

Town of Colrain
Select Board/MLP Board Meeting
Colrain Highway Garage
9 Jacksonville Road
4:30PM
MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD
December 16, 2025

Present Emily Thurber, Chair; Benjamin Eastman; Katie Korby

Others Present: Dr. Richard Martin – FCTS Superintendent; Michael Slowinski; Bill Dornbush; Nate Gilbert – Highway Superintendent; Marjorie Smith – Administrative Assistant; Diana Parsons – Town Administrator

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

Update re: Franklin County Technical School Building Project: Proposed Design, Projected Costs and Funding Timeline along with Q&A – Dr. Richard Martin, FCTS Superintendent

Dr. Martin presented the different options for renovations to the FCTS current campus or new construction and the estimated costs. He further explained the option that will be presented at a future town meeting, which includes building a new 2-story building, parking, athletic fields and demolition of the existing building, with a total estimated cost of \$246M. He summarized the grants and donations received since 2014 and the two most recent projects (the aviation building and animal science and vet tech program), projected timeline and costs to the Town of Colrain for the new building. Dr. Martin also explained the new lottery admission process and its pros and cons. Discussion on the MSBA process and moving as much of the current equipment to the new building after completion.

New Business:

Meet with Highway Department Staff; Updates from Superintendent, Revisit Discussion re: Shoveling Town Facilities

Nate Gilbert, Highway Superintendent, provided an update on some of the vehicle repairs he has recently completed, and the tree work done around town. Diana Parsons updated that she applied for a grant for a new road grader (total cost of \$450,000), in an amount of \$250,000.

Discussion on snow removal at the library. Emily expressed her thanks for taking care of the plowing at the Wood Bank and Nate will provide a barrel of sand. Mike Slowinski requested the MLP hut be shoveled for the next two months, which Nate agreed.

Diana Parsons reported that the next grant application deadline is January 9, 2026. She plans to apply for a Small Bridge Program grant to fund the design work for the Charlemont Road bridge over Meadow Brook. The cost for the bridge on Adamsville Rd over Sanders Brook is estimated at \$3M, and the Board will need to look toward the future for funding the construction.

Consent Items:

Approve Minutes of 11/18/2025 and 12/2/2025

Warrant AP2624 in the amount of \$35,969.54

Warrant PR2611 in the amount of \$29,203.68

Warrant AP2625 in the amount of \$67,847.88

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to approve the minutes of 11/18/2025 and 12/2/2025 of the Colrain Select Board.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to approve warrants AP2624, PR2611 and AP2625 as presented. Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Appointments and Resignations:

Request for Appointment of Chief Lannon to Colrain Mass in Motion Committee

Diana explained that Chief Lannon has been taking initiative in working with the Council on Aging and other groups in the area. Discussion on a term associated with the position.

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to appoint Chief Lannon to the Colrain Mass in Motion Committee until June 2027.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

New Business:

Set 2026 Annual Town Meeting Date, Second Tuesday in May, 5/5/2026 with Election Date of 5/12/2026

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to set the 2026 Annual Town Meeting date as the second Tuesday in May, 5/5/2026 with Election Date of 5/12/2026.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Offer Received from Town of Heath Select Board re Purchase of Police Cruiser

Discussion on the value of the cruiser. Heath offered \$8,500, which was below the \$11,000 minimum requested. Discussion on an appraisal of the cruiser and the use of Fire Chief's vehicle.

Diana will talk with Nick Anzuoni about the Colrain fire vehicle and the Board tabled discussion until the next meeting.

Accept FY26 Municipal ADA Improvement Grant Award in the amount of \$9,975 from Mass Office on Disability for an Update to the Town's American with Disabilities (ADA) Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan; Sign MOU with FRCOG for Project Scope

Diana explained the last plan was completed in 2004 and needs to be updated. She also proposed contracting with FRCOG.

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to accept the FY2026 Municipal ADA Improvement Grant Award in the amount of \$9,975 and sign the MOU with FRCOG for the project scope.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Sign Contact Signatory Authorization for FY27 FRCOG Highway Bid Process

Diana explained that the Board authorizes her to sign the contract as the Chief Procurement Officer, while Nate Gilbert is involved in providing the information to FRCOG used to do the bids.

MOVED: Katie Korby moved to authorize Diana to be the signatory for the FRCOG Highway Bid Process for FY2027.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Fire Department Fee Schedule

Diana proposed increasing the fire inspection fees effective 1/1/2026 to help cover the Town's costs for the inspections. Currently the entire cost goes to the inspector, while the Town has administrative costs that are not covered. Ken Gilbert is doing the inspections in the interim, as an independent contractor.

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to increase the fire inspection costs as presented effective 1/1/2026.

Katie Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Old Business:

Vote to Ratify Promotion of Lee Wheeler to Highway Foreman effective 12/15/25; Final Job Description and Employee Status Change Form for Review

Discussion on Lee Wheeler accepting the promotion, and he is very happy. Diana explained her opinion on the road condition of Greenfield Rd after the recent storm and looking at what to do regarding the plowing/sanding/salting on the main roads and talking with Nate and Lee about different options for road maintenance.

MOVED: Ben Eastman moved to promote Lee to the highway foreman position for the Town of Colrain effective 12/15/2025.

Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Administrator Updates:

Colrain Sewer District Internal Update Meeting (Not public meeting); Thursday, December 18, 9 am – Katie scheduled to attend

No discussion.

Colrain Sewer District Public Meeting, March 3, 2026, 6 pm at Colrain Central School

No discussion.

Public and Board Member Comments:

Update re: December SB Office Hours, Chair Emily Thurber

Emily Thurber summarized the discussion with Jade Mortimer during the “office hours”. Five people received wood at Wood Bank and a few came during off-hours. Tes Siarnaki has been working with a tree company that has been bringing wood to the wood bank.

Mike Slowinski

At the June 2024 Annual Town Meeting, it was voted to take \$24,000 from technology stabilization to put in firewall upgrades, laptops and computers, and new server door and locking mechanism. The door and locking mechanism have not been completed.

Police administration account – there was money being appropriated, however at the last annual town meeting none was appropriated. Diana explained that it was correct and that Maggie received some of it, currently Chris receives none, and the rest is still in the appropriation. Mike questioned when the time comes to need police details for attaching the broadband to the new poles on East Colrain Rd, will the administrative fee charged be paid from the Broadband enterprise fund to the general fund, which Diana confirmed.

Requests for Future Agenda Items:

None

Correspondence and Select Board Informational Items:

Police Department Update from Chief Lannon

No discussion.

Public and Board Member Comments:

Mike Slowinski

Mike updated the Board that the Broadband pays \$12,000/year for a bond for the poles that is paid to Eversource and Verizon, in addition to the insurance for the poles. There is a bill in the legislature that did not pass so the Town will have to continue to pay the \$12,000.

Correspondence and Select Board Informational Items:

Thank You re: Stuff the Cruiser 2025

No discussion.

Correspondence Received from MSBA re: Application of MTRSD

Further discussion on the Tech School project.

Correspondence Received from Sheryl Stanton, Superintendent re: MSBA Letter

Public and Board Member Comments:

Emily Thurber

Emily explained that Jamie Hall spoke to her regarding someone taking pictures of his house, and he was concerned about why and who it was.

Executive Session:

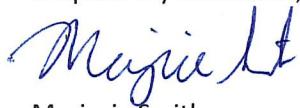
None

Dissolve Meeting:

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to dissolve the meeting at 6:18pm.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

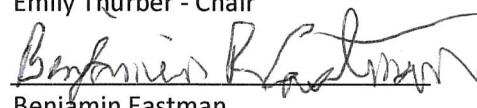


Marjorie Smith
Administrative Assistant

Accepted by the Select Board on 1/13/2024



Emily Thurber - Chair



Benjamin Eastman



Katie Korby

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

Franklin County Technical School Proposed New Facility Project Presentation

Draft Select Board Meeting Minutes – 11/18/2025 and 12/2/2025

Email from Hilma Sumner, Heath Town Coordinator, to Diana Parsons, Colrain Town Administrator, dated 12/9/2025 re: Police Cruiser

Email from Allan Motenko, ED MA Office on Disability, to Diana Parsons, Colrain Town Administrator, dated 12/5/2025 re: Colrain FY2026 Municipal ADA Improvement Grant

FROCG MOU between Town of Colrain and Franklin Regional Council of Governments for ADA Self Evaluation Plan

Email from Laura Phelps, FRCOG, to Diana Parsons, Town Administrator, dated 12/15/2025 re: FY27 Budget Notice and Contract Signatory Authorization

FRCOG FY27 Budget Notice and Contract Signatory Authorization for Collective Highway Bid Program

FRCOG FY27 Highway Bids Process Graphic

Final Highway Foreman Job Description

Employee Status Change Form – Lee Wheeler

Memo from Chief Christopher Lannon dated 12/8/2025 re: November 2025 Police Department Update

Memo from Detective Tucker Jenkins, Shelburne Police Dept., dated 12/8/2025 re: Stuff the Cruiser

Email from Martha Thurber, MTRSD School Committee, to Diana Parsons, Town Administrator, dated 12/12/2025 re: MSBA Invitation to Eligibility Period

Email from Carley Belfield, MSBA, to Superintendent Stanton, MTRSD, dated 12/12/2025 re: MSBA/Mohawk Trail Regional School District: Mohawk Trail Regional Middle/High School Eligibility Period Board Action Letter

Mohawk Trail Regional Middle/High School Eligibility Period Board Action Letter dated 12/12/2025