

Montague Reporter
13 Feb 2014

land agent seeks
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oposed route, ac-
ministrator Frank
ultimately secure
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ne.

ect. He said there were going to be
public hearings – that those would
happen in a matter of two or three
weeks – but they needed these sur-
vey permissions. I think they need to
come before the town.”

The selectboard’s official response

Mike Nelson, attending via tele-
phone, “strongly” seconded the mo-
tion, and all three voted in its favor.

Then the meeting, attended by
a full room of potentially affected
landowners and concerned citizens,

see SURVEYORS page A6

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Rewriting the Book on Sludge

By JEFF SINGLETON

“They’re rewriting the book in Montague,” declared Grant Weaver, a water treatment engineer, speaking to the Montague Selectboard on February 10.

Weaver was referring to innovations made at the Montague Wastewater Treatment Plant that appear to have saved hundreds of thousands of dollars, and potentially avoided several million more in future capital costs.

Weaver, accompanied by WPCF director Bob Trombley and a number of the treatment plant staff, portrayed the Montague innovations as influencing national policy on wastewater treatment. Weaver noted that projects in “Montana, Tennessee and Virginia” are building on what’s going on in Montague.

According to Trombley it all began in 2008 with plant modifications designed to reduce the weight of sludge. The more water in the “solids,” which must be hauled out of the system at a cost, the higher the line item in the WPCF budget.

Plant employees, portrayed by Trombley as a committed and innovative group, began to notice a reduction in nitrogen levels of water being returned to the river.

“Things were going very

well,” he said, “but we were not really sure why.”

Enter Grant Weaver. Weaver is a biologist and engineer who in 2007 founded The Water Planet, a consulting firm located in New London, CT.

According to its website, the company “provides operational support to wastewater treatment facilities all across North America. We make facilities perform in ways not imagined when they were constructed... our specialties are nutrient removal – ammonia, nitrogen, and phosphorus – and sludge reduction.”

Weaver evaluated the plant and suggested more improvements within the scope of current equipment. He has also been promoting innovations apparently pioneered by the Montague plant nationwide.

A key issue Trombley

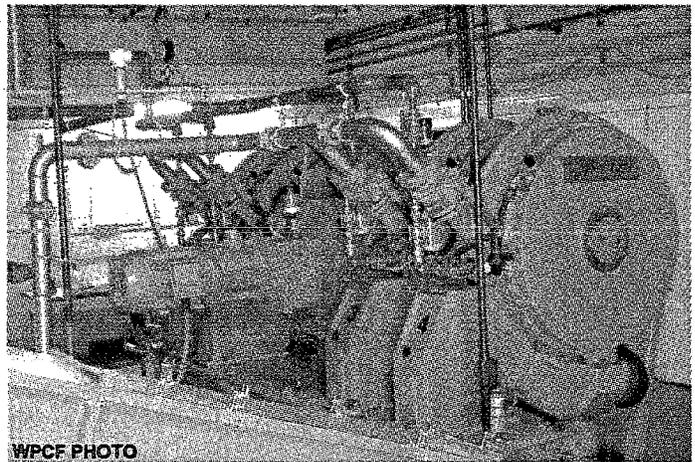
touched on at the meeting was the opportunity to avoid \$4 million in capital expenses that may be required to further reduce nutrients, mainly phosphorus and nitrogen, being poured into the river.

In 2011 the Montague plant purchased a Fournier rotary press, a sophisticated dewatering device, financed in part by a \$1 million dollar earmark placed in the federal budget by then Congressman John Olver.

Beginning in 2012, the plant began to bring in sludge from other towns for treatment, a revenue generating operation.

According to Trombley, such investments have produced \$75,000 in increased revenue and \$200,000 in savings so far this fiscal year.

Audience member Jeanne Golrick asked if sewer users see SLUDGE page A5



The plant’s million-dollar Fournier press dewateres sludge.

SLUDGE from page A1

would see a lowering of the rates: "This all sounds great," she said, "but town meeting members will probably ask about that."

Trombley stated that the savings could go into so-called "retained earnings" which would then be used to lower rates, or to moderate would-be increases.

However he also noted financial demands on the sewer system, including paying for the recent breakdown at the industrial park and the need to upgrade the town's pumping stations, made the latter scenario more likely.

Other Business

In other news, MJ Adams came to the Selectboard to obtain signatures on a variety of forms associated with Community Development Block Grants.

She also requested that \$3,500 be added to the grant application to design new lighting on Avenue A in Turners Falls. The funds will be used for a survey.

The board approved the request and signed the documents. Adams works for the Franklin Regional Housing Authority, which administers block grants for the town of Montague.

The board approved "common victualler" and entertainment licenses for Kali B's Wings & Things on Avenue A.

Other items the board addressed Monday were a survey access request by the Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company (see story, A1) and a letter suggesting changes in the Franklin Regional Transit Authority's governance structure (see story, A4).

It approved signing the letter, and declined to grant access without further information from



**NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD
Departments Submit Budget**

By **KATIE NOLAN**

On February 10, in the selectboard meeting room, police chief Chris Blair, fire chief Philip Wonka, highway, water and wastewater director Paul Prest, and chief wastewater operator Pete Sanders presented their fiscal year 2015 departmental budget requests.

Meanwhile, in the basement meeting room, these department heads and representatives of other departments answered finance committee questions about FY'15 budget requests.

The departmental budgets presented to the board are generally

level-funded with exception of costs to salaries.

The selectboard - Eugene Kleret Sullivan (chairman) was out sick leaning toward a

However, the moderator Tom back on the opinion before the board

The board has adopting a merit system, but because no formal policy merit-based system based only on C

**TURNERS FALLS FIRE DISTRICT
NOMINATION PAPERS AVAILABLE**

Nomination papers for the annual Turners Falls Fire District election are now available to all district residents from the District Office located at 226 Millers Falls Road until Friday, March 4.

Papers must be returned no later than Tuesday, March 8. The District Office is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.

All potential candidates need to obtain 30 signatures from registered voters of the Turners Falls Fire District.

* Announcement in last week's paper said April 26 - p

- Offices are as follows:
 - District Clerk
 - Moderator
 - Treasurer
 - Prudential Commission
 - Water Commissioner
- All are for a 3-year term.

The annual election held on Tuesday polls will open at 7 am.

District residents must register to vote with the Town Clerk's Office at the Town Hall, 171 Millers Falls.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION - HIGHWAYS

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING