

Town of Colrain
Selectboard/MLP Board Meeting
Colrain Highway Garage
9 Jacksonville Rd.
4:30 PM.

**MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD
February 28, 2023**

Present: Mike Slowinski, Thom Griffin, Ben Eastman

Others Present: Matt Allen, MA Craft Cultivation; Gina Govoni, FCRHRA (remote call-in); Valeda Peters; Rebecca Stone; Amy Sullivan; Jeff Robleski; Emily Thurber; Roger Williams; Jamie Hall; Jonathan Lagreze; Michael Shuipis; Bella Levavi, Greenfield Recorder; Ellen Weeks, Personnel Committee; Lynn DiTullio; Paula Harrison, Treasurer/Collector; Betsy Shuipis, Administrative Assistant; Kevin Fox, Town Administrator

Chair Mike Slowinski called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

Appointments:

Matt Allen – MA Craft Cultivation, LLC Update on Business Status

Mr. Allen, CEO, gave a status update on the business. Last August, they received their final license from the Cannabis Control Commission and commenced operations (make sales) on December 31, 2022. They hope to have full-grown plants this year. Challenges encountered: market changes and microbial content in product, which has changed their focus to selling the flower rather than extraction. Discussion on requirements with the Town as written in the Community Host Agreement.

Mr. Allen asked the Board for suggestions regarding hiring more people from Colrain and Town non-profits to donate the \$250 Annual Community Benefit payment to this year. Ellen Weeks suggested the Friends of the Library, a nonprofit that gives all donations to the Griswold Memorial Library. The Board thanked Mr. Allen for keeping the Board updated.

Gina Govoni – Executive Director – Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority– Housing Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Fund Update and Contract Extension Request

Gina Govoni explained the current contract with Colrain and the revolving loan funds program. The original contract was signed in 2013 and has been extended on an annual basis. She is asking the Town to extend the agreement again for one year without changing the terms or seeking additional funds.

MOVED: Thom Griffin moved to extend the agreement with the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority for a period of one year.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Lisa Hayden - Administrative Agent for the Woodlands Partnership of Northwest MA – Presentation on the Partnership

Ms. Hayden could not make the meeting due to the weather.

Amy Sullivan 261 West Leyden Rd. – Request for Speed Limit Signage

Amy Sullivan raised her concerns about the increase of speeding vehicles because South Green River Rd is closed and is hoping to get speed limit signs set up. Mike Slowinski explained that the closure is temporary and Chief Lannon was looking at speed limits when COVID-19 took over. Kevin Fox read an

email from Chief Lannon on the subject and discussion will continue at the next meeting when Chief Lannon can attend. He further stated that he received four emails from other residents on West Leyden Rd.

New Business:

Approval of RRR Version of Backhaul Agreement

Mike Slowinski explained this is to get more than one backhaul into Colrain. This backhaul is with Verizon and we currently have one with Crown Castle.

MOVED: Thom Griffin moved to sign the Backhaul Connection Appendix for a Verizon Connection in Colrain.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Town Administrator Succession Process

The Town Administrator's last day is June 30, 2023. The Board agrees that the town needs this position. Ellen Weeks, Personnel Committee Chair, has looked into the Town Manager vs. Town Administrator roles. A switch to a Town Manager special legislation would be needed and tends to be in larger populated towns. Discussion on the search for the Town Administrator position and revising the job description. Kevin recommended that the Town update the job description, in particular, the hiring and firing process.

Screening can be done privately; the final interview must be public. The Board agreed to proceed with the Town Administrator title and possibly modify the job description in collaboration with Kevin and the Personnel Committee. At the 3/14/2023 Select Board meeting, the Board and Personnel Committee will discuss changes to the job description, appoint a search committee, who will guide the process, advertising, etc. Jonathan Lagreze suggested hiring a headhunter. Discussion on when the new person should start and financial impact to the budget.

Approve/Sign Special Town Meeting Warrant

Paula Harrison, Tax Collector, explained the warrant article regarding the new tax collection software upgrades needed. The meeting is scheduled for March 21, 2023, at 7:00 pm at the Colrain Central School.

MOVED: Thom Griffin moved to approve the warrant for a Special Town Meeting for the transfer of free cash as written in the warrant.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Old Business:

Approve Complete Streets Prioritization Plan

The Board made changes to the priority list as presented and reordered the list as follows:

- Town Center Park & Ride
- Town Center Park & Ride Lighting
- Clear Zone Management
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Sign Upgrades
- Pine Hill Pedestrian Accommodations
- Town Center Street Lighting
- Town Center Pedestrian Accommodations
- Town Center Traffic Calming
- Greenfield Road Truck Escape Ramp
- Call Road Pedestrian Accommodations
- Coburn Street Intersection Improvement
- Adamsville Pedestrian Accommodations

Unanticipated:

None

Town Administrator Updates:

Administrative Assistant Screening Committee

The Screening Committee interviewed all three candidates and wants to move all three for interviews next week. Kevin recommended 3/6 or 3/9 and the Board agreed on Monday, 3/6.

The Board presented a Peace Lily and card to Betsy Shuipis and thanked her for her years of service to the Town and wished her well in retirement.

MOVED: Thom Griffin moved to dissolve the meeting at 6:20 pm.


Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Shuipis
Administrative Assistant

Accepted by the Select Board

Mike Slowinski - Chair



Thom Griffin

Ben Eastman

Minutes originally taken by Betsy Shuipis and typed by Marjorie Smith for approval by the current Select Board members. The current Board members accept the minutes as written on 2/13/2024, for the purpose of putting the minutes on record, as they were not accepted around the time of the original meeting.

Respectfully submitted,


Marjorie Smith
Administrative Assistant


Accepted by the Select Board



Benjamin Eastman - Chair



W. Thomas Griffin



Emily Thurber

Documents:

Select Board Meeting Notes

Host Community Agreement between the Town of Colrain and New England Craft Cultivators, For the Siting of a Recreational Marijuana Establishment dated January 29, 2021

First Amendment to Host Community Agreement dated July 27, 2021

Letter to the Select Board dated 2/6/2023 from Gina Govoni, Executive Director of FCRHRA re: HRA Contract with the Town of Colrain

Letter to the Select Board dated 1/19/2023 from Sharon Pleasant, FCRHRA, re: Colrain's Housing Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Fund

Addendum #1 to the Housing Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Fund Contract between the Town of Colrain and FCRHRA dated 2/6/2023

Housing Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Fund Contract between the Town of Colrain and FCRHRA dated 1/23/2013

Email from Sophie Argetsinger, Woodlands Partnership of Northwest MA, to Kevin Fox, Town Administrator, dated 2/13/2023 re: Appointment for Select Board Meeting

Email conversation between Kevin Fox, Town Administrator, and Lisa Hayden, Woodlands Partnership for Northwest MA dated 2/15/2023-2/21/2023 re: Select Board Meeting Appointment and Presentation

Email conversation between Amy Sullivan, Colrain Resident, and Kevin Fox, Town Administrator, dated 2/15/2023 – 2/17/2023 re: Speed Limit Signs on West Leyden Rd

Backhaul Connection Appendix for a Verizon Connection in Charlemont

Draft Special Town Meeting Warrant

Northeast IT Systems, Inc. QDS Software Install Proposal dated 2/22/2023

102 Main Road Demolition Costs

MassDOT Complete Streets Funding Program Project Prioritization Plan dated 2/14/2023