

**MEETING MINUTES**  
Town of Heath  
**SELECT BOARD**  
Jacobs Road Municipal Center  
Tuesday, August 5, 2025

**Called to Order at 5:00 p.m.** With Robyn Provost-Carlson, Elissa Viarengo, Will Emmet and Hilma Sumner, Town Coordinator.

This meeting was recorded.

**Others in Attendance:** See attendance list.

**Review Agenda:** Added: Carin Freeman request for space.

***On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve Carin Freeman's request for use of JRMC Room 124 for the week of August 10, 2025.***

***Review Minutes: On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of July 22, 2025, as amended.***

***On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of July 30, 2025, as presented.***

**Public Comment:** Barbara Gordon asked if a roll-down screen could be purchased and installed to cover the outside gym doors to help prevent bugs from entering the building.

Pat McGahan stated that, if there were no objections, then Parks & Rec would like to reorganize the town recreation equipment in the storage closet.

**Agreements for Animal Control Officer and Regional Dog Kennel:** The Board reviewed the two agreements with the Franklin County Sheriff's Office for FY 2026 services. They wondered if it would be possible to have discussions about getting more services added to the work that is included. ACO Kyle Dragon may be invited to attend a meeting in the near future to discuss this.

***On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the agreement for Animal Control Officer services for FY2026.***

***On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the agreement for Regional Dog Kennel Shelter services for FY2026.***

**Heath Agricultural Society:** Elissa Viarengo recused herself from this item of business citing a conflict of interest because she is a co-president of the Society. Robyn and Will reviewed the application to obtain a pouring license to serve beer and hard cider for each of the three fair days. The application was accompanied by a request to waive the \$100 license fee.

***On a motion by Will Emmet and seconded by Robyn Provost Carlson, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the application for a pouring license by the Heath Agricultural Society for August 15, 16, & 17, 2025.***

***On a motion by Will Emmet and seconded by Robyn Provost Carlson, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the request from the Heath Agricultural Society for the license fee waiver.***

**MLP Manager Hourly Wage:** Hilma reported that Bailey Cole, the new MLP Manager, had sat for his 90-day performance review. This was done with two members of the Municipal Light Board who reported that Bailey has been doing excellent work of learning the job. The entire MLB were recommending that Bailey receive a 5-percent increase in his hourly wage. ***On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve Bailey Cole's hourly wage increase to \$27.50 per hour.***

**Salt Shed Update:** The site is prepared for Iron Horse Structures to begin building on August 11<sup>th</sup>. The company will deliver a forklift, and the foundation blocks this week.

**Review and Evaluation of Highway Foreman/Mechanic Job Description:** Will reported that he had spoken with Jason Lively who affirmed that he would like to assume the responsibilities of the foreman position. The Board discussed their plan to look at all the Highway Department positions and assess each description for the level of qualifications and responsibilities. Each position will then be reevaluated as to the grade level that would reflect that job description. The Board asked that the Highway Salary budget for FY 2026 be reviewed, and a determination be made if an increase in wage can be given to each of the laborers in the department.

**Surplus Space Rental Proposals:** Hilltown Youth Performing Arts officials will be attending the August 19<sup>th</sup> meeting to discuss the terms of their future rental of space.

The Board reviewed the advertisement for rental of the two rooms in Sawyer Hall. Hilma needs to continue to revise the longer, more descriptive narrative that will be posted on the website.

**Finance Committee:** Members Dena Briggs, Ned Wolf, Wendy Whalen, Alice Wozniak, and Bob McGahan joined the meeting.

**Broadband Loan Payment for FY 2026:** Finance Committee recommended that the entire CAF II payment of this year be used, along with the amount voted at ATM, to apply to the principal of the loan. ***On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve using the \$58,408.05 CAF II payment with the \$100,000 payment amount voted at the 2025 Annual Town Meeting to pay down the principal on the broadband loan.***

**Late Bus:** Finance Committee asked if a survey could be sent to parents of MTRSD students in an attempt to discover how many Heath students are utilizing the late bus during the school year. There was discussion about how that could be logistically done.

**Tenants in Rental Space:** It was suggested that the Board requires all tenants to provide a security deposit and the last month's rent along with the first month's rent.

**Health Insurance Rate Increase:** Hilma provided a synopsis of the Hampshire Collaborative Group Insurance Trust (HCGIT) meeting in which it was explained about the 20 percent rate increase for health insurance premiums. It is primarily due to the substantial number of claims made against insurance which has drawn the reserves below the level that is secure. The Board acknowledged that there was not time in the immediate future to research other options for health insurance. ***On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to accept the modification of the amended agreement of the HCGIT with the 20 percent increase in premium rates to commence October 1, 2025.***

**Town Coordinator Transition Plan:** The Board reviewed the job posting that had been prepared for advertisement in the newspaper, on the website and other locations. There is a deadline of September 8<sup>th</sup> by which applications need to be submitted. Before the next meeting, each Board member will review the job description and changes proposed by Hilma. If they have any questions or suggestions for changes, they will individually email that information to her.

**Mail:**

- S. O'Neill re: application for a pouring license
- RPC re: email to HYRT space lease response
- FCSO re: Regional Animal Control Services agreement
- FCSO re: Regional Dog Shelter Services agreement
- D. Hillman re: Buckland salt shed information
- HCGIT re: Health insurance trust agreement & Oct. 1 rates
- FCSWMD re: household hazardous waste & bulky waste days
- Colrain Central School re: First Day Celebration
- Sen. Paul Mark re: August Update

**Next Meetings:** August 19th

**6:54 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 Sumner  
Town Coordinator