

Town of Colrain
Select Board/MLP Board Meeting
Colrain Highway Garage
9 Jacksonville Road
4:30 PM
MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD
March 26, 2024

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

Others Present: Mike Slowinski, MLP Manager; Lynn DiTullio, Jade Mortimer, Betsy Browning, Ad-Hoc CPA Exploratory Committee; Marjorie Smith, Administrative Assistant; Kevin Fox, Town Administrator

Chair Ben Eastman called the meeting to order at 4:33 pm.

Appointments:

Colrain Ad-Hoc CPA Exploratory Committee - Request to place the following article on the FY25 ATM Warrant:

To see if the Town will accept Sections 3 to 7, inclusive, of Chapter 44B of the General Laws, otherwise known as the Massachusetts Community Preservation Act, by approving a surcharge on real property for the purposes permitted by said Act, including the acquisition, creation and preservation of open space, the acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of historic resources, the acquisition, creation, preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of land for recreational use, the acquisition, creation, preservation and support of community housing, and the rehabilitation and restoration of such open space and community housing that is acquired or created as provided under said Act; to determine the amount of such surcharge on real property as a percentage of the annual real estate tax levy against real property and the fiscal year in which such surcharge shall commence; to determine whether the Town will accept any of the exemptions from such surcharge permitted under Section 3(e) of said Act; or to take any other action relative thereto.

Lynn DiTullio updated the Board on what the Ad-Hoc Committee has been working on over the last 18 months, including research on the CPA, would it work for Colrain, the pros and cons, meeting with town groups, created a website (colraincpa.org), and holding public info sessions. The Committee is requesting the Board put the CPA article on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Lynn further explained that if the article is placed on the ATM warrant, and the article passes, the article would then be placed on the November ballot. Should the article not pass at the ATM, the article can be petitioned to be placed on the November ballot. Both Ben and Thom agreed that the Committee should gather the required signatures for the article to be placed on the town meeting warrant.

MOVED: Thom Griffin moved that we, the Select Board do not endorse the CPA process in Colrain, but instead encourage them to gather their 10 signatures and put it on the town warrant themselves. Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Mike Slowinski – MLP Manager- Request to adopt a policy that no refund that is less than \$5 will be processed by the Colrain MLP

Mike explained that because we are regulated by the Federal Communications Commission, the Town must refund money owed to a homeowner, however, the MLP Board can adopt a policy that if the amount is \$5.00 or less the funds do not get refunded. This policy would be like the Assessors policy.

MOVED: Thom Griffin moved to adopt a policy in Colrain for no refund less than \$5.00 will be processed by the Colrain Municipal Light Plant.

Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

New Business:

None

Old Business:

Review and Possible Approval of HCA with Atlantic Farms LLC

Kevin Fox explained that the Host Community Agreement has not yet been finalized and recommended scheduling a meeting next week. The Board agreed and scheduled a meeting for Thursday 4/4/2024 at 12:00 pm at the Town Hall to discuss the HCA and the highway department staffing.

Continued Discussion RE: FY 25 Budget

Discussion regarding the highway department budget and keeping the contracted services and the highway laborer position in the budget. Kevin recommended at least one of the members of the Board attend the Finance Committee meeting tomorrow at 5:30pm.

Continued Discussion RE: Discontinuance of Cross Rd.

Ben Eastman recommended leaving the road the way it is and not discontinuing the section of Cross Rd. due to the location of a culvert and should it wash out, it leaves a back-up plan for the Town. The section is currently not maintained by the Town and is in a no-maintenance clause, so it is not costing the town money. Discussion regarding John Chivers needing the road delineated by the Town in order to have his property surveyed. The Board directed Kevin to reach out to Town Counsel regarding the issue.

Unanticipated:

Police Officer Full-Time Position Update

Kevin Fox updated the Board that he has received two applications for the position. He will send the Board the resumes and schedule a time for interviews. Ben will be on the screening committee with Kevin and Chief Lannon.

Town Administrator Position

Thom Griffin updated the Board that the Town Administrator Search Committee has received 10 applicants for the position so far.

Approve Select Board Minutes

MOVED: Thom Griffin moved to approve the minutes of 2/22/2024 as submitted.
Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

MOVED: Thom Griffin moved to approve the minutes of Executive Session of 2/22/2024 as submitted.
Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

MOVED: Thom Griffin moved to approve the minutes of 2/27/2024 as submitted.
Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

MOVED: Thom Griffin moved to approve the minutes of Executive Session dated 2/27/2024 as submitted.
Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

MOVED: Thom Griffin moved to approve the minutes of 3/12/2024 as submitted.
Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Griswold Memorial Library Property Survey

Kevin Fox updated that Board that he is giving the abutter until the end of this week before he reaches out again.

Town Administrator Updates:

None

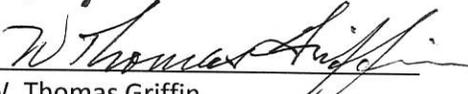
MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to dissolve the meeting at 5:30pm.
Thom Griffin seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Marjorie Smith
Administrative Assistant

Accepted by the Select Board on 4/9/2024


Benjamin Eastman - Chair


W. Thomas Griffin


Emily Thurber

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

Select Board Meeting Notes

Email from David Greenberg to the Select Board dated 3/5/2024, re: CPA Committee proposed warrant article

CPA Adoption handout from www.communitypreservation.org

Sample Ballot Language handout from www.communitypreservation.org

Email from Mike Slowinski, MLP Manager, to Kevin Fox, Town Administrator, dated 3/18/2024 re: MLP Policy Adoption