

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

**MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD
May 27, 2025**

Present: Emily Thurber, Chair; Katie Korby

Absent: Benjamin Eastman

Others Present: Michael Slowinski – MLP Manager; Laurie Francis, Jade Mortimer – Wood Bank Volunteers; Joe Slowinski; Marjorie Smith – Administrative Assistant; Diana Parsons – Town Administrator

Chair Emily Thurber called the meeting to order at 4:32pm.

Consent Items:

Approve Minutes of May 5 and May 13, 2025

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to approve the minutes of the Select Board for May 5th and May 13, 2025 as written.

Katie Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Warrant AP2547 in the amount of \$11,877.46

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to approve warrant AP2547 as written.

Katie Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Appointments and Resignations:

None

New Business:

Reorganize Select Board; Vote Chair, Vice-Chair and Clerk; Review FY26 Select Board Meeting Schedule; Address Dates & Times of Meetings

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to appoint Katie as Chair, Ben as the Clerk and Emily as Vice Chair.

Katie Korby seconded. **No vote taken.**

Discussion: Katie and Emily both listed their reasons for the other to be the chair.

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to table to reorganize the Select Board until the next meeting.

Katie Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Dates/Times of Meetings

Diana Parsons explained that there has been concerns about the meeting time and requests to make it later. Emily Thurber suggested the possibility of having one meeting a quarter at a later time. Diana further explained that other towns have had “office hours” for the Select Board and both Katie and Emily liked the idea. Mike Slowinski commented on the time of the meetings in the past. The Board agreed to discuss it further at the next meeting.

Request Pole Attachment License for Brackets & Flags Located on Greenfield Road Poles (per map)

Diana Parsons explained that when it was requested to move some of the brackets when putting up the flags she asked where the pole attachment license was, which one was never done. She spoke with Mike Kane, Eversource Rep, who said to apply for the license as soon as possible. Diana and Maggie will get the application to Mike Kane. Mike Slowinski provided history of putting up flags and upgrading of telephone poles during the intersection project.

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to authorize Maggie and Diana to request a pole attachment license for brackets and flags located on Greenfield Road poles based on the map they provided and also a future plan for moving the brackets.

Katie Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Mike Slowinski suggested making Maggie the liaison with communicating with the cemetery committees regarding putting up the flags. Maggie expressed to give the new Town Clerk a chance because it is their responsibility.

Diana also explained the notification process for raising and lowering the flag to half-staff and suggested getting a volunteer to take on that responsibility and for flags in general. Discussion on Farley Cemetery location.

FY2025 Broadband Uncollectables and other MLP Manager Updates, Mike Slowinski

Mike Slowinski requested the Board vote to deem the uncollectables as uncollectable so Paula Harrison, Treasurer, can write them off. He further explained the reasoning for the accounts being written off.

MOVED: Katie Korby moved to have Paula write off the outstanding broadband accounts that are uncollectible as written for FY2025.

Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Other Updates:

- Whip City is in the process of formalizing the rate reduction. An email will be sent to all subscribers.
- Incident with the Town of Shelburne who dug up the conduit on Wilson Graves Rd last week because Dig Safe wasn't called. He has left messages with the Highway Superintendent and Town Administrator for the Town of Shelburne
- Currently for outage notifications, Mike Slowinski is notified and asked if anyone else should be notified. Diana Parsons will provide Mike Slowinski with who should be notified
- Smart Meters for electricity – all residents are going to get one from Eversource and Eversource has proposed renting some of the “dark fiber” for parts of Town not covered by the cell towers. Proposing starting on New County Rd and setting up some type of system to report back to the “hut”. A meeting between Mike, Whip City, Eversource and subcontractors has also been proposed. Should they come to an agreement, Mike requested permission to set one up using the broadband to see if it's feasible.

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to allow Eversource to test the equipment on New County Rd as long as Whip City and the MLP Manager are satisfied.

Katie Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Public and Board Member Comments:

Mike Slowinski

Mike Slowinski made the following comments:

- Natalie Blais – Need to ask her for things when she comes
- Complete Streets – apply for Phase 3 to establish the parking lot and Park n' Ride
- Charlemont Rd culvert over Houghton Brook – it has been three years and people are wondering what is happening
- Adamsville Rd over Sanders Brook at Heath line – suggested doing a joint Mass Works Grant with

Heath

- Hiring freeze at State level starting today 5/27 and need to think about that at the Town level
- Mike would like a copy of the list for seniors and those with disabilities in need during an emergency. When the list is complete it will be distributed to Mike.

Old Business:

Review Transfer Station Rules/Regulations re: Oversize Trailers

Diana Parson explained her communication with Jan Ameen, FCSWMD and DEP and that trailer loads of waste are not allowed, however, empty larger trailers are allowed in the Transfer Station, which need to be reported to DEP. Diana suggested the possibility of defining the hours that the larger trailers can be allowed due to traffic constraints and will talk with the attendants.

Revisit Request for Wood Bank Need and Location, Laurie Francis, Representative

Laurie Francis and the group are still hoping to find a space to season and distribute the wood. She has private funds to purchase a lockable gate. Diana Parsons summarized her reasons for not wanting to recommend the lot across from the Transfer Station due to prior concerns, which Laurie provided explanation supporting the space. The group would like to model the wood bank as a community place and anyone who needs wood can take it.

Emily would like to hold a meeting to see what the community involvement would be. Discussion on how people received wood last year and the use of the survey, liability for using Town property, Diana's list of projects and her inability to prioritize the wood bank at this time.

Joe Slowinski commented he is not generally in favor of a wood bank and that if people are in need there are those that would donate. He is opposed to processing firewood on Town property due to the liability and agrees the space next to Transfer Station is a proper place, but only for storage and distribution.

Jade Mortimer commented that three years ago the Select Board voted to allow the wood bank, and no vote has been taken to rescind permission, only a directive to stop using the space. Jade further commented on how the wood bank would be organized.

Discussion on how to get a sense of the need for wood from community members, helping neighbors and building community. Emily would like to start with a list of those that would be interested and unsure that this can be a combined thing in that it's community building and helping keep people warm. Discussion on Town involvement, use of Town land and the liability, and the insurance process.

Diana will reach out to the insurance company regarding using Town property for stacking and distributing wood with a lockable gate. Discussion on Mary Lyon Foundation and possibility of getting information from them on the needs of the residents. The Board decided to table discussion until the next meeting.

Public and Board Member Comments:

Joe Slowinski

Joe Slowinski spoke on the following topics:

- There is a disturbing trend in the election signs beyond the buffer zone being destroyed on election day and nothing was done, which he feels was a lack of respect for the electoral process and abuse of power.
- May 2024 Town Meeting, the Library Trustees brought Town Counsel to Town Meeting for the first time and basically told the residents of the Town that their votes don't matter.
- The CPA Committee told residents that it was a two-step process, Town Meeting votes to put it on the ballot and if it passes, it goes on the ballot, but not that they could put on the ballot if it was voted

down at town meeting. The CPA committee started as a private committee, became a town committee and used town funds. Then the committee was disbanded, they got the signatures and brought it to the ballot. Why was the CPA committee so wrong on the interest of the townspeople when the article was defeated at the Town Meeting? Could they not find people opposed to the CPA? Thinks it was an abuse of power and a betrayal of the electoral process and how the residents voted.

- The most recent town election, he was told that people were dragging their feet to swear in the new town clerk.
- Main theme is that there are groups and/or people that are elected or appointed that are pursuing their own agendas and not the will of the residents. Those that do not discharge their duties appropriately should be identified and not appointed and those that are elected, the Select Board needs to step in as the leaders of the Town.

Discussion on the CPA voting and ballot process and timeline for swearing in the town clerk.

Jade Mortimer

Jade Mortimer explained as a member of the CPA committee that they followed everything by the letter, offered numerous opportunities for asking questions and less than 10% of the population attended the meeting.

Jade Mortimer – Quarterly Tax Bills

Requested that real estate taxes be sent out quarterly rather than twice a year and in one envelope. She owns two parcels, and the bills come separately. Joe Slowinski commented that all his came in one envelope.

Administrator Updates:

Scranton's Quarry

The Zoning Board approved the special permit and included the bond requirement as a condition. Maggie Smith stated that she attended the meeting, and they have the bond in place.

Requests for Future Agenda Items:

Continue Wood Bank Discussion, June 10

Reorganize Select Board, Meeting Dates/Times, June 10

Request from Franklin Land Trust for Support of Conservation Restriction at 413 Adamsville Road, June 10

Review Highway Superintendent Job Description & Advertisement, June 10

Vote to Sign Amended Lease Agreement Through June 2035, with MTRSD for CCS, June 10

Annual Meeting with Representative Blais, June 24

Personnel Policy Changes re: O/T Calculation & Reimbursement for Call-In, Other Misc., June 24

Performance Appraisal for Town Administrator; Set Goals & Objectives for FY26

End of Year Transfers

Updates re: Colrain Sewer District Treatment Options

Correspondence and Select Board Informational Items:

None

Executive Session:


None

Dissolve Meeting:

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to dissolve the meeting at 6:41pm.

Katie Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,



Marjorie Smith
Administrative Assistant

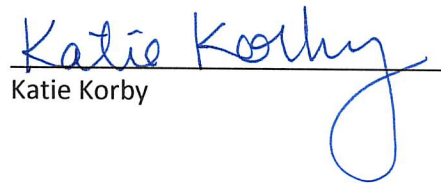
Accepted by the Select Board on 8/26/2025



Emily Thurber - Chair



Benjamin Eastman



Katie Korby

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

List from Mike Slowinski, MLP Manager, to the MLP Board re: Outstanding Broadband Collections and Uncollectables for FY2025