

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

**MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD
September 10, 2024**

Present Emily Thurber, Chair; Benjamin Eastman; Katie Korby

Others Present: Laurie Francis, Jonathan Lagreze, Colrain Wood Bank; Kate Conlon, Woodlands Partnership; Elaine Stanley; Marjorie Smith, Administrative Assistant; Diana Parsons, Town Administrator

Chair Emily Thurber called the meeting to order at 4:33pm.

Consent Items:

Meeting Minutes of August 13, 2024 – not submitted for approval

Warrant AP2510 in the amount of \$44,756.28

Warrant PR2504 in the amount of \$20,843.81

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to approve Warrant AP2510 in the amount of \$44,756.28 and Warrant PR2504 in the amount of \$20,843.81.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Appointments and Resignations:

Appoint Representative to the Franklin Regional Animal Control Advisory Committee

Diana Parsons explained that Kevin Fox was the representative and Ben Eastman was the alternate. Diana has attended a couple of meetings because they needed a quorum.

MOVED: Ben Eastman moved to appoint Diana Parsons as the Franklin Regional Animal Control Advisory Committee member.

Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

New Business:

Accept Regional Digital Equity Plan Prepared by the FRCOG

Diana Parsons explained that the plan is informational for all the towns FRCOG has worked with regarding digital equity. The plan talks about digital equity/broadband resources for all groups of people and is meant as a roadmap for Towns.

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to accept the Regional Digital Equity Plan prepared by the FRCOG as written.

Katie Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Notice of Intent Received; Request for Right of First Refusal on Van Nuys Road (Convert 10 acres to Residential Use)

Diana Parsons explained that per MGL, the Town received the Notice of Intent to Sell three parcels of land on Van Nuys Rd. The land is the Chapters for forestry and the buyer is looking to take out 10 acres for residential use; to build a home. The Town has the right of first refusal to buy the property for the bona-fide offer of \$210,000. The buyer will have to pay the rollback taxes.

MOVED: Ben Eastman moved to not exercise the right to purchase the properties on Van Nuys Rd and East Colrain Rd.

Emily Thurber seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Old Business:

Vote BSC Construction Phase Engineering Contract for Jacksonville Road Slope Stabilization Project

Diana Parsons explained the engineering budget has been exhausted and there are no funds for construction phase engineering. BSC has provided a quote for the engineering, and while Diana feels is high, she was inclined to support the quote. Discussion on the six on-site visits listed in the quote and that it's not a "lump-sum" contract and the total is the most that will be paid.

MOVED: Emily Thurber moved to accept the BSC Construction Phase Engineering Contract for Jacksonville Road Slope Stabilization Project as written.

Ben Eastman seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Updates re: New Highway Staff Onboarding & Staff Pay Upgrades

Diana Parsons updated the Board that the new hire for the Highway Department, Joel Paszko, will be starting 9/23/2024. The starting pay will be \$0.50 less than the salary from last year for the first 90 days. After a successful Probationary Period, his pay would increase to \$27.30. Also on that date, Diana plans to submit a Personnel Action Form to increase the salary of the person currently in the Laborer/Equipment Operator II position to \$31.12, which the Board agreed to at a prior meeting. If all positions are filled, including the one vacant position, the Highway Department budget would need approximately \$57,000. The Board will discuss the sidewalk clearing equipment at a future meeting.

TA Proposal re: COA Foot Clinic Location for Oct/Nov

Diana Parsons updated the Board that she met with the Council on Aging (COA) yesterday and discussed the foot clinic. She also spoke with Nate Gilbert about the history of the foot clinic at the Highway Garage and proposed using the Highway Garage on Fridays from April through October to both Nate and the COA. Discussion on the cleaning schedule. Will go to next COA meeting to discuss after October. Discussion on using the Fire Station. Diana will continue to attend the COA meetings to discuss the Clinic and draft an RFP to the community for a location(s) for the COA activities. Discussion on possible use of the elementary school and long-term planning. The Board agreed to let the Foot Clinic use the Highway Garage through October.

Update re: Pollinator Garden in Colrain Village Center

Diana Parsons received a note from Elizabeth Erickson to announce that the group will be doing work on 9/21 at 8am. They've marked out the spot and are preparing for planting. Emily questioned what plants would be planted and Diana would find out.

Update re: Colrain Community Wood Bank for 2024-2025 Heating Season

Diana Parsons spoke with Jonathan Lagreze and Sean Mahoney at DCR. Diana and Maggie have received a form from another community as an example for residents to complete to get a list of those in need of wood. There is a grant application due in a couple days for future wood bank needs. Discussion on different wood bank models, the grant and how the grant funds could be used. Jonathan Lagreze requested the Board allow Diana to move forward with the grant application. Diana recommended putting in the grant application to include a gate to secure the current location and will notify the Board when a draft application is ready.

Outdoor Nativity Set on Veterans Memorial presented by Elaine Stanley

Diana Parsons shared her experience with other communities regarding nativity sets on Town property and cautioned that once you start putting on things representing a person's beliefs it opens up to all people's beliefs. Discussion on Greenfield's Town Common.

The Board agreed to not put the nativity set at the Veteran's Memorial Park.

Administrator Updates:

Remote Meeting Room Set-Up

Diana Parsons updated the Board that the room is set-up, however we need a little more training before using it.

Pre-Construction Meeting re Heath Road Culvert Replacement

Diana met with Western Earthworks, and they still need the submittals approved. Once approved the culvert can be ordered and hoping to get it in this year, however the project may not be fully complete until next year.

DEP Extension Received for I & I Study until December 31, 2024

Received the letter for the extension of the I&I Study until December 31.

Update on Sewer Collection System Inventory and Field Testing

The smoke testing on the pipes was completed, and everything went fine. There was no police detail because Chief Lannon was unable to get it filled with State or local police.

Misc. Meetings/Events: Planning Board Meeting; Fix-It Day; Special COA Meeting

- Diana attended the last planning board meeting and discussed master planning, which she will add to a future Select Board meeting agenda. Discussion on the process of gauging community interest. The Planning Board will put on the agenda for their next meeting as well. Both Emily and Katie agreed that a master plan is important.
- Fix-It-Day – Ben was there as a “fixer” and commented that it seemed slow due to the concern of rain, but overall went well.
- Jacksonville Rd Slope Failure – the contractor will be starting Monday and have taken over the traffic light bill as part of the contract.
- Chief Lannon submitted the order for the new cruiser approved at Town Meeting.
- The CPA Committee/Group cleared all the hurdles, and the question will be on the November ballot.

Public and Board Member Comments:

Laurie Francis

Thanked the Board for their enthusiasm regarding the wood bank and offered to volunteer for a future committee.

Requests for Future Agenda Items:

Review Capital Planning Materials

Diana sent an email to each of the departments regarding their capital needs, however, doesn't see that the Town has a real Capital Plan in place. Discussion on including facilities planning in any Master Planning. Discussion on fire station being included in current MVP plan and grant funding that is opening soon.

Schedule All-Board Meeting

Discussion on planning an All-Board meeting, joint Board/Committee meetings or having a member of each Board/Committee come to a Select Board meeting. Katie would like to add the Zoning Board to a future meeting to discuss accessory dwellings.

Discuss [possible] Special Town Meeting

There isn't a need to schedule a Special Town Meeting at this point, and will revisit in another month or so.

Correspondence and Select Board Informational Items:

Crafts of Colrain Open Studio Tour, November 9-10, 2024, 10 am-4 pm

No discussion.

Executive Session:

None

Dissolve Meeting:

MOVED: Ben Eastman moved to dissolve the meeting at 6:06pm.

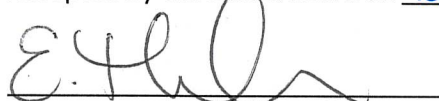
Katie Korby seconded. **Approved unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,



Marjorie Smith
Administrative Assistant

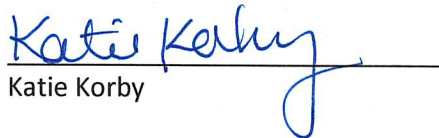
Accepted by the Select Board on 10/8/2024



Emily Thurber - Chair



Benjamin Eastman



Katie Korby

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

Digital Equity Plan prepared by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments

Statement of Intent to Sell dated 7/11/2024 re: Right of First Refusal for Land on Van Nuys Rd

Emails from Dan Dyer to Alice Wozniak dated 8/5/2024 and 8/7/2024 re: Right of First Refusal for Land on Van Nuys Rd

Proposal from BSC Group to Diana Parsons, Town Administrator, dated 8/23/2024 re: Construction Phase Engineering Services

Offer of Employment Letter to Joel Paszko dated 8/25/2024

Highway Department Salary Spreadsheet

Letter from MA DEP to Diana Parsons, Town Administrator, dated 8/19/2024 re: I&I Study Extension

Email from Elizabeth Erickson, Pollinator Garden Committee, to Diana Parsons, Town Administrator, dated 9/3/2024 re: Pollinator Garden Update