

Town of Colrain
Select Board/MLP Board Meeting
Colrain Highway Garage
9 Jacksonville Road
4:30PM
MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD
June 30, 2026

Present: Chair Catherine Korby, Select Board Member Benjamin Eastman, Select Board Member Emily Thurber

Absent: None

Others Present: Jim Slowinski (Electrical Inspector); Corinne Coryat (Candidate for State Representative); Lucy Foster (Campaign Manager); Paula Harrison (Treasurer/Collector); Mike Slowinski (MLP Manager); Joe Slowinski (Resident); Chris Lannon (Police Chief) Diana Parsons (Town Administrator); Marjorie Smith (Administrative Assistant)

Call To Order

Chair Korby called the Select Board/MLP Board Meeting to order at 4:30 PM. All three Select Board members were present and the meeting was noted as being recorded.

Introduction & Share Concerns, Corinne Coryat, Candidate For State Representative

Corinne Coryat, candidate for State Representative and former Chief of Staff to Representative Natalie Blais, introduced herself and discussed priorities relevant to the district. Key topics included rural school funding and Chapter 70 reform, regional school transportation reimbursement, PILOT program reform incorporating carbon sequestration, agricultural worker housing, municipal building authority legislation, broadband surety bond legislation (H. 3566), and regional EMS sustainability. Resident Joe Slowinski posed questions regarding the Attorney General's handling of ballot initiatives, the cost of living in Massachusetts, state spending, and the fiscal responsibility of the Colrain Sewer District. Mike Slowinski raised the ongoing issue of surety bond payments to Eversource and Verizon totaling \$54,000 over six years, and the need for 100% regional school transportation reimbursement. Select Board Member Benjamin Eastman inquired about changes to the Chapter 90 formula and Chapter 90 road funding. Town Administrator Diana Parsons noted the importance of H-2A visa workers to local agriculture, the Fish and Wildlife land stewardship concerns, and the pending West County regional EMS earmark.

Consent Items

Approve Minutes – April 28, 2026

Approve Warrant AP2650 In The Amount Of \$98,113.36

Approve Warrant AP2651 In The Amount Of \$16,815.60

Approve Warrant PR2624 In The Amount Of \$25,361.25

Approve Warrant PR2625 In The Amount Of \$35,365.40

Chair Korby moved to approve the Minutes from April 28, 2026. Select Board Member Eastman seconded. Select Board Member Emily Thurber abstained due to absence from that meeting. **The minutes were approved with one abstention.**

Chair Korby moved to approve Warrants AP2650, AP2651, PR2624, and PR2625 as presented. Select Board Member Eastman seconded. Approved unanimously.

Appointments And Resignations

Electrical Inspector

Town Administrator Diana Parsons summarized the determination that the Electrical Inspector position is classified as a statutory public officer and that Jim Slowinski qualifies as an employee under FLSA. It was proposed that Jim be paid on a biweekly basis approximating his average annual earnings of \$3,500, replacing the prior per-inspection fee structure. Jim Slowinski indicated his agreement with the arrangement.

Select Board Member Thurber moved to appoint Jim Slowinski as Electrical Inspector for a term of one year ending June 30, 2027. Chair Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

New Business

Update Re: Town Inspectors, Employees Vs. Independent Contractors; Stipends For Public Officials, Status As Employees

Town Administrator Parsons presented a draft classification plan outlining employee classifications, supervising authority, statutory references, and payroll/insurance status for various Town positions. She confirmed that inspectors classified as statutory public officers who do not meet independent contractor qualifications must be treated as employees and paid in a manner consistent with FLSA requirements. The plan will undergo further counsel review. This item was addressed in conjunction with the Electrical Inspector appointment above.

Approve Appointment Of Assistant Treasurer And Collector As Made By Treasurer/Collector Per MGL c 41, §39A & §39C

Town Administrator Parsons explained that per statute, the appointment of an Assistant Treasurer/Collector is made by the Treasurer/Collector with Select Board approval. Treasurer/Collector Paula Harrison confirmed that the position of Maggie Smith was budgeted for FY27, structured as a split of the existing administrative assistant role with two additional hours, at an anticipated rate of \$28.75 per hour, covering approximately 12–13 hours per week on the Treasurer/Collector side, effective July 1, 2026.

Select Board Member Thurber moved to approve the appointment of Maggie Smith as Assistant Treasurer/Collector as outlined. Chair Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Review Proposed Executive Assistant Job Description For Town Administrator's Office

Town Administrator Parsons presented a proposed Executive Assistant job description, which would formalize Maggie Smith's expanded role, including coordinating custodial outcomes, board and committee clerks, and serving in an acting capacity for the Town Administrator during absences. The description uses the terms "coordinate" and "monitor" rather than "supervise" to preserve existing workplace dynamics. Maggie Smith noted that with meeting attendance included, her available in-office hours would be approximately nine hours per week, which may be insufficient given current workload. The Board discussed the potential for a future lower-level administrative hire under Maggie's coordination. The item was not formally acted upon and will return to the July 7, 2026 agenda with salary comparisons.

Review Proposed Administrative Assistant Job Description For Police Department

Chief Lannon noted the position would allow him to spend more time in the field and that the role does not require law enforcement certification, only CORE certification for records access. He referenced the Shelburne Police Department as a model. Town Administrator Parsons noted the position was budgeted with the intent of hiring, and that salary discussions are needed. The item will return to the July 7, 2026 agenda with budget and salary context. The Board requested Chief Lannon share a community survey he had prepared as an informational update.

Proposal For Weatherization Of Colrain Central School Re: Green Communities Funds

Town Administrator Parsons reported that the Town's Green Communities designation grant balance of approximately \$33,000 expires September 30, 2026. A weatherization project at Colrain Central School totaling approximately \$98,000 had been proposed, with Eversource agreeing to fund \$55,000, leaving a gap of approximately \$10,000 beyond the available grant balance. The school district's process for contributing funds would take several months. MLP Manager Mike Slowinski recommended pivoting to use the Green Communities funds for purchasing and converting streetlights to LEDs and insulating the back wall of the highway garage, noting Colrain owns the streetlights and would directly benefit from those savings. He also noted a remaining balance of approximately \$30,000 in a garage capital account that may be available to supplement. Town Administrator Parsons indicated she would pursue these alternatives and report back.

Request For Town Administrator To Carry FY26 Vacation Time Through 7/3/26

Town Administrator Parsons requested Board approval to carry 6.5 hours of remaining FY26 vacation time through July 3, 2026, consistent with personnel policy requirements for Board approval when carry-over is necessitated by circumstances.

Chair Korby moved to approve the Town Administrator carrying her remaining FY26 vacation time through July 3, 2026. Select Board Member Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Old Business

Sign Host Community Agreement For MA Craft Cannabis

Town Administrator Parsons noted the Host Community Agreement had been finalized with updated dates. The manufacturing license final certification date was left blank pending issuance. She confirmed that per the Cannabis Control Commission, both the cultivation and manufacturing operations may be included in a single HCA.

Chair Korby moved to sign the Host Community Agreement with MA Craft Cannabis. Select Board Member Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Response From Mohawk Trail Regional School District Re Fire Alarm Panel Additional Funding Needed

The Board reviewed correspondence from the Mohawk Trail Regional School District indicating the fire alarm panel at Colrain Central School may require replacement and that the district intended to proceed with the project and invoice the Town. MLP Manager Slowinski expressed concern about the vendor's credibility given prior inaccurate statements and requested the annual fire alarm inspection report as verification. Resident Joe Slowinski noted the vendor has a financial interest in recommending replacement. Select Board Member Eastman emphasized that the Town had made no appropriation for this capital expenditure. Town Administrator Parsons confirmed she would respond to the district, reiterate that no appropriation exists, and request the inspection report. Mike Slowinski offered to research the parts availability question independently.

Administrator Updates

Completed And Sent Purchase Order For Grader

Town Administrator Parsons confirmed the purchase order for the grader was submitted. Grant award information had been received and contracts were expected to be loaded shortly. Expenditure will occur in FY27.

Completed RFP For Hazardous Mitigation Plan Update

Town Administrator Parsons reported that rather than sole-sourcing the Hazardous Mitigation Plan update to the regional planning agency, the Town will issue a competitive RFP for the \$32,000 project, evaluated on rating and price. The RFP was to be issued that week.

Submitted Close Out For Coronavirus State And Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF)

Town Administrator Parsons reported that closeout paperwork for the SLFRF grant had been submitted. The Town received approximately \$434,000 in total funds, with a minor overage of approximately \$4,000–\$5,000 to be addressed on the recap. Confirmation of closeout was pending.

Reminder Of Select Board Meeting Schedule For July (Only One Meeting On 7/7/26)

No discussion.

Reminder Town Office Closed On Monday, July 6 In Observance Of July 4th Holiday

No discussion.

Public And Board Member Comments (Votes Will Not Be Taken)

Joe Slowinski

Resident Joe Slowinski raised a concern regarding the outstanding response to his June 9, 2026 public records request related to the Council on Aging's requirement to sign a form, and noted the COA appointments scheduled for July 7, 2026 make timely resolution important. He expressed concern that the Board had not pressed the Town Administrator for a written opinion from a named state official and stated he felt misled about the basis for the policy. Town Administrator Parsons acknowledged the request is being treated as a public records request and indicated she would provide the information, including emails, to the Board via OneDrive so all parties have access. She noted the Town's legal counsel budget had been overspent by approximately \$10,000 and she had been awaiting July 1 to address further legal questions.

Joe Slowinski requested that in the future, any reference to a state agency opinion be attributed in writing to a named individual so it can be verified. Chair Korby acknowledged the concern and indicated the Board would work to resolve it.

Colrain Sewer District

Chair Korby inquired about the Colrain Sewer District and whether a response had been received following the letter from Town Counsel. Town Administrator Parsons noted that Sewer District attorney had been in contact regarding the permitting process. The district is proceeding to the Planning Board for an ANR and will be seeking building permits. Town Administrator Parsons noted the project may qualify as a public utility purpose under the zoning bylaw and had briefed Building Inspector Shawn Kimberley accordingly.

Highway Superintendent Update

Town Administrator Parsons noted that Highway Superintendent Nate Gilbert had begun managing his own billing and green communities tracking spreadsheet independently.

Requests For Future Agenda Items

Letters Of Interest & Appointments To Council On Aging, 7/7/26

Chair Katie Korby noted that letters of interest from current Council on Aging members had been received and would be compiled for the July 7, 2026 meeting.

End Of Year Transfers Pursuant To M.G.L. c. 44, § 33B, 7/7/26

Town Administrator Parsons noted end-of-year transfers had been reviewed with the Finance Committee, with a few additional items arising from the final warrant. The Finance Committee is scheduled to meet on July 9, 2026 but the Board will act on transfers at the July 7, 2026 meeting first.

Request For Meeting With Sheriff Streeter Re: FCSO Co-Responder Initiative, 8/11/26

Town Administrator Parsons confirmed she is coordinating with the Sheriff's Chief of Staff to schedule a meeting for August 11, 2026.

Town Administrator FY26 Review & Set FY27 Goals & Objectives

No discussion.

Correspondence And Select Board Informational Items (Votes Will Not Be Taken)

Communications Received From Janice Barnes Re COA

Town Administrator Parsons noted the communication included a request for monthly financial statements from the Council on Aging. She clarified that she provides financial reports directly to COA Treasurer Betty Johnson and will continue to do so. She also noted that COA members communicating collectively via group email may constitute a violation of open meeting rules and suggested the matter be discussed with the COA chair.

Town Administrator Parsons also raised the need for the Board to formally accept donations from Town departments before those funds may be expended. She recommended instituting a quarterly process across all departments, particularly the Council on Aging, which regularly receives donations. It was also noted that the Town should begin providing the Board with regular expense summary reports, potentially quarterly, using the VADAR accounting system.

FY25 Audit Materials

Town Administrator Parsons noted the FY25 audit had been completed with no deficiencies. The management letter identified minor items, including matters within the Treasurer/Collector's area and ongoing work to close out historical grant discrepancies. She reported that the majority of previously open grant accounts have been reconciled and closed, and that the FY26 audit is expected to reflect clean records.

Executive Session

No Executive Session was held.

Dissolve Meeting

Chair Katie Korby moved to dissolve the meeting. Select Board Member Eastman seconded.
Approved unanimously.

The meeting was dissolved at 6:48 PM.

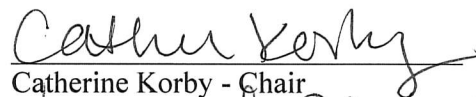
These minutes were created using ClerkMinutes, an AI-powered platform that transcribes meetings, identifies speakers, and generates professional minutes.

Respectfully submitted,

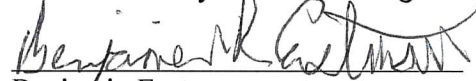


Marjorie Smith
Executive Assistant

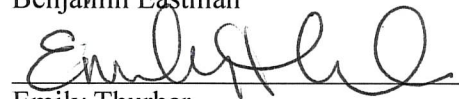
Accepted by the Select Board on 9/22/2024



Catherine Korby - Chair



Benjamin Eastman



Emily Thurber

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

Draft Select Board Minutes 4/28/2026

Letter from Paula Harrison, Collector/Treasurer, to the Select Board dated 6/26/2026 re: Appointment of Assistant Collector/Treasurer

Draft Executive Assistant Job Description

Draft Police Department Administrative Assistant

CET Contract for Energy Efficiency Work re: Colrain Central School Weatherization

Eversource MA Small Business Energy Efficiency Program Application

Host Community Agreement between Town of Colrain and MA Craft Cultivation LLC

Email Correspondence between Diana Parsons, Town Administrator, and Bill Lataille, MTRSD, dated 6/29/2026 re: Fire Alarm Panel at Colrain Central School

Purchase Order dated 6/22/2026 re: CAT Grader Purchase

Milton CAT Proposal for Caterpillar 140 AWD Grader dated 6/15/2026

Correspondence from US Department of the Treasury dated 6/15/2026 re: SLFRF Closeout

Letter from Janice Barnes, COA Chair, to the Town Administrator and Select Board dated 6/25/2026 re: Request for Written Communications Regarding Council on Aging Matters

Letter from Janice Barnes, COA Chair, to the Town Administrator and Select Board dated 6/25/2026 re: Request for Monthly Financial Reports

FY2025 Audit Report from Scanlon & Associates