

**Montague Township Board of Education Meeting  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
March 22, 2021  
6:30 pm**

**I. Call to Order 6:31pm**

**II. Roll Call**

	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Denise Bogle, Vice President	X	
Dale Bouma	X	
Paul Brislin	X	
Danielle Christmann	X	
Barbara Holstein, President	X	
Glen Plotsky		X
Jennifer VanNess		X

Others Present:

- Timothy Capone - Chief School Administrator
- Aldijana Reckovic - Board Secretary
- Jeffery Caccese - Board Attorney - remote

**III. Flag Salute**

**IV. The mission of the Montague Township School District is to provide the best educational experience and opportunities resources allow, in order to realize the potential of every child.**

**V. In accordance with the New Jersey Sunshine Law, a legal notice of this meeting has been posted on the official bulletin board at the school and advertised in the New Jersey Herald and the Sunday New Jersey Herald.**

**VI. Announcement of Executive Session**

**VII. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Montague Township Board of Education recess and proceed to executive session to discuss personnel matters and conduct board attorney interviews. Action may or may not be taken.**

Motion to open Executive Session at 6:33pm  
Motion Paul Brislin 2<sup>nd</sup> Dale Bouma  
Voice vote: All in Favor

Motion to close Executive Session at 9:44pm  
Motion Paul Brislin 2<sup>nd</sup> Dale Bouma  
Voice vote: All in Favor

Motion to reopen Regular Meeting at 9:45pm  
Motion Paul Brislin 2<sup>nd</sup> Danielle Christmann  
Voice vote: All in Favor

### **VIII. CSA Report**

- Mr. Capone stated, at this point in time, Sussex County has the highest infection rate in New Jersey for Covid. Montague's, current infection rate exceeds that of Sussex County. Being we had a number of personnel issues for a number of different reasons. The choice was made for the best interests of the health and safety of our students and staff to switch to all remote until it's reasonable to come back in-person.
- With the budget presentation tonight, we have two items to consider one being we were just made aware of a special education placement that's obviously not in the budget. Also, there is an opportunity to offer food services over the summer, that would require us to hire or maintain staff over the summer months. Being that's not something that has been a current practice, these are two things to consider, as you're going through the budget hearing on whether or not you want to make adjustments based on those two items.
- Mr. Capone: In general, we've seen a number of comments that are made in regard to, processes, and not understanding school processes. It goes back to trying to make sure that you're using a scientific method that you are identifying and saying, we collect all of the information, and then analyze that information to make decisions. As I described with Covid, that you do that with all decisions, you don't start with a premise, and then try and find information to support it. Trying to make sure that we look at it objectively that we then collect the information, and then use that information to make this decision is very different than having a decision and then cherry picking information to support. I think that'll be something we have some statistics that we'll be looking at moving forward as far as not only the performance, but services provided.

### **IX. SBA Report**

- Montague Township Business Administrator Erkan Gumustekin presented the 2021/2022 fiscal year budget.
- Mr. Gumustekin asked if any members of the board had any questions.
- Ms. Holstein stated once we move the money into cap reserve the money stays in cap reserve for those specific projects?
  - Mr. Gumustekin responded yes that's the purpose.
- Mr. Brislin stated , I know you've commented on it. But again, could you be kind enough to give us the details as to why the administration line is increasing by 9%? When a lot of the other line items are decreasing
  - Mr. Gumustekin responded this is the for administration, which is the BA, CSA, BSA, along with the IT that all gets charged from that account line, the administration line.

### **X. Correspondence**

- Ms. Holstein: there was correspondence from a parent due to confidentiality reasons, I will not be reading this correspondence and it was directed to Mr. Capone.

**XI. Approval of Minutes**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the regular minutes and executive minutes of March 1, 2021 and March 8, 2021.

- **Minutes of March 1, 2021**

**Moved: Dale Bouma**

**Seconded: Denise Bogle**

<b>Roll Call</b>	Bogle	Bouma	Brislin	Christmann	Holstein	Plotsky	VanNess	<b>Total</b>
<b>YES</b>	X			X	X			3
<b>NO</b>								
<b>ABSTAIN</b>		X	X					2
<b>ABSENT</b>						X	X	2

- **Minutes of March 8, 2021**

**Moved: Dale Bouma**

**Seconded: Denise Bogle**

<b>Roll Call</b>	Bogle	Bouma	Brislin	Christmann	Holstein	Plotsky	VanNess	<b>Total</b>
<b>YES</b>	X		X	X	X			4
<b>NO</b>								
<b>ABSTAIN</b>		X						1
<b>ABSENT</b>						X	X	2

**BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the executive minutes of February 8, 2021.

- **Ms. Bogle motioned to table**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Dale Bouma**

<b>Roll Call</b>	Bogle	Bouma	Brislin	Christmann	Holstein	Plotsky	VanNess	<b>Total</b>
<b>YES</b>	X	X	X	X	X			5
<b>NO</b>								
<b>ABSTAIN</b>								
<b>ABSENT</b>						X	X	2

**XII. Public Session – Agenda Items**

**Public comment is invited on all matters pertaining to the school district. All participants shall be permitted four (4) minutes to speak and shall state their name, place of residence, and group affiliation, if appropriate.**

**Board meetings are a meeting of the Board conducted in public, NOT a meeting of the public conducted in the presence of the Board.**

**The Board uses the public comment period as an opportunity to listen to citizen concerns, but please be aware that not all issues brought to a board meeting will be resolved this evening; rather, the Board will, in appropriate cases, delegate the authority to investigate the matter to the Superintendent or his designee.**

**Please let the record reflect that the BOE does not endorse your comments nor will the BOE be held liable for comments you make about a staff member, or other person, which the staff member, or other person, may consider defamatory and/or libelous, as that individual retains all rights to pursue any legal remedies against you.**

**Motion to open public comment at 10:16pm**

Motion Paul Brislin 2<sup>nd</sup> Denise Bogle

Voice vote: All in Favor

○ **Krista Mikulski 2 Elm Court**

We need to understand why parents think that Charter has more to offer than Montague School. I'm wondering if the parking lot is worth spending \$500,000 on a parking lot that doesn't seem to have an issue any longer.

○ **Stephanie Guida 105 Autumn Dr**

In light of two or three more years of state aid cuts, it would be wise to make sure that we aren't overspending or doing big projects.

Can someone explain the charter tuition, my understanding is that the charter school gets 90% of the state funding per child and we keep, 10%.

○ **Candace Stout Spook Ridge Rd**

Questions regarding the budget

➤ Mr. Capone, and Mr. Gumustekin provided answers to all questions that were asked.

➤ Ms. Bogle stated the website that we have has been very well done and brought up to date, that could be another area where possibly our CSA could promote the budget.

**Motion to close public comment at 10:34pm**

Motion Dale Bouma 2<sup>nd</sup> Danielle Christmann

Voice vote: All in Favor

**F-1 BE IT RESOLVED** that the Montague Board of Education approve final 2021-2022 fiscal year school budget and approve the final submission of the 2021/2022 fiscal year school budget to the Sussex County Executive Superintendent of Schools for approval as follows:

<u>EXPENDITURES</u>		<u>REVENUE</u>	
General Current Expense	\$ 9,107,848.00	<u>General Fund</u>	
Capital Outlay	\$ 2,275,585.00	Local Tax Levy	\$ 6,672,446.00
Capital Outlay		Tuition Reserve	\$ 132,659.00
Equipment	\$ 35,750.00	Fund Balance	\$ 74,642.00
Special Revenue Fund	\$ 1,461,437.00	Federal Impact Aid	\$ 153,367.00
		Maintenance Interest	\$ 120.00
		Capital Reserve Interest	\$ 700.00
		Capital Reserve	
		Withdrawal	\$ 2,275,585.00
		State Aid	\$ 2,109,664.00
		Total General Fund:	\$ 11,419,183.00
Total Expenditures	<u>\$ 12,880,620.00</u>	<u>Special Revenue Fund</u>	\$ 1,461,437.00
		Total Revenue	\$ 12,880,620.00

**BE IT RESOLVED** that Montague Board of Education authorize the utilization of Unassigned Fund Balance as of June 30, 2020, in the amount of \$74,642 to the 2021/2022 fiscal year budget,

**BE IT RESOLVED** that Montague Board of Education authorize the utilization of Partial Federal Impact Aid in the amount of \$153,367.00 to the 2021/2022 fiscal year budget,

**BE IT RESOLVED** that Montague Board of Education authorize the utilization of Tuition Reserve in the amount of \$132,659.00 to the 2021/2022 fiscal year budget,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the following GENERAL FUND tax levy be approved to support the 2021-2022 budgets: General Fund Tax Levy \$6,672,446.00

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Montague Board of Education Approves the following capital project for the 2021-2022 school year.

- HVAC: \$1,600,000.00
- PARKING LOT: \$486,700.00
- INTERIOR LIGHTING: \$510,200.00
- ARCHITECTURAL /ENGINEERING SERVICES: \$117,800
- Capital Reserve Account Withdrawal**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Montague Board of Education requests the approval of a capital reserve withdrawal in the amount of \$2,275,585. The District intends to utilize these funds for the HVAC, Parking lot, Interior Lighting and Architectural /engineering

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Montague Board of Education requests the approval for the utilize the CRRSA- ESSER II: \$439,115 grant to offset some of the HVAC project cost.

**WHEREAS** the Montague Board of Education policy NJAC 6A:23A -7.3, provides that the Board of Education shall establish in the annual school budget a maximum expenditure amount that may be allotted for such travel and expense reimbursement for the 2021-2022 school year.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Montague Board of Education hereby establishes the school district travel maximum for the 2021/2022 school year at the sum of \$15,000,00 and

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the School Business Administrator shall track and record these costs to ensure that the maximum amount is not exceeded.

### Discussion

- Mr. Brislin stated, we should put off for a year the parking lot, based on the questioning from Krista and from Stephanie.
- Ms. Holstein stated just because we've identified this \$486,700 for the parking lot in this budget, that would have to come before the board again for approval to spend. I'm asking it could be used on a different project correct?
  - Mr. Caccese stated I think you're approving this money for the parking lot. However, it doesn't obligate you to go forward with the project. If circumstances changes, you don't necessarily have to go forward with the project. The question I would pose to the business administrator is, if you allot this money for the parking lot, then decide that you don't want to go forward with a project. What happens with that money? Can you spend it this year on something else? Because it's a capital project. I think that's really what we're trying to establish.
  - Mr. Gumustekin responded, if you don't want to utilize the money that will stay in our capital money.
  - Mr. Capone stated this has been in the long range facility plan for a while it was not put in here as related to drop off. This is something that we've seen because of increased enrollment, because of when we have activities here, there's not enough parking. When we're talking about capital improvements, this is a significant one.
- Ms. Holstein stated, I agree with Mr. Capone we have a budget that's been presented with this project in it with a negative .68% decrease in our tax levy. We have the money to cover this, I am very satisfied with the budget as it's presented.

**Moved: Dale Bouma**

**Seconded: Danielle Christman**

Roll Call	Bogle	Bouma	Brislin	Christmann	Holstein	Plotsky	VanNess	Total
YES	X	X	X	X	X			5
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT						X	X	2

**F-2 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the submission of Coronavirus Response and Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 (CRRSA)- Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER II) grant application for **Project Period: 3/13/2020 - 9/30/2023** and acceptance of the grant award.

CRRSA- ESSER II: \$439,115  
 Learning Acceleration: \$28,180  
 Mental Health: \$45,000

**Moved: Dale Bouma**

**Seconded: Paul Brislin**

Roll Call	Bogle	Bouma	Brislin	Christmann	Holstein	Plotsky	VanNess	Total
YES	X	X	X	X	X			5
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT						X	X	2

**F-3 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent that Montague Board of Education requests the approval of a capital reserve withdrawal in the amount of \$135,000.00 for the 2020-2021 school year. The District intends to utilize these find to pay Parette Somjen Architects, LLC to design, submit, prepare bidding documents, solicit for bids, and perform contract administration services related to the HVAC Upgrades at Montague Township School.

**Moved: Dale Bouma**

**Seconded: Danielle Christmann**

Roll Call	Bogle	Bouma	Brislin	Christmann	Holstein	Plotsky	VanNess	Total
YES	X	X	X	X	X			5
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT						X	X	2

**F-4 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve March 2,2021 thru March 22 ,2021 - Bill List attached and listed below:

Fund 10	\$74,793.01
Fund 11	\$456,437.04
Fund20	\$24,383.00
Fund 60	\$1,346.00
Grand Total	\$556,959.05

**Moved: Dale Bouma**

**Seconded: Danielle Christmann**

Roll Call	Bogle	Bouma	Brislin	Christmann	Holstein	Plotsky	VanNess	Total
YES	X	X	X	X	X			5
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT						X	X	2

**F-5 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Board of Education approve the Board Secretary’s Report (A-148) for the month of January 2021.

**Moved: Dale Bouma**

**Seconded: Paul Brislin**

Roll Call	Bogle	Bouma	Brislin	Christmann	Holstein	Plotsky	VanNess	Total
YES	X	X	X	X	X			5
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT						X	X	2

**F-6 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Board of Education approve the Treasurer of School Monies Report (A-149) for the month of January 2021.

**Moved: Dale Bouma**

**Seconded: Danielle Christmann**

Roll Call	Bogle	Bouma	Brislin	Christmann	Holstein	Plotsky	VanNess	Total
YES	X	X	X	X	X			5
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT						X	X	2

**F-7 BE IT RESOLVED**, that pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-2.11(c) 3, the Board of Education certify that as of January 31, 2021, after review of the Secretary’s monthly financial reports for January 31, 2021 (appropriations section), and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials, Montague BOE is in compliance with N.J.A.C 6A:23-2.11 (c) 4 and shall certify in the minutes of the Board each month that no major account or fund has been over expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16:10(b) and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district’s financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.



**Moved: Dale Bouma**

**Seconded: Denise Bogle**

Roll Call	Bogle	Bouma	Brislin	Christmann	Holstein	Plotsky	VanNess	Total
YES	X	X	X	X	X			5
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT						X	X	2

**F-8 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Board of Education approve the attached list of line-item transfers effective January 31, 2021.

**Moved: Dale Bouma**

**Seconded: Danielle Christmann**

Roll Call	Bogle	Bouma	Brislin	Christmann	Holstein	Plotsky	VanNess	Total
YES	X	X	X	X	X			5
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT						X	X	2

- **Addendum Items A-1 - P-1**

**A-1 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the following student contract: 13-2020-2021.

**Moved: Dale Bouma**

**Seconded: Paul Brislin**

Roll Call	Bogle	Bouma	Brislin	Christmann	Holstein	Plotsky	VanNess	Total
YES	X	X	X	X	X			5
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT						X	X	2

**Amended A-2 - A-3**

**A-2 BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Montague Township Board Of Education approve the law firm for Board Solicitor Cleary|Giacobbe|Alfieri|Jacobs LLC **effective as of March 23, 2021**.

**Moved: Dale Bouma**

**Seconded: Danielle Christmann**

Roll Call	Bogle	Bouma	Brislin	Christmann	Holstein	Plotsky	VanNess	Total
YES	X	X	X	X	X			5
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT						X	X	2

**A-3 BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the law firm for Board Attorney (Special Counsel) Comegno law group **effective as of March 23, 2021**

**Moved: Dale Bouma**

**Seconded: Paul Brislin**

Roll Call	Bogle	Bouma	Brislin	Christmann	Holstein	Plotsky	VanNess	Total
<b>YES</b>	X	X	X	X	X			5
<b>NO</b>								
<b>ABSTAIN</b>								
<b>ABSENT</b>						X	X	2

**P-1 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve staff member #27529312 for a paid extended leave of absence according to policy # 4151.9/4251.9 with dates to be determined.

**Moved: Dale Bouma**

**Seconded: Danielle Christmann**

Roll Call	Bogle	Bouma	Brislin	Christmann	Holstein	Plotsky	VanNess	Total
<b>YES</b>	X	X	X	X	X			5
<b>NO</b>								
<b>ABSTAIN</b>								
<b>ABSENT</b>						X	X	2

- Ms. Holstein stated, I proudly voted yes for this item.

**XIII. Public Session**

**Public comment is invited on all matters pertaining to the school district. All participants shall be permitted four (4) minutes to speak and shall state their name, place of residence, and group affiliation, if appropriate.**

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**Motion to open public comment at 11:01pm**

Motion Dale Bouma 2<sup>nd</sup> Danielle Christmann

Voice vote: All in Favor

- Hearing no comments

**Motion to close public comment at 11:01pm**

Motion Paul Brislin 2<sup>nd</sup> Dale Bouma

Voice vote : All in Favor

**XVI. Unfinished Business**

- None

**XVII. New Business**

- None

**XVIII. Executive Session if necessary:**

**BE IT RESOLVED, that the Montague Township Board of Education recess and proceed to executive session to discuss personnel matters and legal issues. Action may or may not be taken.**

**Motion to open Executive Session at 11:02pm**

Motion Dale Bouma 2<sup>nd</sup> Danielle Christmann

Voice vote: All in Favor

**Motion to close Executive Session at 11:26pm**

Motion Dale Bouma 2<sup>nd</sup> Paul Brislin

Voice vote : All in Favor

**Motion to reopen Regular Meeting at 11:26pm**

Motion Dale Bouma 2<sup>nd</sup> Danielle Christmann

Voice vote: All in Favor

**XIX. Adjournment Motion Dale Bouma**

2<sup>nd</sup> Denise Bogle

Voice vote: All in Favor

Time of Adjournment: 11:27pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Aldijana Reckovic  
Board Secretary