

Town of Colrain
Select Board/MLP Board Meeting
Colrain Highway Garage
9 Jacksonville Road
5:00 PM

**MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD
April 30, 2024**

Present: Benjamin Eastman, Chair; W. Thomas Griffin (arrived at 5:17pm); Emily Thurber

Others Present: Thomas Hutcheson; Marjorie Smith, Administrative Assistant

Chair Ben Eastman called the meeting to order at 5:05pm.

Appointments:

Thomas Hutcheson – Town Administrator Candidate Interview

The three Select Board members alternated asking questions of the candidate, including his reason for applying for the position, current knowledge of Colrain, duties and communication between the Select Board and Town Administrator, town finances and budget process, current experience as Town Administrator with grants, managing department heads, social media, and performance reviews.

Mr. Hutcheson explained that he would like to work back in Franklin County and was impressed with the financial state of the town. His knowledge of Colrain pertained to the issues facing the sewer district, number of bridges and bringing in money to maintain them, total number of road miles, and declining student enrollment and the school budget. He also explained his experience applying for and obtaining grants, brief knowledge of Colrain's budget based on DOR's website and last year's town report. Brief discussion on current budget process.

He explained that he takes direction from the Select Board, would be interested in taking on any authority the Board would like him to, comfortable giving guidance regarding the Select Board meeting process, and can reach out to other groups for specific questions if he isn't familiar. He further described his process for putting together the agenda and communicating with the Select Board members.

Mr. Hutcheson described his process for managing and working with department heads, which varies depending on the person because everyone is different. He finds it better to try and work with the people and use gentle persistence rather than ordering the person around. He also has experience working with a "strong" fire chief and can act as a resource for that person.

When asked about his view on social media, he replied that in general it is more trouble for the town to have its own page. He has implemented a Town newsletter in his current position that residents can sign up for as a way to keep the public informed. Mr. Hutcheson also discussed the use of a pre-town meeting discussion to talk about certain articles on the warrant.

Mr. Hutcheson explained how he interacts with and answers questions from residents.

Regarding performance reviews, he answered that in a small town it is best to address performance issues immediately and in a conversation style. He is willing to do them annually but would rather on a semi-annual or quarterly basis.

Mr. Hutcheson directed a few questions to the Select Board, as to who the Town Administrator's direct reports are, the process for appointing people to committees, representative to FRCOG, staffing issues and the major issues according to the Select Board.

Discussion on his starting timeline should he be hired.

The members of the Board expressed their initial thoughts on the interview and received input from some of the members of the Town Administrator Search Committee.

New Business:

None

Old Business:

None

Unanticipated:

None

Town Administrator Updates:

None

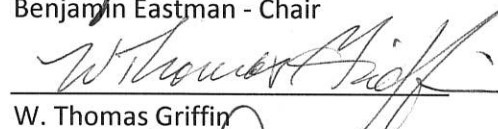
MOVED: Thom Griffin moved to dissolve the meeting at 7:13pm.
Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,



Marjorie Smith
Administrative Assistant

Accepted by the Select Board on 5/7/2024


Benjamin Eastman - Chair
W. Thomas Griffin
Emily Thurber

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

Thomas Hutcheson Cover Letter and Resume

Summary of References for Thomas Hutcheson

Interview Questions from the Ad-Hoc Town Administrator Search Committee

Candidate Rankings from Lynn DiTullio

Candidate Rankings from Thomas Griffin

Candidate Rankings from Michael Shuipis

Candidate Rankings from Howard Phelps

Candidate Rankings from Ellen Weeks