

**SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
JANUARY 30, 2014
BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- ARTICLE 1 Zoning Change to Allow Registered Marijuana Dispensary by Special Permit.**
The Planning Board, pursuant to a public workshop held on August 27, 2013 and a public hearing opened on September 24, 2013 and closed on October 22, 2013, has determined that a Registered Marijuana Dispensary (RMD) requires a higher threshold of review and narrower geographic focus than a typical “retail sales and service use” and that there is a public interest in regulating the siting, design, placement and security of RMDs. The proposed zoning amendment would allow RMDs by special permit and site plan review from the Zoning Board in General Business, Industrial, Central Business, and Historic Industrial zoning districts and prohibit them in all other districts.
- ARTICLE 2 Expand Scope of Previous Appropriation Relating to the Disposition of the Former Cumberland Farms Building.** The Montague Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (MEDIC) is requesting authorization to expand the scope of Article 1 of the May 5, 2012 Special Town Meeting by allowing the use of remaining funds to demolish the blighted building which is located on 38 Avenue A, Turners Falls. The initial authorization only allowed for building remediation and roof repair and did not include demolition as an alternative. There is currently a balance of \$29,000 remaining in the appropriation. This amount is sufficient to cover the cost of demolition. The original plan for the building was to transfer the property to Montague Community Cable Inc. Unfortunately, efforts by MCCI to obtain financing for the project have not been successful and their project may not come to fruition. The MEDIC is requesting the authorization to use the funds for demolition in the event that both parties are unable to consummate a deal for the conveyance of this building.
- ARTICLE 3 Appropriate Additional Funding for Legal Expenses Associated with Renewal of the Cable Contract.** The Montague Cable Advisory Committee is in the process of negotiating a new, long term contract with COMCAST. In order to ensure meaningful and appropriate contract provisions, the committee will require legal oversight and input with regard to the specifics of the contract. Although the Town did appropriate \$8,000 for this purpose under Article 17 of the May 7, 2011 annual town meeting, these funds have already been exhausted. Many important legal issues raised during the contract negotiation process still remain unresolved at this time.
- ARTICLE 4 Refurbishing of Unity Park Field House Rest Rooms.** This article would appropriate the sum of \$15,000 for the purpose of refurbishing and making handicap accessible the Unity Park Field House rest rooms. The Parks and Recreation Department has received numerous complaints about the condition of the existing facilities. They are very old and difficult to clean, as well as not being fully accessible. Although it has always been the desire of the department to address as many of its needs as possible through CDBG or other grants, there are currently no grant opportunities available that would allow this work to be done in the near future. The funding is being requested at a special town meeting, rather than an annual, so the department can do the work during the winter months when it will have less of an impact on recreation programming.
- ARTICLE 5 Supplemental Appropriation for FY 2014 Police Budget.** Article 5 would appropriate the sum of \$20,000 for the purpose of supplementing the FY 2014 budget of the Police Department. These funds are needed to fund anticipated shortfalls in the several line items. These include: Overtime - \$15,000, Police Vehicle Maintenance/Supplies - \$3,000, and Supplies - \$2,000.