

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

**MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD
May 23, 2023**

Present: Benjamin Eastman, Chair; W. Thomas Griffin; Emily Thurber

Others Present: Kevin Fox, Town Administrator; Marjorie Smith, Administrative Assistant; Mike Slowinski, MLP Manager; Steve Daby, Highway Superintendent; Nick Anzuoni, Fire Chief; Kevin Worden II; Amanda Worden; Michael Shuipis; Ellen Weeks, Personnel Committee; Doug Macleay, Finance Committee; Jonathan Lagreze; Jade Mortimer; Roger Williams

Chair, Ben Eastman called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

Appointments: **Michael Slowinski – MLP Manager – Intergovernmental Agreement For Cost Sharing of Multi Gigabit Backhaul Connection Purchased by the City of Westfield Gas & Electric Department Between The City of Westfield Gas & Electric Department and The Municipal Lighting Plants of Charlemont, Colrain, Heath, Leyden and Rowe, Massachusetts**

Mike Slowinski, MLP Manager, presented the new Intergovernmental Agreement for Cost Sharing of Multi Gigabit Backhaul Connection and asked the Board for permission to sign the contract. The contract with MBI Local Linx is for 10 Gbps of Broadband at a cost of \$2,700 per month to be portioned with the other four towns based on usage. Colrain will be responsible for 35% of the cost as we have 35% of the total customers.

MOVED: Thom Griffin moved to approve Mike Slowinski, MLP Manager, to sign the contracts aforementioned.

Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Michael Shuipis FCSWMD Representative – Revised Transfer Station Fee Schedule and Usage Policy

Mike Shuipis presented proposed changes to the Transfer Station fee schedule including providing vehicle stickers for Colrain residents to use the Transfer Station and charging fees for certain items that currently have no fee. Non-residents would pay a fee each time the Transfer Station is used, in addition to the bag fees, however, the daily fee would be waived if only disposing of Super Site items. Residents would receive two stickers per household at no charge to the resident. The proposal does not include an increase in the bag fees. Questions were raised regarding second homeowners, who are not residents, and renters and how they would obtain stickers. Michael responded that there will be bumps during the process and there will be a few exceptions that will be worked out.

Jonathan Lagreze commented that the committee formed at the last meeting of Kevin Fox, Steve Daby and Michael Shuipis wasn't a committee and would not be outside the conflict of interest law. The recommendation comes from Michael in consultation with two town employees. Jonathan proposed that rather than provide stickers for vehicles, raise the bag fees by 50%. Ben Eastman understood Jonathan's points, however he agreed more with some of the other research.

Doug Macleay suggested that a sign be placed at the entrance clearly stating the new process with the stickers.

Jade Mortimer questioned if there is a more environmentally friendly way other than bag stickers.

MOVED: Thom Griffin moved to adopt the Colrain Transfer Station fees as written by Michael Shuipis and additionally adopt the non-resident \$5 fee each time the station is used. Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

MOVED: Thom Griffin moved to dissolve the committee that investigated the Transfer Station fees.

Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

New Business: Request to Consider a Change to the Personnel Policies; Add Juneteenth to the List of Paid Holidays

The Personnel Committee has been working on updating the Personnel Policy for the last year with help from a grant from the Community Compact program and the Collins Center at UMass. One recommendation is to add Juneteenth as a paid holiday, because it is a Federal and State holiday. Kevin Fox is asking for the Board to adopt Juneteenth separately from approving the changes to the full personnel policy. Ellen Weeks commented that the Personnel Committee voted unanimously to recommend to add Juneteenth as a paid holiday for employees.

Michael Shuipis asked if it would change any line items in the budget. Kevin responded the change would not affect the budget.

MOVED: Thom Griffin moved to create in the Town for the employees, a paid holiday on Juneteenth yearly.

Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Chapter 90 Project Requests

Steve Daby presented a request to use Chapter 90 funds, after all WRAP funds have been used to complete the engineering on the Jacksonville Rd washout, on overlay to Jurek Rd, West Leyden Rd and Prolovich Rd. This will complement the MassWorks project on Greenfield Rd.

MOVED: Thom Griffin moved to use remaining WRAP funds after the engineering contract for the Jacksonville Rd washout is complete to do work on West Leyden, Prolovich and Jurek Roads.

Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Approve Selectboard Meeting Minutes – 5/9/2023 and 3/22/2023 (Executive Session)

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to approve the minutes of the Select Board of 5/9/2023 and 3/22/2023.

Thom Griffin seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Old Business: None

Unanticipated: Nicholas Anzuoni – Colrain Fire Chief

Nick Anzuoni presented an overview of what the fire department would like to discuss as an agenda item at a future meeting. Funds for a new fire truck didn't go into stabilization for next fiscal year for one reason or another. Nick is looking into a grant, however, there is no guarantee the department will get one and there is one truck that is having several little issues and is needing to be replaced. Over the next year, the fire department will be looking for funds for a new truck and he didn't want it to come as a surprise to the Board. Doug Macleay stated that the Finance Committee is on board to approve the purchase of a new truck. Nick also asked for more communication between the Board and the fire department.

Letter of Support for Grant Application from Sewer District

Kevin Fox received a letter from Jessica Atwood of FRCOG to request a letter of support from the Board for a grant application for the Rural and Small Town Development Fund that they are applying for on the sewer districts behalf. Ben Eastman and Thom Griffin agree the Board should support the grant application.

MOVED: Thom Griffin moved to have Ben Eastman, Chair of the Select Board, sign the Letter of Support for the Colrain Sewer District’s grant proposal.

Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Jonathan Lagreze asked what the electric rate was locked in at for next year. The rate is locked in at \$0.14.

Town Administrator Updates:

Kevin is preparing a \$1.0MM MassWorks grant application for the permitting and construction costs of the Jacksonville Rd washout. He has requested letters of support from the Colrain Fire Chief, Colrain Police Chief, State Representative and State Senator, and has received most of them back.

A Small Bridge grant application is ready to be submitted that is due June 30th for a design phase replacement of a bridge on Charlemont Road over Meadow Brook. This is the bridge before the one that is closed. MassDOT recommended the Town apply for the grant.

The Highway Equipment Operator/Laborer position will be advertised in the paper on Saturday.

The Town locked in fuel bids for FY2024 for diesel at \$3.44/gal., down from \$4.79/gal last year and heating oil locked in at \$3.10/gal., down from \$4.44 last year.

The Finance Committee met yesterday (5/22/2023) and voted their recommendations for the FY2024 Warrant Articles, which is posted on the website.

The backhoe auction closes Thursday (5/25/2023) at 7:30 pm and is currently at \$15,700. There have been a couple people stop by to look at it.

MOVED: Thom Griffin moved to dissolve the meeting at 5:44 pm.

Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Marjorie Smith
Administrative Assistant

Accepted by the Select Board

Ben Eastman - Chair

Thom Griffin

Emily Thurber

Documents:

Select Board Meeting Notes

Intergovernmental Agreement for Cost Sharing of Multi Gigabit Backhaul Connection Purchased by the City of Westfield Gas & Electric Department

Colrain Transfer Station Proposed Changes

Email from Paula Harrison dated 5/11/2023 re: Juneteenth

State Aid Program – Project Request for Chapter 90 funds for Resurfacing Various Roads in Colrain

Letter of Support from the Select Board for the Colrain Sewer District's Community One Stop for Growth Application