



**Town of Montgomery - P.O. Box 356**  
**Montgomery Center, VT 05471**  
**802-326-4719**  
[www.montgomeryvt.us](http://www.montgomeryvt.us)

Unapproved Minutes of the  
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
SELECTBOARD & WATER COMMISSION  
Monday, January 25<sup>th</sup>  
6:30pm

Full Recording of the meeting can be viewed or downloaded here:  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/Yyzz4DEMIcN1e13\\_2FF9iaCHiFqA4NaUyLA55gF-cjrw\\_U1QtrCltHU9rmvN4tZU.AbqISdHfLQ3dup7I](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/Yyzz4DEMIcN1e13_2FF9iaCHiFqA4NaUyLA55gF-cjrw_U1QtrCltHU9rmvN4tZU.AbqISdHfLQ3dup7I) Passcode: S=bC5L!J

Attendees: Charlie Hancock, Leanne Barnard, Jacob Racusin, Suzanne Dollois  
Absent: Mark Brouillette, Clerk: Genevieve Lodal-Guild  
Visitors: NWATV, Erin Kopacz, Sue Wilson, Larry Letourneau, Anita Woodward

Charlie called the meeting to order at 6:37pm.

1. Review and make any changes to the agenda
2. Review/approve minutes of January 18<sup>th</sup> meeting  
Jacob made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 18<sup>th</sup> meeting, Leanne seconded. Vote: 3-0, Aye. 1 abstain. Motion passed.
3. Town Meeting
  - a. Review and Approval of FY22 Municipal Budget (*Board Action*)  
Erin explained the minor changes made to the budget that were sent out earlier this week. Charlie said that big-picture, the budget looks good, and with a projected 30% decrease in the tax rate since last year. Charlie noted the Unreserved Funds number and a change in its calculation based on the Town's budget shifting to run on a fiscal year, with additional explanation from Erin around the projection.

Charlie explained some various points in the budget:

- Recording Fees in FY21 generated higher revenue than budgeted, due to more properties being transferred than in previous years.
- General Government Expense is slightly higher because of the ever-increasing costs of Workers' Comp and other Insurance.
- Town Office Payroll is lower, due mostly to changes in Health Insurance plans, even with this budget reflecting a cost of living increase (CPI+1).
- Debt Service reflects that the 2016 truck has been paid off.
- For Public Works, the paving of the PSB parking lot would come from the

Reserve Fund, Infrastructure Replacement.

- Bldg Capital Improvement Reserve Acct fund would provide the money to replace the Grange Hall furnace and begin renovation steps at the PSB re: Town Office.
- All of the FEMA expenditures from the 2019 Halloween storm came out of the Highway, 'Projects and Events' line. The town has received \$97k from FEMA and expect another \$10-20k before the close of the FY21 budget (therefore this is not reflected in FY22).
- The paving of West Hill and Hill West are also under the Highway, Projects and Events line in the FY21 budget.
- Highway Payroll savings is a bright spot, but Road Maintenance actuals from FY21 is high because we received a delayed bill from St. Onge for work completed a couple of years ago which was not planned for.
- Machinery Repair line item is an earmark for a potential new tractor for Highway Maintenance (Our current tractor is from 1976, is beginning to fail, and it's becoming difficult to find parts).

Jacob asked about the NW Special Investigations agency request. Charlie said we typically appropriate funding for agencies that offer an impact in our community and that the NWSI has helped with a few cases in town (letter will be in Town Report). Charlie added that Grateful Treads has also asked for funding, as they mostly rely on grants, and the agencies/organizations giving those grants look favorably upon groups who also receive some modicum of official municipal funding.

Sue and others gave kudos to Erin for all her work on preparing the budget this year!

Charlie mentioned that he will draft a letter explaining some of the budget items for the Town Report, as in years past (baked into the "State of the Town" report)

Charlie made a motion that the Board adopt the FY2022 budget of \$1,235,606, of which \$862,735 shall be raised by taxes and \$334,363 by non-tax revenues, Leanne seconded. Vote: 4-0, Aye. Motion passed. FY22 tax rate projected at \$0.5310 (*for reference FY21 rate was \$0.7624, representing a reduction of -\$0.2314*)

b. Review and Approval of Town Meeting Warning/Ballot (*Board Action*)

Charlie explained that this warning will look different, as it needs to legally match the ballot, per statute requirements. Additionally, there will be some items missing, like the election of a Moderator, because we're conducting the voting by Australian ballot and not conducting an in-person town meeting.

Regarding the Articles:

Article 1 - Elections of positions; As of today, all offices have consent of candidate forms submitted.

Article 2 - The treasurer is an appointed position, so this article allows that non-elected position to collect current taxes.

Article 3 – This article combines the budget into one votable item, as there is no ability to amend the budget in real time from the floor. It will be like the school budget: voted up or down.

Article 4 – This item has been here the past few years, with the same language.

Articles 5 to 7 – These articles relate to financing for the wastewater system. The Sewer Reserve Fund allows the Town to have a legally earmarked fund to support the proposed debt service for the wastewater system. The .0612 cents per \$100 of property value will help pay the debt obligation on this system. This is presented separately from the Municipal Budget described above for full transparency. The second of the financing options is a 1% local option tax to generate revenue to pay the debt service on the wastewater project, thereby allowing user rates to be financially affordable (projected to be around \$35k annually). \*full report on financing options study/alternatives selection to be available on *Thrives* website

Article 8 – This item regards whether Montgomery will choose to allow cannabis retailers ad/or integrated licensees in town, pursuant to a recent law requiring town's to "opt-in".

Article 9 – The Board decided to add the ATV petition article, per previous discussions.

Charlie recapped the history of the wastewater plan. From the passing of the Bond vote last July, the Board was given permission to pursue USDA RD offer and figure out financing. With the offer from the USDA in hand, we now understand potential debt obligations, and options presented herein look like the most feasible with lowest long-term risk. The streetscapes project is still on hold for now (re-engagement expected this spring).

Charlie opened the floor up for discussion and questions. Discussion ensued.

Jacob made a motion to adopt the Warning for Town Meeting 2021, Suzanne seconded. Vote: 4-0, Aye. Motion passed.

**The Information Meetings will take place on: Saturday, February 27th at 10am and Monday, March 1st at 6pm.**

4. Open Mail / Sign Orders / Administrative Matters

5. Review Action Items for Board Members

6. Adjourn

Jacob made a motion to adjourn, Leanne seconded. Vote: 4-0, Aye. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 7:42pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Genevieve Lodal-Guild, Clerk