

Town of Colrain
Select Board/MLP Board Meeting
Colrain Highway Garage
9 Jacksonville Road
4:30 PM
MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD
August 11, 2026

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

Absent: None

Others Present: Sheriff Lori Streeter (Franklin County Sheriff's Office); Nicole Guertin, Chief of Staff (Franklin County Sheriff's Office); Chris Lannon (Colrain Police Chief); Robbie Murphy (Friends for the Preservation of the Colrain Historic District); Mike Slowinski; Joe Slowinski; Shannon Reade; Diana Parsons (Town Administrator); Marjorie Smith (Administrative Assistant)

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.

Introduction to Franklin County Sheriffs' Office Co-Responder Initiative, Regional Behavioral Health Program

Sheriff Lori Streeter and her Chief of Staff presented the Franklin County Sheriff's Office Co-Responder Initiative. Sheriff Streeter clarified that the program is not a traditional co-response model but rather an aftercare initiative developed in response to requests from local law enforcement chiefs. The Chief of Staff described the program as providing licensed mental health clinicians and case managers who would follow up on social service concerns identified by officers — including elder welfare, hoarding, and non-crisis mental health situations — within 24 to 72 hours of the officer's initial contact, using unmarked vehicles and operating under HIPAA compliance.

Sheriff Streeter emphasized that the Sheriff's Office would only operate in towns upon invitation from local chiefs and that services would be provided at no cost to the Town, leveraging existing staff. Chief Chris Lannon confirmed that a prior ride-along program had been dissolved in June due to insufficient call volume, and that this new initiative would complement law enforcement's role as initial responders. A planning meeting with relevant chiefs and administrators was described as forthcoming.

Chair Catherine Korby expressed support for the initiative. The Board had no further questions.

Update re: Development of West County Regional Ambulance Service

This item was rescheduled to the August 25 meeting.

Administrator Updates

Colrain 9/11 Memorial Flag Lighting Event Plan for Friday, September 11, 2026

Robbie Murphy provided an update on the planned 9/11 Memorial Flag Lighting Event scheduled for Friday, September 11, 2026, from 5:30 to 6:30 PM at the corner of Coombs Hill Road and Greenfield Road. The event will focus on honoring first responders, including a traditional bell-ringing ceremony for firefighters lost in the line of duty. Attendance is expected to be between 100 and 200 people.

Outreach is being kept within local channels such as the Colrain Clarion to avoid creating a large-scale public event requiring extensive Town management. Pine Hill will provide parking and shuttle service.

Chief Chris Lannon confirmed he is drafting a traffic management plan, including use of breakdown lanes for emergency vehicles and a travel lane for shuttles, to be completed upon his return from vacation.

Consent Items

Approve Meeting Minutes for June 9, June 16 and June 23, 2026

Approve Warrant AP2653 FY26 in the amount of \$28,959.15

Approve Warrant AP2654 FY26 in the amount of \$6,101.55

Approve Warrant PR2626 FY26 in the amount of \$44,788.26

Approve Warrant AP2702 FY27 in the amount of \$222,526.73

Approve Warrant AP2703 FY27 in the amount of \$491,626.32

Approve Warrant AP2704 FY27 in the amount of \$51,262.99

Approve Warrant AP2705 FY27 in the amount of \$24,113.84

Approve Warrant AP2706 FY27 in the amount of \$23,544.87

Approve Warrant PR2701 FY27 in the amount of \$25,645.36

Approve Warrant PR2702 FY27 in the amount of \$28,929.62

Chair Korby moved to approve the meeting minutes for June 9, June 16, and June 23, 2026. Select Board Member Benjamin Eastman seconded. Approved unanimously.

Chair Korby moved to approve Warrants AP2653, AP2654, PR2626, AP2702, AP2703, AP2704, AP2705, AP2706, PR2701, and PR2702. Select Board Member Eastman seconded. Approved unanimously.

Appointments and Resignations

Recommendation for Appointment Received from COA, Michael Slowinski

Chair Catherine Korby stated that she did not intend to appoint Michael Slowinski to the Council on Aging (COA), citing guidance from the Massachusetts COA recommending that members of the same household not serve on the same committee together, as Michael Slowinski and his spouse are both associated with the COA.

Michael Slowinski objected, characterizing the decision as discriminatory and inequitable, noting instances where the Board had approved similar household arrangements in other Town positions. He argued that his skills in digital equity work would be an asset to the COA and that being placed in a subcommittee role would not be equivalent to full membership.

Select Board Member Eastman and Select Board Member Emily Thurber suggested that a subcommittee role could be a valuable platform and noted the importance of having qualified individuals in those positions. Chair Korby affirmed support for Michael Slowinski's digital equity work but maintained her position regarding the appointment. Michael Slowinski subsequently announced his intention to submit his resignation as MLP Manager effective the following morning.

No appointment was made.

New Business

Accept Departmental Donations per MGL Chapter 44, Sec 53A

Town Administrator Diana Parsons presented a summary of departmental donations on file as of the end of FY26, along with FY27 donations requiring acceptance, including a \$2,000 highway department donation and a \$1,740 Council on Aging gift. Diana also noted that historical COA donation expenditures had been tracked collectively rather than by restricted category and indicated that staff would work to reconcile records over time.

Chair Korby moved to accept a gift to the Highway Department in the amount of \$2,000. Select Board Member Thurber seconded. Approved unanimously.

Chair Korby moved to accept the Council on Aging gift in the amount of \$1,740. Select Board Member Thurber seconded. Approved unanimously.

Chair Korby moved to accept gifts as presented in the total amount of \$2,908.45. Select Board Member Eastman seconded. Approved unanimously.

Vote to Execute and Sign MOUs for Franklin County Solid Waste Management District; Household Hazardous Waste Event, Third Party Inspection of Transfer Station, and Hauling

Diana Parsons described the three MOUs: one for the regional household hazardous waste collection event at the Orange Transfer Station, one for third-party inspection of the Town's closed landfill, and one for hauling services.

Chair Korby moved to accept the MOUs for the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District. Select Board Member Eastman seconded. Approved unanimously.

Sign Letter to State re: Special Legislative Act, Differences Acts vs Town Meeting Votes

Diana Parsons reported that Senator Mark's office had identified non-substantive language discrepancies between Town Meeting-authorized articles and the language in House bills H4846 and H4848, currently at third reading. She noted that the town's own special town meeting articles had authorized the Select Board to approve such non-substantive differences. The Board reviewed the letter and signed it.

Chair Korby moved that, according to Select Board articles 3 and 4 of the November 4, 2025 Special Town Meeting, the Colrain Select Board hereby approves the differences between the language authorized by Town Meeting and the language contained in H4846 and H4848 as filed, and respectfully requests that both bills proceed in their present form. Select Board Member Thurber seconded. Approved unanimously.

Old Business

Vote to Execute and Chair to Sign MOU with FRCOG for Planning & Technical Services for Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

Diana Parsons described the MOU with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) for planning and technical services related to the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan update, funded by a grant of approximately \$32,000. She noted that the Town — not FRCOG — is the grant manager, and that a qualified committee including the Police Chief, Fire Chief, Emergency Management Director, Highway Superintendent, Board of Health Chair, and Town Administrator would oversee deliverables.

Joe Slowinski raised concerns about FRCOG's performance on a prior sewer district project and questioned whether the Town had vetted FRCOG's quality of services. Diana responded that this type of planning update is well within FRCOG's established expertise, having been conducted repeatedly across its 26 member towns, and distinguished it from the more novel sewer district work. The Board acknowledged the concern and indicated it would maintain oversight throughout the grant period.

Chair Korby moved to sign the MOU with FRCOG for planning and technical services for the Hazard Mitigation Plan update. Select Board Member Thurber seconded. Approved unanimously.

Appointments and Resignations

Request for Appointment to Personnel Committee, Shannon Reade

Shannon Reade introduced herself as a Colrain native currently serving as Director of Administrative Services for a nonprofit supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, with approximately six years of experience in human resources management. The Board expressed enthusiasm for her background.

Chair Korby moved to appoint Shannon Reade to the Personnel Committee for a term ending June 30, 2029. Select Board Member Eastman seconded. Approved unanimously.

Administrator Updates

Meeting and Emails re: Small Bridge Program (SBP) for Adamsville Road over Sanders Brook

Diana Parsons expressed significant frustration with the ongoing delays in the Small Bridge Program design for the Adamsville Road bridge over Sanders Brook, which has been stagnant with BSC since 2022. Despite recent meetings, no timeline has been provided, and the bridge is at risk of closure due to worsening conditions, which could cause major detours for residents. The Board supported drafting a stern letter to MassDOT, with Chair Korby suggesting additional letters from local property owners to emphasize the urgency.

Meeting with Division of Fish & Wildlife and Senator Mark's Office re: South Green River Rd.

Diana Parsons and Chief Chris Lannon discussed unauthorized use and parking issues at the Wildlife Management Area along South Green River Road with Division of Fish and Wildlife staff. The right-of-way, approximately three rods wide, sees illegal parking on Town-owned land, limiting Fish and Wildlife's ability to fund barriers. Solutions considered include boulders, fencing, trees, and a seasonal parking bylaw. Joe Slowinski also offered to donate rocks from his property.

Contracts Signed for Unpaved Rural Roads Grant for Grader Purchase

Diana Parsons confirmed that contracts have been signed for the Unpaved Rural Roads Grant for the grader purchase and that a purchase order has been submitted pending receipt of funds.

RFP re MVP 2.0 Seed Project Implementation

Diana Parsons reported that the final RFP for the MVP 2.0 Seed Project Implementation was posted to the Town website and will appear in the newspaper the following day. The project, shared between Colrain and Charlemont with \$100,000 in total grant funding, aims to establish a resilient neighborhood network to improve community preparedness and mutual support during climate events and emergencies. Diana indicated the Town is seeking 6 to 12 neighborhood leaders and encouraged community members to consider involvement.

Green Communities Grant Update

Diana Parsons reported that the scope of the school weatherization project has been reduced to fit within available funding, and the rescope plan has been submitted to CET and Eversource for review. Green Communities indicated a potential extension beyond the September 30 deadline if the project is on track. The timeline is being managed carefully given the upcoming return of students to school.

CCS Fire Alarm Panel Replacement

Diana Parsons summarized ongoing uncertainty about whether the Colrain Central School fire alarm panel needs full replacement. The district's vendor asserts replacement is necessary; the Town's electrical inspector believes parts may be obtainable. Select Board Member Eastman requested that both the Electrical Inspector and the Fire Chief be invited to present their positions to the Board directly. Diana agreed to arrange that meeting.

Tree Removal on Franklin Hill Rd.

Diana Parsons reported that a complaint was received regarding tree removal on Franklin Hill Road during her absence. The matter was reviewed with Highway Superintendent, Nate Gilbert, and Diana outlined the requirements of Chapter 87 regarding public shade tree removal. She indicated that Nate will pause further removals on that road until the Board and relevant staff align on the definition of a public shade tree and the appropriate process, including whether a public hearing is required. The Board was advised that four trees had been removed, and that the action was taken for operational reasons related to the S-curve. Diana indicated a communication plan for future planned tree removal would be developed.

Research re: Dissolve vs Adjourn for Board/Committee Meetings

Diana Parsons reported that research conducted with staff confirmed that "dissolve" is the proper term to conclude a Town Meeting, while "adjourn" is the correct term for Board and Committee meetings per Robert's Rules of Order. She noted that the formal end of a meeting occurs when the Chair states that the meeting has adjourned.

Public and Board Member Comments

Joe Slowinski - Public Records Request: Joe Slowinski inquired about the status of a public records request. Diana Parsons acknowledged she had not formally responded in writing and indicated she would share relevant documents, noting the available records are not directly responsive to the request. Select Board Member Eastman reported he had contacted the State Ethics Commission on his own initiative but was advised he would need authorization from the Council on Aging Board to inquire on their behalf, and indicated he would pursue that step.

Mike Slowinski raised a broader concern about the interpretation of a conflict of interest statute related to the COA meals program and the adequacy of the Board's oversight of the Town Administrator's guidance on the matter. He requested to see the basis for the interpretation provided and expressed disappointment at the pace of resolution. Diana Parsons provided additional context regarding the origin of the analysis, including a prior personal ethics inquiry she had made and a COA email confirming meals were not publicly advertised. The Board acknowledged the concern and committed to sharing available documentation.

Laurie Francis - Wood Bank Update: Laurie Francis reported that the Colrain Wood Bank has received four donations to date and is on track to open in October. The Board expressed support.

Laurie Francis - Colrain Food For All: Laurie Francis reported that fundraising efforts have been successful, including a house concert and an event at Incandescent Brewing, and that food pantry pop-up distributions are drawing increasing attendance. A potential partnership space at Mohawk Trail Regional High School is being explored.

Emily Thurber - School Building Committee: Select Board Member Emily Thurber reported receiving an invitation to join the regional school building committee and indicated she would share the email with the Board for discussion regarding a potential formal liaison appointment.

Ben Eastman - Boulders/Rock Acquisition for Town Use: Select Board Member Ben Eastman noted a prior concern raised by the Highway Superintendent about Town trucks entering private property to collect donated materials and the associated liability. He suggested that a disclosure or liability waiver be established before the Town accepts donated rocks from private property.

Maggie Smith - Executive Assistant Appointment: Maggie Smith noted it is unclear whether a formal vote appointing her as Executive Assistant was taken at a prior meeting when the job description was approved, and requested the Board confirm or take that action at a future meeting.

Diana Parsons - COA Service Incentive Grant: Diana Parsons announced that the Town received a field demonstration/service incentive grant for a congregate meal program in partnership with Colrain Food for All. She indicated she would bring this to the COA at their next meeting and place it on the next Select Board agenda.

Diana Parsons - Mass In Motion Surveys: Diana Parsons noted plans to compile and analyze the Mass In Motion survey data.

Requests for Future Agenda Items

Meeting re: FCTS Vote for Building Construction, 8/19, 6 pm, Buckland Town Hall, upstairs

Select Board Members Eastman and Thurber confirmed attendance. Diana Parsons indicated the meeting would be posted as a Select Board meeting due to the potential for information relevant to Board business. Chair Korby is unable to attend.

Town Administrator Review & FY27 Goals & Objectives, 8/25

Diana Parsons confirmed she will prepare a draft of the goals and objectives form for the August 25 meeting.

MTRSD Request for Meeting to Update 2D8T, 9/22/26

Diana Parsons confirmed the meeting is scheduled for September 22, 2026.

Correspondence and Select Board Informational Items

Communications to/from Council on Aging

Notification of Covenant for Woodslawn Farm, 152 Wilson Hill Road, 209 Acres Land Protected in MDAR Farm Viability Enhancement Program (FVEP)

2D8T, July/August 2026 Update

MMA's Ongoing Activities on Colrain Behalf

PILOT Listening Session, Information and Input

Diana Parsons indicated she had requested a parcel-level open space protection map from FRCOG's Ryan Cleary. She noted a right of first refusal action for 66 Reils Lane would be on the next agenda.

Governor & LT Governor Letter to Local Officials

Invitation to First Day at Colrain Central School, 9/2/26, 8:30 am-10 am

These items were noted for the record. Diana Parsons confirmed she and Chair Korby plan to attend the First Day of School event on September 2.

Adjourn Meeting

Chair Korby moved to adjourn tonight's meeting. Select Board Member Eastman seconded.
Approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:48 PM.

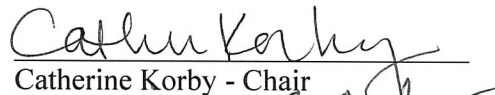
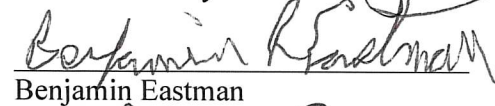
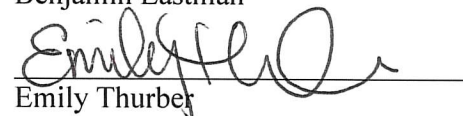
These draft minutes were created using ClerkMinutes, an AI-powered platform that transcribes meetings, identifies speakers, and generates professional minutes.

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 6/9/2026

Draft Select Board Minutes 6/16/2026

Draft Select Board Minutes 6/23/2026

Letter of Interest from Shannon Reade re: Personnel Committee

Recommendation Email from Amy Herzig, COA Chair, dated 7/29/2026 re: Mike Slowinski COA Appointment

FY2026 Ledger History for Donation Account Balances

FY2027 Ledger History for Donation Account Balances

FCSWMD MOU re: Hazardous Waste Collection Events

FCSWMD MOU re: Third Party Inspection of the Transfer Station

FCSWMD MOU re: Hauling and Disposal of Solid Waste, Hauling and Disposal of Bulky Waste, and Hauling and Disposal of Scrap Metal and Appliances

MOU between Town of Colrain and Franklin Regional Council of Governments re: Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

Email Correspondence between Diana Parsons, Town Administrator, and Mark Devylder, MA DOT, dated 7/30/2026 re: Small Bridge Adamsville Rd over Sanders Brook

Colrain 9/11 Flag Memorial Event Planning for Friday September 11, 2026

Request for Proposals MVP 2.0 Seed Project Implementation Consultant

MA Citizens Guide to Annual Town Meeting re: Adjourn vs Dissolve

What are the basic rules for adjournment under Robert's Rules? Article

Email from Katie Korby, Select Board Chair, to Amy Herzig, COA Chair, dated 8/6/2026 re: Response to questions from the COA and Request to be added to the COA Agenda

Email from Amy Herzig, COA Chair, to Diana Parsons, Town Administrator, dated 8/6/2026 re: COA Donations

Letter to COA Members from Colrain Select Board re: Collaboration between COA and Select Board and Questions asked of the COA

Correspondence from MDAR to Select Board dated 7/9/2026 re: Covenant on 152 Wilson Hill Rd

2D8T July/August 2026 Update

MMA Fiscal 2027 Dues Newsletter

Email from Caroline Elmendorf, Deputy Chief of Staff EOAF, dated 7/25/2026 re: PILOT Listening Session

PILOT Program for State Owned Land July 2026 Public Listening Session Presentation

Letter from Governor Maura Healey to Municipal Leaders dated 7/21/2026