

SELECTMEN'S MEETING
Monday, November 1, 2010
UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM

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Meeting was opened at 7:00 PM in the Upstairs Meeting Room. Present were Selectpersons, Mark Fairbrother, Chris Boutwell, Patricia Allen, Town Administrator, Frank Abbondanzio; Administrative Secretary, Wendy Bogusz; Arn Albertini, Greenfield Recorder, Jeff Tirrell, WHAI, Janel Nockleby, Montague Reporter

Allen announces meeting is being taped

Approve minutes of October 25, 2010

Fairbrother makes the motion to approve the minutes of October 25, 2010 with corrections. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Fairbrother – Aye, Boutwell – Aye, Allen - Aye

FY11 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Public Hearing (Board member introductions made to audience) (Bruce Hunter FCRHA)

Fairbrother reads Public Hearing Legal Notice into the record

Abbondanzio gives brief overview of program CDBG – CDF Grant Program:

- This is Federal Money from Housing & Urban Development
- Administered by the State through the Department of Housing and Community Development
- Competitive Program under Mass. Small Cities Program
- Have to meet National Objectives for this grant, in our case it is to benefit low/moderate income people, residents of the Town of Montague.
- Town will contract with Housing and Redevelopment Authority to administer the grant if and when we receive it.

Update of FY 2009 CDBG:

- Received grant from DHCD in 2009 to do the Unity Park Design, activity is complete. Berkshire Design Group was selected to design the project; they prepared bid ready plans and specs that were completed last January. Unfortunately the grant was not funded in July, so we still have designs in ready to go status and that is what we will be submitting as part of FY11 application.
- Housing Rehab Program in Turners Falls and Millers Falls, that activity will be completed by December 31, 2010; there was a budget of \$252,417; 8 units of housing were set as a goal and 8 units were completed. 2 units are under construction and all funds have been committed.
- Social Service Program in 2009: Bridge to Success Montague Catholic Social Ministries we are attempting to complete that program by December 31, 2010. So far it has served 41 residents; the goal was to assist 55 low/moderate income women in Montague. There is also a computer literacy component that involved web design, budgeting and financial literacy and leadership and mediation skills training. The other Social Service Program was the Montague Green Jobs Project that was implemented by the Brickhouse and may be completed by December 31, 2010. So far 8 residents have been served, the goal of the program was to assist 25 low/moderate youth and young adults in Montague in job readiness training with particular emphasis on green jobs.

Hunter: Just an update on green jobs, that was as of June, they started the new school year and I believe they will complete the grant within the timeline which is December 31, 2010. They should meet the goal.

FY2010 CDBG CDF Grant

- We did not get funded for the Unity Park Project however, Montague was included in a four-town regional grant with the Towns of Northfield, Sunderland and Monroe. Montague received funds totaling \$154,000 that will be used to fund a housing rehabilitation program which is part of the Regional Application. In our case, the target area in Montague is: Montague Center, including Taylor Hill, Dry Hill and Chestnut Hill areas. The town applied for five units, (\$154,000); no project is committed as of this date. There are 8 persons on the waiting list who are being processed and the program must be completed by December 31, 2011.

FY2011 CDBG CDF Grant

- Looking at applying for a total of \$1,000,000 in two different project areas one for Unity Park Improvement Project. The project was ranked very highly, almost a perfect score in the 2010 application. We'll be applying for construction funding of phase one. Total project cost of \$652,700; we are requesting \$575,000 to come from the block grant; we are requesting town contributions totaling \$77,700. Last year we committed \$40,000 from program income for that project

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and it is still in place. There is an additional \$37,700 that will come from funds currently being administered through the Regional Housing Authority. That will require a letter from the Board authorizing them to go ahead with that.

- Second component of the grant will be a Housing Rehab program that will be included as part of a Regional application. The target area is in Turners Falls and Montague City, there will be a total of 5 units, \$143,200 in total cost and there are currently 5 households on the waiting list for these funds.

Allen: Application is due December 10, 2010 and will be awarded in April 2011.

Public Comment:

Dennis Grader, Chair of the Parks & Rec. Commission: I'm excited about this; I've been on the board since 1990 and it's mostly great efforts by the P & R Directors we've had over the years to keep our programs going and we've just been piecing mealing our parks together to keep them going, replacing equipment that has been bad or unsafe and it has been very difficult. If this project goes through, I'm sure Unity Park will be like a diamond for the whole community. It is not just for kids, it is for adults and elders that have been incorporated into the park.

Allen: We're excited too. It really seems like a wonderful program besides the walking paths as well as everything else, it does speak to all the different groups that use the park. Other people have mentioned how it is just one more piece that will draw people into downtown, besides the Pumpkinfest, the Soapbox Derby and the Bikeway itself.

Hunter: We had over 300 signatures from residents and non residents requesting this project go forward in this application. We are also working with the Skateboard Park Committee and the Berkshire Design Group as to the completion of the Unity Park Design. That process is currently in Master Plan form; there are some revisions being looked at and we'll be holding public informational meetings that will complete the park design and future phases of the park which the Town can apply for.

Public Hearing closed at 7:17 PM

Fairbrother makes the motion to endorse the FY2011 Community Development Block Grant program as just spelled out. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Allen - Aye

Lew Collins, Between the Uprights, (Boutwell recuses himself)

Use of Public Property

Collins: Want to do what I've done the past several years where we've been allowed to extend our traffic flow area, but have that closed in where people can go from the Sports Bar to the Night Club and back with their beverage and also so smokers can go out there with their beverage. Every year you have let me do this it has just made the night so much smoother traffic flow wise and people respect this. Abutters have been notified, and there will be 7 people working.

Abbondanzio reminds Lew Collins that it is important that the outside sidewalk have 48" of clearance. He must make sure bumpers don't come in to close to the sidewalk.

Collins: Sidewalk itself measures 53".

Fairbrother makes the motion to grant the permit for use of public property at the delineated section of sidewalk on Avenue A in front of the premises to Lew Collins owner of Between the Uprights at 23 Avenue A on November 24, 2010 from 3:00 PM to 1:10 AM; approximately 20 – 40 participants expected and the Chief has signed off. Seconded by Allen, approved. Fairbrother – Aye, Allen - Aye

Special Liquor License

Fairbrother makes the motion to grant a Special Alcohol License to Lew Collins of Between the Uprights at 23 Avenue A for a delineated section of sidewalk outside the 23 Avenue A on November 24, 2010 from 3:00 PM to 1:00 AM and Police Chief Zukowski has signed off on the request and proof of liquor license liability insurance is on file with the Town. Seconded by Allen, approved. Fairbrother – Aye, Allen - Aye

Collins asks about putting a porta-potty outside for the event. He is told to contact Gina in Board of Health.

Boutwell rejoins the meeting

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Town Administrators Report

Announce Award of Sustainable Materials Recovery Program Municipal Grant

Abbondanzio: This is a small grant from the Dept. of Environmental Protection and is a recycling grant applied for by the FCSWMD. It is for \$750 and is a targeted grant. In our case, we will use it to purchase 52 recycling bins and 40 traffic cones made from recycled plastic

Other

Allen asks about how the Solar Belly Box at Peskeompskut Park gets used.

Ramsey: It is there for the passerby, a public trash can, meant to be put in public places. The idea behind it is that it fits five times the trash that a normal container does; therefore you make less trips to remove trash. It is open to the public and it was used at the Pumpkinfest.

Letter to NE Utilities regarding status of land owned by Quinnetuck Company

Abbondanzio: We've been getting feedback from WMECO that they are no longer interested in offering the 100 acre site on the Montague Plains for a possible Industrial Park. We want to get a formal opinion from WMECO that they are no longer declaring that as surplus. We were getting negative vibes and heard that they are more interested in looking at it for energy production for maybe solar panels. We could end up seeing some economic development that is privately funded and planned, so that is not necessarily a bad thing either because that is tax paying as well. If they are not interested in the possibility of that site, Walter and I have talked about the possibility of revisiting the Turnpike Road landfill site as a possible Industrial Park site. There was a Feasibility Study Master Plan done by the Conway School of Design in 2000 and there are some issues, however. There is a lot of land so if there is not a whole lot of sentiment to move forward on the development of the site at the landfill, then we ought to be looking at alternatives and that is going to involve a lot of discussion of this Board and other Boards as well. Walter is looking to take the issue to the EDIC in two weeks.

Special Town meeting date

Discussion held about having an early meeting Abbondanzio: We're trying to time it so it is coordinated with the district meeting, getting the word back from the State on the education assessment, scheduling use of the Theater at the High School and not getting to close to the holiday. The real unknown is the legislatures and DESE. Personally doesn't think it is a good idea to schedule it before we have the information.

Fairbrother makes the motion to set the date for the Special Town Meeting for Thursday, January 6, 2011 at the Turners Falls High School at 7:00 PM. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Fairbrother – Aye, Boutwell – Aye, Allen - Aye

Michael Nelson, Franklin County Pumpkinfest

Nelson: Wow, Wow, Wow! Had the 1st annual Pumpkinfest on October 23, 2010. There were 51 vendors; there were some electrical problems in the beginning. Rich Kuklewicz is working on correcting the problem for next year. Had mostly positive feedback from businesses along the Avenue; a couple had some ideas and concerns mostly related to parking. Next year: will have to work on parking for businesses in Food City Parking lot; signs that there is no public restroom in plaza should be put up; double porta potties and have them in more central locations so they are more accessible to folks; will up police coverage for next year and discuss parking prior to event. Shuttle was well received and will plan on doing it again next year, will have it the whole time and might add a second bus to remove stress from Avenue A. We will urge more people to bring pumpkins next year. We would also like to expand down one more block to include more businesses. Also hoping the Discovery Center will be open.

Bill Holbrook, Jakes Tavern: Thanks Mike for a job well done. Wants to make sure next year people serving beer are aware of rules for serving people.

Allen would like to see Riverculture involved so they can benefit financially somehow.

Use of Peskeompskut Park & Public Property – Entertainment Event

Fairbrother makes the motion to grant a permit for use of public property, Peskeompskut Park and Avenue A from Seventh St. to Second Street to Michael Nelson and Matt Wannamaker for the 2nd Annual Franklin County Pumpkinfest on October 22, 2011; hours will be 12:00 PM to 12:00 AM, set up and take down included with the main event from 3:00 PM to 9:00

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PM. This permit approval is to facilitate event planning for the meetings with the Board and the weeks leading up to the event are required. Proof of insurance liability and finalized planning details will be required. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Fairbrother – Aye, Boutwell – Aye, Allen – Aye Traffic issues will have to be discussed one month prior to event with Police Chief.

Fairbrother wanted to wait on other permits until next year, Allen would just as soon get them done so Michael doesn't have to worry about them. Boutwell would like to go ahead also.

Special 1 – Day Alcohol License

Fairbrother makes the motion to grant a special 1 day alcohol license to Michael Nelson and Matt Wannamaker of Greenfield Road for the Franklin County Pumpkinfest for Peskeompskut Park on October 22, 2011 from 3:00 PM to 9:00 PM, Proof of insurance will be required. Seconded by Allen Fairbrother – Aye, Allen – Aye, Boutwell – Abstain

Application to Place Banner on Peskeompskut Park

Boutwell makes the motion to authorize Michael Nelson and Matt Wannamaker for the Franklin County Pumpkinfest to place a sign, object or other display/exhibit on the grounds of Peskeompskut Park; start date of October 22, 2011 and end date is October 22, 2011. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Fairbrother – Aye, Boutwell – Aye, Allen - Aye

Application to Place Sign, Object, Other display or Exhibition/Vigil on Montague Center Town Common & Peskeompskut Park

Boutwell makes the motion to authorize Michael Nelson and Matt Wannamaker for the Franklin County Pumpkinfest to place a sign, object or other display on the Montague Center Town Common and Peskeompskut Park commencing October 1, 2011 and ending October 22, 2011. Seconded by Fairbrother, approved unanimously. Fairbrother – Aye, Boutwell – Aye, Allen – Aye

The Board would like Nelson to come back with an update sometime in May 2011

Raymond Zukowski, Chief of Police

Installation of an ATM at the Police Department

Zukowski: I sent you an e-mail with Greenfield Savings Banks proposal and contract for an ATM. An ATM at the police department is a good idea for making it convenient for families of people getting arrested to get bail money as bail is all cash. Our other thought is it is a very convenient, safe place for anyone 24 hours a day to utilize an ATM. Greenfield Savings bank officials saw the amount of traffic going by and feel it is a good location for this, as well as I. I was also contacted by another private vendor, but as I said to you, Greenfield Savings Bank is very community oriented; they donate to a lot of Town events. I think it would also be a little way to thank them by allowing them to put an ATM in our building. Installation would go in the main foyer and installation will be fairly easy.

Allen: Greenfield Police have an ATM at their location and I suspect a growing number of police stations do too at this point. I have some concerns because you have heard from another company and Greenfield Savings is interested which is good, but I know of at least one other bank that would probably also be interested. I find myself thinking that we should be considering an RFP or some sort of process to make sure we are fair to everyone who might want to come in.

Fairbrother: Are we legally required to advertise it? It would be nice to say this is a good thing and do it, but do we need to get...?

Allen: The other company was going to pay you 25¢ per transaction.

Abbondanzio: I ran it by the Inspector General because it is an obvious 30B question, and they told me it was a borderline thing. If there is the potential to raise revenue, then you need to get some comparative thing to make sure that somebody who would have paid you more revenue is not passed over for whatever reason.

Allen questions the contract and feels she would feel better if this is put out to an RFP.

Boutwell thinks it's a good concept and wanted to know if it would do anything to lower towns' liability? Also wants to know if it would have to go to a Special Town Meeting.

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Everyone feels it is doubtful the Towns Liability will be lowered. If space is leased, it would have to go to Town Meeting.

Linda Ackerman, Greenfield Savings Bank: I'm sure there is nothing in the contract that says they expect the Town to pay any fees, the only concern was if on a weekend or holiday that the receipt jammed, would someone in the building be able to be trained to fix this.

Frank and Ray to work on creating an RFP as it is the consensus of the Board.

Personnel Board

Letter from Retirement Board regarding Dispatcher Hours

Zukowski: All dispatchers have been certified through 911 to operate the equipment and now they are in the stage of training in house, answering calls, learning computer system, how to enter data etc, etc. All three are in a different stage, but I would say within a month all three should be able to work by themselves.

Discussion about November 8th cutoff date, hours being worked and why; the Retirement Boards concerns

Fairbrother: I don't think it's not primarily a union issue, this woman works more than 16 hours, it sounds to me like what Shari is saying is if this woman works more than 16 hours per week, and I don't care why, she has to be in the retirement system.

Allen: I suspect it wouldn't be a real problem with the form figuring out what that actually equates to, but it is getting these other people up to speed, because I think they decided enough is enough, we have to find out where we are here. So if you can sit down with Carolyn and Shari and...

Zukowski: Will try. It is hard when you're working 24 hours a day around the clock to fill these shifts. It's not a gray area where your working 7 – 3 everyday, and we have to answer the phones. With these 3 people coming on, it should hopefully alleviate that.

Allen: It may be they just need to know that there is an end in sight within a month or something like that.

Zukowski: Okay, I'll make it my mission in the next week to try and iron this one out.

Request for creation of Dispatch Manager/Office Administrator

Zukowski: On December 2, Sandy Guilbault will be retiring after 32 ½ years. Within the past year Sandy took some leave and Marsha filled in and did a great job managing both offices. Common practice for most Police Departments is to have an Administrative Assistant. Greenfield, Orange, Winchendon, Acton any department that is a little larger has that function. I'm asking the Board to consolidate the Dispatch Supervisor and the Secretary into one position, Administrative Assistant type position. Carolyn, Sandy and Marsha went over the job description which you have a copy of, they updated it to include a lot of the responsibilities that are current. To me it's nice to go to one person instead of two for your needs. If we hire a secretary, the secretary has to go through the training to answer the phones, because they have to come out when they start to go crazy and assist the dispatcher. Sandy has the training now, if we hire someone new just as a secretary and leave Marsha where she is, that is going to entail a lot of extra training for that secretary before they can serve that function as well. It is very hard for Marsha to do her role and also answer the phone like she was doing. In the last 8 years we have gone through 4 dispatch supervisors.

Allen asks about what part is the dispatch part and which is the secretarial part on the job description. Zukowski explains.

Zukowski: If we merge the two jobs we would hire a level 1 dispatcher instead of a secretary, and there would be no transition. They sat down with Carolyn and they came up with a rating for the job description.

Allen: I want to wait until after tomorrows election because if question 3 passes, then everything is out the window. I personally am not interested in making a decision tonight because I don't know where we are going to be. If it passes, we are going to be looking at cuts all over the place.

Boutwell: If we decide to merge these two positions, what do we have to do with the unions?

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Abbondanzio: We'd go through the posting process and sit down and impact bargain, telling them what we're doing and why. Actually, Bob Dixon has taken part in the discussion we've had, so they are aware of it and pretty supportive of the concept.

Fairbrother: I'm inclined to support it, but I was going to ask for a week to think about it.

Zukowski: I believe you will save \$6,000 if we merge the positions. If you go the step 4 it is about a \$6,000 savings.

This issue to be put on the next agenda

Status change, 2 reserve officers

Zukowski: At Town Meeting it was approved that the Reserve Officers could have a pay rate between \$14.62 and \$16.00 per hour and we haven't done anything with that. Presently all reserves work for \$14.62 per hour but I have two that really step up to the plate, that work every time we call them, they have been on several years, Peter and Todd. I'd like to put them at the top rate just to keep them on board.

Discussion about raising the rate for only 2 people; Zukowski states this is within his budget, cutting down on OT

Fairbrother makes the motion to change Peter Lapachinski and Todd Michon's rate from \$14.62 to \$16.00 per hour effective November 1, 2010. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Fairbrother – Aye, Boutwell – Aye, Allen - Aye

Allen asks if this needs to go before the union? Zukowski responds No, as they are not in the union.

Town Administrators Report

Program Income Hearing: Contribution to RiverCulture

Abbondanzio: We're asking for \$15,000 for a Riverculture match. This is going to be the sixth year of the program, and the Town has supported the program every year since the beginning. Obviously it strengthens the application we have with the Mass. Cultural Council. Walter and Lisa are here to talk about why the program is such an asset to the Town.

Ramsey: We've been fostering a creative economy here in Turners Falls ever since the 2004 Economic Development Plan called for an organization like Riverculture. It has been a great success in creating festivals, new businesses here, and artist move here by the day. You're getting a changing face of Turners Falls and no one is doubting it is a great success. This year we have the challenge of the bridge closure and we're worried about the effect that is going to have on the community that we have nurtured the past few years. Riverculture has been playing a major part in turning that negative view into a positive view. They are playing with the idea of one way into Town with the Water under the Bridge Festival and having a hard hat auction in a way of keeping the community in a positive direction. It could potentially be economically harmful. Riverculture is entering a new phase where we are established as an organization network and we need to insure the longevity of it and getting us through the bridge construction and continuing that mission that we worked so hard to get where we are.

Davol: The Town put so much effort into the physical infrastructure and 2004 plan called for we have all these nice buildings we need people here, we need some liveliness. Everything about Riverculture is it is a partnership of many organizations in town, businesses, individuals, people coming to the table assessing what the Town needs, what the issues are, how we can creatively respond to things and there are more resources as partnership and more perspectives; it is not just one organization deciding what happens in Town. Especially with the bridge, a lot of businesses are nervous. Let's try to make a positive out of it. We want to beef up the next Water Under the Bridge festival. We're going to keep the producers series alive. The Pumpkin festival was so spectacular, the soap box derby was spectacular, those are the kinds of things we have been trying year after year to position Turners as a place for people to come have their festival, to come and enjoy the Town. People are starting to do it, it's great.

Allen: I don't think those events would have been a success if it wasn't for the umbrella of Riverculture.

Davol: Riverculture does so many things behind the scenes that people don't realize, so many hours of my week are answering public inquiries. I spend several hours hooking people up with the right people to get their event going. People have ideas, but they flounder not knowing how to connect the dots. It's a lot of things that people don't see. We are going

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to beef up the marketing campaign, try to bring people in because the bridge is an issue. It is a new economic context that we have on our plate, so let's just go with it. The State has been extremely supportive; the Mass. Cultural Council has been amazing.

Fairbrother: Where has the money come from in the past and has it been \$15,000 each year?

Davol: It has either been \$20,000 or \$15,000

Allen: It comes out of the program income account each year and then there is money from the John and Abigail Adams Grant.

Davol: We have to match our grant. The Town gives some, WMECO has given a huge chunk, Hillside Plastics has been a major sponsor, we've gotten individual sponsorships, some earned income, Greenfield Savings Bank has given some money, Mark Abramsons realty company has donated. It's going out into the community and raising it however you can.

Boutwell: If we do the \$15,000 where does that leave us with a balance plus all the additional grants Riverculture has obtained?

Davol: It will be for 2011 calendar year.

Abbondanzio goes over available funds on the program income listing, and how there is probably \$70,000 additional allocations that can be closed out of the bottom balance.

Davol: There may come a time when Riverculture has done its job and we may not need to be here.

Fairbrother makes the motion to allocate \$15,000 from the Program Income River Account to the Riverculture Match for the coming calendar year. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Fairbrother – Aye, Boutwell – Aye, Allen – Aye

FRCOG Grant

Ramsey: When I was here two weeks ago I mentioned the FRCOG received a grant from the Housing and Urban Development to do a regional plan and the Town of Montague is a consortium member in this grant to do the regional plan and Riverculture is also a part in that. As a component of this overall grant, 3 year process we are going to be doing a downtown Turners Falls master plan and Riverculture is going to be an absent partner in the planning process as well as the Planning and Conservation Department.

Allen: I think Riverculture has expanded way beyond what one might have thought when it first got developed. Who knew where it would go.

Fairbrother makes the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 PM. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Boutwell - Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Allen - Aye