Warm greetings to all Montville residents,

Anticipated and appreciated signs of Spring are upon us, leading us to know that it is time once again to gather for our annual Town Meeting. As generations before us, we come together to voice our opinions and vote on the important matters of the Town. For 215 years, residents have supported this revered democratic process. We hope you will give serious consideration to attending this annual and historical event. It is your presence and participation that will contribute to the everlasting “Spirit of Montville”.

The Select Board has worked diligently (and harmoniously) this year to put forth a Warrant that has taken a considerable amount of time and effort to prepare for Town meeting. It is the result of many long discussions over the year with elected and appointed officials, the Budget Committee, town employees, and residents. These dynamic exchanges resulted in the Board taking action to begin reviewing a variety of issues that could eventually influence proposed changes to existing Town policies, the creation of new policies, budgetary expenditures, department priorities and expectations, and

re-evaluating wage structures. All important tasks to investigate further but in need of community input as to how best to move forward.

Our discussions and efforts revealed that as a Town, we appear to be at an important crossroads. For a Select Board to properly do its due diligence, we realize that there is some urgency for the Town to consider setting a course that has long-term vision. Without a clear directive, it is challenging for a Select Board to know its decisions are aligned with the goals set forth by the Town. A pro-active plan would help guide future Boards, elected and appointed officials, and the budget committee to responsibly recommend policy and budgetary decisions that would better reflect an intentional direction set by more representation.

How can we maintain our rural character, as we welcome newcomers and businesses to Town? What is our long- term plan for Public Works, Health and Sanitation, and Protection and Enforcement? Should there be more collaboration of shared services with neighboring towns? How can we work together to be a resilient community so we are prepared for the future?

The current Select Board is asking that you give some thoughtful consideration to what this long-term vision might include. Our hope is that there will be enough interest among residents, old and new, to come together to discuss, brainstorm and be creative to delve into the possibilities for a “visionary” plan. There is currently known interest among some residents to organize this effort. Ask yourselves how do you want Montville to go forward into the future? We hope you will be involved and engaged in a process that leads us to a sustainable future and preserves the Town’s character.

On behalf of the Select Board, I would like to thank Montville’s Treasurer, Town Clerk and (webmaster), Deputies, Fire Chief, EMD, Road Commissioner, transfer station attendants, employees, subcontractors and volunteers for their extraordinary service to the Town. Special appreciation to Bob Leroy, 2nd Selectperson, who will be retiring this year from the Select Board after 3 years and to the Board’s Administrative Assistant, Hannah Hatfield, for her wholehearted commitment to the Town.

Cathy Roberts

1st Selectperson

**Noteworthy from the Select Board:**

**Article 9 –** The Select Board recommends to pass this article. 2 new members would join the committee. This action will increase representation and provide additional support to the SB.

**Halloween Storm 2021 declared a disaster** – A nor’easter brought up to 6” of rain to areas of Montville and other towns in Waldo County, causing localized flooding and unprecedented damage to many gravel and paved roads. The Select Board has submitted an application to FEMA covering damages totaling $193,000. We are currently waiting for confirmation.

**Transfer Station –** The purchase of the new trash compactor approved by residents last year is installed and is expected to provide a significant savings to the Town. Unfortunately, this year, we had to temporarily suspend the transport of recyclables to Unity Regional Recycling Center (UARRC) in Thorndike. We were also unable to purchase a trailer for the recommended amount passed last year. The Board is requesting $10,000 this year to purchase a new trailer. If the Town votes to purchase a truck for Public Works, the intention is to use this truck to haul recyclables on a new trailer to UARRC. However, Article 33 is written as Recycling Trailer/Box Truck, providing an alternate in case a truck is more economical. Residents can bring their recyclables directly to UARRC until a plan is in place. There are efforts to apply for a DEP Waste Management Grant later this year to help support our recycling efforts.

**Mud Season –** This has been a challenging Spring on many of Montville’s gravel roads, a condition that is shared by many rural New England towns. Several of our roads were posted early in the season, others were closed to through traffic. We will be prioritizing sections of roads for summer maintenance that were most impacted from the spring thaw.

**Sand Shed Policy –** Since we have increasingly seen more evidence of mixed precipitation and icing, the Select Board passed a new policy for taking sand from the resident sand shed. The policy states that “Montville residents and businesses are welcome to take up to three 5-gallon buckets of sand, per weather event, from the town sand shed for their driveways. Whole pick-up loads are not allowed. Taking sand for commercial use is prohibited”.

**Property Tax deferral program for eligible seniors –** An owner of a home that receives a homestead exemption may apply for deferral of taxes on that home if the owner has income of less than $40,000 and liquid assets of less than $50,000 (less than $75,000 if more than one owner and both are applying) and the owner is either 65 and older or is unable to be employed by reason of a disability.

**Appreciation** to John York, EMD, and Fire Department volunteers for their efforts to organize food box distributions and stay connected to residents in need, during the pandemic and extreme weather events.

**For the archives: Covid-19 pandemic –** The pandemic has gone beyond its second year. The Select Board continued to endorse Covid-19 protocols set forth by the Maine CDC and Governor Mills. Recently, these protocols were suspended because Covid- 19 cases have decreased significantly. As of March 24, 2022, the CDC reports 974,441 Covid-19 related deaths in the USA, 5977 deaths in Waldo County, and 1 death reported in Montville. 77.58% of Maine’s population are fully vaccinated, 590,696 residents have received an additional booster dose.