

MEETING MINUTES
Town of Heath
SELECT BOARD
Jacobs Road Municipal Center
Tuesday, April 1, 2025

Called to Order at 5:04 p.m. With Robyn Provost-Carlson, Will Emmet and Hilma Sumner, Town Coordinator. Elissa Viarengo was absent.

This meeting was recorded.

Others in Attendance: See attendance list.

Public Comment: Hilma mentioned that there will be traffic lights used at the bridge reconstruction site when one lane is closed for rebuilding.

After Action Review (AAR): Emergency Management Alternate Sheila Litchfield joined the meeting to discuss the written report that summarized the AAR held following the mid-February storm and 3-day power outage. The report covers the aspects of the incident response that were positive parts and the areas of response that can be improved upon. There are five goals that were included in the report.

1. Improve communications/notifications.
2. Preplanning and following response plan.
3. Improve EOC use and operations; ensure it is a clearinghouse for resources and workers.
4. Establish a local shelter operations plan and offer training for shelter workers.
5. Redundancy (of emergency personnel and electric power)

MEMA's response worker who assisted Heath during the incident stated that the Town's response was excellent and was an example of neighbor helping neighbor. Sheila also noted that the Town needs to develop a call-down list of emergency personnel for when a State of Emergency is called.

Review of Minutes: *On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of March 25, 2025, as amended.*

ATM Warrant Discussion: The Board reviewed a compiled list of the warrant articles that involved appropriating funding. These needs include the assessments for the school districts, a share of the late-bus cost, and purchase of a new highway department truck to replace the Dodge 550.

The Board discussed their concern that there may not be enough overage in the FY 2024 accounts to balance out the deficit in the Legal Fees account which is several thousand dollars over budget. The Finance Committee will be asked for suggestions about covering the deficit.

Fy 2026 Budget Discussion: The Board reviewed account lines in Article 3. It was agreed to include Colrain Emergency Medical Services in the general budget. During the week board members will compare account amounts of both the amounts requested for FY26 and the amounts expended thus far this year. The Treasurer will be asked to add six months' cost of family-level health insurance in case a newly appointed Town Coordinator would like to enroll. The Office Assistant position hours will be

increased to 10 hours per week and the wage account increased accordingly. Inquiry will be made to find out if other towns still have a reserve fund account or if it is not necessary given the changes made to municipal law several years ago.

Proposed Changes to Zoning Bylaws: Response from town counsel has been received. The Board noted that counsel's recommendations are to adopt those suggestions regarding the street definitions and notations within the bylaws as made by counsel. Changes were also suggested to the section regarding accessory dwelling units to correlate with the changes in state law. The response from town counsel will be sent to the Planning Board members so that they will be aware that counsel has expressed many concerns with the revisions to the wireless bylaws.

Mail:

- D. Clark re: Board's response during the previous week's meeting
- RPC re: email to Planning Board with thoughts on the proposed zoning bylaw changes
- RPC re: proposed zoning bylaw changes
- MTRSD re: Voices and Votes exhibit
- C. Rabbitt re: March nurse's report
- KP Law re: extended virtual meetings
- Se. P. Mark re: April office hours

Next Meeting: April 8th

7:20 p.m. *On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.*

Respectfully submitted,

Hilma A. Sumner
Town Coordinator