

**Montague Township Board of Education Meeting
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 28, 2022**

1. CALL TO ORDER at 6:31 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

	Present	Absent
Barbara Holstein, President	x	
Paul Brislin	x	
Andree Campbell	x	
Danielle Christmann	x (6:32 p.m.)	
Tasha DeGeorge	x	
Michael Zernhelt	x	

Others Present:	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
James Andriac - Acting CSA	X	_____
Carl Morelli, SBA/BS	X	_____
Joseph Garcia, Esq. – Board Atty.	X	_____

3. FLAG SALUTE - FOLLOWED BY A MOMENT OF SILENCE OR PRAYER

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. PRESENTATION - The Center for Prevention & Counseling was in attendance and discussed what they will be presenting to our health classes. Ms. DeGeorge asked if there is anything that can be done with seniors. They do have a grant but they have been unable to do anything because of the population. Mr. Morelli asked when they plan on starting in the school and they said next Friday. Barbara Holstein stated if a resolution needs to be done they will do that after legal advice when they go into executive session.

7. VICE PRESIDENT VACANCY. Barbara Holstein opened the floor to nominations. Barbara Holstein nominated Paul Brislin as Vice President. Joseph Garcia, Esq., stated we will allow for nominations but we do not need a 2nd. Anyone who wants to nominate can make a nomination and once all nominations are on the table you can go around and say the person you are voting for. Michael Zernhelt asked about the new candidates coming in and Barbara Holstein stated that any new candidate would not be able to vote for over a month because they have to be fingerprinted and they have to be sworn in and the appropriate thing to do is to do it the meeting following the resignation of the VP.

Paul Brislin - Abstained

Andree Campbell, Danielle Christmann, Tasha DeGeorge, Barbara Holstein, Michael Zernhelt all **voted for Paul Brislin**

8. 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 6:54 p.m.

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

Benjamin Smith, 306 Shore Drive, Montague, affiliated with the Scouts (BSA). Asked to seek approval from the Board to do an outdoor classroom for his eagle scout project.

Barbara Holstein stated that under New Business they will do a resolution to approve the Eagle Scout Project. Michael Zernhelt asked if he can work up some facts and figures to provide to the BOE.

Motion to close Public Comment at 7:03 p.m.

Motion Tasha DeGeorge 2nd Michael Zernhelt Voice Vote: All in Favor

9. ANNOUNCEMENT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION

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 7:03 p.m.

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

Motion to close Executive Session at 8:03 p.m.

Motion Paul Brislin 2nd Danielle Christmann Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to reopen Regular Meeting at 8:03 p.m.

Motion Danielle Christmann 2nd Michael Zernhelt Voice Vote: All in Favor

10. CSA REPORT - James Andriac, Acting CSA - Addressed the busing situation, there is a bus driver shortage so we had to do double runs but we have a new bus driver on the agenda. Back to school night was a success and thanked all families who came. Student of the Month will be starting again this year and will begin for the month of September. It is not only based upon grades but their behavior, good positive attitude in school and how they interact with their fellow classmates. We had two assemblies this month - 1. Internet Safety by the State Police and 2. Rob Holiday for a presentation called "Don't Be Rude" which is about bullying. Cross-Country and soccer is going on now. Next month, Mr. Andriac will be giving a presentation on NJSLA Scores for the 21-22 school year. Congratulations to the cross-country team who ran against Port Jervis today. Thanked the PTA and announced their Car Show/Fall Fest on October 1, 2022 and that their mum sale was the best they've had. Barbara Holstein congratulated the cross country team and thanked Coach Runne and Coach Weiss.

11. SBA REPORT - Carl Morelli, SBA - On tonight's agenda we have April and May treasurer's report to be approved and in the process of finalizing June report with treasurer and auditor to close out our year and begin our July 1, 2022-23SY with accurate financial reporting. Also on the agenda is the Transportation Employee Handbook and Bus Accident Procedures Manual which are both up for approval. These will be used in conjunction with other documents as part of our improvement plan for our transportation department. Regarding additional projects, we are now looking at expanding our parking lot for additional staff parking, a lot for bus parking and a spot for a transportation office trailer. We are looking to create additional PreK classrooms next to our building which will probably be 4 to 5 classrooms which would allow us to use the current PreK classrooms for our new self-contained classrooms. We are repairing our windows, many of which are inoperable and looking into the construction of a locker room. In order to facilitate these improvements there is an RFP resolution for a new architect on the agenda tonight for approval.

Barbara Holstein stated that what she is envisioning for the PreK is putting them in modular type classrooms and then shifting the classrooms down so that we could open space for self-contained classrooms. In the past the self-contained classrooms were in the lower and upper wings. Now that we have the upper grade level we have to keep that in mind.

12. BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Barbara Holstein, President - A lot of communication has taken place the past couple weeks between Barbara Holstein, Carl Morelli and James Andriac regarding getting the projects moving forward. As we move forward the school improves. Our enrollment is 302 and a short time ago we were below 250. When we went for referendum to add classrooms we also had a sharp drop in enrollment so the K-8 was able to sustain and fit into the building at that time. Ms. Jeskey brought in the PreK program. Now that enrollment is going up we need the additional classrooms. This is something that is a great problem to have. If you are running out of space you are doing something right and something the community should be proud of. The parking situation has been horrendous over the years. The parking lot was designed for a little school and hasn't changed. A parking lot would go beyond the Finnegan tree.

13. 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 August 24, 2022.

Moved: Tasha DeGeorge Seconded: Michael Zernhelt Discussion: None

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

17. TRANSPORTATION

T-1 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the Transportation Handbook and Bus Accident Procedures manual.

Moved: Michael Zernhelt Seconded:Tasha DeGeorge

Discussion: Tasha DeGeorge has questions regarding discipline policy. Feels some of them were repeats like No. 6 and No 17 regarding absences and 20 and 14 failure to report an absence. Barbara Holstein stated that she provided the Handbook from where she works and June provided the handbook from High Point. Carl and Jim C. worked together to put it together and Joseph Garcia, Esq., put in the discipline section too. The handbook should be able to be approved tonight and make edits to it. Carl said we can always revise it. This is the first ever transportation handbook. We are really working hard to address transportation concerns. The primary concern is that the children get transported safely. Ms. DeGeorge asked if it is normal for the procedure to be to call the office first instead of calling 911 if there is an accident. Barbara Holstein said that in every school district she has worked for it is to call the school first. The bus drivers have bus to building radios. First concern is student safety. There are things in the CDL book that Barbara Holstein doesn't agree with. Some items are in the book because the State says they have to be in there. Andree Campbell asked if all the bus drivers signed the acknowledgement form? Barabara Holstein stated that is being approved tonight and will be handed to the driver.

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

T-2 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **WESLEY BARTHEIUS**, as full time bus driver, pending background check, \$22.00 an hour, with a start date of October 3, 2022, for the 2022-2023 school year.

Moved: Tasha DeGeorge Seconded: Michael Zernhelt Discussion: Barbara Holstein said she is happy the school hiring bus driver sign is working and that people are coming in to interview.

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

18. BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

BG-1 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the Business Administrator to go out for an RFP (Request for Proposal) for architectural services from October 27, 2022 to June 30, 2023.

Moved: Paul Brislin **Seconded:** Michael Zernhelt **Discussion:** Barbara Holstein asked Mr. Morelli if this is the period of time for the architectural services? Mr. Morelli said yes. Barbara Holstein asked how long the ad run for? Mr. Morelli stated that it has to be in the paper for 20 days to allow companies to respond and our second meeting in October we will have the packets and Board can approve one at the October 26, 2022 meeting.

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

BG-2 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education conditionally approve the Eagle Scout project by Ben Smith to move forward with the eagle scout project that he will plan and construct an outdoor classroom. The approval will be conditional on Board approval of the plans and the supplies and materials to be used in the project as well as compliance with any permitting matters and compliance with construction code laws, rules and regulations.

Moved: Paul Brislin **Seconded:** Michael Zernhelt
Discussion: Michael Zernhelt said that he thinks this is a very good thing for the school. Barbara Holstein agrees and that it takes alot for a kid to come in a speak and for his passion to give back to the school. It is a very high achievement. She is very proud that this project is going to get off the ground.

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

19. ADMINISTRATION

Barbara Holstein would like to do a consent agenda for A-1 to A-3. Mr. Zernhelt had a question about A-3 and wanted to know if there will be a stipend for Mr. Harris. Mr. Andriac said not right now. This is a pilot so if it works out well next year we will attach a stipend to. Mr. Zernhelt is ok with lumping it together.

A-1 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve a \$5,000 stipend to Megan McElhaney for running the Before and Aftercare Program for the 2022-23 school year.

A-2 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve an annual stipend for any maintenance/custodian employee who holds a CDL license in the amount of \$600.00 together with any renewal fees associated with the CDL license.

A-3 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the creation of the STEM Club with Michael Harris as Club Advisor.

A-4 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve and authorize the Center for Prevention and Counseling to come into the school using their staff and their curriculum to provide services for drug and alcohol abuse prevention for the 2022-23 school year.

Moved:Michael Zernhelt Seconded: Danielle Christmann Discussion: None

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

20. SPECIAL COMMITTEES - Reports will be moved to the next meeting.

21. 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 8:40 p.m.
 Motion Tasha DeGeorge 2nd Danielle Christmann Voice Vote: All in Favor

Krista Mikulski, 2 Elm Ct., Montague, NJ. Asked Mr. Morelli how many seats, how many classroom students can be in each modular. Mr. Morelli stated that right now it is all in the preliminary stages so right now we are looking at 4 full size classrooms that would probably contain 1 or 2 bathrooms in the unit. Ms. Mikulski asked about how many? Mr. Andriac said there are 15 students in each PreK classroom. Typical classroom would be more than 15. As of right now we have 44 which is why we need to open the 4th one and our grant goes to 56 students. Ms. Mikulski asked if this is paid from Prek budget and Mr. Morelli said the plan is to use PreK funds for construction of their classrooms.

Ms. Holstein stated that other school districts have cut out the zoom portion of the meetings. She would like to keep some stats on how many viewers we have. This is something NJ School Boards should do. We should be looking to engage the community. Proud of still doing zoom meetings.

Motion to close Public Comment at 8:43 p.m.
 Motion Paul Brislin 2nd Michael Zernhelt Voice Vote: All in Favor

22. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - Ms. DeGeorge asked if all State inspections on the office suites were all done? Mr. Garcia stated that is something they can talk about in executive session or after the meeting. Mr. Zernhelt asked Mr. Morelli about the bathrooms in the modulars. Once the architects come on board they will come up with plans with how we can connect them to the building. It will be one per class per the PreK grant. This is very preliminary at this point

23. SECOND CANDIDATE INTERVIEW WITH JAIME JOHNSON at 8:46 p.m. Carl Morelli, BA read 15 questions to Ms. Johnson, to which she answered individually.

No clarifications by any BOE member.

Ms. Holstein stated the Board will be going into Executive Session to discuss candidate qualifications in closed session and the BA will be in touch with whomever shall prevail.

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 may or may not be taken.

Motion to open Executive Session at 8:53 p.m.
 Motion Michael Zernhelt 2nd Paul Brislin Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to close Executive Session at 9:14 p.m.
 Motion 9:14 p.m. 2nd Andree Campbell Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to reopen Regular Meeting at 9:14 p.m.
 Motion Danielle Christmann 2nd Andree Campbell Voice Vote: All in Favor

CANDIDATE DISCUSSION:

Ms. Holstein said that they had their candidate interviews and went into executive session to discuss candidate qualifications.

Barbara Holstein opened the floor to nominations between the two candidates who presented tonight to be nominated to the vacant seat to the Board of Education and Ms. Holstein nominated Jaime Johson and was seconded by AndreeCampbell. Per the By-laws say nominations and a second. Mr. Garcia stated to be in compliance with bylaws, do a motion and a second and then said the person would say the name of the person they wish to appoint to fill the vacancy. Barbara Holstein asked if there were any nominations to be added. Danielle Christmann nominated Krista Mikulski which was seconded by Tasha DeGeorge.

Roll Call vote each Board member will say the name of the candidate they wish to fill the vacancy and the majority of naming member is to fill the vacancy.

Roll Call	Brislin	Campbell	Christmann	DeGeorge	Holstein	Zernhelt
Candidate Name	Krista Mikulski	Jaime Johnson	Krista Mikulski	Krista Mikulski	Jaime Johnson	Jaime Johnson

Mr. Garcia stated that it is 3/3 and neither candidate has not acquired enough votes so the seat will remain vacant until such time the Board has four (4) votes for any one candidate.

Mr. Brislin asked if could make a motion to advertise from now until the next meeting for candidates for additional people who might be interested in applying for this opportunity. Motion made by Paul Brislin to re-advertise for candidates interested in the vacancy.

Ms. Christmann asked how long did the advertisement run for. Mr. Morelli stated the advertisement was sent to the newspaper the day after Ms. Bogle resigned and the ad ran for 3 days, yesterday being the last day and it was listed on the school website and on the sign in front of the school and it was on the Town website.

No second for motion so motion dies.

25. ADJOURNMENT

Motion Andree Campbell
Time of Adjournment: 9:19 p.m.

2nd Danielle Christmann

Voice Vote: All in Favor

Respectfully submitted,

Carl Morelli

CARL MORELLI
Board Secretary