

Town of Colrain
Select Board/MLP Board Meeting
Colrain Highway Garage
9 Jacksonville Road
4:30 PM

**MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD
August 13, 2024**

Present Emily Thurber, Chair; Benjamin Eastman; Katie Korby

Others Present:

Marjorie Smith, Administrative Assistant; Diana Parsons, Town Administrator

Chair Emily Thurber called the meeting to order at 4:30pm.

Consent Items:

Review/Approve Warrants and Meeting Minutes as listed below:

Warrant AP2505 in the amount of \$14,679.97

Warrant PR2501 in the amount of \$19,888.36

Warrant AP2506 in the amount of \$15,270.41

Warrant AP2507 in the amount of \$22,330.19

Meeting Minutes of July 23, 2024

MOVED: Ben Eastman moved to approve the warrants and meeting minutes as written.

Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Appointments and Resignations:

None

New Business:

Sign Election Warrant for 2024 State Primary

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to sign the Election Warrant for the 2024 State Primary as written.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Award Contract for Colrain Jacksonville Road Slope Stabilization Project to ET&L Corporation, Stow MA, in the amount of \$723,035

Diana Parsons updated the Board that there were seven bidders and three lowest were ET&L at \$723,035, Western Earthworks \$775,515, and Davenport at \$1,035,416. ET&L is a pre-approved and vetted contractor and she and FRCOG recommend awarding the contract to ET&L. Discussion on risk of lump sum bid in terms of materials. Ben Eastman questioned if the contractors knew the Town's budget for the project, which Diana explained that the \$828,787 was in the prequalification form, and the only way to add or change cost is through Change Orders that have to be approved by the Town and engineer. Diana further explained that we have limited construction administration for the project from BSC Group (\$2,500 allocated). She has asked for a quote for the service from BSC and has asked for local engineer quotes because there is a cushion in the budget.

MOVED: Ben Eastman moved to award the contract to ET&L for the Colrain Jacksonville Road slope stabilization project for \$723,035.

Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

All three members of the Board signed the contract.

Review and Vote Amended Host Community Agreement (HCA) for Atlantic Farms, LLC.

Diana Parsons explained that the laws have changed and the CCC is now overlooking all HCA's and rejecting if it doesn't have certain language included. The HCA for Atlantic Farms was rejected and has been through the Town's legal counsel, and their legal counsel and is ready to be resubmitted. None of the parameters are changing, only the language surrounding the impact fees.

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to approve the amended Host Community Agreement for Atlantic Farms, LLC as written.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

All three members of the Board signed the contract.

Review and Approve Funding for Remote Meeting Room Configuration for 11 Jacksonville Road from MLP FY25 Budget

Diana Parsons explained that these are funds to create hybrid meeting space at the Highway Garage. There will be a large wired tv and a camera. Meetings will be recorded and will provide an opportunity for people to join remotely. Diana recommended putting a hybrid meeting policy in place for all Boards/Committees to follow. Discussion on what to put in the policy. Emily Thurber questioned when the install would happen and Diana explained that as soon as Board gives their ok, materials will be ordered, but probably not until October.

MOVED: Ben Eastman moved to approve funding for remote meeting room configuration of 11 or 9 Jacksonville Rd from the MLP budget.

Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Receive Award of FFY 2024 Community Development Fund Grant (regional) of \$1,375,000 from the Massachusetts Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program for Housing Rehabilitation in Colrain

Diana Parsons updated the Board that this is the regional grant that Colrain is a part of with Buckland and Ashfield. There are 16 units on the list and the money will be used for those houses. Discussion on the housing rehab program.

Address Location of Council on Aging (COA) Foot Clinic; Discuss COA Facilities, Operations & Budget

Diana Parsons met with Nina, of the BOH, regarding accessibility requirements and Town Hall for the foot clinic and the conclusion was that there isn't an ideal location in town facilities. Discussion on Fire Station activity and their needs and the need to provide a home for the COA. For the short term, we should leave the Aug/Sept foot clinic alone but need to look at moving it going forward.

Emily Thurber was interested to see more about the Senior Center in Shelburne. Diana further explained that they are working on forming a 9-town district and Colrain doesn't want to get left out.

Richard Herzig, Adamsville Rd, gave a short history of the COA and questioned who made the complaint about foot clinic and what the complaint was. Diana explained that the complaint was about the space being used is a breakroom/kitchen and the for the foot clinic is medical use and the Board of Health was asking if the uses were congruent. Diana wants to meet with the COA about the issue and the COA as a whole. Diana will follow-up with Janice Barnes and Nina Martin-Anzuoni about what was discussed.

Update from KP Law re: Lindke vs. Freed re: Social Media Use by Elected and Appointed Officials

Diana Parsons explained that she sent this update to staff and all board/committee members. If personal social media accounts blur into Select Board business, it opens the personal account to being public and can't block people.

Certify EECBG Grant Application in the amount of \$50,000 for HVAC Engineering and Design Work at the Colrain Central School

Diana Parsons explained that the Town still has Green Communities money that needs to be spent and the Energy Committee is ready to apply for the design work for the HVAC system at the school. Once funded, we have a year to use the money for the engineering and then can apply for a Green Communities Competitive Grant to have the work completed.

MOVED: Emily moved to certify the EECBG Grant Application in the amount of \$50,000 for HVAC Engineering and Design Work at the Colrain Central School.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Diana Parsons will sign the application and further noted the Energy Committee received support letters from the school principal and facilities manager.

Address Implementation of Colrain Wood Bank

Diana Parsons explained that DCR has six cords ready to be delivered to the Wood Bank, however, the current setup isn't ideal because it is not secure. Discussion on how the Wood Bank was run last year. DCR recommends creating a list of people who need wood and DCR can deliver to the people.

Discussion on the need to create a list of people who need wood first, and the potential of applying for a grant to help with making the location of the wood bank more secure. Discussion on liability to the Town regarding promoting the use and inviting people to Town property. Diana and Maggie will reach out to other towns about their processes. Diana will contact Sean at DCR as well.

Old Business:

Offer for Interim Highway Superintendent

Diana Parsons updated the Board regarding Nate Gilbert agreeing to the interim Highway Superintendent offer that was discussed during the Executive Session. The offer included giving Nate the superintendent salary of \$77,127 and in acknowledging his efforts as the mechanic which will continue, will pay a \$500 bi-weekly stipend and allocate overtime as necessary during the interim period. In February, if the mechanic skills are fully implanted into the superintendent position, salary would be \$90,131 for the remainder of the Fiscal Year. During the interim period he will be assigned a Town vehicle, and the Town will provide training and administrative resources. If it's not a good fit, he can go back to the mechanic/laborer position.

Ben Eastman and Emily Thurber expressed their thanks and appreciation to Nate for all his hard work over the years. Discussion on administrative items; email, office set up, etc. Ben questioned Nate on taking classes, and Nate would like to, just need the time to do so.

Diana further explained that the interim superintendent offer will take effect on Monday 8/19, will discuss other staff budget issues at a future meeting, and has two preliminary interviews for laborers.

Nate signed the offer letter.

Veterans Memorial Care, Pollinator Garden Area Identified; Update from MIIA re: Stone Stairs

A representative from MIIA visited the stairs and if leave them the way they are the stairs are fine and no liability to the Town. If the Town allows volunteers or anyone and promotes and/or make them attractive, that opens the liability. Discussion on location of the pollinator garden, removal of weeds, and Diana to contact the Pollinator Garden Committee and the Veteran's Park group.

Administrator Updates:

Administrative Office Reconfiguration Update

Still planning the reconfiguration design and looking at trying to coordinate the work to be done after the November election and setting of the tax rate. Discussion on the process of reconfiguring and working with everyone in the office. Diana also stated that she had received a quote from King Information for making electronic records and maps.

Highway Department Staff Hiring

Diana Parsons and Nate Gilbert will be doing preliminary interviews with the two applicants.

Broadband Claim Received for Incident on 7/22/2024 West Leyden Road

The Town was involved in the incident by trying to assist Johnson Paving and the only claim received so far is from the MLP Manager, Mike Slowinski. The Town has not received claims from Eversource or Verizon yet. Diana is hesitant to file a claim against us due to the possible increase in insurance premiums. **MOVED:** Emily Thurber moved to not submit the claim for the incident on 7/22/2024 on West Leyden Rd. Katie Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Signed Release for Waste Management Claim to be Processed for \$13,496

Diana Parsons explained that there was an accident at the Transfer Station in February with Waste Management hitting a pole and their insurance is paying the cost for the repairs and updated the Board that she signed the release.

Misc. Communication Updates – Board of Health Chair, FC Solid Waste Management District

Diana Parsons met with Nina Martin-Anzuoni regarding Board of Health issues and will attend their next meeting. Randy Crochier is Colrain's Health Agent, and he comes in regularly with updates. Nina would like the Board of Health, Library, and Council on Aging together to work on initiatives.

Diana spoke with Jan Ameen with FCSWMD and got caught up on solid waste. Jonathan Lagreze asked about doing an analysis on transfer station finances and she analyzed his work and gave recommendations to Diana. Diana further spoke with Jan about the property of 55 Main Rd regarding the past use of the land as a land fill and will reach out to DEP as well.

Public and Board Member Comments:

Jade Mortimer

Jade commented that she thinks Diana's idea about investigating is great. Jade also questioned the Community Housing Grant details. Diana reiterated that she will invite the Franklin County Housing Authority to a future meeting to discuss the grant. Jade further mentioned that if the CPA were instituted, those funds could help with housing.

Howard Phelps

Howard questioned taking care of the bridge this winter. Ben Eastman explained that the Board needs to fill positions in the Highway Department first before asking them to clear the sidewalks. Diana will put budget discussion and contracted services for the highway department on the agenda for the first meeting in September. Ben further commented that we need to meet with the Conservation Commission regarding snow removal from sidewalks/bridge into the river. They can give a permit giving permission to do so. Nate has reached out to the contractor from last year with no response and Diana will reach out as well.

Requests for Future Agenda Items:

August 27th Select Board Meeting re: Diana's Vacation

Diana Parsons will be away for two weeks and FRCOG wants to come to talk about opioid funds being received. The Board agreed to keep the next meeting scheduled.

Notice of Intent for Right of First Refusal on Van Nuys Road (Convert 10 acres to Residential Use)

Diana included this as a reminder to speak to the planning board and assessors for the roll back taxes figures. This will be discussed further at a future meeting.

Correspondence and Select Board Informational Items:

Notice of Inspection – Griswold Memorial Library from July 10, 2024 Inspection

Randy Crochier completed an inspection in July and Diana received the Notice of Inspection. The letter outlined the need to have the electrical looked at.

Annual Report from HRA re Activity for Colrain's Housing Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Fund (HRRLF) for Jan-Jun 2024

Diana explained that the Board received the annual report that outlined the balances in the fund.

Invitation to Colrain Central School First Day Celebration, August 28, 8:30 am-10 am; Colrain Fix-It Day, Saturday, September 7, 2024, 11 am-2 pm. FRTA Shuttle Available at Colrain Central School beginning at 10:30 am; Crafts of Colrain Open Studio Tour, November 9-10, 2024, 10 am-4 pm

The Board received the invitation to attend the First Day Celebration and Diana wanted to be sure that the Board knew the events were happening.

Executive Session:

None

Dissolve Meeting:

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to dissolve the meeting at 6:34pm.


Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

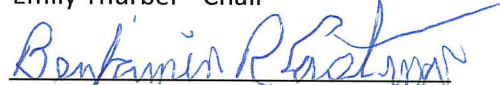


Marjorie Smith
Administrative Assistant

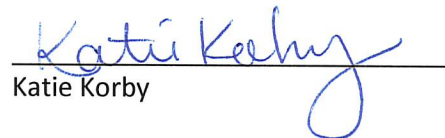
Accepted by the Select Board on 9/24/2024



Emily Thurber - Chair



Benjamin Eastman



Katie Korby

Documents Distributed to the Select Board Before the Meeting in a Packet or at the Meeting:

Warrant for 2024 State Primary

Town of Colrain Jacksonville Road Slope Stabilization Contract with ET&L Corporation

Host Community Agreement Between Town of Colrain and Atlantic Farms, LLC

Email from Michael Slowinski, MLP Manager, to Diana Parsons, Town Administrator, dated 8/8/2024 RE: Use of Broadband Funds for Hybrid Meeting Space at Highway Garage

Highway Conference Room August 2024 Proposal from Northeast IT

Letter from Executive Office of Housing & Livable Communities to Mr. Clinton Phillips, Chair of Buckland Select Board, dated 7/22/2024 RE: FFY2024 Community Development Fund Grant

DP Law eUpdate dated 7/24/2024 RE: Supreme Court Issues Guidance on Use of Social Media

Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant – Municipal Sub Grant Application

Offer of Employment Letter to Nate Gilbert dated 7/24/2024

Email from Michael Slowinski, MLP Manager, to Diana Parsons, Town Administrator, RE: Broadband Claim for Accident on West Leyden Rd

Release of All Claims RE: Accident at Transfer Station

Work Proposal from Taylor Davis Landscape & Construction to Jan Ameen, FCSWD, dated 3/28/2024 RE: Accident at Transfer Station

Statement of Intent to Sell from Newton and Karen Logan to the Town of Colrain dates 7/11/2024 RE: Land on Van Nuys Rd

Notice of Inspection dated 7/10/2024 RE: Griswold Memorial Library

Annual Report dated 7/18/2024 RE: Colrain's Housing Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Fund balances

Invitation to Colrain Central School's First Day Celebration

Colrain Fix-It Day Flyer