

JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE AND SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES  
UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM  
1 AVENUE A, TURNERS FALLS, MA  
JANUARY 18, 2017

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Chairman John Hanold opened the meeting:

- Meeting was opened at 6:00 PM in the Upstairs Meeting Room
- **Finance Committee Members Present:** John Hanold, Fred Bowman, Chris Menegoni, and Patricia Pruitt. Michael Naughton and Greg Garrison were absent.
- **Selectmen Present:** None-Michael Nelson, Chris Boutwell and Richard Kuklewicz were absent.
- **Others Present:** Town Administrator Steve Ellis, Town Accountant Carolyn Olsen Town Clerk Debra Bourbeau, Director of Parks and Recreation Jonathan Dobosz, and Parks & Recreation Commissioners Barbara Kuklewicz and Al Cummings
- The Finance Committee Chair announced that the meeting is being recorded by MCATV, and asked if anyone else was recording the meeting. No one identified themselves.
- This is a duly posted meeting of the Montague Finance Committee and Montague Selectboard with a quorum of the Finance Committee but not the Selectboard.

**Minutes -**

Finance Committee Moved:

To approve the minutes of January 11, 2017.

Vote: 4 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

**Impact of Minimum Wage on Schedule II (wages for appointed officials)**

- Mr. Dobosz informed the group that under current law, the Town must follow the state minimum wage law, but can apply for a waiver for summer camp counselors. (Clarification was obtained after the meeting that this employee group is the only group for which Montague can apply for a waiver from the state minimum wage requirement. Therefore state minimum wage must be paid to all other employee classes.)
- Mr. Dobosz said that the Parks and Recreation Commission has voted unanimously to pay the most recent minimum wage to all workers, but is concerned that any further increase would have a detrimental effect on programing. The recent increases in minimum wage resulted in increasing the summer program rates \$5 last year and will increase \$5 this year. Participation has not yet decreased as a result of these increases, but enrollment is very competitive.
- Mr. Dobosz noted that new Department of Health regulations distinguish between counselors aged 16 and over, and junior counselors aged 15 and under. If the state minimum wage increases again, Parks and Recreation could request a waiver to pay junior counselors less than the state minimum wage.
- Regarding the question of whether an increase in the lower end of a range required a corresponding increase in the top of that range, Ms. Olsen said she had asked affected departments and none felt a corresponding increase in the top of the range was required.

**Department Budgets**

Town Clerk: Department 161

- There is only one election scheduled for Fiscal Year 2018, so there is a significant reduction in the request for part time wages. The requested wages include the minimum wage increase, with poll

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workers receiving minimum wage and wardens (the election workers running each precinct from the wee morning hours to the late hours) receiving an additional \$2 per hour.

- Ms. Bourbeau noted that the new records management system came at the best possible time given the new public records law.
- There is a new line item, #5247, for Software and Storage Support. Of the \$1,660 requested, \$890 is the annual fixed price cost for software support for the business license program boards/committees program and \$770 is for King Informational Systems, the company who cleaned out and organized the two attics and the basement records. King Informational Systems come back every year to update our records, add more boxes and shelving if needed and update our database. They are also storing a second set of permanent records for the town in case we ever lose our records in a fire or in a flood etc. The annual cost for King Informational Systems should remain constant.
- The request in line item #5248, Office Equipment Repair & Maintenance, is primarily to refurbish the old ballot boxes. Ms. Bourbeau is having trouble with the ballot boxes and they need to go the antique clock repair man in Conway. Some of the boxes do not lock anymore, the numbers are sticking and not turning as the ballots get cranked into the box so our counts have been off, and some of the boxes were actually destroying the ballots as they were getting cranked into the box. Since this was the first year for early voting and it cost more than was expected, there is not likely to be anything available in this year's budget to repair the ballot boxes. Ms. Bourbeau further noted that most of her spending happens in the second half of the fiscal year.
- Mr. Hanold asked about the future of paper ballots.
  - Paper ballots are likely to continue in Montague for the foreseeable future, but there is a question of when to switch from manual ballot boxes to electronic tabulators that scan the paper ballots. This scanning would cut down considerably on the time it takes to count ballots.
  - Tabulators currently cost about \$6,000 each and Ms. Bourbeau would want a spare so the cost to switch to tabulators would be about \$42,000.
  - There would be an offsetting reduction in the cost of wages for counters. Using an estimate of 9 counters for each of 6 precincts, 3 elections per year, 2 fewer hours by not manually counting ballots for each election and \$11 per hour in wages, the savings would be about \$3,600 per year. This makes the "payback" time almost 12 years.
  - Mr. Menegoni noted that the cost of the technology is likely to come down in the future.
  - The other benefit to tabulators is that it is becoming increasingly difficult to find people to come in after work to do the manual counting, particularly when they know it could take several hours.
  - It was suggested that one option is to purchase one used tabulator and test it in one precinct.
  - Ms. Bourbeau currently has several spare ballot boxes that can be used for parts to repair the boxes in use, but noted that eventually she will run out of spare parts.
  - Mr. Bowman suggested selling the old boxes as antiques to offset the cost of tabulators.
- A related issue is the number of precincts in Montague. Montague currently has 6 precincts. An attempt was made to reduce that number to 3 precincts, but that failed by 2 votes.
  - The Town can only reduce the number of districts every ten years, and the next chance is in 2020.
  - If precincts can be reduced, this would be an ideal time to make the switch to tabulators.

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- Another issue with reducing the number of precincts, aside from people not wanting to leave their current polling places, is that there are limited locations available that can handle the number of voters. Schools are not desirable for a number of reasons, and the town has few other options.
- It was noted that if a large enough space could be found, all precincts could vote in the same location, as is done in Greenfield.

**Schedules I (wages for elected officials) and Schedule II**

Proposed changes to Schedule I:

1. Increasing the Town Clerk's salary from \$67,602 to \$69,988. This represents a step increase to Step 10 and a 1.5% increase to the wage scale.
2. Removing the Treasurer/Tax Collector position temporarily as the incumbent is appointed and will be shown in Schedule II.

Proposed changes to Schedule II:

1. Increase the range for Extra Clerical from \$10-\$12 to \$11-\$12
2. Increase the range for Election Workers from \$10-\$13 to \$11-\$13
3. Increase the range for Summer Highway from \$10-\$13 to \$11-\$13
4. Increase the range for Part Time Police Officers from \$14.50-\$17 to \$17-\$19  
Chief Chip Dodge has asked that the range for Part-Time Police Officers be increased to match the range for Part Time Dispatchers, which was increased for Fiscal Year 2015. At that time the range for dispatchers increased from \$13-\$15 to \$17-\$19 and went from being lower than the range for police officers (\$14.50-\$17) to being above the range for police officers. Chief Dodge feels that the responsibilities of part-time officers justify that they should be paid at a level at least equal to that of dispatchers.
5. Increase the range for Part Time Parks & Recreation from \$9-\$20 to \$11-\$20
6. Adding the positions of Treasurer/Tax Collector (Grade G), Police Lieutenant (Grade G+8.5%), and Police Custodian (Grade A) to the list of Non-Union Employees not Shown Above.
7. Increase the ranges for Non-Union Employees Not Shown Above by 1.5%.

**Topics not anticipated within in the 48 hour posting requirements**

**Next Meeting Dates:**

January 25, 2017	Libraries, vote recommendations for Schedules I & II
February 1, 2017	Police, Dispatch, Benefits, General Insurance, Intergovernmental
February 8, 2017	Planner, Public Works, feedback from Building Maintenance Study
February 15, 2017	WPCF, and STM Issues (if STM planned)
February 22, 2017	FCTS, Initial meeting with CIC
March 1, 2017	GMRSD
March 8, 2017	Town Administrator, final votes Schedules I & II (if not done earlier)
March 15, 2017	Final Revenue Estimates, final Affordable Assessment due, Preliminary Budget Recommendations, March 22, 2017 Final meeting with CIC
March 29, 2017	Draft warrant to KP-Law, Review Special Article Requests

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April 5, 2017	Draft Finance Committee Report, vote on Special Article requests
April 12, 2017	Revise Finance Committee Report and Policy Actions
April 19, 2017	Final votes, reconsiderations, approve Finance Committee Report
May 3, 2017	Any pre-Town Meeting actions needed
May 6, 2017	Annual Town Meeting
May 10, 2017	Any post-Town Meeting actions needed

**Meeting adjourned at 7:02 PM**

**List of Documents and Exhibits:**

- January 11, 2017 Minutes
- Town Clerk FY2018 Budget Request
- Draft Schedules I & II

**Minutes Approved January 25, 2017**

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John Hanold, Finance Committee Chair

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**SCHEDULE I**

**Elected Officials**

<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	<b><u>FY16 ACTUAL</u></b>	<b><u>FY17 BUDGET</u></b>	<b><u>FY18 REQUEST</u></b>	<b><u>FY18 RECOMMEND</u></b>
<b>MODERATOR</b>	340	340	350	350
FY17 budget was 350				
<b>BOARD OF SELECTMEN</b>				
Chairman	1,500	2,040	2,040	2,040
Second/Third Members	1,500	2,040	2,040	2,040
<b>BOARD OF ASSESSOR</b>				
Chairman	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
Second/Third Members	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
<b>TREASURER/COLLECTOR</b>	68,271	68,954*	0	0
*G-10				
<b>TOWN CLERK</b>	65,620	67,602*	69,988**	69,988
*G-9, **G-10				
<b>BOARD OF REGISTRARS</b>				
Town Clerk	800	800	800	800
<b>TREE WARDEN</b>	1,300	1,500	1,500	1,500
<b>BOARD OF HEALTH</b>				
Chairman	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
Second/Third Members	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500

**SCHEDULE II**  
**Appointed Officials**

<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	<b><u>FY16 ACTUAL</u></b>	<b><u>FY17 BUDGET</u></b>	<b><u>FY18 REQUEST</u></b>	<b><u>FY18 RECOMMEND</u></b>
<b><u>ANNUAL STIPENDS</u></b>				
<b>BOARD OF REGISTRARS (3)</b>	500	500	500	500
<b>EMERGENCY MGMT DIRECTOR</b>	5,490	5,490	5,490	5,490
<b>ANIMAL INSPECTOR</b>	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
<b>BARN INSPECTOR</b>	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000

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**SCHEDULE II**  
**Appointed Officials**

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>FY16 ACTUAL</u>	<u>FY17 BUDGET</u>	<u>FY18 REQUEST</u>	<u>FY18 RECOMMEND</u>
<b><u>ANNUAL STIPENDS</u></b>				
IT ADMINISTRATOR	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
FOREST WARDEN	1,631	1,631	1,631	1,631
<b><u>RATES PER INSPECTION</u></b>				
ASST. BUILDING INSPECTOR	27.50	27.50	27.50	27.50
GAS INSPECTOR	27.50	27.50	27.50	27.50
PLUMBING INSPECTOR	27.50	27.50	27.50	27.50
ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR	27.50	27.50	27.50	27.50
<b><u>HOURLY RATES</u></b> FY18MinWage=\$11	<b><u>Ranges/hr.</u></b>	<b><u>Ranges/hr.</u></b>	<b><u>Ranges/hr.</u></b>	<b><u>Ranges/hr.</u></b>
EXTRA CLERICAL	8.00-10.00	10.00-12.00	11.00-12.00	11.00-12.00
ELECTION WORKERS	8.00-10.00	10.00-13.00	11.00-13.00	11.00-13.00
SUMMER HIGHWAY	8.00-12.00	10.00-13.00	11.00-13.00	11.00-13.00
SNOW PLOW DRIVERS	15.00-25.00	15.00-25.00	15.00-25.00	15.00-25.00
PART TIME POLICE OFFICERS	14.50-17.00	14.50-17.00	17.00-19.00	17.00-19.00
PART TIME DISPATCHERS	17.00-19.00	17.00-19.00	17.00-19.00	17.00-19.00
PARKS & RECREATION	9.00-25.63	9.00-20.00	11.00-20.00	11.00-20.00

**NON-UNION EMPLOYEES NOT SHOWN ABOVE**

	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Range FY2017</u>		<u>Range FY2018</u>	
<b><u>SALARIED</u></b>		Start	End	Start	End
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR	J	86,594	106,570	87,893	108,169
TOWN ACCOUNTANT	G	56,303	68,954	57,148	69,988
TREASURER/TAX COLLECTOR	G	56,303	68,954	57,148	69,988
CHIEF OF POLICE	I	78,722	96,881	79,903	98,334
DPW SUPERINTENDENT	H	71,567	88,084	72,641	89,395
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH	G	56,303	68,954	57,148	69,988
LIBRARY DIRECTOR	G	56,303	68,954	57,148	69,988
WPCF SUPERINTENDENT	H	71,567	88,084	72,641	89,395
<b><u>HOURLY</u></b>					
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT	E	20.93	25.76	21.24	26.15
POLICE LIEUTENANT	G+8.5%	35.13	38.03	35.80	38.75
POLICE CUSTODIAN	A	14.03	17.26	14.24	17.52

**Informational Only: Fiscal Year 2018 budgeted wages with 1.5% COLA**

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR	106,047	DPW SUPERINTENDENT	87,642
TOWN ACCOUNTANT	69,988	DIRECTOR OF HEALTH	69,988
TREAS/TAX COLLECTOR	58,577	LIBRARY DIRECTOR	64,658
CHIEF OF POLICE*	108,482	WPCF SUPERINTENDENT	87,642

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EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT	25.50	POLICE LIEUTENANT	36.51
POLICE CUSTODIAN	15.34		

\*includes add'l 20% educational incentive pay