

Town of Colrain
Select Board/MLP Board Meeting
Highway Garage
9 Jacksonville Road
4:30 PM

**MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD
APRIL 25, 2023**

Present: Mike Slowinski, Chair; Thom Griffin; Ben Eastman

Others Present: Steve Daby, Highway Superintendent; Sheryl Stanton, MTRSD Superintendent; Bill Lataille, MTRSD Business Administrator; John Chivers, MTRSD School Committee; Deb Menard; Betty Ringwood; Doug MacLeay; Jane Johnson; Jade Mortimer; Russell Coombs, Jr.; Emily Thurber; Roger Williams; Ellen Weeks; Michael Shuipis; Maggie Smith, Administrative Assistant; Kevin Fox, Town Administrator

Mike Slowinski called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

Appointments: Steve Daby – Highway Superintendent – Department Update

Road grading is currently underway, and they are working in the Thompson Rd area. Thom Griffin commented that what has already been completed looks good. Patching will begin on Greenfield Rd; the patch is arriving on 4/26. Street sweeping is scheduled for early May and line painting is scheduled for the end of May into June. Catch basin cleaning is yet to be scheduled.

The full Greenfield Road paving project has been moved from spring/early summer of 2023 to late summer/fall of 2023. An error was made on the original bid, therefore the project start date has been pushed back and the bid will be resubmitted in FY2024.

Ben Eastman asked if any consideration was given to buying a smaller tractor with a sickle-bar mower, rather than a bigger tractor with the 22' boom mower. Steve Daby said a sickle-bar would lose the ability to reach over guard rails and mow steep banks efficiently.

Mike Slowinski and Ben asked for thoughts on hiring a new full-time laborer to replace the employee that was let go. Steve is ready to hire a full-time person and the Finance Committee approves as it is in the proposed budget. Kevin Fox will advertise for the position and start the hiring process for a replacement full-time laborer as of 7/1/2023. A suggestion was made about the possibility of hiring high school students, or others, to do hand work/summer help. The Select Board agreed to give Kevin Fox and Steve Daby the ability to hire said people.

A question was posed regarding the status of the washout on Jacksonville Rd. Kevin Fox stated it is in the engineering phase.

Jade Mortimer asked who is responsible for the chain link fences and guardrail at the Call Rd/Main Rd intersection that is damaged. The highway department is responsible and they will look into the issue. Jade also asked about the town line signs and other road signs that are twisted and/or pointed in the wrong direction. The highway department will also look into the road signs, including the town-line signs.

MOVED: Thom Griffin moved to hire two summer help people at \$17.50/hour for a period not to exceed eight weeks.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

MTRSD – Proposed Regional Agreement Amendment Warrant Article

Sheryl Stanton spoke briefly on why there are changes to the Regional Agreement being proposed. The reason being is because of school choice and the effect on the district and that school choice was not around when the Agreement was first created. Towns that do not have a lot of school choice students cost those towns more. Changing to Foundation Enrollment will align with DESE (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) and be more consistent with other districts. Bill Lataille said that Foundation Enrollment includes all students except those that attend Franklin County Tech and will make the member towns more even. Bill will forward more information regarding the number of school choice students in the district to the Select Board.

Thom Griffin stated he needs more time to digest the information at hand and the repercussions to the Town. He asked when the decision needs to be made to put the proposed change on the warrant. Kevin answered with May 9, 2023. Kevin will add to the Appointments for the next Select Board meeting to continue discussion with the Colrain School Committee and Finance Committee regarding the proposed changes to the Amendment.

Mike Slowinski asked about the buses and whether the district can run smaller buses for less money. Sheryl stated that the bus company decides what they run for buses and that the district would pay the same amount no matter the size of the bus. Mike also asked why the School Building Subcommittee Meeting is always scheduled at the same time as the Select Board Meetings. Bill Lataille will revisit the issue with the Subcommittee.

New Business: None

Old Business: None

Unanticipated: Approve Select Board Meeting Minutes – 4/11/2023 and 4/18/2023 and Executive Session Minutes – 4/11/2023

MOVED: Ben Eastman moved to approve the minutes of the Select Board from 4/11/2023 and 4/18/2023 and Executive Session Minutes of 4/11/2023.

Thom Griffin seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Jane Johnson asked who takes care of the Chandler Hill Cemetery. Jeff Brisson (Brisson Lawncare) does the mowing and a clean-up for Memorial Day and the Highway Dept. will do tree clean-up from the most recent storm.

Mike Slowinski suggested dedicating the Annual Report to Bill Kerivan and Spike Wheeler.

Town Administrator Updates:

The Warrant closes Friday (4/28) for the Annual Elections. There is currently one article that the Town Clerk needs to certify the votes.

Kevin received the annual notification for the Franklin County Land Trust's bike race, D2R2, which takes place 8/19/2023.

The call for the Electricity Aggregation Indictive Pricing took place on 4/25/2023 and they will be going with Dynergy for a 24-month term at a price of \$0.1415, an increase of \$0.05.

Kevin took a moment to acknowledge Mike Slowinski's last Select Board meeting and his years of service to the Town. Thom also thanked him for his years with the Town.

MLP Manager Updates:

Mike Slowinski, MLP Manager, received an email from Robyn Bloomer, 10 High St, regarding struggling to pay her internet bill and would like the MLP Board to assist so the internet is not turned off. The MLP Board stated she has had more than five weeks to pay and will not be intervening.

MOVED: Ben Eastman moved to dissolve the meeting at 6:15 pm.

Thom Griffin seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Maggie Smith
Administrative Assistant

Accepted by the Select Board

Mike Slowinski - Chair

Thom Griffin

Ben Eastman

Documents:

Select Board Meeting Notes

Email dated 4/19/2023 and Financial Analysis for the MTRSD Proposed Regional Agreement Amendments from the School Committee Chair Martha Thurber

DESE Description of "Foundation Enrollment"

Procedure for Regional Agreement Amendments per the Current Regional Agreement

Proposed Regional Agreement Amendment Warrant Article by MTRSD

Spreadsheet re: An example of how the Proposed Foundation Enrollment Amendment would look

Email dated 4/25/2023 from Robyn Bloomer re: Whip City Bill and Non-Payment