

MEETING MINUTES
Town of Heath
SELECT BOARD
Jacobs Road Municipal Center
September 16, 2025

Called to Order at 6:00 P. M. with Robyn Provost Carlson, Will Emmet, and Hilma Sumner, Town Coordinator, in attendance. Elissa Viarengo was absent.

Other Attendees: See attendance sheet.

The meeting was recorded.

Highway Department: Will presented the request from the Highway Superintendent that the two older trucks that have been replaced with newer vehicles be declared as surplus property for disposal. ***On a motion by Will Emmet and a second by Robyn Provost Carlson, the Select Board voted unanimously to declare the one-ton Dodge truck and the 2008 International truck to be surplus town property for disposal.***

Highway workers discovered on Monday morning that there was no running water. The breaker to the well pump kept tripping so it is thought that perhaps the pump itself had burned out. A plumber had been called but had not come yet. Will is going to be following up on the necessary repair work.

Review of Minutes: ***On a motion by Will Emmet and a second by Robyn Provost Carlson, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of September 2, 2025, with amendments.***

On a motion by Will Emmet and a second by Robyn Provost Carlson, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of September 8, 2025, with amendments.

ATM 2025, Article 21: Town Clerk Mary Sumner gave a synopsis of the steps taken to request the Attorney General's approval for the zoning bylaw changes that were voted at the Annual Town Meeting in May. Due to the fact that the mandatory public hearing was only advertised once in the local newspaper, instead of the required two times, the Attorney General's office has put review of the changes on hold. The Town may either post a notice in the newspaper now that presents an opportunity for any appeals or start the process again and navigate through the requirements before presenting to another town meeting.

To publish a notice now would require printing the entire wording of the article and would cost approximately \$960 while publishing notice of a hearing twice would cost \$300. It is not known what account could be used to pay for an appeals notice. There are other concerns about continuing with the process now because town counsel was not able to complete a thorough review of the changes. If the Town were to proceed, there is no guarantee that the Attorney General would approve the changes. A final note in the information from the Attorney General's office stated that, even with approval, an appeal as to the validity of the bylaw could be made at any time in the future.

After discussion, the Board decided that deliberation would continue at a future meeting.

Salt Shed Update: Work is progressing with Hillman Trucking having completed the final grading and packing of the base. In the Highway Superintendent's absence, Will is now going to contact the paving company to schedule the finish work of black-top pavement in the shed.

Health Insurance Update: Hilma reported that she had listened to the latest HCGIT monthly meeting and a presentation by the Group Insurance Commission (GIC). If the Board decided to switch insurance groups to GIC, that decision would need to be made by December 1st. There will be more presentations with additional information during the next two weeks.

Clinical Co-Responder Agreement: The terms of the agreement are consistent with previous years to contract for services of a clinical co-responder to work with the police department. The expenses for this program are paid through a state grant that was obtained by the town of Ashfield. ***On a motion by Will Emmet and a second by Robyn Provost Carlson, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve and sign the 2025 Clinical Co-Responder Agreement.***

Hilltown Youth Performing Arts (HYPA): Jonathan Diamond and Laura Iveson joined the meeting to discuss the various terms that would be incorporated into a new lease. It was agreed that HYPA would rent rooms 122 and 126 for \$500 per room per month. For use of the cafeteria and gym, they would pay according to the short-term rental block rates. Jonathan asked the Board to consider a reduction in that rate.

Although the Board stated that the atrium was not to be used as a functional rental space, they were asked about allowing HYPA to use it on Friday afternoons during the winter program. The Board stated that they would charge \$50 per month for space in the equipment closet and \$100 per month for use of the outdoor space including siting of the green storage box on the property. As with past lease agreements, there will be an attachment list of particulars. Jonathan asked that he be allowed to move forward on two ideas he has had for several years: building a fire pit and having a tent campout night.

Robyn explained that the Board is currently discussing how the process of any and all of the space leasing will work going forward. There needs to be someone who will handle the rental and leasing process and there needs to be clear, smooth communication between the two parties.

It was agreed that, if there is a signed lease by October 15th, then HYPA will pay the new rental rate of \$500 per room. Otherwise, they will pay the same arrangement of \$500 in total.

Tree Trimming/Removal on Avery Brook Road: The tree trimming company is presently working on the road in Charlemont. Tree Warden Steve Thane will be notified of this and asked, if he has not been contacted by National Grid about Heath work, then perhaps he will need to reach out to them.

Mail:

- Attorney General re: ATM Art. 21 Letter of hold
- Emails re: ATM Art. 21
- C. Rabbitt re: August Town Nurse report
- KP Law re: Changes in Tax Title Foreclosure Procedures
- EOEEA re: extension of Open Space and Recreation Plan

Next Meeting: September 23rd: MTRSD officials to present update and possible transition plan with 2D8T goals.

7:08 pm. Adjournment: *On a motion by Will Emmet and a second by Robyn Provost Carlson, the Select Board voted unanimously to adjourn.*

Respectfully submitted,

Hilma A. Sumner
Town Coordinator