

**SELECTMEN'S MEETING
MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 2008**

#36-08

27

Meeting was opened at 7 PM in the Upstairs Meeting Room. Present were Selectpersons Allen Ross, Pat Allen, Patricia Pruitt (absent); Town Administrator Frank Abbondanzio, Dan LaRoche, Town Planner; Robert Mellstrom, Stantec; Tom Bergeron, DPW Superintendent

Approve minutes of July 14, 2008

Allen made a motion to approve the minutes of July 14, 2008 with corrections. Seconded by Ross, Approved. Allen – Aye, Ross – Aye.

Dry Hill Road Alternatives – Public Presentation by Stantec, Inc. (Robert Mellstrom, Sr. Associate of Stantec, Inc.)

LaRoche: This has been an ongoing discussion for several decades now of how to access the cemetery, both to allow visitors and to maintain it. I put together a scope of work that looked at what the various alternatives that have been discussed over the years to provide access to that. I put together a scope of work to look for engineering consultants to come up with a feasibility study of the various options identifying costs and pros and cons to each of the various alternatives. A study committee was put together to help guide the process. They reviewed the scope of work, came up with a final draft and help with the selection of the ultimate firm which was Stantec Consulting. The alternatives have been looked at over the past year, the costs examined and Bob is going to present that to the public to take a look at what those alternatives are and what the best alternatives are out of the scope. There are 3 alternatives that have cost estimates to them and not any particular one has been selected as far as this study, but as the Town moves forward with thinking about coming up with money and grant funding to pay for this, this should be on the table. I think it has gotten the Town much closer to figuring out what it wants to do.

Mellstrom: As Dan said, the study is to assess access to the Dry Hill Cemetery. Explains problem with area and access to the area using map. Further explanation of Feasibility Study gone over. Please see Wendy for copy of Feasibility Study "Access to Dry Hill Cemetery, Montague, MA" June 2008. What is in the best interest of the Town? They all have different cost differences. The best access is through alternative 1 (most costly) next best might be through alternative 2; and there are other considerations you would want to look at. The last alternative would be the foot path. Looking at updating the crossroads, by improving that roadway into that forested area you may create a situation you have in the plains where there is some illegal disposal of trash and other activities you do not want to encourage. The other question that came up, was if you improve the roadway, does it open the area up to further development?

Mellstrom goes over Assessors map he printed and colored to show who could possibly sell and build in that area. There is an area that is protected though. Currently there are no endangered species in the area.

Ross asks what the next step is

Laroche: The committee is going to take this and have a discussion with the Selectboard to see where they want to go with the alternatives that were presented and where do we find the money to do this work and what alternative do we want to do.

Maps will be left in the Selectmen's Office if anyone would like to stop by and look at them.

**Bob Trombley, WPCF Superintendent
Water Pollution Control Issues**

Trombley: There will be no change orders this evening, as they were not ready. Greenfield road will be partially blocked off (lower end) due to the work on the CSO structure at the intersection of Sherman Drive and Greenfield Road until hopefully only Friday. We have had a larger number of odor complaints in the past 6 weeks, and there are couple of reasons for that, obviously the CSO project is ongoing and we are not hauling 8 – 9 trucks out like we have been on a weekly basis. We are processing the sludge to a dry cake like material and that is being stored in truck body for a couple of days before it is hauled away. We have found that leaving it for the extra day over the weekend is causing some real problems with odor. We plan to change the schedule and not have a truck sitting full over the long weekend. Discussion if this will continue to be a problem in the future and steps that will be taken to correct it.

**SELECTMEN'S MEETING
MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 2008**

#36-08

27

Sewer Rates:

Trombley: FY2009, looking at the increase in debt service due to the CSO Project we're talking an increase of 20% in debt service from FY2008 dollar amounts for debt to FY2009. The overall budget increase for operations ends up being 5.9%, the operational wages and expenses for the plant have gone up 3.37%, so the big driver at this point is the debt service. If we had zero dollars for retained earnings, the sewer rates would go up almost 28%. I will be getting correspondence out to the paper mill about the increase and I will be back at the next meeting. Town Meeting will decide how much in retained earnings gets spent, but I would like \$180,000 used. The average households annual sewer bill is \$474 - \$475 per year. I will have more correspondence for the next meeting.

**Town Administrators Report
Household Hazardous Waste Day**

Bergeron: This is our annual event where you can get rid of all your paints, cleaners, pesticides and items you don't want around your house any longer. You must preregister by September 5, it is free to Town residents and a slight cost to Gill residents to it and flyers are available. This will be held on September 13 at the Montague Highway Garage. This cuts down on a lot of waste at the transfer station because we can't collect hazardous material.

Approval to Hire in DPW

Bergeron: I would like to have approval for a temporary maintenance and grounds person to help while David is out. I'm recommending Joe Dodge for this position, Grade 3, Step 1 per the UE contract at the rate of \$13.96 per hour.

Allen makes the motion to appoint Joseph Dodge temporary Maintenance and Grounds Person at Grade 3, Step 1 per the UE contract at \$13.96 per hour effective August 25, 2008. Seconded by Ross, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Ross - Aye

Strathmore Project Status and Letters of Support for Historic Tax Credits

Abbondanzio: We talked about this at the last meeting, the project status on Strathmore, they are moving ahead on getting their tax credit application done for the states historic tax credit. I did have a tour of the command center at St. Anne's rectory, it was quite impressive. The architects and there were a lot of student interns working to get the final documents together for the final documents together for the submission that is due the end of the month.

Update on Wednesday's Meetings in Boston with State Auditor's Office and Department of Elementary and Secondary Educations

Abbondanzio: We have two meetings in Boston on Wednesday, one at 11:30 at the State Auditor's Office and later in the afternoon with the Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. We wrote letters to both of those departments and in one case we will be trying to argue that 1/12th budget as presented by the State Department of Education is an unfunded mandate meaning that under Prop 2-1/2 guideline, the state is not supposed impose expenses that are not backed up by commensurate increases in funding. Somehow, we have to make the connection that our state aid has not been increased to the level it would have to be in order for the Towns of Montague and Gill to be able to afford the assessments that will result from that higher 1/12th budget. When we make our case with DESE we mainly have to look at getting more state aid so we don't always find ourselves in this bind of not being able to afford spending that is required. There are about a dozen people going on this trip. There is a meeting tomorrow night in joint session with the Finance Committee at 5:00 PM. This will be to come up with a schedule and agenda for the meetings in Boston.

District Meeting and Vote for Moderator for Tuesday's Joint Selectmen/Finance Meeting

This will be voted at the joint Finance and Board of Selectmen's Meeting on Tuesday, August 26, 2008.

Schedule Special Town Meeting – September 11th

Allen makes the motion to schedule the Special Town Meeting for September 11, 2008 at 7:00 PM at the Turners Falls High School. Seconded by Ross, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Ross – Aye.

Allen makes the motion to place Article 1 on the warrant for the Special Town Meeting warrant of September 11 to see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds any sum of money needed to finance collective bargaining agreements negotiated with the town's three unions, and to fund comparable changes in non-

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27

union (including the Treasurer Collector and Town Clerk) salaries and benefits, or pass any vote or votes in relation thereto. Seconded by Ross, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Ross – Aye

Allen makes the motion to place article 2 on the Special Town Meeting warrant for September 11th to see if the town will vote to revise Schedule I - Salary schedule for Elected Officials, (Town Clerk and Treasurer/Collector portion only) as voted at the May 3, 2008 annual town meeting to reflect any changes made in the salaries of elected officials, under Article 1 above, or to pass any vote or vote in relation thereto. Seconded by Ross, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Ross – Aye

Allen makes the motion to place article 3 on the Special Town Meeting warrant for September 11th to see if the town will vote to revise Schedule II - Salary Schedule for Appointed Officials (Non-union Full time Appointed Officials portion only), as voted at the May 3, 2008 annual town meeting to reflect any changes made in the salaries of appointed officials under Article 1 above, or to pass any vote or vote in relation thereto. Seconded by Ross, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Ross – Aye

Allen makes the motion to place article 4 on the Special Town Meeting warrant for September 11th to see if the town will vote to transfer care, custody and control of the Montague Center School from the Board of Selectmen for general municipal purposes to the Board of Selectmen for sale or lease; and further, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to sell or lease the Montague Center School on such terms as it determines are in the best interests of the Town, with any lease of such property to have a term not to exceed five years, or take any other action relative thereto. Seconded by Ross, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Ross – Aye

Allen makes the motion to place article 5 on the Special Town Meeting warrant for September 11th to see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow or otherwise provide the sum of \$50,000, or any other amount, for the operations and maintenance of the Montague Center School Building, or pass any vote or votes in relation thereto. Seconded by Ross, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Ross – Aye

Allen makes the motion to place article 6 on the Special Town Meeting warrant for September 11th to see if the town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to use the sum \$180,000, or any other amount, from the Sewer Enterprise Fund retained earnings (balance of \$216,192) for the purpose of stabilizing and/or reducing the sewer rates for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2008, or pass any vote or votes in relation thereto. Seconded by Ross, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Ross – Aye

Allen makes the motion to place article 7 on the Special Town Meeting warrant for September 11th which would be the to see if the town will vote To increase the Board of Health's Fiscal 09 Budget by \$21,500 to provide for a salary for the part time position of Public Health Nurse; To be paid for from Free Cash. (This sum represents the unexpended balance of the nurse's salary from '08.) Seconded by Ross, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Ross – Aye

Read and Adopt United Nations Proclamation

Allen makes the motion to join with the proclamation for United Nations Day 2008 (proclamation read into the record) and the Board of Selectmen officially proclaim October 24, 2008 as United Nations Day. Seconded by Ross, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Ross - Aye

Announce Selectmen's Association Meeting

The Franklin County Selectmen's Association Meeting is scheduled for September 11, 2008.

Invitation from Franklin County Home Care Corporation

This is a letter from Anna Viadero of the Franklin County Home Care Corporation asking whether the Town would like a representative from the FCHCC to come talk with the Board and staff members to tell us more about how they can be of help.

Allen makes the motion to contact Franklin County Home Care Corporation and ask them to send a representative to talk to the Board about what they do and how they can help our citizens. Seconded by Ross, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Ross – Aye.

**SELECTMEN'S MEETING
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27

Invitation to Mass. Selectmen's Association Regional Update Meeting on September 17th

The Board cannot attend this meeting as it is on the same date as the District Meeting

Approve Registration for Assembly, Public Demonstration – Turners Falls Fire Fighters Boot Drive, September 6, 2008

Allen makes the motion to approve the registration for public demonstration for the Turners Falls Fire Fighters local #2452 under the direction of Kyle Cogswell for their MDA Annual Boot drive on September 6, 2008 from 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM at the Third Street and Avenue A intersection. Seconded by Ross, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Ross - Aye

License to Place a sign or object in the right of way – Martin Glaser – Harmony Lodge

Allen makes the motion to approve the license to place an object in the right of way for the Masonic Harmony Lodge of 1 Masonic Avenue for a 4' x 24' banner celebrating 275 years of free Masonry in Massachusetts to go across Avenue A from August 31 to September 14 and to be temporary one time pending approval by David Jensen and Tom Bergeron. Seconded by Ross, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Ross – Aye

Allen makes the motion to go into executive session for collective bargaining and only come out to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Ross, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Ross – Aye

Adjourned at 8:24 PM