

**SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES
UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM
1 AVENUE A, TURNERS FALLS, MA
MONDAY, January 27, 2014**

Meeting was opened at 7:00 PM in the Upstairs Meeting Room. Present were Selectpersons, Mark Fairbrother, Chris Boutwell, Mike Nelson; Town Administrator, Frank Abbondanzio, Administrative Secretary, Wendy Bogusz;

Meeting being Taped

Approve minutes of December 2, 9 and 18, 2013, January 6 and 13, 2014 if available.

Nelson makes the motion to approve the minutes of December 2, 2013. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson – Aye

Nelson makes the motion to approve the minutes of December 9, 2013. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson – Aye

Nelson makes the motion to approve the minutes of December 18, 2013. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson – Aye

Nelson makes the motion to approve the minutes of January 6, 2014. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson – Aye

Public Hearing, FY2014 CDBG application to the Dept. of Housing & Community Development

Fairbrother reads public hearing notice into the record

MJ Adams explains FY2014 CDBG Application Process: Here tonight to discuss the Town of Montague's application for Community Development Block Grants that are administered through the Dept. of Housing and Community Development, but ultimately come from the Federal Housing and Urban Development. This fall we started working on defining what type of activities and what the grant application might look like. The grant application is due into Boston on February 14th. We held a series of information sessions to share what could be funded with the block grant funds and worked with the Town as they worked through their community development strategy (CDS). The CDS was adopted and out of those two things a program for FY2014 emerged. The program includes three program elements that are being proposed for funding. The largest one is the streetscape enhancements for Avenue A as a result of the planning process the Town did last year, the Livability Plan was developed for downtown Turners Falls and in that there were several action items that the community wanted to see happen. One of the major elements was making some improvements along Avenue A and the Town picked up that project and started moving forward with it. In the Fall, the Town hired Berkshire Design Group Landscape Architects who worked with some preliminary concepts and a small group from Town to start defining the specifics of what the plan will look like. Major element is streetscape improvements, looking at the corner of Third and Avenue A. The second element is housing rehabilitation, and the third element is the social services component where we are recommending there be the continuation of a very successful program that is funded with this year's block grant where it provides early literacy education to children of adults who are attending English as a second language training at the Montague Catholic Social Ministries.

PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

Public Facilities – Streetscape Improvements (454,400), Target Area 1 (Turners Falls)

Peter Wells and Emily Berkshire Design Group: We were asked to look at the corner of Third Street and Avenue A. Shows diagram of bump-out along Avenue A. We are also planning on removing and installing new lighting, 33 lights along the Avenue with new decorative lighting fixtures that are dark sky compliant and they will be LED lights.

Emily: One of the goals of this project is to create a node along Avenue A that would allow people to stop and gather. This particular node was created by taking a few parking spaces away from Avenue A and creating a bump-out. (Description of bump out given)

Ramsey: We carefully selected this particular spot for the bump-out because there is no right turning truck traffic.

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Wells: The bump out is also to create traffic calming and to have a safer crosswalk. It gives a person 14 or 15 more feet into Avenue A and stay safe before attempting to cross. That was an important factor. The bump-out decision is based on pedestrian safety. There will not be solar panels on them due to a conflict with the trees along the Avenue. The existing lights will be removed and replaced on the same foundation with a new decorative light. We are proposing 33 new lights.

Nelson: I recall when this was first discussed not being overly excited about it and much more enthusiastic about doing lights from First Street to Seventh Street. Was there any research done into making that happen?

Ramsey: I do not know how much it is going to cost, it will make it complicated as that is a whole other project.

Adams: The lighting in and of itself is not a streetscape improvement, it has to be part of a package and the plan to do a bump-out that combination caused it to be interpreted by the State as being a streetscape improvement.

Fairbrother: I raised the concern that if we are going to lose parking spots on Avenue A, I supported it with a gentlemen understanding that we would be developing it in the future.

Ramsey: I did investigate that, and it would cost between \$300,000 - \$500,000 to create a parking lot there.

Nelson asks how much the construction cost of the bump-out is. Answer is about \$200,000 and the lights are about \$200,000.

Nelson: My biggest concern are the lights are critical. It's a safety situation, they look terrible. I'm not overly comfortable spending \$200,000 when I feel like there is a whole lot more we could be doing with that money, and that makes me nervous.

Boutwell doesn't like the idea of losing 2 – 3 parking spaces for a bump-out.

Nelson expresses his strong disagreement with the bump-out project

Adams: This project came directly out of your livability plan and the amount of community process you did with that livability plan was extraordinary and something you should be extremely proud of. You have generated a stake holder group who's interested in seeing the plan for Turners Falls come to life and this is going to be the first tangible piece you will be doing from that.

Ramsey: The livability plan said more about making downtown friendly for pedestrians and making it someplace people want to come visit, it did not say anything about needing more parking; that's why this project rose to the top

Wells: The existing conditions of that sectional block is unsafe in certain areas, unacceptable and inaccessible in certain areas for people with disabilities. This project will make it accessible and safe.

Abbondanzio: Once we have a developer of the Strathmore then we could package the parking development of that lot you are talking about and others as well.

General discussion about parking spaces, size of travel lanes and site distance

Woman: I participated in the downtown livability study and I think this will add to the downtown and it is going to bring people in.

Housing Rehabilitation (\$179,000); Target Area 1 (Turners Falls) – 5 units Housing Rehabilitation

Adams: The program will be targeted to the village of Turners Falls neighborhood, provides 0% interest loans to income eligible homeowners to make property improvements so their home is brought into compliance with building code requirements, energy code requirements and they address anything like hazardous lead paint, septic systems and wells.

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Social Service Programs (\$22,000) MCSM – Early Language and Literacy Program

Adams: This is to provide funding to the Montague Catholic Social Ministries to continue the program they are currently running under the fiscal year 13 block grant where they provide early childhood literacy and care to children of parents who are in the English language classes.

Susan explains program run by Center for New Americans and Early Language and Literacy Program for Pre K to Second Grade. Started in 2012 for immigrant parents in town. Started talking to Center for New Americans, did pilot program and turned grant into childcare and early literacy. This site had the best attendance because we had early literacy. Applied last year and was funded partially. Been significant program, school district wrote letter saying they noticed improvement in students work.

Fairbrother closes hearing at 7:45 PM

Nelson makes the motion to approve the FY2014 CDBG Application to the Department of Housing and Community Development as presented. Seconded by Boutwell for discussion:

Nelson supports everything on here except for the bump-out but does not feel it is an appropriate time to be spending this amount of money on it and am supporting it only because it is an all or nothing package. Boutwell does not like seeing a planter in there and losing 2 – 3 parking spaces.

Nelson makes the motion to approve the FY2014 CDBG Application to the Department of Housing and Community Development as presented. Seconded by Boutwell approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson - Aye

MJ Adams, Director of Community Development, FCRHRA, Sign FY2011 Certificate of Completion

Nelson makes the motion to sign off on the FY2011 Certificate of Completion for grant #CDFIG2011 Montague-00654, and authorize the Chair to sign the agreement. Seconded by Boutwell approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson - Aye

Robert Trombley, WPCF Superintendent, Vote to approve Changes to Sewer Use Regulations, Greg Roy, Engineer, Paul Gilbert

Trombley: Nothing extremely substantial done, These replace Sewer By-Laws

Roy: Back in 2008 EPA issued the Streamlining Rule and it's a change that all municipalities have to incorporate into the Sewer Use Regs. There are a few editorial type of changes made, nothing significant, and there were some changes made by the attorney. EPA has a model sewer use ordinance that encourage all municipalities to use when they develop new ordinances. This ordinance not follows all those requirements. It is fully compliant with what EPA requires.

Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Sewer Use Regulations as presented (71 page document) as of today. Seconded by Nelson, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson - Aye

Walter Ramsey, Town Planner, Sign Change Order #1, totaling \$6,150 from Stantec Consulting Services, Inc. for the Montague City Road Multi-model Bike and Pedestrian Crossing Improvement Project #607239 (Original agreement amount is (\$51,000))

Nelson makes the motion to authorize the chair to sign change order number 1 Order #1, totaling \$6,150 from Stantec Consulting Services, Inc. for the Montague City Road Multi-model Bike and Pedestrian Crossing Improvement Project #607239 (Original agreement amount is (\$51,000)). Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson - Aye

Cindy Tarail, Outreach and Communication Coordinator, MCTV, Request for approval and letter of support regarding improved government access: Remote Video Systems for Town Hall

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Tarail: What MCTV is proposing is to provide videos of all the Town's open meetings on television and on line that happen in Town Hall in the upstairs and downstairs conference rooms. With very simple to operate camera systems that participants in the meetings can easily be trained to use, which would basically consist of pushing a button. With your support, we would implement early this year, pay for it out of the MCTV's Operating Funds and as well as conduct a pretty minor underwriting campaign to fill in. With your approval we would go to all the Town Boards and Committees and come to some agreement.

Fairbrother would like to see final cost and where things will be going before voting on the issue.

Nelson makes the motion to lend our support to MCTV to come back with more information but give support for the project. Seconded by Boutwell, approved. Boutwell – Aye, Nelson – Aye, Fairbrother - Abstain

Liquor License Hearing, Transfer of Annual Off Premises, \$15 Package Store Wine and Malt Liquor License from Montague Mini Mart to Ling Ling Corp. d/b/a/ Montague Village Store, Dennis J. Lynch as Manager, 60 Main Street, Montague

Boutwell abstains from this portion of the meeting

Nelson makes the motion to approve the Transfer of Annual Off Premises, \$15 Package Store Wine and Malt Liquor License from Montague Mini Mart to Ling Ling Corp. d/b/a/ Montague Village Store, Dennis J. Lynch as Manager, 60 Main Street, Montague. Seconded by Fairbrother, approved. Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson – Aye, Boutwell – Recused.

Boutwell returns to meeting

Colleen Campbell, Approve Registration for Assembly, Public Demonstration, Use of Public Property, Turners Falls Block Party and Heritage Festival on August 2, 2014

To be discussed at an upcoming meeting

Town Administrators Report, Votes may be taken

Sign Energy Supply Contract with Hampshire Council of Governments

Abbondanzio: The electricity market is so volatile right now so they are proposing a conservative strategy going down the road for the next couple years.

Boutwell makes the motion to authorize Hampshire Power to return the Town of Montague electric accounts back to WMECO Default service from now until new contract starts in the spring and sign contract with them until December 31, 2015. Seconded by Nelson, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson - Aye.

Announce Article submission dates for Annual and Special Town meeting

Nelson makes the motion to set the annual town meeting for Saturday, May 3, 2014 at the Turners Falls High School Theater. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson - Aye

Nelson makes the motion to set Monday, February 24, 2014 at 4:00 PM as the due date for all monetary article submission for the annual Town Meeting warrant. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson – Aye.

Nelson makes the motion to set Thursday, March 13, 2014 at 4:00 PM as the due date for all non monetary articles on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson – Aye.

Nelson makes the motion to set March 13, 2014 at 4:00 PM as the due date for articles for the Special Town Meeting Warrant to be held on Saturday, May 3, 2014. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Nelson – Aye, Fairbrother - Aye

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Discuss strategy with respect to Litigation Town vs. Conley eviction matter currently in the Western Division of the Housing Court, Executive Session, under G.L. c. 30A, §21(a)(3) expected.

Fairbrother determines having this discussion in open session will have a detrimental effect on the town at 8:28 PM.

Nelson makes the motion to go into Executive Session with the Chairs declaration to discuss strategy with respect to Litigation Town vs. Conley eviction matter currently in the Western Division of the Housing Court, Executive Session, under G.L. c. 30A, §21(a)(3). Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Nelson - Aye