

Town of Colrain
Select Board/MLP Board Meeting
Colrain Highway Garage
9 Jacksonville Road
4:30 PM
MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD
July 7, 2026

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

Absent: None

Others Present: Mike Slowinski (resident); Betty Johnson (Council on Aging); Chris Lannon (Police Chief); Diana Parsons (Town Administrator); Marjorie Smith (Executive Assistant)

4:30 p.m. Call to Order

Chair Catherine Korby called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. All three Select Board members were noted as present, and the meeting was noted as being recorded.

Consent Items

Approve Minutes of May 12, 2026

Approve Warrant AP2652 FY26 in the amount of \$40,651.84

Approve Warrant AP2701 FY27 in the amount of \$222,526.73

Chair Korby moved to approve the minutes from May 8, 2026 and May 12, 2026. Select Board Member Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Chair Korby moved to approve Warrants AP2652 for FY26 and AP2701 for FY27 as presented. Select Board Member Benjamin Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Appointments and Resignations

Requests for Appointments/Letters of Interest Received for Council on Aging; Appointments to Three, Two and One Year Terms

Chair Korby provided background on the Council on Aging (COA) reconstitution, noting that the original COA bylaw had been found non-compliant with state registration requirements and that a Special Town Meeting corrected the bylaw, updating membership numbers and terms. Attorney General approval was subsequently received in spring 2026.

The Board approved COA appointments as follows:

- One-year terms (expiring June 30, 2027): Betty Johnson, Elaine Stanley, Susan Slowinski, Richard Herzig, and Amy Herzig.
- Two-year terms (expiring June 30, 2028): Kathy Phelps, Gail Sinistore, and Melinda Herzig. Janice's appointment is pending her letter.
- Three-year terms (expiring June 30, 2029): Doni Beauregard, Glenda Wood, Jan Jones, Joel McCloud, and John Yannis.

In total, 13 members were appointed. Chair Korby highlighted plans to appoint a fourteenth member upon receiving interest from Janice. The COA bylaw duties were shared, and next steps for appointees

include coordinating with the Town Clerk for their oath and completing conflict of interest training. A discussion clarified that previously unadvertised COA events prompted financial disclosure concerns. Betty Johnson ensured that COA activities are now well-publicized, accessible to residents. Town Administrator Parsons noted a broader issue with the Town's donation acceptance process, planning for a regular quarterly reporting procedure to address the gap.

Chair Korby moved to appoint the following folks to a 1-year term to expire June 30th, 2027, to the Council on Aging: Betty Johnson, Elaine Stanley, Susan Slinski, Richard Herzig, and Amy Herzig. For a 2-year term to end June 30th, 2028, I would like to appoint Kathy Phelps, Gail Sinistore, and Melinda Herzig. For a 3-year term to end June 30th, 2029: Doni Beauregard, Glenda Wood, Jan Jones, Joel McLod, and John Yannis. Select Board Member Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

New Business

End of Year Transfers Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 44, §33B

Town Administrator Parsons reported that the Finance Committee had voted a first round of end-of-year transfers at their meeting of June 23, 2026, as outlined in the Board's packet. Two additional transfers — for the cemetery account and the Smith Vocational assessment — had not yet been reviewed by the Finance Committee due to timing, but required Board approval given that the next regular meeting is not until August.

Chair Korby moved to transfer funds as presented with the concurrence of the Finance Committee as voted at their meeting on June 23, 2026 and as outlined in the packet. Select Board Member Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Chair Korby moved to transfer funds as outlined for the cemetery account and the Smith Vocational assessment. Select Board Member Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Review and Address Correspondence Received from Emily Johnson

The Board reviewed a series of correspondence and public records requests received from non-resident Emily Johnson. Town Administrator Parsons noted that many of the requests are being processed through the public records repository and that the Records Access Officer, Town Clerk Emma Coburn, should be the primary point of contact for all such requests going forward.

Select Board Member Emily Thurber disclosed that she had voted on matters related to the Catamount Country Store's liquor license without recusing herself, which she acknowledged was an error. She confirmed she has since spoken with the State Ethics Board and will recuse herself from any future votes involving the store, including liquor and common victualler license matters.

Select Board Member Eastman noted he had completed a substantial amount of training and would compile a record of completed trainings in response to inquiries. Resident Mike Slowinski recommended that all Board members complete the harassment and discrimination training, noting it addresses behaviors — such as eye contact avoidance and expressions perceived as dismissive — that can affect public perception during meetings.

The Board agreed that correspondence received the day of the meeting required additional review before substantive response and that outstanding public records requests may resolve many of the concerns raised. The Board expressed a willingness to meet with the correspondent in person should she be open to it in the future.

Old Business

Review Proposed Executive Assistant Job Description for Town Administrator's Office with Budget & Wage Information

Town Administrator Parsons presented the proposed Executive Assistant position for the Town Administrator's office, noting that current Administrative Assistant Maggie Smith had been budgeted for 52 hours per pay period in FY27, an increase of two hours, at a negotiated rate of \$28.75 per hour. The budgeted cost is split across the Town Administrator's budget and the Town office support budget.

Select Board Member Thurber moved to approve the Executive Assistant job description as presented. Chair Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Select Board Member Thurber moved to set the pay rate for the Executive Assistant at \$28.75 per hour. Chair Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Review Proposed Administrative Assistant Job Description for Police Department with Budget and Wage Information

Town Administrator Parsons presented an administrative assistant position for the Police Department at a proposed starting rate of \$23.94 per hour, with a maximum of 10 hours per week. Police Chief Chris Lannon outlined that the position would cover Monday evening office hours and assist with operational budget management, billing, and related administrative functions, with the goal of freeing him for field and community duties.

Select Board Member Eastman expressed reservations about creating a new position given the Town's budgetary constraints and the stated goal at Town Meeting of keeping budgets tight. He also raised concern about the precedent of prioritizing administrative staffing over sworn officer capacity. Town Administrator Parsons and Chair Korby acknowledged the concern but noted that the position is funded within the existing police budget, largely made possible by current vacancy in officer hours, and that the administrative workload placed on the Chief is unsustainable. Chief Lannon confirmed that recruitment for officers has been posted three times with two wage increases over two years without success, reflecting a regional challenge.

Select Board Member Thurber moved to approve the Administrative Assistant job description for the Police Department as presented. Chair Korby seconded. **Approved 2-1, with Select Board Member Eastman opposed.**

Select Board Member Thurber moved to set the pay rate for the Police Department Administrative Assistant at an hourly rate of \$23.94. Chair Korby seconded. **Approved 2-1, with Select Board Member Eastman opposed.**

Regarding the hiring process, Town Administrator Parsons noted that a public advertisement would be placed, applications would be reviewed by the Chief and herself, and interviews would be conducted with at least one Board member participating. The Board noted the absence of an active Personnel Committee and discussed the Select Board's role as the de facto personnel authority in that circumstance.

Administrator Updates

Communication with MTRSD re: Appropriation for Fire Alarm Panel

Town Administrator Parsons informed the board that no funds were allocated for the fire alarm panel replacement at Colrain Central School and requested a fire inspection report from MTRSD. Although the Fire Chief initially seemed implicated in follow-up communication, it was confirmed his knowledge was indirect and he was awaiting an opinion from the electrical inspector to confirm if replacement is necessary before the Board decides on a special appropriation. Resident Mike Slowinski highlighted that the building inspector holds jurisdiction over fire alarms and mentioned the quick

availability of panel parts, while Chair Korby plans to discuss the matter with Building Inspector Shawn Kimberley.

Public Records Requests Received, Repository Created

Town Administrator Parsons informed the Board about the creation of a shared drive repository for tracking and organizing public records requests, which is accessible to the public. Resident Mike Slowinski inquired about the update of public records access officer designation and guidelines from the previous administrator to Parsons, and she acknowledged the guidelines need reviewing and updating. Select Board Member Thurber and the Board agreed that the existing guidelines, which reference January 2017, might require updating, and Parsons confirmed she would address this.

Public and Board Member Comments

None

Requests for Future Agenda Items

Town Administrator Review & FY27 Goals & Objectives, 8/11/26

No discussion

Request for Meeting with Sheriff Streeter re: FCSO Co-Responder Initiative, 8/11/26

No discussion.

Finance Committee

Town Administrator Parsons also noted that a joint meeting with the Finance Committee should be scheduled for early September to begin discussion of the FY28 budget, given anticipated fiscal constraints.

Correspondence and Select Board Informational Items

FCTS Vote for Debt Authorization for Franklin County Technical School Building Project, 10/6/26

Town Administrator Parsons noted that the district-wide debt authorization vote is scheduled for October 6, 2026, and that it is a majority vote across the entire district rather than a per-town vote. Debt service obligations to Colrain are anticipated to begin in small amounts in FY28, grow modestly in FY29, and reach approximately \$215,000 annually beginning in FY30, subject to the vote passing.

MSBA Materials for MTRSD; Timeline for Feasibility, Vote by March 29, 2027

Town Administrator Parsons noted that MTRSD has entered the eligibility period for an MSBA feasibility study, which will require a vote by all member towns by March 29, 2027. Colrain's portion of the feasibility study cost has not yet been determined. A meeting for Select Boards, Finance Committees, and Town Administrators across the district is expected to be scheduled in early September to provide details in advance of the district vote.

Executive Session

At 6:03pm Chair Korby announced that the Board would enter Executive Session pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, §21(a)(1), to discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual and that the Board did not intend to return to open session.

Chair Korby moved to enter Executive Session. Select Board Member Eastman seconded.

Roll call vote: Catherine Korby — Aye; Emily Thurber — Aye; Benjamin Eastman — Aye.
Approved unanimously.

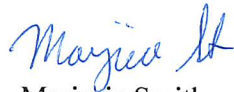
Dissolve Meeting

Chair Korby moved to dissolve tonight's meeting. Select Board Member Thurber seconded.
Approved unanimously.

The meeting was dissolved at 6:20 p.m.

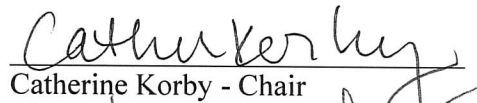
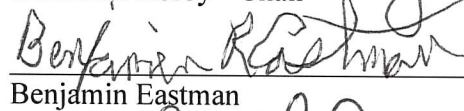
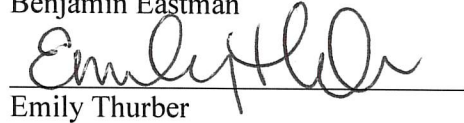
These draft minutes were created using ClerkMinutes, an AI-powered platform that transcribes meetings, identifies speakers, and generates professional minutes.

Respectfully submitted,



Marjorie Smith
Administrative Assistant

Accepted by the Select Board on 9/22/2026


Catherine Korby - Chair
Benjamin Eastman
Emily Thurber

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

Email from Maggie Smith, Administrative Assistant, to the Select Board dated 7/1/2026 re: COA Letters of Interest

Letter of Interest from Melinda Herzig re: COA Appointment

Letter of Interest from Susan Slowinski re: COA Appointment

Letter of Interest from Richard Herzig and Amy Herzig re: COA Appointment

Letter of Interest from Michael Slowinski re: COA Appointment

Letter of Interest from John Yannis re: COA Appointment

Letter of Interest from Joel McCloud re: COA Appointment

Letter of Interest from Jan Jones re: COA Appointment

Letter of Interest from Glenda Wood re: COA Appointment

Letter of Interest from Gail Sinistore re: COA Appointment

Letter of Interest from Elaine Stanley re: COA Appointment

Letter of Interest from Doni Beauregard re: COA Appointment

Letter of Interest from Betty Johnson re: COA Appointment

Letter of Interest from Kathy Phelps re: COA Appointment

Resignation Letter from Russell Barnes re: COA Appointment

Resignation Letter from Kathy Stinem re: COA Appointment

Letter from the COA Members to the Select Board dated 5/1/2026 re: COA Recommendation for Appointments

FY2026 Year End Transfer Worksheet dated 7/7/2026

FY2026 Year End Transfer Worksheet dated 7/9/2026

Email from Emily Johnson to Katie Korby dated 7/1/2026 re: Select Board Review of Council on Aging Concerns

Email from Emily Johnson to Katie Korby dated 7/1/2026 re: Laws to Review Regarding the Council on Aging

Correspondence between Emily Johnson and Katie Korby dated 7/1/2026 re: Invitation to a Public Meeting and Request for a Response to her Concerns

Draft Executive Assistant Job Description

Town of Colrain FY27 Salary Grid

Memo from Franklin County Technical School dated 6/12/2026 re: District Wide Election

MSBA Initial Compliance Certification re: Mohawk Trail Regional Middle/High School

Email from Jennifer Flynn, MSBA, to Sheryl Stanton, MTRSD Superintendent, dated 6/17/2026 re: MTRSD MSBA Eligibility Period

Letter from MSBA dated 12/12/2025 re: MTRSD Acceptance into MSBA Eligibility Period