

**Montague Township Board of Education Meeting
Regular Meeting Minutes
December 14, 2022**

1. CALL TO ORDER at 6:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

	Present	Absent
Barbara Holstein, President	x	
Paul Brislin, Vice President	x	
Andree Campbell	x	
Danielle Christmann	x	
Tasha DeGeorge	X (arrived at 7PM w notice)	
Michael Zernhelt	x	

Others Present:

	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
James Andriac - Acting CSA	X	_____
Carl Morelli, SBA/BS	X	_____
Joseph Garcia, Esq.	X	_____
John Comengo, Esq. (via zoom)	X for executive session only	

3. FLAG SALUTE - FOLLOWED BY A MOMENT OF SILENCE OR PRAYER - Ms. Holstein would like to pay respect to Kaleb Barretto who unexpectedly passed away.

4. MISSION STATEMENT - The mission of the Montague Township School District is to provide the best educational experience and opportunities to realize the potential of every child.

5. LEGAL NOTICE - 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.

6. PRESENTATIONS

- **Emily Weiss, 3rd grade teacher, said a few words about being Teacher of the Year**
- **Montague Spotlight: Highlighting the Positives by Brent Runne and Megan McElhaney**
 - **Megam McElhaney spoke about the Preschool program and what activities have been happening. A 4th classroom has been opened. Thanked the BOE, PreK Staff, Mr. Andriac and PreK parents for all they do.**
 - **Mr. Runne provided a very detailed summary of the activities that have been happening in the school and classrooms. Also listed all of the afterschool activities that have been and are being provided to the students.**
- **Performance by the Bell Choir**

7. ANNOUNCEMENT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR ONE LEGAL ITEM ONLY - ACTION WILL BE TAKEN

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 7:05 p.m.
Motion Paul Brislin 2nd Danielle Christmann Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to close Executive Session at 7:19 p.m.
Motion Michael Zernhelt 2nd Andree Campbell Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to reopen Regular Meeting at 7:19 p.m.
Motion Danielle Christmann 2nd Michael Zernhelt Voice Vote: All in Favor

8. Presentation of Long Range Facilities Plan Presentation by DMR Architects - Before DMR's presentation, Carl Morelli spoke about the Long Range Facilities Plan update which is basically a wish list of items that are necessary and what we would like to do for our building. It comprises items we would like to start immediately and goes into the future of items that we need for the future. This plan needs to be submitted to the State ahead of time so that permits will not be denied. There are about 9 projects. Estimates are extremely high because if you go over estimates you have to update the plan again. Dollar amounts are not up for approval. The State requires estimates to be on the plan.

Henry Ossi from DMR Architects presented the Long Range Facilities Plan. As a firm they do the planning and design work and carry through the construction phase of the project and make sure the project gets built for plan. Anything they recommend will need to be Board approved first. As part of the process, they update the LRFP. Looked at increasing enrollment (adding classroom space, modifying areas in the building, identifying any building deficiencies along the way). Mr. Ossi made a recommendation for electrical service upgrade which will facilitate air conditioning in the building. Tonight the BOE will be approving a very preliminary outlook for the school's future. The approved resolution will be submitted and then the LRFP can begin.

Ms. Holstein asked if he knew Mr. Miller from Green and what were some of the projects? Mr. Ossi answered yes and some projects were HVAC upgrades, roof top units, fans, roofing projects.

Ms. Holstein asked if the dollar amounts include the design plan and construction? Mr. Ossi said yes but again they are estimates.

Ms. Holstein inquired about the PreK program states on the front page to begin in 2024. They would like it to start in 2023. Will there be a problem if it is submitted with 2024 on it? Mr. Ossi said no. You can move the dates around.

Ms. Holstein asked how often are LRF plans updated? Mr. Ossi said typically every 5 years they should be updated. Mr. Zernhelt asked if we can update sooner than 5 years? Mr. Ossi said yes. Ms. Holstein said that it costs money every time you update it. Mr. Morelli asked if they can just add an item if it comes up? Mr. Ossi said yes. The long range plan states that we have 240 students wherein as of November we have 305 students. This means that the school's needs have increased. Ms. Holstein is happy to get the Long Range Facility Plan in place.

9. ANNOUNCEMENT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR AGENDA ITEMS/LEGAL/PERSONAL QUESTIONS (if needed)

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 7:35 p.m.

Motion Paul Brislin 2nd Michael Zernhelt Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to close Executive Session at 7:49 p.m.

Motion Andree Campbell 2nd Michael Zernhelt Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to reopen Regular Meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Motion Tasha DeGeorge 2nd Danielle Christmann Voice Vote: All in Favor

10. CSA REPORT - James Andriac - Thank you to the entire board for everything you do. Congratulations to Emily Weiss for Teacher of the Year and Darah Pinzon for Educational

11. SBA REPORT - Carl Morelli - Mr. Morelli thanked Mr. Ossi for his presentation tonight. Once it is approved tonight he will make the changes to the dates from 2024 to 2023 and will then submit it to the State. Once the plan is approved by the State it will be posted on our school website. From our auditors, for our fiscal year of 2021-22 which closed out this past June, we will be showing an excess surplus of \$1,046,110.00. That is a good amount of money. Some background on how this is determined, historically, going back to the audit of 2018-19 and audit of 2019-20. The excess surplus for the 2018-19SY was \$483,000.00 and that historically is where we should be for a district this size, single building, budget of \$10M to \$12M. In fiscal year 2020-21, our excess surplus was \$1,655,040.00 more than triple what it should be and the reason for that is because the District received COVID money which was a one time deal that the State/Federal government gave out to upgrade facilities due to the COVID pandemic. So again in 2021, three times the amount was the excess surplus. From that amount, \$460,000 was put into excess surplus. Excess surplus means you can move it forward into the next budget year. \$154,000 was put into maintenance reserves and \$1,040,837.00 went into capital reserves. Capital reserves is an account that can only be used for improvements on the facilities. You cannot take any money out of it to pay for any other expenditures or anything else in the budget, meaning salaries, bills, field trips. It can only be used for capital improvements. So when money goes into capital reserves, it is being locked up to only be used for the facility. You can't say you are going to put money in there and use it for something else. It is an important part of the budget and it is very important for BOE members to understand that when that money goes into that account, it can only be used for the facility. Right now 2021-22, a little over a million dollars. It is my best guesstimate and opinion, that we will be back down to the historic amount of \$500,000.00. It means that the District is fortunate to have this money and it should be analyzed and a lot of due diligence should be put into how it is spent on the facility, on the

improvements, on the future improvements. This money needs to last a while. Once the report is presented to me, I will pass it on to the BOE members.

Ms. Holstein asked what the 2019-2020 surplus was again and Mr. Morelli stated that in 2018-19, 2019-2020 was each \$483,000. Ms. Holstein asked if the same amount was put into excess surplus and in capital reserves. Mr. Morelli said no, that out of the excess surplus of \$483,000 the auditors said that for 2018-19, the excess surplus was \$133,000 and \$350,000 went into capital reserves. Mr. Morelli said that if he was involved in it out of the \$483,000, he would have put 1/3 into capital reserves, 1/3 into maintenance reserves, because you can use maintenance money differently that capital reserves money and the rest into the future budget.

Mr. Brislin asked that in respect to the \$1,046,000.00 excess surplus, can part of that money be applied to our LRFP update? Mr. Morelli stated that yes, by putting the money into the capital reserve account, you can use the money for the long range facility plan. Any money going into the capital reserve account can only be used for the building facilities. The long range plan is for the building facility.

12. BOARD PRESIDENT’S REPORT - Barbara Holstein looked into the information that she had seen regarding going trying to do extended school years and it doesn’t seem to have much traction and will keep an eye on it. She stated that she is very proud to be board president and working together with everyone, we have unleashed all of these wonderful student classroom enrichments and afterschool programs. The creativity in our school district is contagious. People need to join in on our meetings. Come and see Mr. Andriac the hour before the BOE meetings. Thanked Mr. Runne and Ms. McElhaney for coming in tonight.

13. CORRESPONDENCE - Barbara Holstein read a letter from Gayle Carrick, Ed.D., stating that she is authorizing the appointment of Christopher Bell to the Montague Board of Education.

14. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the Regular Meeting Minutes and the Executive Minutes of November 9, 2022.

Moved: Paul Brislin

Seconded: Tasha DeGeorge

Roll Call	Brislin	Campbell	Christmann	DeGeorge	Holstein	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x	x	x	6
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT							

BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the Regular Meeting Minutes and the Executive Minutes of the November 30, 2022 Special Meeting.

Moved: Andree Campbell Seconded: Tasha DeGeorge

Roll Call	Brislin	Campbell	Christmann	DeGeorge	Holstein	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x	x	x	6
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT							

15. 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. The board uses the public comment 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.

Motion to open Public Comment at 8:06 p.m.

Motion Michael Zernhelt 2nd Andree Campbell Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to close Public Comment at 8:08 p.m.

Motion Paul Brislin 2nd Michael Zernhelt Voice Vote: All in Favor

16. FINANCE AND INSURANCE

F-1 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the November 10, 2022 through December 14, 2022 - Bill List is listed below:

Fund 10	\$ 75,317.60
Fund 11	\$ 887,652.56
Fund 12	\$ 6,748.00
Fund 20	\$ 60,118.15
Fund 60	\$ 3,436.66
Fund 61	\$ 2,060.00
Grand Total	\$1,035,333.57

Moved: Tasha DeGeorge Seconded: Andree Campbell

Roll Call	Brislin	Campbell	Christmann	DeGeorge	Holstein	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x	x	x	6
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT							

17. PERSONNEL

Motion made by Barbara Holstein made a motion to do a consent agenda on items P-1 to P-6, seconded by Michael Zernhelt.

Discussion: Mr. Zernhelt said he was excited to see that the archery club is on the agenda. Mr. Andriac stated that both of the gym teachers are now certified. Mr. Zernhelt said that Silver Birch Archery in PA does a lot with schools. Ms. Holstein stated that we used to have archery with Ms. Wright and the kids loved it and it blends well with our community. She is thrilled to have it come back. Ms. Holstein stated that regarding to P2, just wanted to miss the person well and that we will miss you.

P-1 BE IT RESOLVED, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **JAMES ANDRIAC**, as the Principal and Acting Superintendent for the period of January 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023 at an annual salary of \$135,000, per approval by the County Superintendent and subject to approval of the Commissioner.

P-2 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education accepts the early retirement of **EMPLOYEE #5372309**, effective January 31, 2023.

P-3 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education appoint **MICHAEL D'AMORE** as the School Safety Specialist, without any increase to salary, for the 2022-2023 school year.

P-4 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education, approve to extend the Contract of **EMILY TATTERSALL**, Teacher, until June 30, 2023. (Her current contract ends February 28, 2023).

P-5 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **TRACY EDWARDS** as TREP\$ club advisor with a \$1,000 stipend per the MEA Agreement for the 2022-23 school year.

P-6 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the creation of the Archery Club.

Moved: Barbara Holstein

Seconded: Michael Zernhelt

Roll Call	Brislin	Campbell	Christmann	DeGeorge	Holstein	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x	x	x	6
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT							

18. BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

Barbara Holstein moved to do a consent agenda for items BG-1, BG-2 and BG-3

Moved: Paul Brislin Seconded: Michael Zernhelt

Discussion: Ms. Holstein is very impressed with the Long Range Facility Plan. It does cover all the things we have on the white board and it sets us off with a positive path. You don't have to pull a permit to paint the gym. Ms. Holstein is glad the curtains in the gym have been taken down.

BG-1 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the following resolution:

RESOLUTION REGARDING LONG RANGE FACILITY PLAN SUBMISSION FOR THE MONTAGUE TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT TO THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

WHEREAS, the Montague Township School District recognizes the New Jersey Department of Education requirement to address five-year reporting requirements for their Long Range Facility Plan per the Educational Facilities Construction and Financing Act, P.L. 2000, c. 72 (C.18A:7G-4) amended by P.L. 2007, c. 137; and

WHEREAS, the Montague Township School District hired DMR Architects to fulfill Long Range Facility Plan reporting requirements as mentioned above;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, in accordance with New Jersey Department of Education requirements, Montague Township School District approves the submission of the Montague Township School District Long Range Facility Plan to the New Jersey Department of Education for a 'Major' amendment to satisfy five-year reporting requirements.

BG-2 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the PTA's Request for Use of Facilities or Grounds for the following: Cafeteria, gymnasium and bathroom on Friday, February 10, 2023, 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. for their Sweetheart Dance for grades PreK-4 (with a snow date of February 24, 2023 - 4PM to 10PM).

BG-3 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the MEA's Request for Use of Facilities or Grounds for the following: Gymnasium and bathroom on Friday, March 31, 2023, 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. for their MEA PRIDE Carnival event.

Roll Call	Brislin	Campbell	Christmann	DeGeorge	Holstein	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x	x	x	6
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT							

19. TRANSPORTATION

T-1 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education accept the Montague Township School - School Bus Emergency Evacuation Drill Report for dated November 17, 2022 for Route #s: M1, M2, M3, M4 & M5 documenting the following information:

Time of Drill	Location	People Overseeing Drill	Other Info
9:00 a.m.	Front of building along sidewalk	James Andriac, Danielle Conklin, Michael D'Amore & Sussex County Sheriff Dept.	All grades: PreK-8th - Rear door evacuation drill - 1st evacuation drill of the 2022-23SY

Moved: Tasha DeGeorge Seconded: Andree Campbell:

Roll Call	Brislin	Campbell	Christmann	DeGeorge	Holstein	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x	x	x	6
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT							

20. ADMINISTRATION

A-1 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the ten (10) year Sending/Receiving Agreement with High Point Regional Board of Education and the Montague Township Board of Education commencing with the 2022-2023 school year and running through the 2031-2032 school year.

Moved: Barbara Holstein Seconded: Tasha DeGeorge Discussion: Ms. Holstein said that this is something she is very proud to put forth to the Board and the public. Our children are doing very well at HP. The enrollment numbers are going up. We are close to 6% or 7% of the enrollment at HP which means that we can have a voting seat on the Board when we reach 10% per State statute. There are some great career programs at HP.

Roll Call	Brislin	Campbell	Christmann	DeGeorge	Holstein	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x	x	x	6
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT							

A-2 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the following January 2023 to December 2023 Board of Education hybrid meeting schedule.

WORKSHOP MEETINGS (Action may be taken if needed)	REGULAR BOE MEETINGS
January 11, 2023	January 25, 2023
February 8, 2023	February 22, 2023
March 8, 2023 (Approval of Tentative Budget) (Tentative)	March 22, 2023 Public Budget Hearing (Tentative)
April 5, 2023	April 26, 2023
May 4, 2023 (Reorganization Meeting)	May 24, 2023
June 14, 2023	June 28, 2023
July 12, 2023	July 26, 2023
August 9, 2023	August 23, 2023
September 13, 2023	September 27, 2023
October 11, 2023	October 25, 2023
November 8, 2023	November 29, 2023
December 13, 2023	

Discussion: Mr. Brislin asked about the April dates. April 5th is the first Wednesday of the month and May 4th is the first Thursday in May? Why are we switching the dates to the first Wednesday? Ms. Holstein stated the May 4th meeting was probably picked due to the April 25th election and the timeframe we have to have the ReOrganization Meeting within so many days of the election. Ms. Holstein asked if we could make April 5th to April 12th. Mr. Brislin asked if May 4th can be changed to May 3rd? Ms. Holstein said May should be May 10 and May 24. Mr. Morelli said May 10th would probably put us out of the amount of days for ReOrg Mtg. Mr. Brislin asked if we could have the ReOrg Meeting on April 26th. Ms. Holstein said that she doesn't believe the results will be certified by then. She doesn't think May 10th will be a problem so would like to change May 3, 2023 to May 10, 2023 and if we have to change the dates we will. Mr. Andriac stated that April 12, 2023 is during the Easter break. Ms. Holstein said in the worst case they can cancel it. Ms. Holstein stated that we have the April 26th meeting and if we do not have certified election results by April 26th then we will call a Special Meeting for a ReOrg Meeting. Ms. Holstein stated that we will have April 12, 2023, April 26, 2023, and will add in the ReOrg Meeting on May 3, 2023. The ReOrg Meeting is just for the ReOrg. No business can take place. May 10, 2023 will be when business can take place.

Mr. Brislin made a motion to revise A-2 to read that we will be meeting for a regularly scheduled meeting on April 12, 2023 changed from April 5, 2023 and then the May 4, 2023 date has been changed to May 10, 2023 and for the ReOrg Meeting we are adding Wednesday, May 3, 2023. Seconded by Michael Zernhelt

Roll Call	Brislin	Campbell	Christmann	DeGeorge	Holstein	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x	x	x	6
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT							

21. LIAISON REPORTS

- High Point - Tasha DeGeorge - Was present at the November 22, 2022 meeting when our Contract was approved. HP had their 8th grade tours and had their senior formal. They finished Fill the Bus today (12/14/22). Basketball starts December 15 with the girls playing a Pretty in Pink game on January 14, 2023. Open house for parents and students on January 5, 2023. There is no December meeting. Mr. Andriac said that the HP chorus came to our school today and gave a holiday presentation to our students. Ms. Holstein was happy to hear that the HP Choir came to the school today. Encouraging everyone in Montague to attend the Pretty In Pink game. It was very meaningful to be at the November 22, 2022 meeting with Tasha and Andree Campbell.
- Montague PTA - Danielle Christmann - Nothing to report they've had no meeting. The Book Fair just ended.
- Sussex County Charter/Tech School - Andree Campbell - Applications online are being accepted for the 2023-24 school year. Was not able to watch the previous meeting due to sound issues.
- School Board Association - Barbara Holstein - SBA is holding the Three Rs of Being a School Board member in the State. Check out the website or facebook page if you want to catch one of the three Rs. There were over 1,000 board seats that were up this year.

22. 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.

The board uses the public comment 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.

Motion to open Public Comment at 8:32 p.m.

Motion Tasha DeGeorge 2nd Michael Zernhelt

Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to close Public Comment at 8:34 p.m.

Motion Michael Zernhelt 2nd Tasha DeGeorge

Voice Vote: All in Favor

23. NEW BUSINESS - Barbara Holstein made a motion to cancel the December 28, 2022 Board of Education meeting. Seconded by Michael Zernhelt.

Roll Call	Brislin	Campbell	Christmann	DeGeorge	Holstein	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x	x	x	6
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT							

Michael Zernhelt asked if there could be a couple of color schemes and the children could pick the color scheme? Mr. Andriac would have to approve the color scheme. The gymnasium definitely needs to be painted.

24. 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 Will Not be taken.

Motion to open Executive Session at 8:42 p.m.

Motion Andree Campbell 2nd Danielle Christmann Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to close Executive Session at 9:36 p.m.

Motion Paul Brislin 2nd Michael Zernhelt Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to reopen Regular Meeting at 9:36 p.m.

Motion Tasha DeGeorge 2nd Danielle Christmann Voice Vote: All in Favor

25. ADJOURNMENT

Motion Michael Zernhelt 2nd Tasha DeGeorge VoiceVote: All in Favor
 Time of Adjournment: 9:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carl Morelli

CARL MORELLI, Board Secretary