

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

**MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD
July 22, 2025**

Present Emily Thurber, Chair; Benjamin Eastman; Katie Korby

Others Present: David Meager – Eversource; Mike Slowinski – MLP Manager; Jade Mortimer; David Greenberg; Kevin Worden I; Nate Gilbert – Interim Highway Superintendent Diana Parsons – Town Administrator

Chair Emily Thurber called the meeting to order at 4:31 pm.

Consent Items:

AP Warrant #2555 dated 6/30/25 in the amount of \$10,729.45

PR Warrant #2601 dated 7/18/25 in the amount of \$33,191.14

AP Warrant #2604 dated 7/21/25 in the amount of \$5,923.91

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to approve the warrants as presented.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Public Hearing:

Eversource Pole Hearing

Vice Chair Ben Eastman opened the Pole Hearing pursuant to Mass General Law c.166 s.22 Pole Hearing for Eversource request to install one solely owned pole on Purington Lane. The new pole set is need to service customers at both number 10 & 13 Purington Lane, Plan #17899204 – 80205463.

Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

David Meagher explained the reasons the new poles are needed, 10 Purington Lane is upgrading their service and 13 Purington Lane will be a new house.

Ben questioned if there are plans to add more poles to 42 Purington Lane. David responded that there are no plans at this moment. Mike Slowinski, MLP Manager explained the current situation with the poles leading to 42 Purington Lane. Mike questioned the pole numbers so he can apply for the pole license for Broadband.

Emily Thurber closed the hearing.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to approve the pole petition as presented.

Katie Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Appointments and Resignations:

None

New Business:

Approve and Sign FY26 MOUs between Town of Colrain and Franklin County Solid Waste Management District for Regional HHW Day, Annual 3rd Party Inspections and Hauling

Diana Parsons explained that these are annual contracts with the Solid Waste Districts.

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to approve and sign the FY26 MOU's between the Town of Colrain and Franklin County Solid Waste Management District.

Katie Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Request from the Fire Department to Accept Grant from DCR for Competitive Fire Capacity (50% Matching Grant) in the amount of \$1,000

Kevin Worden I explained that the fire department doesn't apply for this every year. This grant will be a \$2,000 grant which is matched 50%, so the Town is responsible for \$1,000. Diana further explained this is for wild land firefighting gear.

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to accept the grant for the fire department from DCR in an amount of \$1,000.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Request from Chip Elitzer of Great Barrington to Support Bill S407; To Create a Commission to Study Regional School District Tax Reform

Discussion on the current school efforts and talking with the Superintendent or the School Committee about the study.

Request for Reimbursement for Cost to Repair Mailbox from Ken Shearer, 270 Greenfield Road

Emily Thurber spoke with Ken prior to the meeting about the mailbox, which has been damaged several times over the years and thinks the request of \$30 is reasonable. Diana explained that the Board has never provided reimbursement in the past, however, agrees the request is reasonable. She further explained that the Town has a 'no replacement' policy and this would be an exception.

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to approve the request from Ken Shearer for the \$30 to replace his mailbox as an exception.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Distribute Materials for FY25 Performance Review for Town Administrator

Diana Parsons provided the Board with a draft performance appraisal form and the goals and objectives set in July 2024. Discussion on when and how to compile the individual appraisals by each Board member.

Address First Draft of FY26 TA Goals & Objectives

Diana Parsons presented the Board with Draft Goals and Objectives for FY26. The list is extensive, and Board is to take under advisement. It was noted that the list may need to be spread out over future years to be completed.

Certificate of Appreciation for Library Director (to be presented July 31st)

The Select Board reviewed certificate of appreciation to be presented to Chelsea Jordan-Makely, outgoing Library Director, for her service to the Town. Emily noted it was nicely worded and represented the Board's appreciation appropriately.

MOVED: Katie Korby moved to sign and present the certificate.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Old Business:

Review and Adopt Proposed Personnel Policy Language Changes re: Vacation Accrual, Tobacco Products

Diana listed the proposed changes and provided the Select Board with a red-lined copy:

- a. **Employee Leave Policies:** personal leave was removed from first sentence, as it does not accrue.
- b. **Personal Leave:** the following change is proposed: Personal Leave is awarded on the date of hire for the annual equivalent of sixteen (16) hours of personal leave prorated, and then each July 1st (fiscal year) for full-time employees and prorated for part-time employees.
- c. **Vacation Leave:** Vacation leave accrues monthly based on the schedule above, is awarded on the first day of the following month and may be used as accrued. Vacation leave may be accrued up to a maximum of 160 hours. Any vacation leave earned beyond 160 hours will not be credited to the employee, unless a request to use vacation time is denied, and then only the amount of time unable to be taken shall be credited. Vacation leave does not accrue during periods of unpaid leave.
- d. **Overtime/Compensatory Time:** Payment for overtime shall be in accordance with the terms of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as amended. For non-exempt employees, if an assignment requires work in excess of forty hours per week, overtime work must be authorized in advance by the employee's supervisor. Time taken as vacation, sick, personal, bereavement, and other types of leave are counted as regular work hours and included as hours worked when calculating overtime.
- e. **Call Back Pay:** If full-time non-exempt employees are recalled to work from off-duty hours, they will receive a minimum of four hours' pay.
- f. **Tobacco Policy:** Use of tobacco products, as defined in M.G.L. c 270, §6, is prohibited in all public buildings and Town vehicles.

MOVED: Katie Korby moved to adopt the changes to the Town of Colrain Personnel Policy as presented. Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Final Review of Highway Superintendent Job Description; Hiring Committee Formation, Process and Timing, Review Draft Ad

Diana updated the Select Board regarding the advertisement appearing in the Greenfield Recorder and included the finalized job description. She is working on a detailed task list that will include daily, weekly, monthly and yearly tasks that can be added to the position description as an appendix and can further assist the current team to ensure all responsibilities are covered. There was continued discussion with Nate about the essential functions of position and whether they make sense of what the department needs at this time. Nate had also mentioned he was feeling uncomfortable with the idea of sitting on the hiring committee and wondered if that was the right option; that he was unsure of how to participate in the hiring process without feeling uncomfortable. Diana noted that she would add to next agenda for further discussion if that this was the case.

Address Transition of Interim Superintendent and Next Steps

Discussion ensued regarding whether to continue the interim position and the challenges that still are ahead with hiring and operating the department without a Superintendent. No action was taken at this time.

Administrator Updates:

Reminder: Farewell Celebration for Chelsea Jordan-Makely, Library Director, Thursday, July 31, 2025, 4 pm-7 pm at Griswold Memorial Library

Update re: Colrain Wood Bank Volunteer Operations

Since the last update, the site has been cleared by volunteers. The Board reviewed pictures shared of wooden storage sheds on the site and wood being delivered, although the site hasn't been fully secured yet. Jade Mortimer noted that the Committee was struggling to insert the posts for the fencing they envisioned for the site. Ben wondered if Town Highway jersey barriers could be used in the meantime. Diana will check with Nate. The Committee will continue to work to secure the site as requested. Emily also mentioned that volunteers need to complete the volunteer forms that have been provided.

Staff/Director Reports from the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District (FCSWMD)

Jan Ameen, Executive Director of the FCSWMD, delivered quarterly staff reports to the Select Board for review.

Public and Board Member Comments:

David Greenberg noted that the Board and Diana are very busy with activities to further the Town, which he greatly appreciates. He also wanted to let the Board members (and Diana) know that if there is any grants or activities where help is needed, he and others in Town are willing to assist. Jade Mortimer echoed these comments.

Requests for Future Agenda Items:

Update on Hiring Process re: Library Director

No additional action. Updates on future meeting agenda.

Address General Bylaws Enforcement w/ Non-Criminal Disposition; Schedule Fall Special Town Meeting

For future review of articles.

Schedule Joint Meeting with Council on Aging Re: COA Formation, Services & Facilities

Board will likely meet with the COA at one of their upcoming meetings; date and time to be determined.

Correspondence and Select Board Informational Items:

None

Executive Session:

None

Dissolve Meeting:

MOVED: Ben Eastman moved to dissolve the meeting at 6:54 pm. Katie Korby seconded.

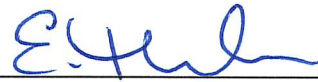
Approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Marjorie Smith
Administrative Assistant

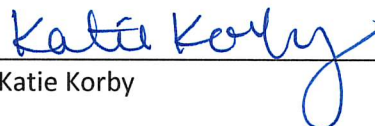
Accepted by the Select Board on 10/28/2025



Emily Thurber - Chair



Benjamin Eastman



Katie Korby

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

Petition for Pole and Wire Locations from Eversource dated 6/18/2025

MOU between FCSWMD and Town of Colrain re: Third Party Inspection of the Town's Municipal Transfer Station

MOU between FCSWMD and Town of Colrain re: Hauling of Recyclables and Hauling and Disposal of Solid Wastes Hauling and Disposal of Bulky Wastes; and Hauling and Disposal of Scrap Metal and Appliances

MOU between FCSWMD and Town of Colrain re: Regional Household Hazardous Waste Collection Events
Cooperative Fire Protection Project Description

Letter from DCR to Kevin Worden II re: 2024 Volunteer Fire Capacity Program Funding

Contract between Town of Colrain and DCR dated 6/18/2025

Memo from Volunteer Fire Capacity Program Coordinator to Fire Chief re: FY2026 VFC Project

Email from Chip Elitzer to Diana Parsons dated 7/12/2025 re: Education Committee Testimony on S407

Letter from Ken Shearer dated 7/9/2025 re: Mailbox Repair Costs Request

Town Administrator Performance Appraisal Considerations – Goals & Objectives ser 7/2/2024 for FY2025

Draft Department Head Performance Appraisal

Draft Town Administrator Goals & Objectives for FY2026

Draft Certificate of Appreciation Presented to Chelsea Jordan-Makely

Draft Revised Personnel Policies and Procedures dated 7/22/2025

Town of Cheshire Smoking Policy

Draft Town of Colrain Highway Superintendent Job Description

Town of Colrain Highway Superintendent Job Description approved 9/27/2022

Email dated 7/10/2025 from Maggie Smith, Administrative Assistant, to Diana Parsons, Town Administrator re: Wood Bank Pictures and Meeting Notes

Wood Bank Pictures

FCSWMD Executive Director's Report dated June 2025

FCSWMD Program Director Report dated May 2025