (DCR)**
Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the Contract Amendment with Tighe & Bond for Alternative Design #2 - Proposal for Demolition at the Strathmore Mill Complex; amendment value is \$17,250.00 to be funded by FY24 State earmark from Department of Conversation & Recreation (DCR); and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Review and authorize Contract Amendment with Wright-Pierce for additional construction administration services on Turners Falls Sewer Manhole Rehabilitation Project. Amendment value is \$30,000 to be funded by a Rural Development Fund Grant from MA Executive Office of Economic Development (EOED)**
Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the Contract Amendment with Wright-Pierce for additional construction administration services on Turners Falls Sewer Manhole Rehabilitation Project; amendment value is \$30,000 to be funded by a Rural Development Fund Grant from MA Executive Office of Economic Development (EOED); and authorize the Chair to sign it. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Review and authorize Change Order #1 with Mountain View Landscapes and Lawncare, Inc. for ledge encountered during construction at 38 Avenue A. Value is \$1,380.35, to be funded by contingency under ARPA allocation**
Boutwell makes the motion to authorize Change Order #1 with Mountain View Landscapes and Lawncare, Inc. for ledge encountered during construction at 38 Avenue A; value is \$1,380.35, to be funded by contingency under ARPA allocation. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye
- **Canal District Bridge Status Update**

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- On April 16 Mass DOT held a virtual legislative briefing on the status of the anticipated replacement of the five bridges connecting the Canal District to Greenfield.
- The bridge replacements are still on the Transportation Improvement Plan for FY2029, currently funded at \$63 million.
- The timeline is a 25% design submission expected this fall, followed by a design public hearing set for spring of 2026.
- Regarding the right-of-way acquisitions, Mass DOT has agreed to assume the responsibility for the majority of those acquisitions.
- **Other Updates**
 - The Solar Project on the roof of the annex is going well.
 - The Streetscape Project is making good, steady progress. Construction at the front of Town Hall is expected to be wrapping up in the next couple of weeks.

Town Administrator's Business

- **Correspondence and report from Six Town Regionalization Planning Board**
 - Ramsey states that the Six Town Regionalization Planning Board reached out to the Selectboard asking to give an update, both to the Selectboard and at Annual Town Meeting. They are working on drafting up a regional district agreement between the six towns that are involved. They are tracking to have a Town Meeting vote on the regional agreement on November.
 - Lord states that there has been a lot of work going into this. He encourages everyone interested to keep an eye out on information coming out of the Six Town Regionalization Planning Board.
- **Topics not anticipated in the 48-hour posting requirements**
 - **Bike Path Closure**

Ramsey states that FirstLight is going to be resuming their work on the Canal dyke, the left embankment. They will need to close the Bike Path for two to four weeks this spring.
 - **Website Links**

Ramsey reports that a lot of links on the Town website are down currently. It is being worked on.

Executive Session in accordance with G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(6) To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if the Chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body. 15 Power Street, Turners Falls, MA

- The Chair deems that holding this discussion in open meeting would be detrimental to the Town's position.
- *Boutwell makes the motion to go into Executive Session in accordance with G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(6) To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property - 15 Power Street, Turners Falls, MA. Seconded by Lord, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Lord - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

Next Meeting:

Selectboard, Monday, May 5, 2025, at 6:30 PM, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls and via ZOOM