

RECREATION AND CULTURE

600 RECREATION AND CULTURE

- **610 LIBRARIES**
- **630 PARKS AND RECREATION**
- **691 HISTORICAL COMMISSION**
- **693 WAR MEMORIALS**

PROGRAM SUMMARY: Recreation and Culture (budget code 600)

COMMENTS:

The Recreation and Culture Program includes **Parks and Recreation, Libraries, Historical Commission and War Memorials** as well as other forms of public celebrations and cultural enrichment, some of which (**River Culture**) are not funded by the General Fund.

Expenditure Profile:

Requested spending on the Fiscal 2015 Recreation and Culture budget is \$428,803 or 5.3% of total Program Operating Expenses. This represents a \$7,533 or 1.8% increase over FY 2014.

Significant Changes:

Although the overall increase for the Recreation and Culture Program budget is not significant, there is a significant change being proposed in the Libraries Department. These relate primarily to an increase in staffing. The **Library** is proposing to create a new 26 hour/week Library Assistant position. This position is needed to address a significant increase in circulation activity related to an expansion of the interlibrary loan program, which has greatly enhanced readership but also processing demands. At the present time, professional staff has had to take on much of this expanded workload, work that would typically be done by paraprofessionals. This is inefficient use of their time, and is being done at the expense of program development, grant writing functions and other professional functions that are not getting done. The cost of the proposed new staff position does not radically impact the budget because of the savings realized through the turnover of the Library Director and Children's Librarian's positions. Both of the latter position will be working at a significantly lower salary than their FY 2014 incumbents.

The **Parks and Recreation Department** is requesting an increase in its part time temp wages account. This increase is in anticipation of an expected increase in the State minimum wage. The department does not know what rate will ultimately be adopted but has budgeted for the likely number being discussed at the State House (\$12.00-\$12.50/hour) by FY 2018. It is anticipated that the rate would go up \$1/hour to \$9.00/hour in 2015. Such an increase would cost the department an additional \$1,637 in its operating budget. This amount reflects a 50/50 allocation (from \$3,273 total) between the department's operating budget and the Revolving fund.

Highlights of Goals and Objectives

Some of the key goals and objectives that are included in the Recreation and Culture Budget are:

Libraries:

- To improve customer service, offer more technology services and adult programs, and increase staff efficiency. This will be accomplished through: (1) Seeking more outside funding, especially of emerging technology, and offering training to staff and the public, (2) Increasing speed and efficiency of the circulation through staff enhancement and expansion of the volunteer pool and recipients for home deliveries, (3) (In the area of community services), Offering regular and special programs for adults and to continue to offer numerous high quality children's programs; (4) (In the area of Youth Services), hiring a children's librarian as soon as possible, and planning and implementing more teen programs.

Park and Recreation:

- To revise the department's Master Plan
- To apply to KABOOM @, and obtain a "Playful City" Designation.
- To develop programs that utilize the new facilities developed at Unity Park.
- To research the feasibility of having the Sawmill River 10K Run course "certified" through USA Track and Field
- To complete Phase II of the Unity Park improvements.
- To address the most pressing facility needs at all other town parks and facilities

Accomplishments (last 5 years)

Libraries:

- After a false start in their search process, the Library Directors hired their first new Library Director in over 30 years.
- The recent hiring of a temporary library assistant has greatly improved efficiency, improved customer service and improved staff morale.
- A \$90,000 collaborative grant was written by the new Library Director and submitted to the State that, if funded, will provide laptop computers, tablets, and training for the libraries, the Gill-Montague Council on Aging and the Montague Catholic Social Ministries.

Parks and Recreation:

- The most significant accomplishment in the past eighteen months has been the successful implementation of Phase 1 and II of the Unity Park Improvement Project. Through these improvements, the department has already experienced a significant increase in service (facilities and programmatically), improved safety, as well as made major enhancements to the quality of life of Montague residents.

Other Cultural (River Culture):

- Although most of the funding for the River Culture Program falls outside of the town's operating budget, the program is still a component of the town's planning and downtown revitalization program. The greatest achievement of River Culture is that it has helped to change the image that Turners Falls projects both to its residents and to the outside world. In so doing, it has helped to provide a more favorable climate for private investment in economic development and for the types of spontaneous community events (Pumpkin Fest, Soapbox Derby) that have come to define the new Turners Falls.

General Category: Culture & Recreation

Department **LIBRARIES**

Dept # 610

EXPENDITURES		Actual 2013	Appropriated 2014	Expended thru 12/31/2013	FY15 Level Services Request	FY15 Fin Comm Recommend	FY15 Town Administrator Budget
5111	Wages Full Time	117,197	139,652	74,941.10	121,449		121,449
5113	Wages Part Time	90,291	75,740	29,529.41	93,885		93,885
5142	Shift Differential	454	500	229.95	500		500
5144	Longevity	750	700	200.00	700		700
5193	Vacation Buy Back		6,000		2,000		2,000
5194	Sick Leave Buy Back		2,500	2,500.00	2,500		2,500
	TOTAL PERSONAL SERVICES	208,691	225,092	107,400.46	221,034	-	221,034
5211	Electricity	6,528	5,000	3,124.01	5,250		5,250
5213	Heating Oil	10,256	10,000	3,118.83	10,500		10,500
5231	Water	138	150	69.00	150		150
5232	Sewer	252	400	123.08	400		400
5247	Computer R & M	11,095	11,000	11,776.00	11,775		11,775
5341	Telephone	1,126	800	510.17	1,100		1,100
5344	Postage	179	100	43.36	100		100
5345	Advertising	123	100		100		100
5350	Recreation Programs	1,000	5,000	2,350.00	5,000		5,000
5380	PO Box Rental	100		106.00	106		106
5420	Office Supplies	3,280	2,500	3,203.06	3,500		3,500
5580	Other Supplies	1,205	1,000	456.92	1,200		1,200
5581	Subscriptions/Books	31,288	33,000	15,223.14	35,000		35,000
5587	Media	26,172	29,000	9,701.53	32,000		32,000
5590	Equipment < \$2K	839	1,000	424.94	1,000		1,000
5710	Travel	1,629	1,000	162.83	1,400		1,400
5730	Dues & Memberships		100		100		100
	TOTAL EXPENSES	95,210	100,150	50,392.87	108,681	-	108,681
5800	Capital Outlay						
	TOTAL CAPITAL OUTLAY	-	-	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL LIBRARIES	303,901	325,242	157,793.33	329,715		329,715

Staffing - Base Wages excluding Overtime/Shift/Holiday

Anniv	Title	Grade/Step 7/1/2014	Hourly Rate	Rate #1 Hours	Grade/Step Anniv	Hourly Rate	Rate #2 Hours	Total Annual
		G3						57,415.00
7/1/2014	Library Director						-	30,437.82
3/31/2015	Children's Librarian	H5-2	16.66	1,827				33,596.64
10/1/2014	Library Technician MW	H3-13	18.12	462	H3-14	18.48	1,365	8,442.96
3/11/2015	Library Assistant I JT 12 +8	H1-5	13.28	432	H1-6	13.53	200	23,840.48
7/1/2014	Library Assistant I MP 26 hrs +8	H1-18+	17.44	1,367				8,945.46
9/10/2014	Library Assistant I JW 13 hrs +8	H1-7	13.80	103	H1-8	14.09	534	14,806.56
10/1/2014	Library Assistant I PS 17 hrs +8	H1-18+	17.44	849				11,789.20
9/7/2014	Library Assistant I AG 16 hrs +8	H1-7	13.80	160	H1-8	14.09	680	9,300.78
9/17/2014	Childrens' Prog Asst RO 12/wk + 144	H1-7	13.80	141	H1-8	14.09	522	16,759.42
	New Libr Asst 26 hrs +8	H1-1	12.26	1,367				

23-Oct per STM, added 983 to 5111

Program Description/Description of Services

In the space below provide a brief and concise description of your department/program. What is the overall mission of your department and what are your primary goals? How will your department go about achieving them? And in a few sentences, describe the responsibilities of each element/division of your department and the programs/services that each provides. (Note: You may find it useful to refer to prior year "program description narratives." These have been provided for your convenience)

The Montague Public Libraries consists of the main library, the Carnegie Library, and the Millers Falls and Montague Center branches. We provide quality library services for the residents of Montague. Provided materials enhance lifelong learning and provide entertainment and recreation for patrons of all ages. We offer many programs for children and will be offering more programs for adults.

Consistently high quality customer service and efficient delivery of services are both very important. Adequate staffing levels, training, cross training, and evaluations will facilitate this.

Libraries are now considered technology centers as well as book repositories. A new goal is providing more technology services and public education.

Library buildings must be safe, in good repair, and should be clean. A larger, better designed main building, with adequate parking, is a long term goal.

Fundraising efforts are crucial to enhance library services and programs. The Friends of the Montague Public Libraries will be restarted and library staff will work with them in fundraising efforts. Grants will be pursued whenever possible.

Library administration includes strategic planning, collection development, personnel management and development, building management, database management, information services, budgeting and grants management.

Circulation services includes book, DVD, periodicals, and other library materials check-in and check outs, placing holds, displays, reader's advisory and reference. The circulation staff is also responsible for the scheduling and monitoring of public access computers with high speed internet access.

Community services include children and adult programming, outreach programs, delivering books and other library materials to the homebound, and providing volunteer opportunities.

Technical services include materials processing and maintenance, circulation automation operations, and computer maintenance. Interlibrary loans include items in and out of the CWMARS network. Includes tracking materials, and individualized ordering for particular patrons.

Youth services encompasses both children and young adults and includes collection development and maintenance, planning, programming, summer reading program, reference, displays, outreach with local schools and playgroups.

Reference includes materials selection, accessing information and reader's advisory.

Budget Statement

Describe the most significant changes that you are proposing in your FY 2015 budget submission. What are the key factors that are driving spending in your budget? These could include uncontrollable increases (greater than inflation) for materials, supplies or utilities; increases related to the implementation of collective bargaining agreement; staffing increases; the implementation of new programs or services, possibly driven by new statutory requirements, compliance issues or need to address deferred maintenance. Conversely, note any savings that are anticipated due to greater efficiency in your operations.

Staffing remains the largest component of the libraries' budget. Circulation continues to increase, but paraprofessional staffing levels have not. Scheduling and monitoring the public access computers with internet access have also added to the workload. This has created multiple problems. The libraries professional staff, the director and children's librarian, have been spending an average of at least three hours a day performing paraprofessional tasks including library materials circulation and shelving. This is inefficient and not cost effective. As a consequence, grant writing has plummeted and adult programming has disappeared. Many other administrative tasks have also languished. When a new director was hired, he promptly quit because the library director's work load was unsustainable, especially for anyone without decades of experience.

There are currently three fulltime staff and six part time library assistants spread between three buildings. Only one part-timer works over twenty hours a week. Most of the part time staff work other jobs or are retirement age. There is no coverage or money in the current budget for substitutes for vacations or sick time.

There has usually been only one staff member at the circulation desk at most times in the three buildings. In the main library, there were often lines to receive service. Creating library cards and providing other services can be time consuming. Library patrons often complained about wait times and many have walked out.

When I first acts as interim director, with the approval of the library trustees, was to hire a temporary worker to be a dedicated second staff person at the Carnegie Library circulation desk during our twenty open afternoon hours. This has resulted in greatly improved customer service, library staff efficiency, and employee morale. Because we are down a fulltime professional staff member, funds are available for this temporary position in the FY 14 budget.

For the FY 15 budget, I am proposing the addition of a twenty-six hour a week library assistant. This person will help cover the circulation desk in the weekday afternoons. They will also work Tuesday and Thursday mornings, when there are no other library assistants scheduled. During this time they will check in the on average five large bins of library materials that are delivered five mornings a week. This material has been checked in and shelved by the professional staff. During slow periods, there are a wide variety of other important tasks they will perform, many of which have not been regularly done due to the staff shortage. Public appearances are very important; they will not look as though they have "nothing to do."

I am also adding eight hours a year to all of the part time positions. This is to facilitate quarterly staff trainings. We have had next to no staff trainings here in the last seventeen years. The trainings will include technology skills and improved/consistent customer service.

These personnel changes will result in greater efficiency, improved customer service, and will allow the two professional librarians to concentrate on areas such as fundraising and program enhancements. Additional part time personnel costs will be offset by lower fulltime salaries. Both the former library director and children's librarian were at the top of their wage scales. The new library director was hired at step 2. A new children's librarian will also be hired at or near the bottom of the scale.

The two library assistants at the top of their scale have announced plans to retire. One said she will leave in several months, the other probably in the summer of 2014. They will also cut down on personnel costs.

The library budget has not always accurately reflected what is spent in various areas. Cost overruns have come out of the state aid to libraries funding. I have slightly increased the travel line item, library supplies and other supplies line items to reflect this. The other supplies line item is for children's programming supplies. We offer multiple children's programs every week, many of which require craft supplies. For example the annual Halloween and Valentines parties offer at least six craft making stations each, and are attended by over one hundred children and adults.

Objectives

Describe the department's primary objectives for the upcoming fiscal year. These could include both "maintenance objectives" (i.e. continuing to provide the same level of services as the current year) and "new initiative objectives. Wherever possible an attempt should be made to identify the two or three key objectives for each division/element of your department. A matrix identifying the apparent divisions/elements of your department will be provided to you.

We plan to improve our customer service, offer more technology services and adult programs, and increase staff efficiency. This will be done in a number of ways.

611- Library Administration

611-1- Strategic Planning- Update short and long term goals

611-2- Information Service- Offer computer/technology training to staff and public

611-3- Collection Development- Expand the variety of fiction and non-fiction books

611-4- Personnel Development- Hold regular quarterly staff trainings and start work on a library policy manual. Recruit, train, and utilize more volunteers.

611-5- Building management- Strive for cleaner, better maintained buildings. Long term a larger, fully handicapped accessible building.

611-6- Budgeting- Seek more outside funding, especially for emerging technology

612- Circulation Services

612-1 Book and Other Check-outs- Increase speed and efficiency and reduce errors

612-2 Books and Other Check-Ins- Increase speed and efficiency and reduce errors

613-3- Books and Other Shelving- Reduce errors, spend more time shelf reading (realphabetizing)

613-4- Home Deliveries- Expand volunteer pool and recipients

613-5- Reserves- Expand local history/genealogy collection

613-6- Data Base Management- More staff training, better utilization

613-7- Periodicals- Find a vendor with better service

613-8- DVD/E-Book Collection- Expand DVD offerings. Train staff and public how to access e-books through the library

613 Community Services-

613-1- Programs/Concerts- offer regular and special programs for adults, Continue to offer numerous high quality children's programs

613-3- Liaison to Friends of the Libraries- Help reestablish group and encourage them to obtain nonprofit 501C3 status to aid in grant applications

614-1- Materials Acquisition- Have new materials arrive in a more spread out, consistent manner

614-2- Speed up processing time for AV materials and have spine labels on all items. This will enable volunteers to better shelve items.

614-3- Automation Services- More staff training

614-4- Materials Maintenance- Clean and repair more DVD discs rather than discarding

614-5- Database management- More staff training, better utilization and analysis

615 Interlibrary Loans

615-1- Local Loans- Train more library users to order their own materials

616 Youth Services- Hire a new children's librarian ASAP

613-3- Programs and Story Hours- Plan and implement more teen programs

616-7 Library/Schools Liaison- Resume with new children's librarian

617- Reference

617-2- Materials Selections- Weed out outdated obsolete materials

Major Accomplishments

Describe the most significant accomplishments of your department over the past eighteen months. Also, describe why you consider these accomplishments significant and identify the benefits that have been/will be realized by the town. These could include costs savings, greater efficiency, increased service levels, improved safety, or enhancements to quality of life.

After a false start with a two week outside hire library director, we have the first new library director in over thirty years. With her almost seventeen years of experience and community connections as the children's librarian, she is starting to make small changes that will improve efficiency, customer service, and increase service levels. Adult programming is returning. More volunteers are being welcomed, and better utilized. Volunteer hours and services are being logged. Staff communication is improving.

A temporary library assistant was hired for while the library is extra short staffed. This has resulted in greater efficiency, improved customer service, and improved staff morale.

A \$90,000 collaborative grant was written by the new library director and submitted to the state to provide laptop computers, tablets, and training for the libraries, Gill-Montague Council on Aging, and Montague Catholic Social Ministries. This is the first collaboration with the Senior Center in at least seventeen years. The project will emphasize training staff, volunteers, and the public at all of the sites. This will encourage long term sustainability and will result in greater service levels and increased efficiency. If this funding is not obtained from the state, other outside funding sources will be sought.

A new circulation desk was designed, built, and installed by Thayer Associates of Deerfield during the summer of 2013. The old desk was not designed for circulation computers or the storage of DVD disks. Due to theft issues, over 3600 disks are stored out of their cases in desk drawers. The new desk design is more efficient and allows for quicker retrieval. The new drawers do not stick and their tracks do not require almost constant repair by the Highway Department..

New public access and circulation desk computers were purchased. They are very popular with the staff and library users. They are running better, and crashing much less than the old computers.

Performance/Workload Indicators

Provide comparative measures of performance and workload delivered in FY 2013, estimated in FY 2014, and anticipated in FY 2015 in for key departmental divisions/elements. The appropriate measures will be identified during your meeting with the Town Administrator.

Our circulation and children's programming statistics are organized by calendar year, not fiscal year. The 2013 figures are not yet available, but will be shortly. I will pass them along as soon as possible

The workload and difference in circulation in my almost seventeen years here is daunting. In 1997, we circulated 68,085 items. In 2012, it was 107,728 items. In 1997, we had 37,766 items in the libraries, compared with 55,272 in 2012. During this time we have added no extra staff, and increased the part time hours only slightly.

Most libraries nationally have declining circulation. In other areas, residents increasingly avail themselves of electronic media. Locally, our library circulation has increased steadily, from 101,216 items in 2010 to 105,005 in 2011 to 107,728 in 2012. I expect this local trend to continue, especially with a new emphasis on consistent high quality customer service and more adequate staffing. Training for the staff and public will encourage the accessing of electronic resources through the Montague Public Libraries.

The Children's programs are run or facilitated by the Children's Librarian and the Children's Programming Assistant, who usually works twelve hours a week. As there has been no children's librarian for a substantial part of FY 2014, there has been a reduction in children's programs. There have been no primarily adult programs run or facilitated by library staff in at least several years. There will be limited programming for adults in the second half of FY 2014, and more in FY 15.

Calendar Year 2012 Circulation Statistics

Adult Printed Material	35,148
Adult Audio	5,490
Adult Video/DVD	28,940

Children's Printed Material	23,641
Children's Video/DVD	10,500
Misc.	99
Young Adult Printed material	2,165
Young Adult Audio	705
Young Adult Video/DVD	76
Downloadable Audio	204
Downloadable Video	4
e-books	614
Total Circulation-	107,728
Interlibrary Loans:	
Items Received From Other Libraries	18,577
Items Sent to Other Libraries	13,520
Non-Resident Circulation At Our Libraries	27,421

Calendar Year 2012 Children's Programming Report

Highlights- 2012 was a very busy year for children's programming. With greatly reduced outside funding, we have had to become more creative with our program offerings and fundraising efforts. Additional thematic parties were extremely popular. Having a Pirate Party Summer Reading Program kick-off and a Prince and Princess Party resulted in the attendance at summer library events going up almost two and a half times over 2011. Retired Franklin County Technical School science teacher Jim Klaiber was hired to teach Hands-On Science for homeschoolers for part of the year. This resulted in attendance per session going up 50%. Preschool Story Hour attendance declined in 2011. The program was renamed Story Time to encourage toddler participation and total attendance more than doubled from 2011 to 2012. Family Network had primarily funded the very popular Music and Movement with Tom Carroll and Laurie Davidson for over ten years. Due to their reduced funding, they were no longer able to support the weekly series. Special funding from the Town of Montague and partial funding from the CFCE allowed the series to continue. Ongoing collaborations with the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement project (CFCE), the Hillcrest and Sheffield Schools, the G St. and Central St. Parent Child Development Centers, Montague Catholic Social Ministries, Great Falls Discovery Center, RiverCulture, and Gill-Montague School and Community Partnerships have continued.

Story Time (formerly known as Preschool Story Hour)

48 sessions held at the Turners Falls Carnegie Library (TF)- total attendance (ta) 1059

Evening Children's Programs

12 Evening craft programs at the Montague Center Library- ta 64

After School Programs (Library Club) at the MPL

48 (year round) sessions at the Millers Falls Library- ta 546

Class and Group Visits for special programs not funded by outside sources

8 sessions- ta 301

Saturday Programs held at Carnegie Library not funded by outside sources

Programs held included arts and crafts and seasonal parties

5 Saturday programs held- ta 385

Crabapple Blossom Festival Events not funded by outside sources

Cinco de Mayo Children's Festival- 60

May Day Party in Millers Falls Library- 12

2 Crabapple Blossom Festival Events not funded by outside sources- ta 72

Summer and other vacation programs not funded by other sources

February School vacation Prince and princess Party- 65

Pirate Party- Summer Reading Program Kick-off- 150

No Strings Marionette Company Puppet Show- 150

3 Dream Big Career programs with community guests- 47

Summer Prince and Princess Party- 160

7 Summer and other school vacation programs- ta 572

Summer Reading Program (self directed reading program)

336 children participated

End of Summer Reading Program Parties

Turners Falls (TF) Live Australian Animal Party- 160

Millers Falls (MF) Celebration Party- 16

Montague Center (MC) Costume Party- 15

3 summer reading program parties- ta 191

134 programs not funded primarily by outside sources, total attendance 2809

Programs funded by a combination of library and outside sources

Music and Movement with Laurie Davidson and Tom Carroll funded by Town of Montague and CFCE grant

17 sessions at TF- ta 791

16 sessions at MF- ta 787

17 sessions at MC- ta 800

50 Music and Movement sessions- ta 3178

Home School Hands-On Science and Social Studies Programs - funded by a combination of library funds and by the Northeast Foundation for Children

18 sessions- ta 414

Programs primarily funded by outside sources

Montague Cultural Council funded programs

Big Birds Homeschool program-(Part of Crabapple Blossom Festival)-18

To Bee or Not to Bee Play-(Part of Crabapple Blossom Festival)- 98

Dinosaur Days – 60

Frogs- at Millers Falls Library- 32

Montague Center Nature Walk- 15

Roger Tincknell Family Dance- 80

6 Montague Center Cultural Council Funded Programs- ta 303

6 programs primarily funded by outside sources, total attendance 303

134 programs primarily funded by the Montague Public Libraries, total attendance 2809

68 programs funded by a combination of sources, ta 3592

208 total programs held at the Montague Public Libraries, in nearby Peskeomskut Park, or in the Montague Center conservation land.

total attendance - 6704

Outreach Programs

Classroom/School Visits- included Hillcrest School, G St. and Central St. Parent Child Development Centers, Sheffield School
29 Classes visited – ta 568

Gill – Montague Family Center Play Group
6 sessions- ta 118

Off-Site Family Literacy Event
G St. PCDC- 25

36 Outreach programs- total attendance 711

Form Narrative 3

General Category: Culture & Recreation

Department **RECREATION**

Dept # 630

EXPENDITURES		Actual 2013	Appropriated 2014	Expended thru 12/31/2013	FY15 Level Services Request	FY15 Fin Comm Recommend	FY15 Town Administrator Budget
5111	Director of Parks & Recreation	56,734	58,073	27,665.68	59,242		59,242
5113	Clerk 20 hrs	14,205	12,991	6,186.00	13,245		13,245
5124	P/T Wages Temp	18,920	18,871	18,869.12	20,508		20,508
5144	Longevity	150	150	150.00	150		150
	TOTAL PERSONAL SERVICES	90,009	90,085	52,870.80	93,145	-	93,145
5275	Pool Expenses - GMRSD	3,117	3,228	1,408.00	3,228		3,228
5341	Telephone	414	1,015	167.55	1,015		1,015
	TOTAL EXPENSE	3,531	4,243	1,575.55	4,243	-	4,243
	TOTAL	93,540	94,328	54,446.35	97,388		97,388

Staffing - Base Wages excluding Overtime/Shift/Holiday

Anniv Date	Title	Grade/Step 7/1/2014	Daily/Hrly Rate	Rate #1 Days/Hrs	Grade/Step Anniv	Daily/Hrly Rate	Rate #2 Days/Hrs	Total Annual
10/1/2014	Director of Parks & Recreation (days)	S8-15	223.58	66	S8-16	228.13	195	59,241.63
10/4/2014	Clerk 20 hrs	H1-2	12.51	276	H1-3	12.75	768	13,244.76

Program Description/Description of Services

In the space below provide a brief and concise description of your department/program. What is the overall mission of your department and what are your primary goals? How will your department go about achieving them? And in a few sentences, describe the responsibilities of each element/division of your department and the programs/services that each provides. (Note: You may find it useful to refer to prior year "program description narratives". These have been provided for your convenience)

The Montague Parks & Recreation Department (MPRD) is a year-round, fully staffed municipal recreation department serving the Town of Montague. The Parks & Recreation Department has one full-time employee (Director of Parks & Recreation; 37.5 hrs./week), and one part-time employee (Clerk/Bookkeeper; 20 hrs./week). We currently provide approximately two dozen programs and special events throughout the year, employ fifteen (15) part-time/seasonal individuals to help deliver such programs. MPRD also has jurisdiction of five public parks and two indoor facilities.

The Mission of the Parks & Recreation Department is *"to enhance the quality of life and the sense of community to the residents of the Town of Montague through the delivery of safe, healthy, diverse, accessible, quality, year-round leisure-time experiences, in addition to maintaining and preserving our parks and resources."* We feel that we honor this mission through the successful management of the following four divisions of the department;

I. Administration:

- a. Recreation Planning & Development – planning and development is a rather dynamic process. Whenever changes need to be made, if feasible, they are done immediately. MPRD utilizes both formative (during implementation) and summative (final) evaluation methods to ensure effective and efficient program delivery. The Director of Parks & Recreation's primary role is program planning and development, but the Parks & Recreation Commission, Clerk/Bookkeeper, part-time/seasonal staff and volunteers are part of this process. The Parks & Recreation Department is always interested in exploring new program opportunities, and encourages input both internally and externally.

Specialized Software Systems - The department currently utilizes *Sportsman Recreation Registration System* by Peak Software. It was purchased by the department in 2002 and has proven to be a valuable resource for program registration, planning and development. The Bluefish Swim Team also utilizes *Hy-Tek* software for their swim meets, and the Sawmill Run currently uses *RunScore* racing software.

- b. Policy & Procedure Support – The Parks & Recreation Department is governed by a three-member, publicly elected board. The Parks & Recreation Commission is the decision/policy-making entity of the department, and has legal jurisdiction over its programs, resources and budget. Commission members are elected to three year terms, and typically meet once a month with the Director of Parks & Recreation. Since 2004, the Director and Commission have developed numerous policies and procedures, including; Master Plan (every five years), Strategic Plan (annual), Parks & Facilities Rules & Regulations, Departmental Financial Plan (annual), Marketing Plan, Park Naming Policies, Aquatics Programs Policies & Procedures, and Youth Sports Manual for Players/Parents and Volunteer Coaches.
- c. Personnel Mgmt. for F/T & P/T Employees – Both the Director of Parks & Recreation and Clerk/Bookkeeper are evaluated on an annual basis; the Director by the Parks & Recreation Commission, and the Clerk/Bookkeeper by the Director. Personal assessments and goals are established during these evaluations, with the measuring of success from previous evaluations. The Director of Parks & Recreation also implements evaluations (mid-season and final) to the Summer Playground Staff. The Summer Playground Program is a highly extensive “day program” implemented during the summer for children ages 3 – 12. MPRD hires high school and college-aged individuals as counselors and supervisors, and evaluations are performed during mid-season and at the end of the program.

Volunteers – It would be extremely difficult to provide adequate, affordable programs without a strong volunteer base. We primarily need the use of volunteers as coaches for our youth sports program. Without the use of volunteer coaches, MPRD would need to rely on paid personnel which would greatly increase participation fees. MPRD is fortunate to receive the help of over thirty (30) adult volunteers who invest approximately 285 – 300 total hours in a given year towards its youth sports programs (not including planning and travel time to contests). Based upon current minimum wage (FY14 – \$8.00/hr), the Parks & Recreation Department would spend at least \$2,500 on personnel costs. These costs would either need to be covered through its Operating Budget or Revolving Budget (participation fees).

- d. Grants Administration – MPRD continually researches the availability of public and private grants to enhance existing programs and facilities and/or develop new programs and facilities. Grants may either be offered on a matching, reimbursement, or entitlement basis. Below are some grants that are typically available;
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – Developed through the consolidation of various grants to allow local governments more flexibility and discretion in determining community expenditure priorities. Monies are received through “formula-entitlement”, whereas communities must submit a three-year program. Funds can be used for acquisition, construction and rehabilitation of recreation facilities in addition to programs. The Unity Park Improvement Project was funded through the CDBG.

- Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) – Funds disbursed through the State’s Executive Office of Environmental Affairs/Department of Conservation & Recreation. The fund was created for assisting all levels of government in the acquisition and development of outdoor recreation resources. This is a matching grant. The LWCF helped fund improvements to the Unity Park Fieldhouse in 2006, and major renovations to Unity Park in 1988.

- Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC) Grant Program – Provides federal grants to economically hard-pressed communities, specifically for the rehabilitation of critically needed recreation areas, facilities, and development of improved recreation programs. This is a reimbursement grant, where Montague is eligible for up to 70% of having total costs covered in a given project. We will be applying to the PARC Grant to fund improvements for a skatepark in FY15.

- Program Grants – Mostly enhance curriculum

+ United States Tennis Assoc. New England Grants – have provided funding for both curriculum and marketing in the last decade.

+ Youth Tennis Foundation – have provided funding for personnel and supplies and equipment in the last decade.

+ Hasbro Summer Learning Initiative (HSLI) Grant – provided funding for a designed science and engineering curriculum, implemented through our Summer Playground Program for approximately four summers in the later part of the last decade.

- KABOOM/Playful City Grant – A new grant opportunity that MPRD is exploring that will help fund playground improvements and also act as a broad-based marketing tool for the community.

e. Fundraising – There are various methods in which to fundraise, including but not limited to; sponsorships, concessions, private donations, product sales & commissions, and special events. Fundraising campaigns can help offset expenditures and can benefit various aspects of the department like programs, services, and scholarships.

- Sponsorships – private entities have the opportunity of providing a donation towards a special event or program in exchange for business promotion. For example, co-sponsors for the Sawmill River 10K have their company’s logo on the event’s t-shirt. We currently offer sponsorship opportunities for our Peter Cottontail’s EGGstravaganza, Sawmill River 10K Run, and our Bluefish Swim Team.

- Private Donations – MPRD typically receives very few private donations in a given fiscal year. When made, they are usually put towards the Scholarship Program for children who wish to enroll in the Summer Playground Program. A gift account was recently established to benefit the installation of the Accessible Wheelchair Swing Project slated for Unity Park, and we anticipate a similar account being created for the Skatepark in the relative near future. We hope that both items will benefit greatly by private donations through their respective gift accounts.

- Product Sales & Commissions – the department made an attempt some years ago to sell t-shirts and other “MPRD” items as an additional revenue stream, but this venture never became fruitful. We may revisit this opportunity in the future.

One of our more successful fundraisers, however, is our cookie dough fundraiser that we implement during our spring youth sports season. Children in our Tee Ball, Rookie Baseball, Rookie Softball and Senior League Softball programs have been selling cookie dough the last couple of years and have collected close to \$1,000 in revenue per season.

- Concessions – the selling or renting of merchandise or provision of a specialized service. At the moment, the Bluefish Swim Team benefits the most from concessions. The team sets up a food and beverage table at every home meet, and all proceeds benefit the operation of the team. Parental volunteers help plan, staff, and donate to this area. The department also provides limited concessions during Peter Cottontail’s EGGstravaganza and Pumpkin Carving/Scarecrow Stuffing Party. When looking at future opportunities, MPRD plans on developing a “Park Snack Shop” at Unity Park for the summer months. Initial plans are for proceeds to offset the cost of operating and maintaining the park’s *Whale Water Spray Feature*, which incurs an annual expense of approximately \$1,300.

f. Budgeting – MPRD utilizes a Zero-Based Budget Format for all of its programs. Zero-Based (sometimes called Program Budgeting) allows us to systematically evaluate the program and its expenditures on a continual basis as opposed to historical precedent. We also develop an “anticipated” or “projected” budget to help establish fees, when needed. A profit/loss statement is also prepared after the end of each program/event for proper evaluation.

g. Certification & Training – There are a number of certifications that the Director of Parks & Recreation is required to hold during his/her tenure; CPR/First Aid, Basic Lifeguarding, Certified Pool Operator (CPO) and Criminal Offense Record Inventory (CORI). Aside from these, the current director is also a Certified Parks & Recreation Professional (CPRP). The department’s Clerk/Bookkeeper is also certified in CORI. The Director is also a member of the National Recreation & Parks Association, Massachusetts Recreation & Parks Association, New England Parks Association, and Pioneer Valley Parks & Recreation Association through the department. The Director is required to attend conferences, meetings and workshops to not only broaden his knowledge and expertise, but also to maintain his CPRP designation. The Clerk/Bookkeeper is also offered to attend workshops and trainings when available.

II. Programs:

Summer –

- Summer Playground Program – This is quite possibly MPRD’s most popular program. The Summer Playground Program is offered to children ages 3 – 12, and is typically held from late June through mid-August. We offer both full-day (9:00am – 3:00pm) and half-day (Ages 3-5) sessions; Mondays thru Fridays. We offer daily activities that range from group games, arts & crafts, sports, to weekly trips to Laurel Lake, field trips, and special events. We have four different sites; Unity Park (Pre-School Playgroup, 5-8 yr. old site, and 9-12 yr. old site) and a 9-12 yr. old site at the high school. In the summer of 2013, we had a

daily attendance of approximately sixty-five (65) children, and served over 420 children for the entire summer. Scholarships are available for Montague residents only. An on-line survey is offered to both staff and parents for evaluation and planning.

- Tennis Lessons – MPRD has traditionally offered two, four week sessions of tennis lessons during the summer. Classes are 50-minutes in length and are taught by a qualified instructor. The popularity of tennis has waned considerably in the last few years, and MPRD has struggled to provide more than two introductory classes.
- Summer Bluefish Swim Team – Due to the popularity of our “winter” Bluefish Swim Team, a summer team was developed in 2011. The Summer Bluefish compete with many of the same teams who participate in the PVSL during the winter months.
- Swimming Lessons – MPRD offers various class levels accommodating differing skills. Classes are 30-minutes in duration, with sessions offered for seven weeks per season. Ideally, MPRD seeks individuals with Water Safety Instructor (WSI) certification to teach the course. We are typically able to accommodate six to eight children per class.
- Adult Co-Ed Softball League (May through August) – Montague’s co-ed softball league is officially sanctioned through the American Softball Association (ASA). It is a slow-pitch league that has included approximately eight teams (100 – 125 participants) in the last few seasons. Teams are sponsored by local business and organizations, and all games are officiated by certified ASA umpires.

Fall –

- Youth Soccer Program – (includes Start Smart © Soccer; grades K-2, Junior Soccer; grades 3/4, and Senior Soccer; grades 5/6)
 - + Start Smart Soccer - Start Smart Football teaches children (ages 5-8) the basic motor skills necessary to play organized soccer. The program focuses on teaching young children the basic skills of the sport, and working cooperatively to achieve positive results. We typically have twenty-four children registered in the program.
 - + Junior Soccer (Grades 3/4) – an introduction to soccer at a more competitive level, where the team travels and plays against teams from other local communities. Games are played on a smaller field, with five players and no goalies. Teams are co-ed, and we typically have one team of approximately ten. Montague is a member of the Tri-County Youth Recreation Sports League which includes Greenfield, Bernardston, Northfield, Erving, Gill, Warwick, Brattleboro, Hinsdale NH, and Vernon VT.
 - + Senior Soccer (Grades 5/6) – Players advance their skills in a more traditional format of soccer, where there are seven players on the field per team with goalies. Teams are co-ed. MPRD has struggled to have a consistent Senior Soccer Team since 6th grade players were brought up to play at the middle school.
- Start Smart © Football - Start Smart Football teaches children (ages 5-8) the basic motor skills necessary to play organized flag football. The program focuses on teaching children the skills of throwing, catching, kicking/punting, and running/agility. *This is a non-contact program.*

- Bluefish Swim Team – One of the most popular programs provided by MPRD. The Bluefish is a competitive/recreational swim team that has been in existence for almost forty years. The Bluefish has regional appeal, as it attracts swimmers from many towns throughout Franklin County. The Bluefish participates in the Pioneer Valley Swim League (PVSL), and while being one of the smaller teams in the league, still competes very well against teams often twice their size. The program is also MPRD’s longest, with its season starting in October and finishing in mid-March. The Bluefish typically has a roster of over fifty swimmers. An on-line survey is offered to both staff and parents for evaluation and planning.
- Tennis Lessons – despite decreasing popularity, MPRD was able to offer lessons in the fall of 2013. While we only had four participants we hope this will be a foundation for bringing the program back to its prominence from a few years ago.
- Swimming Lessons – Classes typically held November – December.

Winter –

- Youth Basketball Program - (includes K-2 Basketball, Junior Basketball; grades 3/4, and Senior Basketball; grades 5/6)
 - + K-2 Bball – an introductory program that meets once a week in January and February. Players work on the basic skills of basketball. We typically serve 18-20 children.
 - + Junior Basketball (Grades 3/4) – Much like Junior Soccer, this is the first experience children have playing basketball at a competitive level. We typically serve twenty children comprising of one boys team, and one girls.
 - + Senior Basketball (Grades 5/6) – We typically serve twenty children; comprising of one to two boys teams, and/or one girls team.
- Knights of Columbus Free Throw Contest – MPRD partners with the Knights of Columbus to offer this Free event. Approximately fifteen individuals between the ages of 10 – 14 participate in this event. The winning boy and girl in each age category moves onto the regional competition.
- Red Cross Babysitting Course – Held twice a year, this program is offered to young adults ages 11 – 15. This program is held in two consecutive nights, where participants are given basic first aid and other relative skills. Those who successfully complete the course are given a certification card.
- Open Swim – This program is offered on Tuesday and Friday evenings from early January through the middle of March. We provide a Family Swim session from 6:30p – 7:30p, and Adult Lap Swim from 7:30p – 8:30p. Open Swim is staffed by two certified lifeguards, and is held in the Turners Falls High School Swimming Pool. MPRD wishes they would be able to offer Open Swim beyond the winter months, unfortunately, this service consistently operates in the red where it is currently not feasible for expansion.
- Swimming Lessons – Typically held in January and February.

Spring -

- Tee Ball (Ages 4-6) – One of MPRD’s most popular programs. Tee Ball consists of four teams (Cardinals, Mariners, Rockies, Giants), who play one another in a round-robin format. The program is held Saturday mornings from late April through the beginning of June. The first half-hour is devoted to working on basic skills, with the second part of the hour spent playing games. We typically have around sixty children who participate in this program.
- Rookie Baseball – (Ages 6 – 8) – The next step up from Tee Ball. The players are pitched to by volunteer coaches, and play intra-squad games. The basics of the game are covered, as well as in-game strategy and situations. This program is held Saturday mornings before Tee Ball.
- Rookie Girls Softball – (Ages 6 – 8) – Similar to Rookie Baseball, this girls team consists of volunteer coaches pitching to players, who play intra-squad games. The basics of the game are covered, as well as in-game strategy and situations. This program is also held Saturday mornings before Tee Ball.
- Senior League Girls Softball – (Ages 9 – 12). This is the competitive travel program, where Montague teams compete in the Small Towns Girls Softball League that includes teams from Northfield, Erving, and Hinsdale NH. Normally, there are approximately eight teams in the league with Montague being represented by two; the Diamond Dusters and Purple Panthers.
- Adult Co-Ed Softball – see above.
- Red Cross Babysitting Course – The second time this is offered during the year for young adults ages 11 – 15. This program is held in two consecutive nights, where participants are given basic first aid and other relative skills. Those who successfully complete the course is given a certification card.
- Swimming Lessons – Typically held in May and June.

III. Special Events:

- Scarecrow Stuffing & Pumpkin Carving Party – This event is run in conjunction with the Franklin County Pumpkinfest. It serves as a “pre-event” where participants are given the opportunity to purchase and carve their pumpkin for the Pumpkinfest. We are very fortunate to have local farmers donate the pumpkins as well as the hay for the scarecrow stuffing.
- Sawmill River 10k Run – Our most significant special event relative to planning, logistics, and revenue. MPRD “adopted” the Sawmill Run in 2009 from Dr. Allen Ross. The event is held on New Years Day in Montague Center, and attracts runners from throughout the region and beyond. For the 2014 race, we welcomed runners from as far away as Minneapolis. The race was also featured in the December 2013 edition of *Runner’s World* Magazine. MPRD needs the services of over thirty volunteers to successfully implement the event. We utilize the Montague Common Hall (formerly Grange # 141), as well as portions of the First Congregational Church. The Sawmill Run is also an officially sanctioned race through USA Track & Field. Since 2009 participation has consistently increased from 85 of that year to 163 in 2014.

- Peter Cottontail's EGGstravaganza – The EGGstravaganza is MPRD's largest event when it comes to total participation. We typically entertain between 300 – 500 people, dependent upon weather conditions. The event is held in Unity Park, and includes 5,000 candy and toy-filled eggs. We separate areas for specific age groups; 4-6 year olds, 7-9, and 10-12.
- One Pitch Softball Tournament – MPRD organized its first One Pitch Tournament in the summer of 2011. Six teams participated, and all proceeds benefit the Co-Ed Softball League. The department did not host a tournament in 2013 (and will most likely not in 2014) due to Phase II construction of the Unity Park Project.

Volunteers - Approximately, 150 additional volunteer hours are devoted to these events.

IV. Parks & Facilities:

Parks – MPRD currently manages approximately 20+ acres of park land in the Town of Montague.

- Unity Park - Unity Park is the most widely utilized outdoor recreation facility within the jurisdiction of the Parks & Recreation Department, and *may* be the most widely used outdoor recreation facility in the entire town of Montague. Unity Park is made up of the Skrzypek Fieldhouse, two ballfields (Unity 1 & Unity 2), a playground, rain gardens (2), butterfly garden, community garden, basketball court, picnic area, and a paved walkway going around the park with fitness stations. Unity Park is used for both organized and non-organized leisure pursuits. The majority of organized programs and events are sponsored, organized and funded through the Parks & Recreation Department. These programs and events include; the Summer Playground Program, Youth Soccer, Peter Cottontail's EGGstravaganza, Family Fall Fun Day, Tee Ball, Rookie Baseball & Softball, the Adult Co-Ed Softball League, and numerous program related meetings. Unity Park, as with all other town owned parks, is maintained by the Highway Department, which works on field maintenance, mowing, playground repairs, building repairs, and other duties.

Unity Park has regional appeal. We see many people who do not reside in Montague enjoying the park. The ability of Unity Park to attract individuals beyond the boundaries of Montague provides a very strong revenue generator for businesses and other attractions in downtown Turners Falls, which in turn, benefits the town as a whole.

In the summer of FY13 the department completed the construction phase of Phase I of the Unity Park Improvement Project. Enhancements included a paved parking lot, landscaping around the fieldhouse, rain garden, and a new playground that includes a new water feature. Project funding was obtained by the Franklin County Regional Housing Authority through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

The department is currently implementing Phase II of the project, with completion slated for late summer of 2014 (FY15). Improvements include refurbished ballfields, a new basketball court, paved parking lot at the east end of the park, community garden, a butterfly garden, rain garden and a paved fitness path connecting all areas of the park. The department will also be installing a sand volleyball court and an additional rock climbing feature in the spring of 2014 through additional CDBG funding.

After Phase II is complete, we hope to develop a skatepark at the west end of the park, in the area that was formally Williams Way. Funding for this phase of the project may be available through the State's PARC Grant (Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities), which is a reimbursement program (up to 70% for Montague). This grant is administered through the State's Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs. The volunteer Skatepark Committee is seeking additional grants and fundraising opportunities to help fund this facility's development. Given grant approval, we hope to start construction of a new skatepark in 2015.

MPRD also hopes to install an accessible wheelchair swing in an area adjacent to the current playground in FY15. We are still in the developmental stage of this project, and we anticipate that funding will rely on donations and fundraising campaigns. The volunteer group "A Friend to Friend" spearheaded the fundraising and marketing campaign to purchase the swing unit, but additional funding is needed for construction and site preparation.

- Highland Park (Millers Falls) - Highland Park is the second most widely utilized park under the Parks & Recreation Department's authority. The facility currently includes a softball field (soccer in the fall), playground area, picnic area, park shed, and a parking area with a basketball hoop. The park is currently used by the Senior Girls Softball Program (which plays in the *Small Towns League*), Youth Soccer Program, and our Summer Playground Program. The playground has seen considerable improvements these last few years, with the installation of a new slide, climbing structure, merry-go-round, and protective surfacing.

Regarding long-term planning, the department hopes to address improvements to the shed. Currently, the shed is used for the Girls Senior League Softball teams, Youth Soccer, and for restroom use for various programs and events.

- Montague Center Park - At this time, MPRD does not provide program opportunities in Montague Center Park. However, it remains a very popular park in the village. The park's most popular events revolve around the annual Independence Day Bonfire (sponsored by the Montague Center Volunteer Firemen's Association), and event space for Montague's Annual Old

Home Days. In the recent past, MPRD utilized Montague Center Park as a site for their Summer Playground Program, Soccer Mania Soccer Camp, and Adult Co-Ed Softball League.

The playground at Montague Center Park has seen improvements these last few years, with the installation of a new slide, climbing structure, merry-go-round, teeter-totter, and protective surfacing. The department continues to look at feasible opportunities to make improvements to the shed/restrooms. MPRD may develop a more comprehensive plan to address facility-wide shortcomings and concerns that will affect the following areas; playground, ballfield, parking/accessibility, basketball court. In 2008, due to the closing of the Montague Center Elementary School, the large playground structure was handed down to the Parks & Recreation Department. There is a possibility that this structure may need to be moved to Montague Center Park in 2014, barring any purchase of the former Montague Center School property.

- Norma's Park – The Town of Montague leases Norma's Park and the adjoining ballfield from The Quinnehtuk Company (First Light, formerly Northeast Utilities). Neither area is actively used by the Parks & Recreation Department for programs or events. Norma's Park is primarily a playground with a couple of picnic tables, swing set, and climbing structure. In the fall of 2008, we installed a new bench swing, and the First Calvary Church of Turners Falls donated and planted numerous flower bulbs, and installed flower beds along the fence which has greatly beautified the park. In the fall of 2010, we held a rededication ceremony attended by Norma's relatives and Montague officials.

- Rutter's Park – Rutter's Park is a relatively new playground that includes a metal slide, tot-sized double slide, teeter totter, and a three-bay swing set. As with Norma's Park, MPRD does not currently hold any programs or events at this park. Due to a successful capital campaign, protective wood chip surfacing was installed in the fall of 2006 with the help of village residents.

Recently, the Lake Pleasant Village Association (LPVA) expressed desire to replace dated playground equipment, and wood chip surfacing throughout Rutter's Park. MPRD will be working with the LPVA in developing an action plan (including fundraising) relative to these requests, and intend to have a plan in place for FY15.

- Montague City - The Parks & Recreation Department has obtained a parcel of land at the corner of Masonic Ave. and Rod Shop Rd. in Montague City. The department will take a better part of a year to study the feasibility of developing that property into park space. The total parcel is approximately 100' x 135' (13,500 sq. ft.). The department hosted a public hearing to discuss possibilities and general interest of developing this parcel in July of 2009. MPRD has long desired a "presence" in Montague City, which is the only village in Montague without a park.

Facilities –

- The Fieldhouse at Unity Park - The Unity Park Fieldhouse was built in the mid-fifties and currently houses the Main Office of the Parks & Recreation Department. The Parks and Recreation Department not only utilizes the Fieldhouse as their “home”, they also store equipment, supplies and materials for their various programs and services. In the winter of 2007/2008, the Fieldhouse roof, main room, and electrical system were refurbished through a 50% matching federal grant through the Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). During the summer of 2008, a mural was painted on the exterior walls of the Fieldhouse thanks to an Art Angels grant obtained through The Brick House Community Center. Additional improvements to the Fieldhouse include new windows, refurbishment of the restrooms, and the conversion of the garage into program space.
- Montague Center Town Hall Gym - The MCTH Gymnasium is located on the second floor of the town hall building. The gym includes a mini multi-use court that is 43' x 40' (a total of 1,720 square feet), two basketball hoops, a stage (15'x43'; 645 sq. ft.), and balcony seating above the gym floor. The MCTH Gym is the only indoor space under the jurisdiction of the Parks & Recreation Department, and unfortunately, it cannot adequately support many programs or events due to its lack of accessibility and heat. At one time, the department held adult aerobics, Tai Chi, and Tae Kwon Do classes in this space. This space was also used as the central location for the department's Sawmill River 10k Run, before moving on to the Montague Grange. MPRD also stores ping-pong tables and various other play and athletic equipment in this area. The department also rents out this space for private parties and other interests.

Form Narrative

Budget Statement

Describe the most significant changes that you are proposing in your FY 2015 budget submission. What are the key factors that are driving spending in your budget? These could include uncontrollable increases (greater than inflation) for materials, supplies or utilities; increases related to the implementation of collective bargaining agreement; staffing increases; the implementation of new programs or services, possibly driven by new statutory requirements, compliance issues or need to address deferred maintenance. Conversely, note any savings that are anticipated due to greater efficiency in your operations.

MPRD is requesting an increase in its *P/T Wages Temp* line-item due to an anticipated increase in state minimum wage. At this time we do not know what the minimum wage increase will be for 2015. However, it seems the State House has set its sites on \$12.00-\$12.50 per hour by 2018. We assume that minimum wage would then go up \$1 to \$9.00/hr. for 2015, and therefore request an

increase of \$1,637 for said line-item. This increase reflects a 50/50 allocation (from \$3,273 total) between the department's Operating and Revolving Budgets. *P/T Wages Temp* is primarily used for Summer Playground Staff salaries, and is based upon 8.5 weeks of payroll.

We anticipate increased costs due to the operation and maintenance of new items and facilities developed from the Unity Park Improvement Project. *At this time*, we hope to offset those costs through the generation of revenue from various sources (Park Store, fundraising).

Objectives

Describe the department's primary objectives for the upcoming fiscal year. These could include both "maintenance objectives" (i.e. continuing to provide the same level of services as the current year) and "new initiative objectives. Wherever possible an attempt should be made to identify the two or three key objectives for each division/element of your department. A matrix identifying the apparent divisions/elements of your department will be provided to you.

At this time, MPRD has not developed any *specific* goals/objectives relative to FY15. During their June meetings, the Parks & Recreation Commission approves a Strategic Plan for the upcoming fiscal year. The department is currently implementing its FY14 Strategic Plan, with the FY15 plan to be voted upon this coming June. Typically, any items that are not accomplished in a given fiscal year are then moved to the next. The following is our Strategic Plan (per division) for FY14 where completion is slated for June 30, 2014. *Anticipated FY15 items are italicized;*

DIVISIONS:

I. Administrative -

- *Revise departmental Master Plan*
- *Apply to KABOOM ©, and obtain "Playful City" designation.*

II. Programs -

- Develop programs that utilize the new facilities developed at Unity Park

General, Yearly Program Goals/Objectives:

- Continue to develop partnerships with local schools, non-profits, local businesses and other town departments to diversify and strengthen current programs and develop new programs
- Research and apply to grants that enhance current programs and services
- Continue to improve training for program volunteers

III. Special Events –

- *Research the feasibility of having the Sawmill River 10k Run course “certified” through USA Track & Field*

IV. Parks & Facilities –

Unity Park –

- Complete Phase II of the Unity Park Improvement Project
- Plan and develop the Unity Skatepark
- Plan and develop the installation of a wheelchair swing
- *Research and plan improvements relative to the Fieldhouse (restrooms, program space)*

Highland Park –

- Install new swingsets

Montague Center Park –

- Dependent upon the sale of the former Montague Center School property, move the large play structure located at the former Montague Center School to the park.
- Discuss the need for developing a more comprehensive master plan relative to the park. Initial assessment of the facility suggests there are opportunities and shortcomings that should be addressed, in particular: Ballfield backstop, Storage shed, Configuration of ballfield, installation of a Basketball court

Norma’s Park, Lake Pleasant –

- Begin a needs assessment and action plan relative to installing a new swingset, and installing wood chip playground surfacing around the entire park.

Rutter’s Park, Lake Pleasant –

- Begin a needs assessment and action plan relative to refurbishing and possibly re-designing the park.

Montague City Park –

- No plans at this time

Montague Center Town Hall –

- No plans at this time

Form Narrative 2

Major Accomplishments

Describe the most significant accomplishments of your department over the past eighteen months. Also, describe why you consider these accomplishments significant and identify the benefits that have been/will be realized by the town. These could include costs savings, greater efficiency, increased service levels, improved safety, or enhancements to quality of life.

In general, MPRD continues to see strong participation across our entire program spectrum with overall participation being close to 100%. The popularity of our programs and services are never taken for granted, however. We continue to look at ways to make all of our offerings operate more efficiently.

That being said, the most significant accomplishment over the past eighteen months has been the successful implementation of Phase I and II of the Unity Park Improvement Project. Through these improvements we will most likely see, and in fact have already seen; an increase in service (facilities and programmatically), improved safety, as well as an enhancement to the quality of life. We feel these improvements transcend all social and economic sectors. Back in the late 1990's, the National Recreation & Parks Association initiated a new movement titled *The Benefits of Parks & Recreation*, which focused on what communities and individuals gain from their respective parks and recreation departments. Below is a very brief description of those benefits.....

PARKS & RECREATION. THE BENEFITS ARE ENDLESS.....

Quality of Life – Strong, Vital & Involved Communities – Economic Stimulation – Environmental Health & Protection – Personal Development – Connected Families – Catalyst for Tourism – Community Pride – Reduced Delinquency – Protection of the Ecosystem – Reduced Healthcare Costs – Sense of Accomplishment – Self-Esteem & Self Reliance – Reduced Vandalism & Crime – Social Bonding – Clean Air & Water – Problem Solving and Decision Making – Revenue Generator – Understanding and Tolerance – Support for Youth – Enhanced Land Values – Productive Workforce – Preservation of Open Space..... National Recreation & Parks Association

We feel confident that the vast majority of those who participate in our programs and enjoy our parks experience a wide range of the benefits noted above.

Performance/Workload Indicators

Provide comparative measures of performance and workload delivered in FY 2013, estimated in FY 2014, and anticipated in FY 2015 in for key departmental divisions/elements. The appropriate measures will be identified during your meeting with the Town Administrator.

Workload increased considerably in 2013 and 2014 with the implementation of the Unity Park Project, not only from the perspective of its planning and development, but also how it affected other programs. Modifications needed to be made relative to the Summer Playground Program, Adult Softball League, Tee Ball, Rookie Leagues, and Youth Soccer. Coordination was critical, with MPRD having to work with the Gill-Montague School District, Newt-Guilbault/Cal Ripken Baseball League, and the Greenfield Recreation Department. We acknowledge the efforts these agencies provided us, and the positive affect their accommodations had on the community. We anticipate that this will be a similar case (at least on a slightly smaller scale) for 2015, with the continued closing of the Unity ballfields (possibly through the summer of 2014) and the hopeful execution of the Skatepark and Accessible Swing projects.

As noted previously, Unity Park is not the only facility that will require substantial attention. Rutter's Park in Lake Pleasant has received the least amount of improvements since 2000. MPRD will be working with the town's Planning Department, the Lake Pleasant Village Association, as well as village residents to develop a comprehensive improvement plan. While it is one of the our smaller parks, the potential of this space is considerable given that only a quarter of its available space (1+ acre) has been developed. The application of various grants may be necessary to have its potential realized.

Workload in 2015 is also dependent upon how successful the department is with the other items noted in our 2014 Strategic Plan.

Form Narrative 3

General Category: Culture & Recreation

Department **Historical Commission**

Dept # **691**

EXPENDITURES		Actual 2013	Appropriated 2014	Expended thru 12/31/2013	FY15 Level Services Request	FY15 Fin Comm Recommend	FY15 Town Administrator Budget
5700	Miscellaneous Supplies	253	500	-	500		500
	TOTAL EXPENSES	253	500	-	500	-	500
	TOTAL WAR MEMORIALS	253	500	-	500		500

General Category: Culture & Recreation

Department **WAR MEMORIALS**

Dept # 693

EXPENDITURES		Actual 2013	Appropriated 2014	Expended thru 12/31/2013	FY15 Level Services Request	FY15 Fin Comm Recommend	FY15 Town Administrator Budget
5211	Electricity	426	420	151.43	420		420
5700	Miscellaneous Supplies	804	780	75.77	780		780
5710	Travel						
TOTAL EXPENSES		1,230	1,200	227.20	1,200	-	1,200
TOTAL WAR MEMORIALS		1,230	1,200	227.20	1,200		1,200

27-Jan keep same per Al Cummings