

**SELECTMEN'S MEETING  
UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM  
1 AVENUE A, TURNERS FALLS, MA  
MONDAY, January 23, 2012**

*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; Jeff Tirrell, WHAI (absent); Chris Curtis, Greenfield Recorder, Janel Knockleby, Montague Reporter*

**Fairbrother opens the meeting and announces the meeting is being taped**

**Approve Minutes of January 17, 2012**

*Boutwell makes the motion to approve the minutes of Tuesday, January 17, 2012. Seconded by Fairbrother, approved.  
Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Allen - Abstain*

**Josh Goldman, Request to develop an MOU between the Town of Montague and the Mass. Division of Fisheries and Wildlife for maintenance of a replacement walking bridge in the Sawmill River Conservation Land**

Goldman: About 18 years ago a group of citizens from Montague formed a conservation group called "Friends of the Sawmill River" and this group raised funds, did education and ultimately played a roll in structuring the purchase and sale of the Garbiel property off North Street with assistance from Mt. Grace Land Trust, ultimately into the hands of the Mass. Division of Fisheries and Wildlife as a conservation area. This property has been very well used and loved by members of the Town. Unfortunately around 5 years ago, the bridge that historically connected the southerly portion of the property where most people access the land to the larger northerly portion of the main fields in the back adjacent to Swamp Road collapsed. The bridge that was there relied on a rock structure in the center of the river and over time it became eroded and when the center support went away, the bridge collapsed. Members of the community removed the residual parts of the bridge and at that time we really lost "dry foot" access to a lot of the property. There have been a number of attempts to build an adhoc bridges that were neither with the permission of the land owner nor permitted or really that safe. Members of the community thought it was important to try and reestablish the bridge. I entered into discussions with Ralph Taylor, the property manager who indicated a willingness to have a bridge on the property provided it was stamped by a Mass. Engineer and it was ADA compliant. I was able to design a bridge based on utility pole bridges that often used by the U.S. Park Service as there are publically available designs we adapted a design, did a site survey and have a stamped set of plans. It is a very simple bridge and I think it would be easy to raise funds in the community to fund the execution of this bridge. Much of this is ready to go, however, the State, the landowners are concerned about potential future maintenance of the bridge and did not want to be responsible for future maintenance of the bridge. They essentially said they are not able to enter into an MOU with a community group would the Town itself or the Conservation Commission, some governmental agency be willing to enter into an MOU that would cover future contingents maintenance of the bridge. That is what I am here to request. If there was an interest in entertaining this proposal, I would like to know what the concern would be then I could develop an MOU that would hopefully be acceptable to both the Town and the State.

Allen asks about fundraising to include money for maintenance as well and Goldman responds he thinks that would be a good idea and if that was a concern, they would certainly endeavor to do that.

Fairbrother responds that it has already been done; 5 or 6 years ago a couple locals had a design for a bridge and they were going to build this bridge and last I heard it got as far as being Mass. Fish & Wildlife finally approved the bridge, but fundraising was done at that time, and if I remember correctly they secured about \$3,000. We ought to inquire where that is.

Goldman: I think I know who that is, the problem with that bridge and the reason it never happened was it wasn't ADA compliant and there was another issue on another property that essentially spooked them and realized they had to be ADA compliant. We are ahead of the game. Abutments' are in really good shape so it is a very simple matter to drop in the superstructure on top of it.

It is suggested that Goldman submit an RDA to the Conservation Commission, speaking on his own and not for commission, Fairbrother does not see how it would be impacting any wetlands.

*Allen makes the motion to support the concept of an MOU between the Town of Montague and Mass. Division of Fisheries and Wildlife for building and the maintenance of the replacement walking bridge on the South end of the river conservation land contingent upon the Conservation Commissions okay and approval from Town Meeting for the Selectmen to negotiate*

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*and MOU with the understanding that local fundraising is involved in the construction and possibly maintenance as well. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother - Aye.*

**Lindsey Phillips, Request to use Peskeompskut Park on September 8, 2012**

*Allen makes the motion to approve the request of Lindsey Phillips and D.J. Towne, Jr. for the use of Peskeompskut Park on September 8, 2012 from 1:00 PM until 5:00 PM with a fee of \$25.00. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother - Aye*

**Town Administrators Report**

**Set Annual Town Meeting Date and Article submission date**

*Allen makes the motion to set the annual town meeting date for Saturday, May 5, 2012 at the Turners Falls High School Auditorium and submissions for monetary articles will be 4:00 PM on Thursday, February 23, 2012; non-monetary articles for 4:00 PM on Thursday, March 15, 2012, Special Town Meeting Articles will have a deadline of 4:00 PM on Thursday, April 12, 2012. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother - Aye*

**Zoning Board appointment**

*Allen makes the motion to appoint Ericka Almeida to the Zoning Board of Appeals for the unexpired term of Dennis Booska from January 19, 2012 until June 30, 2014. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye*

*Allen makes the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 PM. Seconded by Boutwell, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Boutwell – Aye, Fairbrother - Aye*