

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

**MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD
January 28, 2025**

Present Emily Thurber, Chair; Benjamin Eastman; Katie Korby

Others Present: Jessica Atwood, FRCOG; Pat Geary, Matt Lovett, Christa Snyder, Norm Ward, Dave Adams, Cole Whitaker, Colrain Sewer District; Madison Schofield, Greenfield Recorder; Jade Mortimer, Howard Phelps, Mark Thibodeau, Paul McAndrews; Andrew Evans (remote), RCAP; Kevin Olson & Matt Corbin, Wright Pierce; Betty Ringwood, Chris Pelletier, Nate Gilbert; Marjorie Smith, Administrative Assistant; Diana Parsons, Town Administrator

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

Joint Meeting with Colrain Sewer District Board of Directors:

Review Sewer System Evaluation Survey (SSES) of the Colrain Sewer District System, Matthew Corbin and Kevin Olson from Wright Pierce Engineers

Kevin Olson and Matt Corbin presented slides reviewing the history of the project and sewer system, current operation, reason for the SSES, summary of the study including the field work completed, and evaluation of the findings. They further presented their recommendations for manhole and pipe repairs, projected expenses for the repairs, and proposed implantation schedule.

Pat Geary and Norm Ward requested more details be included and suggested edits to the draft report. Discussion on the sale of Barnhardt property and the MassDEP order. Discussion on current disposal and possible other options for locations to dispose of the wastewater, funding options for the repairs, history of the sewer system and ownership.

Updates on Grant Activities, DEP Consent Order and Next Steps, Jessica Atwood, Director of Planning, Frankling Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG)

Jessica Atwood explained the history of the grant funds received and FRCOG's involvement, use of the grant funds for the SSES and the long-term solution study by Wright Pierce, current pumping of the collection system, and FRCOG's time working on the project. Jessica is going to work with Pat Geary on requesting an extension for using the grant funds until 6/30/2026.

Consent Items:

Approve Minutes of the Select Board for December 10, 2024

Warrant AP2528 in the amount of \$60,362.31

Warrant AP2529 in the amount of \$497,210.21

Warrant PR2514 in the amount of \$36,558.03

MOVED: Katie Korby moved to approve the minutes of December 10, 2024.

Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

MOVED: Ben Eastman moved to approve the Warrants of AP2528 in the amount of \$60,362.31, AP2529 in the amount of \$497,210.21, and PR2514 in the amount of \$36,558.03.

Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Appointments and Resignations:

None

New Business:

Vote to Accept FY25 Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant Award in the amount of \$10,225.00

Diana Parsons explained the Fire Department will use the money for hoses, electric charger switches and nozzles.

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to accept the FY25 Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant Award in the amount of \$10,225.00.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Vote to Extend Vacation Time Usage Period for Highway Superintendent

Diana Parsons explained the Personnel Policy regarding vacation time. Nate Gilbert had reached the limit and lost 10 hours due to not being able to take time off and is requesting to allow him to increase his cap to 170 hours until 6/30/2025.

MOVED: Katie Korby moved to raise Nate's vacation hour cap to 170 until 6/30/2025.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Discussion regarding road complaints and maintaining "Colrain Mountain".

Review and Approve Age & Dementia Friendly Community Grant

Diana Parsons explained she is working on submitting a \$3,000 LifePath Grant application, due this Friday, to be used toward an initiative that can further the Town's Age-Friendly designation. Diana shared the draft application with the Board which is requesting using the funds for outreach for the population over the age of 60, hiring an Engagement Coordinator, and creating three multi-generational events. Mass in Motion voted to use \$4,000 of their funds toward the project at their meeting on 1/27/2025. The Board agreed to move forward with the application.

Open Annual Town Meeting Warrant, May 6, 2025

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to open the annual Town Meeting Warrant.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Review FY26 Budget Process & Schedule

Diana Parsons summarized the budget process she uses, and the role of the Select Board and the Finance Committee. She is hopeful of having a draft budget to the Board soon. The Board would like to invite department heads to their meetings to speak about their respective budgets, as well as schedule a joint meeting with the Finance and School Committee's. Discussion on the MLP budget and needing to go before the MLP Board prior to the Finance Committee voting.

Old Business:

Churchill School Update & Next Steps

The Town is going to do a survey and abutters notice regarding the Town now owning the property and using the "cut-through" will no longer be allowed.

Sidewalk Snow Removal Policy

Diana Parsons updated the Board that the new equipment has arrived. She summarized the policy from Brookfield, MA for the Board as an example. Nate Gilbert and Diana have talked about possible options and are recommending that the Town takes care of clearing the sidewalks this season but it could take a couple days after the storm. Ben Eastman commented that the Conservation Commission needs to provide a letter allowing the Highway Dept to clear the snow on the bridge into the river. The Board agreed that the priority would be from the school to the Post Office and should time allow do the other small bridges in Town.

Administrator Updates:

None

Public and Board Member Comments:

Update from re: Attendance at Connect 351

Emily Thurber summarized a few of the presentations she attended at the Conference; costs of education, role-playing activities, and networking opportunities.

Requests for Future Agenda Items:

Appoint Representatives to Resilient Deerfield River Watershed Coalition Per Request of FRCOG

No discussion.

Joint Meeting with Health Select Board re Sustainability Study updates-March 18, 2025

No discussion.

Review and Approve Amended Building Department Fee Schedule

Diana Parsons spoke with Shawn Kimberley, Building Inspector, about raising the fees and he has agreed to increase some. She will propose creating a revolving fund for building department receipts using a by-law at Town Meeting.

Review General Bylaws Changes for Annual Town Meeting

Diana Parsons listed the few by-laws needing revisions; Council on Aging, Finance Committee, Unregistered Motor Vehicles. Discussion on possible zoning changes.

Correspondence and Select Board Informational Items:

None

Executive Session:

None

Dissolve Meeting:

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to dissolve the meeting at 6:39pm.
Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,



Marjorie Smith
Administrative Assistant

Accepted by the Select Board on 2/11/2025



Emily Thurber - Chair



Benjamin Eastman



Katie Korby

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

Slide Presentation from Wright Pierce Engineers re: Sewer System Evaluation Survey

Award Letter dated 1/17/2025 to Chief Anzuoni from the Office of the Governor, Comm. Of MA re: FY25 Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant Program

Draft Age & Dementia Friendly Community Grant Application

Town of Brookfield - A Residents Guide to Winter Snow Removal Operations & Procedures

Town of Belmont Winter Storm Information Brochure