

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

**MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD
August 26, 2025**

Present Emily Thurber, Chair; Benjamin Eastman; Katie Korby

Others Present: Judson DeCew; Liam Cregan – Franklin Land Trust; Jane Johnson; Karen Hopkins; Bernard Hopkins; Sarah Richardson; Martha Richardson; Kevin Worden I; Joe Slowinski (remote); Ellen Weeks (remote); Marjorie Smith – Administrative Assistant; Diana Parsons – Town Administrator (remote)

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

Acceptance of Conservation Restriction (CR) located at 413 Adamsville Rd donated to Franklin Land Trust by landowner Judson DeCew, Liam Cregan, Land Conservation Specialist, Franklin Land Trust

Liam Cregan briefly explained his request of the Board's signatures on behalf of Judson DeCew.

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to accept and sign the conservation restriction as amended.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Request to be Colrain Representative on the MTRSD 2D8T Steering Committee, Kennedy Strakose-Griffin, 411 Jacksonville Road

Kennedy Strakose-Griffin introduced herself, provided a brief personal history and explained why she would like to serve on the 2D8T Steering Committee. The Board endorsed her joining the committee. Ben questioned her opinion on the consolidation and Kennedy explained that she moved here because of the community school, however, won't let her personal feelings get in the way of what is best for the district and community.

Consent Items:

Review/Approve Warrants & Minutes

Minutes of 5/27/2025, 6/10/2025, 6/24/2025

Warrant PR2603 in the amount of \$23,874.32

Warrant AP2609 in the amount of \$14,467.34

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to approve the minutes of the Select Board for May 27, 2025, as written.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to approve warrant PR2603 and AP2609 as presented.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

New Business:

Request from FRCOG to Support MassDOT Application to the Federal Railroad Administration's Corridor Identification and Development Program for the Northern Tier Passenger Rail; Sign Support Letter

Discussion regarding what the Northern Tier Passenger Rail will provide. Emily read a passage from the draft letter of support.

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to sign the letter of support requested from FRCOG for MassDOT Application to the Federal Railroad Administration's Corridor Identification and Development Program for the Northern Tier Passenger Rail.

Katie Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Notice re Smith Vocational Student Transportation and Tuition Needed for FY26; To be Added to STM Warrant

Diana Parsons explained that she received notification last week regarding a student being accepted to attend Smith Vocational school in September, the tuition cost (\$21,793), transportation cost (\$7,971), the statute regarding Town notification and that the school is expecting payment in October. Diana will reach out to Sheryl Stanton regarding the communication surrounding the notification.

5:00PM – Notice of Public Hearing for Unregistered Motor Vehicles located at 69 Adamsville Road

In accordance with the Town of Colrain General By-Laws, Unregistered Motor Vehicle By-Law, the Select Board of the Town of Colrain will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, August 26, 2025 at 5:00 pm in-person at the Colrain Highway Garage (9 Jacksonville Rd, Colrain, MA) and remotely via Microsoft Teams regarding an application for a special permit for the purpose of storing more than one unregistered motor vehicle at 69 Adamsville Rd, Colrain, MA.

Ben Eastman recused himself from the hearing.

Chair Emily Thurber opened the hearing at 5:00pm. Katie Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Ben Eastman explained his request for a special permit to keep six and a half vehicles at 69 Adamsville Rd. Three vehicles won't be there for more than two calendar years. For the six, two are stripped derby cars, one is for his son to rebuild the engine, one is a jeep, two trucks to fix up and sell or sell as-is, and last is the half a vehicle to remove the engine and then send for scrap.

Abutters Comments:

Martha Richardson has no issue with Ben's plan.

Joe Slowinski lives across the street and supports Ben's application. He has done a good job cleaning up other vehicles. Joe requested the permit provided is for Ben only, for a specific number of vehicles (10 and under), and on a yearly basis that Ben provide evidence of compliance (photos/documentation).

Diana Parsons stated that it is an annual permit.

Karen Hopkins added that Ben is trying to do the right thing.

Chair Emily Thurber closed the hearing at 5:08pm. Katie Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

For comparison, Emily read a few of the conditions on Jamie Hall's permit. Katie and Emily discussed the conditions.

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to approve the unregistered motor vehicle permit with conditions as discussed.

Katie Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

The Board thanked the abutters for their input.

Old Business:

Receive Responses from Chris Curtiss re Questions from 8/12 meeting; Vote on Request for Town Endorsement of Study and Support for Deerfield River and its tributaries to be Designated as a National Wild and Scenic River

The Board tabled discussion because they didn't receive answers from Chris Curtiss prior to the meeting.

Readdress Notice of Outstanding Host Community Municipal Equity Submission; Vote to Adopt Social Equity Plan and Host Agreement Policy (as opposed to Model Bylaw)

Diana Parsons explained that effective May 2024 the Town was to adopt an equity protocol when giving out host community agreements. Legal counsel said that it can be Board policy rather than a by-law. It requires the Board to score the applications when they are received. Diana is waiting for questions she sent to KP Law and hasn't heard back and requested the Board table the discussion until she hears back. The Board agreed to table discussion until questions are answered.

Adopt Final Highway Superintendent Job Description; Re-Address Hiring Committee Formation, Process and Timing; Vote to Approve Advertisement

Diana Parsons made a few minor changes to the task list regarding the administrative items. She drafted and presented the advertisement with a salary range. She also requested removing Nate Gilbert and adding herself to the hiring committee.

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to reform the hiring committee for the Highway Superintendent position to make the committee Ellen Weeks, Diana Parsons, Nick Anzuoni, Chris Lannon and Ben Eastman. Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to update the Highway Superintendent job description as written. Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Discussion on when to advertise for the position, which the Board would like to do immediately.

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to post the job ad as soon as possible. Katie Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Address Transition of Interim Superintendent and Next Steps

Diana explained that Nate submitted the Chapter 90 request for Adamsville Rd and doesn't foresee him needing to do anything else in that position and that she or a member of the Board could sign the Chapter 90 paperwork. Discussion on waiting until further along in the process to make the transition, the tasks he isn't currently doing as interim and receiving stipend for. Diana will share the items so he can make progress. Diana will add the highway department to the next meeting agenda.

Administrator Updates:

HO Cook Forest Fire; Thank you to all Fire (Public Safety) Personnel & EMD for Communications

The Board thanked the Fire Department. Kevin Worden I thanked the community for their support and gave a brief update about the fire.

Update on Use of Emergency Alert System

The alert system was used to notify residents about the fire. There are reports that can be generated to try and clean up the system. A news article is on the website about how to sign up.

Orders to Correct for 6 Greenfield Road

Working with the health agent, building inspector and Town Counsel on getting the property getting cleaned up. Diana explained the history of the clean-up process and prior orders. Legal Counsel recommended getting the health agent involved and taking it to housing court. Shawn and Randy would now like to see the house removed.

Update on Hiring Process re: Library Director

Ellen Weeks provided an update regarding the screening committee and there were seven applicants. They have chosen three finalists and asked if a member of the Select Board would like to attend the interviews. Katie will attend the interviews. Ellen also commented that the meeting will be open to the public, however, the trustees will not be taking public comment.

Information from MTRSD re CCS Abutter Issue

No discussion.

Update on Hiring Laborer/Equipment Operator I

No discussion.

Requests for Future Agenda Items:

Follow Up from Meeting 7/8/25 with Police Chief re: Police Department Staffing, 9/9/25

No discussion.

Schedule Fall Special Town Meeting (11/4/25); Review List of Proposed Articles, 9/9/25

No discussion.

Review FY25 Performance Appraisal for Town Administrator; Adopt FY26 TA Goals & Objectives

Diana will add the topic to the next agenda. Ben and Emily will send their forms to Katie.

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

Emily plans to attend the next COA meeting.

Public and Board Member Comments:

Diana Parsons – Full-time Police Officer Updated

Diana updated the Board that Derek Worden put in his notice. Chris has had a change in his employment and has requested Health Insurance from the Town, and she suggested scheduling a separate meeting with Chris.

Emily Thurber – Wood Bank

Barnhardt donated a gate and Matt Slowinski donated chain link fence with posts. She is waiting for letters regarding the donations for the Board to accept.

Emily Thurber – FRTA Update

Emily attended the Virtual Stakeholder engagement meeting, and they are redoing their 5-year strategic plan. Need to get information about their services and if residents use it or would use. Diana explained that she attended a meeting, which Nina Marti-Anzuoni also attended, Nina was adamant that Colrain couldn't get Demand Response, however, that is not the case. Ben suggested putting out a non-emergency call about the service. Emily summarized the Demand Response process.

Correspondence and Select Board Informational Items:

None

Executive Session:

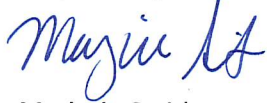
None

Dissolve Meeting:

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to dissolve the meeting at 6:14pm.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,



Marjorie Smith
Administrative Assistant

Accepted by the Select Board on 10/14/2025



Emily Thurber - Chair



Benjamin Eastman



Katie Korby

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

Grant of Conservation Restriction between Judson M. DeCew Jr and Franklin Land Trust, Inc.

Application for a Special Permit for Benjamin Eastman re: Unregistered Motor Vehicles

Certified List of Abutters dated 7/30/2025

Schedule of Departmental Payments to Treasurer dated 8/7/2025

Notice of Public Hearing to Abutters re: Unregistered Motor Vehicle Special Permit

Special Permit for Unregistered Motor Vehicles – Jamie Hall

Letter of Support re: Federal Railroad Administration's Corridor Identification and Development Program for the Northern Tier Corridor dated 8/26/2025

Letter from Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School re: out-of-district tuition dated 4/14/2025

MGL Ch. 74 Sec. 7C

Letter of Support re: National Wild and Scenic River Designation for the Deerfield River dated 8/12/2025

Draft Social Equity Plan and Host Community Agreement Policy

Draft Highway Superintendent Job Description

Draft Highway Superintendent Advertisement

Order to Correct Violations dated 8/14/2025 to Bluebird Real Estate Investing LLC re: 6 Greenfield Rd, Colrain

Settlement Agreement and Mutual Release between the Mohawk Trail Regional School District and Bradley Brigham dated 6/2/2023

Settlement Agreement and Mutual Release between the Mohawk Trail Regional School District and Jocelyn Demuth and Christopher Laroche dated 6/2/2023

Draft Department Head Performance Appraisal