

JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE AND SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM, 1 AVENUE A, TURNERS FALLS, MA
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2019

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The Chair opens the meeting

- Meeting was opened at 6:00 PM in the Upstairs Meeting Room
- **Finance Committee members present:** Fred Bowman, Greg Garrison and, Richard Widmer, Jen Audley, and Michael Naughton. Chris Menegoni and John Hanold were absent.
- **Montague Selectboard members present:** Chris Boutwell and Richard Kuklewicz. Michael Nelson was absent.
- **Others present:** Town Accountant Carolyn Olsen, Director of Libraries Linda Hickman, and Library Trustees Nancy Crowell and David Harmon. Town Administrator Steve Ellis was absent.
- The Vice-Chair announced that the meeting is being recorded by MCTV and asked if anyone else was recording the meeting. No one else was recording the meeting.

Minutes

Finance Committee Moved:

To approve the minutes of January 30, 2019.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Selectboard Moved:

To approve the minutes of January 30, 2019.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Libraries Budget Request

Ms. Hickman provided an amended budget request which excluded the requested grade change for the Children's Librarian. This request will be made through the bargaining unit negotiations. There was also a correction of step for a new employee.

It was noted that the questions and answers previously submitted are attached to the minutes below.

Ms. Audley asked if there was anything to add about collaboration issues with other agencies. Ms. Hickman has started a new discussion group program at the Senior Center.

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Ms. Crowell stated that she is really hoping the special articles are approved and that the buildings are properly maintained.

Mr. Bowman asked how far along the building study project is. The board of trustees now have a strong subcommittee and are currently determining how much of the work can be done by the DPW. They hope to have preliminary report soon.

Ms. Hickman noted that her budget is lean because their priority is getting the building projects approved.

Non-Capital Special Articles, including a list of articles with a description from the request. Descriptions from the article request or other background information are shown in italics.

Airport ADA \$1,750

This project is to bring the only town owned public building on the airport into full ADA compliance. Currently, the airport has completed 4 of the 7 identified deficiencies in regards to federal ADA regulations. The remaining items include a new primary entrance door with smooth transition threshold, ADA handles, and a wider sidewalk to allow for side movement when the door is opening. The current door is 18 years old, with a door frame that is almost completely rotted and beyond economical repair. When replacing the entrance walkway in order to remain in compliance an access pad to the left of the door will be constructed to allow for public viewing of the bulletin board. Unofficial contractor estimates put the sidewalk replacement at \$500, and the door replacement at \$1,250, paying prevailing wages, with work estimated to occur in the fall of 2019. If funding is granted, a minimum of 3 quotes will be obtained before work will be performed, keeping with best business practice.

- Ms. Audley feels the project is misnamed and should be called a door replacement project. While it's laudable for the airport to address these issues she feels it's important to look at how this fits into the Town's overall ADA plan and prioritization. Ms. Audley feels that other projects have a higher priority and she's uncomfortable putting this ahead of others.
- Mr. Naughton noted that while the funding is coming from airport revenues, taxation is needed to subsidize the airport's operating budget, so this is really coming from taxation. The airport has made big strides in reducing requested taxation, and if they keep up that pace, they'll have a surplus they can use for this. Mr. Naughton prefers the project be delayed until both it and the full operating budget can be funded from airport revenues.
- Mr. Kuklewicz noted that the door is rotted, and replacing it seems more like an operating repair. If they replace the door, the new door should meet the current code for accessibility.

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- Several people think it should be an operating budget item as it is maintaining their property and has a relatively small cost. It was also not seen as a critical project.

Airport Industrial Park signs \$7,500

This project will refurbish the existing “Airport Industrial Park” Sign at Millers Falls Road by cleaning and repainting it. The existing directory sign will be removed and replaced with a new sign supporting the 10+ business in the park. The existing secondary “loop” directory sign will be removed and replaced with a new sign. The current signs are approximately 30 years old.

Additionally, the Montague EDIC will formalize a plan/policy for keeping the directory updated.

- Mr. Garrison and Mr. Kuklewicz noted that other towns have the industrial park tenants or other private efforts fund these types of signs.
- Mr. Kuklewicz said it’s a town industrial park, so we should have appropriate signs. Spending this amount to replace a 30 year old sign seems like a small token of the Town’s appreciation of the impact these businesses have on the town.
- Ms. Audley noted this is a project for the EDIC at a time when other projects are stalled. Her only concern is that there’s no real basis for the cost and asked for justification or an estimate to support the requested amount.
- It was noted that the special article description and the Planning Department questions and answers had slightly different descriptions of the project. More clarification is requested on the project, specifically what is to be refurbished and what would be replaced.
- It was asked if EDIC is best agency to manage this project. It was noted that the DPW does town signage, and asked can they do this out of their budget. Mr. Naughton sees the need for a design component, but is not sure who would do this.

Town Hall Awning repair \$8,975

This project would restore the lower section of Montague Town Hall’s front awning, inclusive of the ornamental copper, brass, and glass “lower skirt” that sits under the roof structure. These components of the awning are seriously damaged and sections of glass are presently falling as the copper and brass sections curl and fail.

From an estimate of repair: “This piece is a classic example of 19th Century American metalwork, and has been a part of the history of Montague, and the village of Turners Falls for

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well over 100 years. It is clearly in need of restoration so that it may continue to be a part of the history of the town for generations to come. It is made of both copper and brass, which explains the various colors, or patinas, and was certainly made by one of the great metal fabrication shops of the latter 19th and early 20th Centuries.”

It is presently in a fragile state, but fortunately can be stabilized and restored. This will require the removal and reinstallation of the 13' long lower skirt. It has achieved a greenish verdigris patina, as with other historic copper works of the period. This patina can and should be preserved, as it actually protects the copper and brass from further deterioration from the elements.

The Town's DPW would assist a local metalworker in removing and transporting the lower skirt to the vendor's workshop and in transporting it back and assisting with reinstallation.

- Work on this has been put off for a long time. When Mr. Kuklewicz worked on the lights, DPW employees wanted to remove the bottom section of glass because it was flimsy. They were not allowed to because of the historical aspects of the awning. Mr. Kuklewicz has noticed hanging pieces.
- DPW likely to remove existing glass before work done. New glass will be sealed in.
- Ms. Audley noted that the estimate expires on May 1st and questioned if it is good after that.
- Mr. Naughton is looking forward to talking to CIC. We're once again presented with something that is falling apart. Mr. Naughton wants a complete list of what needs repair with prioritization. Mr. Naughton expressed hope that the town is working to move away from management by emergency.
- Mr. Naughton asked if other aspects of front of town hall also need to be addressed. Mr. Kuklewicz said that a historical sign has been removed and should be replaced, and that the other signs on the front of the building need work.
- Mr. Kuklewicz brought up the idea of having an architect or some sort of building inspector assess all of the building needs.

Utility Valuation \$16,250 (#2 of 3)

This is the second year of a three year plan intended to establish fair market values and build a valuation module for Montague utility companies that previously self-reported their taxable personal property. Last year's results were a success in that an additional \$11.2 million in

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valuation was assessed to NStar (Eversource/Neon, Inc.), Berkshire Gas and New England Power Co which resulted in \$294,000 additional tax revenue.

Additionally, easements owned by these companies were valued and taxed for the first time which resulted in \$31,500 additional tax dollars.

The second year of utility services will focus on obtaining updated personal property data from the utility companies, adjusting depreciation of these assets and continuing to use data to build the module unique to Montague that will support an accurate fair market valuation of these companies for tax purposes.

This was discussed briefly, and there were no concerns or further questions. The need for this project is understood and both groups support it.

Hydroelectric Valuation - \$50,000

The Board of Assessors requests funds needed to hire an outside appraiser to perform property appraisals on the hydro-electric facilities located in the Town namely Cabot Station, Turners Falls #1 and Turners Falls Hydro LLC for valuation as of January 1, 2019.

This was discussed briefly, and there were no concerns or further questions. The need for this project is understood and both groups support it.

Discretionary Accounts – General Discussion

- While Mr. Naughton is comfortable with the DPW discretionary account meeting a specific need, he doesn't see why the other discretionary accounts (IT, Police and WPCF) can't be incorporated into each budget, recognizing that there may be an occasional need for a specific special article or reserve fund transfers for emergencies. Mr. Naughton doesn't think a discretionary is bad way to handle expenditures, but is concerned that it sets a precedent and asked why we would say no to the next department. Ms. Olsen responded that the specific types of expenses charged to the discretionary accounts are unlikely to occur in other departments.
- Pros and cons of (non-DPW) discretionary accounts were discussed:

Pros:

- Expenditures from these discretionary accounts include both expense items and capital items (objects that cost more than \$5,000 and have a useful life of at least

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5 years). Capital expenses within the operating budget must be appropriated separately. Having a special article allows both types of expenses without having to plan more specifically for individual purchases of \$5,000 or more, and it can be difficult to know in advance both exactly what will be needed and the exact cost to determine what capital appropriations should be.

- Having the discretionary account removes the inclination to spend before a true need arises in order to avoid both losing the appropriation balance and having to justify the following year's budget amount when the prior year's amount wasn't fully spent. By having the appropriation in a special article, any unused balance simply remains for use in a subsequent year.
- Having a discretionary account with a level annual request makes budgeting a smoother process than when dealing with changing amounts each year. This specifically relates to the IT budget, where there tends to be a \$10K-\$15K expense every several years for a file server.
- Currently, more scrutiny is placed on individual purchases when they're in a discretionary account. Details of expenditures are regularly reviewed, which doesn't generally happen with department budget line items, which tend to be reviewed for total expenditures rather than individual purchases.

Cons:

- Since expenses from discretionary accounts are regularly planned, it is relatively easy to budget for them in the department's operating budget. Minor differences in what is purchased can still be accommodated.
- Including these expenses in the operating budget reduces the number of special articles needed at town meeting.
- The expenses from discretionary accounts don't generally meet the typical one-time expense threshold for special articles.

Mr. Naughton proposes that all non-DPW discretionary be moved into operating budgets.

- Ms. Audley asked what the next step is. When the committee discusses and votes on all special articles, they will decide whether to recommend keeping the discretionary accounts or adding those amounts to the specific departmental budgets.

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- **IT Discretionary Account - \$11,000**

Current year expenditures will include a server warranty extension for the e-mail server, replacing the main town server, and extending the warranties on ten workstations. The plans for the Fiscal Year 2020 appropriation focus on replacing 4 workstations at the DPW and 4 laptops at the COA. The appropriation also allows for additional purchases, as there are occasionally requests for new hardware.

- **Police Discretionary \$15,000**

This appropriation is used to purchase new items or equipment not currently in the police inventory. It will also be used to replace certain items and equipment that is outdated or damaged (tasers, radios, computer components, portable breath test machines, etc.). The department can save money by being allowed to purchase items and equipment that is on sale or available at a lower cost. This appropriation is also used to cover large unexpected purchases of equipment and make necessary repairs to equipment that is not funded in another line item.

There were previous appropriations of \$15,000 for Fiscal Years 2016 and 2018, but none for Fiscal Year 2019. These two appropriations were used to purchase new computer systems for 2 cruisers, 20 new Glock .40 caliber firearms and holsters to replace current 20 year old firearms, gear for the two special response officers and a computer firewall for the police department.

Potential uses of the Fiscal Year 2020 appropriation are the purchase of new radios and uninterrupted power sources (UPSs) for all computers, 911, phone and any other electronic devices that are plugged into wall outlets. Another likely purchase will be another portable speed sign as these are very popular with the community in all five villages. We currently have one, but an additional one would have a positive impact on residents and speeders.

In general, having these funds available would allow the Chief to make purchases on an as needed basis, and the funds would be on hand so he would not have to go to Town Meeting or request a reserve fund transfer. This would benefit officer safety and improve service to the Town as the equipment could be purchased right away without delay.

- **WPCF Discretionary \$20,000 (description is from the WPCF Questions and Answers)**

The discretionary account is very important; there are so many moving parts at the facility and pump stations that run 24/7. This at times makes it very difficult to predict an expensive repair. In FY-19 I used the account to upgrade hardware/programming to SCADA from pump stations.

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The goal is to have all pumps visible on SCADA versus having to physically checking each station daily (reduce site visits to 3/week). This will help convince DEP to approve our staff reduction request. I hope to use this account in Fiscal Year 2020 to continue upgrading of pump stations.

DPW Discretionary Account \$100,000

The purpose of this account is to enable the DPW Superintendent to fund purchases of and/or major repairs to DPW vehicles and equipment. This account addresses unforeseen expenditures where timeliness is important, it is not possible to secure town meeting appropriation, and the magnitude of such expenditures would quickly exhaust the Finance Committee reserve fund. \$100,000 was requested by the DPW. Uses of the appropriations in FY2019 include over \$8,000 in vehicle repairs and \$33,000 for smaller pieces of equipment, including an over-seeder for seeding park and recreation areas, tailgate conveyor (allows staff to bring roads up to new grade after new blacktop is put down without having to use a loader, which damages the road surface), air compressor, line painting machine, and hurricane stand blower to clean roadside ditches of fall leaves. The DPW Superintendent plans to use an additional \$63,000 for a new one ton dump truck with plow and sander before the end of FY2019, leaving less than \$20,000 for rebuilding fans in the vactor truck and additional emergency repairs. Plans for the new appropriation include \$40,000 for a mini-excavator, likely repairs to the vactor truck as well as any extraordinary repairs needed or replacement equipment. This account has been in place for several years and when unspent is rolled into the following fiscal year. The ability to roll resources ahead is an advantage of using a special article for this expense. The goal is to ensure an ongoing balance of \$100,000 at the start of each year and planned expenses suggest that a \$100,000 appropriation is needed in Fiscal Year 2020.

Mr. Naughton noted that if all of the money is not spent, it is rolled over. The Capital Improvements Committee's policy is to recommend an appropriation that will bring the available balance to \$100,000 as of July 1st of each year. This seems contradictory to the idea of an annual appropriation whose unspent balance rolls over, which could result in an available amount much greater than \$100,000.

Operating Appropriation to OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefits) Trust Fund \$50,000

Like most other communities in Massachusetts, Montague currently pays for its other post-retirement benefits (OPEB), primarily retiree health insurance, on a pay-as-you-go basis. This means we simply pay the bills as they occur, but make no provision to fund the future costs of current employees after they retire. Much like putting aside money today to pay for future

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retirement allowances, funding for OPEB is a big topic these days. While towns are not currently required to fund these future benefits, it's still a good idea.

The way the liability must be reported has changed, which looks like a dramatic increase in the Town's OPEB obligation to \$14,869,617 on June 30, 2017 from \$5,320,000 on of June 30, 2016. Most of this was a prior year adjustment (to reflect current methodology) of almost \$8 million. The Fiscal Year 2017 change in liability was \$475,102, which was lower than the prior year. Our annual OPEB cost was \$985,102 (a decrease of \$184,898 from 2016).

The appropriation of funds into the OPEB Trust is largely viewed as a symbolic gesture showing that the town recognizes its obligation and is beginning to address it, but having the funds set aside and invested in the State's Pension Reserves Investment Trust has the added benefit of accruing significant investment income. In spite of market losses in 2018, the cumulative earnings are still over \$55,000. As of December 31, 2018, the town had contributed a total of \$405,074 since May 2, 2015, and the balance had grown to \$460,700.

The Town's long term plan is to address the OPEB unfunded liability in the same way that it is currently addressing the Town's unfunded pension liability. Once the Town's pension fund is "fully funded" (currently expected to occur in FY2033) the money currently appropriated to fund the unfunded pension liability will be freed up for use, on an annual basis, to fund the unfunded OPEB liability.

- Mr. Naughton questioned the need for this funding, given that we're already paying current costs and the town has other needs. A general discussion, mostly comparing this to saving for future retirement costs by making appropriations now so that necessary funds are available on retirement.

Operating Appropriation to Town Capital Stabilization Fund \$120,214

Town's Financial Management Policies and Objectives include annually appropriating 0.2% of the prior year's general operating revenues (PYGOR) to the Town's Capital Stabilization Fund as part of the operating budget funded from taxation. This year's minimum appropriation from taxation is \$38,436. Additionally, the town sets aside 51.5% of the Kearsarge lease payment for future capital needs. For Fiscal Year 2020, that amount is \$81,778. (The other 48.5% is allocated to use for the GMRSD, half in the Affordable Assessment and half to the GMRSD Stabilization Fund.)

Operating Appropriation to Town General Stabilization Fund \$57,654

With the creation of the Town Capital Stabilization Fund, the Town General Stabilization Fund is intended to be used only when State Aid drops significantly, leaving the Town Capital Stabilization Fund available for capital expenditures. Town's Financial Management Policies and Objectives include annually appropriating 0.3% of the prior year's general operating revenues (PYGOR) to the Town's General Stabilization Fund as part of the operating budget funded from taxation. The PYGOR includes the net tax levy less excluded debt, state aid and local receipts, and excludes one-time or special purpose revenues. The general operating revenue for FY2018 was \$19,218,118, and 0.3% of that amount is \$57,654.

Operating Transfer to GMRSD Stabilization Fund \$38,507

As part of the lease agreement with Kearsarge, the town will receive an annual lease payment for 20 years. In keeping with the financial policy of sharing 48.5% of the town's general operating revenues with the GMRSD, and in order to both increase operational revenue and invest in future capital needs for the GMRSD, the Finance Committee decided to further allocate the 48% to the GMRSD by including half of it in the affordable assessment calculation and putting half of it in the GMRSD Stabilization Fund.

GMRSD Budget Requests –

Suggestions, concerns to be resolved, and what we want to highlight or explain to the public about these budgets.

Suggestions for inclusion in the report:

- A brief discussion of the increase in the foundation formula and the resulting significant increase in chapter 70 funding, noting that the State aid we now receive is more in line with our needs rather than depending on an outdated formula. Also note that the benefit to us is larger because of our larger population of higher need students.
- Recognizing proposed future collaborations between districts that were unthought of 20 years ago.
- The population of students from Montague is a larger percentage of the total enrollment, which exacerbates the GMRSD budget situation when they work to meet our affordable assessment, as the total assessment not as high as it would be if there were more Gill students.

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This discussion segued into a discussion of appropriate funding of education.

- Ms. Audley noted that there are items in the District Improvement Plan that don't have much progress because the district is making the budget work at the level of the affordable assessment. The result is making things fit the affordable assessment rather than planning how to achieve a high quality institution.
- Mr. Naughton asked, based on comments that the GMRSD needs more money, should the town consider doing something different from the affordable assessment? Right now we essentially tell the district "here's what we can afford, do your best". Is this the best approach? The current formula started for a very good reason, and while abandoning it would require dealing with issues, nothing's cast in stone and no law we can't offer more.
- Ms. Audley said that the district worked in good faith to meet our affordable assessment and is not sure it's good to change the process mid-stream.
- Mr. Bowman asked if we are spending enough for the education system we need.
- It was decided to continue the conversation about how we fund our schools after the budget process.

Topics not anticipated within in the 48 hour posting requirements –

- Looking at future agendas, Mr. Naughton wondered if, as a result of questions and answers received, do we want to make any changes in what departments we meet with. It was decided to add Planning to the schedule. Mr. Kuklewicz suggested allocating less time to each department. It was decided to schedule the Board of Health for 30 minutes, the DPW for 15 minutes, and the Selectboard for 30 minutes.

Next Meeting Date: – February 13th to meet with the BOH, DPW, Selectboard, and reserve fund transfer, and review what to include in the Finance Committee Report regarding the Libraries. Add item to re-evaluate remaining agenda items.

Meeting adjourned at 8:18 PM

List of Documents and Exhibits:

- Minutes of January 30, 2016
- Library Questions and Answers

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610-LIBRARY Questions and Answers

1. If your budget only increases by 1.1%, will state grant funding be jeopardized?

In order to qualify for State Aid funding, the state looks at the last three years average of the town's library funding. As long as there is at least a slight increase next year, we will still meet the threshold.

2. Please provide an update on the Library Buildings Study

The Library Trustees Building Subcommittee now includes two employees of Renaissance Builders. They recently completed part one of the building study, which is an overall assessment of the three buildings. They have identified multiple areas of concern and have ranked the more easily addressed items in priority. Next they plan to meet soon with Steve, Tom, Jim Whiteman and Mark Nelson to give their report and identify which problem areas can be addressed by the Highway Dept. They have also identified more complex issues that will be addressed in the next phase of the study, where we hire an architect. Improved handicap accessibility for the Carnegie and rehabbing its basement office space are prime examples. Having these volunteers has been invaluable in terms of quicker results and saving the town money. The three building repair special articles I have proposed for the coming year are all a result of their work, assisted by estimates from two knowledgeable members of the Capital Improvements Committee.

3. Has the Selectboard accepted the 8.5% adder for the Children's Librarian? Is the Police Lieutenant an appropriate yardstick for comparison?

I met with the Selectboard in executive session late Monday night to discuss the situation. This is a matter of negotiation with NAGE and I am not sure how much I can legally say about this at this point.

4. The main cost increase for FY2020 is for building remediation. Without going into detail — pending CIC evaluation — is there a priority ranking among them

All three projects are important. I really hope they can all be funded for the coming year. If I had to reluctantly pick two, it would be the Montague Center Library and the door situation at the Carnegie. We are lucky we have not yet been sued by any of the dozens of families whose children have been hurt by the swinging doors in my 22 years here. The mold situation at the MC Library is very unhealthy and expensive. We are losing a lot of books to mold, and have to run dehumidifiers in both buildings year round, which jacks up the electric bills. We also run AC window units to help the situation, (24/7 at MC spring - fall) further increasing the utility bills. With both Montague Center and Millers Falls, sills and other supports are rotting due to moisture. If the situations are

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not addressed soon, the repairs will become much more expensive. With MC, we could be looking at a worker's comp claim due to heavy mold exposure.

5. Last year you requested and received increased staffing for the Libraries -- have those changes had the effects you'd envisioned?

We had several staff members leave in the last year and one was a full timer who resigned without any notice. Apparently the job market may have tightened up, because it took us much longer than expected to fill the vacancies. We are finally fully staffed as of two months ago, and following a training period, it is definitely better.

6. Being able to designate an employee who will be "in charge" in the event that the director is unavailable seems reasonable, and given the current staffing configuration it seems practical to empower the Children's Librarian to do this task now. However, in the future, the right person to hold the second-in-command position might be in a different role. Will you be structuring this as a defined set of responsibilities + compensation that could be added onto any qualified employee's role, or are you upgrading the Children's Librarian role to a new role of Assistant Director? May we see the job descriptions?

The way the "in charge" is currently being written up, it would be transferable. Again, I am not sure how much I can say about this at this point due to union negotiations.

7. Please provide estimates for the Millers Falls Library building improvement request and the Carnegie Library door request.

Please see separate attachments. The estimates came in after I submitted my budget.

8. Montague's three branch libraries are currently housed in town-owned buildings that each have significant defects and shortcomings. A sincere effort is clearly being made to assess needs and prioritize repairs, but soon it will be helpful to know more about the Trustees/Friends/staff vision for the future of the MPL. So here's a question to consider for discussion outside of the FY20 budget hearing: What goals are we working towards?

Our goals for the library buildings are straightforward. Unlike most of the nearby towns, we are not currently seeking a new main library building. In light of the town's financial picture with debt still owed on the safety complex and a new DPW facility in the near future, a new main library would not be realistic. The Library Trustees and I are committed to maintaining the three buildings we have, none of which is individually large enough to meet the town's needs. We still hope for a larger fully accessible main library when the town can afford it, but realize that may not happen in the foreseeable future. For too many years, maintenance was deferred because money was tight and why put

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money into old rundown buildings if you are going to get a new one? But you can only get away with this for so long. Even if we eventually get a new or redone main library, the Trustees and I strongly agree that one of the last thing this town needs is yet more falling apart, town-owned white elephant buildings. In the meantime, we have buildings centrally located in the three largest population clusters that are meeting the needs of numerous residents, including many who lack transportation.

9. Our committee is wondering about opportunities for town departments to collaborate more closely with GMRSD and with one another. From the outside, the Libraries seem to have many natural points of connection and shared interest. What opportunities or challenges do you see? What would MPL need in order to collaborate more - with the schools and/or other departments - or at a higher level?

I passed this question along to the children's Librarian, Angela Rovatti-Leonard. I could tell you what I did for 17 years in that role, but she can tell you about the last 5 years. The following is her response. We are already very active collaborators, as you may not be aware. From my point of view, it would be easier to do yet more collaboration with the schools if they could better maintain/retain their school librarians and spend less time teaching primarily to the standardized tests.

The Montague Public Libraries appreciate ongoing collaboration with various local organizations, including Great Falls Discovery Center, Montague Catholic Social Ministries, Community Action's Parent Child Development Center G Street and Central Street Head Start, Gill-Montague Community School Partnership, Gill-Montague Schools and the Franklin County Technical School. The following includes brief descriptions of past or current collaborations:

Great Falls Discovery Center:

Park Interpreter Janel Nockleby covered Story Time while MPL looked for a Youth Programs Assistant. The Discovery Center hosted several Homeschool Science programs and Janel has done programs for Homeschool Science at MPL as well. Library Director Linda Hickman has served on the Board of the Friends of the GFDC for appx. 15 years and is currently the President.

Montague Catholic Social Ministries:

Collaboration with MCSM includes both the library receiving a small amount of funding for materials and events and working together to plan community events. The new table

in the Children's room at the Carnegie Library was purchased with Coordinated Family & Community Engagement funds.

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MPL, MCSM and the Discovery Center have previously collaborated on Family Fish Day. Recently, Angela shared grant money from the Traprock Center for Peace & Social Justice in a small donation of books.

Community Action's PCDC, Central and G Street Sites:

Youth Programs Assistant, Karen Wartel, makes monthly outreach visits to both sites, bringing her guitar and several books to sing and read to the children. She has also been invited as a guest to Literacy Night events for both sites.

Gill-Montague Community School Partnership:

Jen Audley serves as an important liaison for the schools and MPL. She was extremely helpful in making connections throughout the community when Angela was gathering data for the application for a science grant. Without her intervention, collaboration with the schools would have been much more difficult and in some cases impossible. The high turnover in staff throughout the school district has been a challenge. MPL is committed to working with local schools and organizations in an effort to better serve the children and families of Montague.

Gill-Montague Schools:

Through a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA)

Science Grant, MPL was able to provide a planetarium visit from the Springfield Museum for 4th and 5th grade classes at Sheffield Elementary. In addition, Angela brought tech gear to the Sheffield school library for 5th grade classes to experiment with.

Angela has attended Literacy Nights at Hillcrest and Sheffield schools. More recently, Angela attended a Hillcrest School Council meeting to collaborate on a Story Walk with a social Justice theme this spring.

At the end of each school year, Angela strives to beat the "summer slide" with Summer Reading Program promotion visits to the classrooms at Hillcrest and Sheffield.

School District Art Teacher, Jocelyn Castro-Santos, brings student artwork to the Carnegie Library regularly. The Children's Room serves as a gallery. Children delight in proudly showing their family members what they have created when they visit the library.

MPL delivers flyers with information about upcoming library programs for children to the elementary schools to be sent home with every student.

JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE AND SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM, 1 AVENUE A, TURNERS FALLS, MA
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At the beginning of the school year, Angela reached out to Tabby Martinelli, the school librarian for the Great Falls Middle School and Turners Falls High School. Currently, collaboration is simply the sharing of information via email or social media. There are plans for meeting and talking about ways in which a higher level of collaboration could begin. Middle schooler Izzy Vachula-Curtis has a column in the Montague Reporter in which she reviews books and related movies. After talking with Izzy, Angela created a display at the Carnegie Library with copies of the books and movies and her review in the newspaper. Library patrons now have the opportunity to read her review and read the books.

Franklin County Technical School:

The school librarian, at the Franklin County Technical School, asked Youth Services Librarian, Angela Rovatti-Leonard, to add a student access point for the state-funded databases to the library. Angela added a link to the main page of the library website for students to easily access while doing their research. Since the addition of this link, the number of databases searches utilized last year in town went from 8 the year before to over 400. Access to these otherwise very expensive databases is one of the perks of Montague adequately funding its libraries so they qualify for state library services.