

TOWN OF HEATH

MASSACHUSETTS



SELECT BOARD

MEETING MINUTES - TOWN OF HEATH SELECT BOARD

This meeting was held on Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 4:30PM.

JACOBS ROAD MUNICIPAL CENTER – CAFETERIA - 18 JACOBS ROAD HEATH, MA 01346

Called to order at 4:35PM with Robyn Provost (Chair), Elissa Viarengo (Member), William Emmet (Member), and Mia Francesconi (Town Coordinator) present.

Others present included Pat McGahan (Heath Connects), Bill Fontes, Robert McGahan (Finance Committee), Liam Cregan (Franklin Land Trust), Sheila Litchfield (Board of Health), Gene Garland (Board of Health), and Johnny Depin (Greenfield Recorder).

R. Provost announced that the meeting was being audio recorded.

Review Agenda: Moved “ADA Transition Plan” from “New Information/Updates” to “Select Board Discussion/Decision Items”

Annual Town Meeting – Review/Discuss

R. Provost explained that Town Meeting went well with good communication and discussion. She thanked the Finance Committee for their explanations of some of the warrant articles that were up for consideration and noted that the Select Board would attempt to get their explanation documents out earlier next year. The Moderator would be attending the initial budget meeting between the Finance Committee and the Select Board in January to discuss the method in which the budget is voted. That meeting will be advertised as a forum for voters to weigh in on the discussion. She suggested that the Board ponder ways to make Town Meeting more accessible to people with disabilities.

Meeting Minutes: 05/05/2026

A motion was made by E. Viarengo and seconded by W. Emmet to approve the meeting minutes from May 5, 2026, as amended.

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Carries: 3-0

Meeting Minutes: 05/09/2026

A motion was made by E. Viarengo and seconded by W. Emmet to approve the meeting minutes from May 9, 2026, as presented.

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Carries: 3-0

Reorganization of the Select Board – Elect Select Board Chairman & Secretary; Appoint and/or Elect Liaisons & Representatives as Necessary – Vote Anticipated

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A motion was made by E. Viarengo and seconded by W. Emmet to elect R. Provost as Chair of the Select Board. R. Provost accepted.

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Carries: 3-0

A motion was made by E. Viarengo and seconded by R. Provost to elect W. Emmet as Secretary of the Select Board. W. Emmet accepted.

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Carries: 3-0

FY '27 Appointments – Initial Discussion & Planning

M. Francesconi explained that she had begun the process of inquiring as to whether those holding appointed positions were willing to be reappointed. She has received responses for most positions but is still waiting for a few. She will continue to update the appointment list as she receives responses.

End of Fiscal Year – General Discussion & Transition Planning

M. Francesconi explained that she is working with the accountants on setting up fiscal year 2027 accounts and is simultaneously working with the accountants on fixing spelling errors in account names. She will continue to update the Board as necessary.

Office Assistant Position – Review/Discuss Recommendation from Interviewers & Job Description; Vote to Offer Position to Recommended Candidate – Vote Anticipated

M. Francesconi explained that the interviews for the Office Assistant position had gone very well with all four applicants being very qualified for the position. The interviewers consisted of W. Emmet, M. Francesconi, and the Town Clerk, Mary Sumner. A scoring rubric was created, and each candidate was scored on their responses to the interview questions, qualifications, and a couple of other attributes. The candidate Olivia Girard scored the highest and she had great recommendations, so the group decided to recommend her for appointment as the Office Assistant. Members reviewed Olivia Girard's resume and cover letter.

A motion was made by E. Viarengo and seconded by W. Emmet to offer the Office Assistant position to Olivia Girard, beginning July 1, 2026, at a rate of \$20.25 per hour, for ten (10) hours per week.

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Carries: 3-0

5:30PM Liam Cregan, Franklin Land Trust – Discuss Behl-Amter Conservation Restriction; Vote to Approve Conservation Restriction – Vote Anticipated

L. Cregan explained that the proposed conservation restriction would encompass approximately thirty acres of property off South Road. The property is home to three small streams and a cabin and is located across the street from protected property that is already owned by the Franklin Land Trust. The property owners' goal for the conservation restriction is to protect the headwaters of the cold-water resources and to protect the brook trout in them. He noted that the property is already in an agricultural preservation

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restriction, so the tax revenue should be unchanged whether or not the property is put into a conservation restriction; however, the property owners plan to keep roughly three acres of the property around the cabin out of the conservation restriction so they can renovate the cabin, which would increase tax revenue for the Town. Members discussed and decided to consult the Director of Assessing regarding the potential tax implications of this conservation restriction ahead of approval.

Boards' Clerk Position – Review/Discuss Statements from the Board of Health re. Board of Health Clerk; Review/Discuss Job Description & Future of Position

Members reviewed the statements from the Board of Health regarding the probable detrimental impact that losing a clerk would have on the day-to-day operations of the Board of Health, specifically on temporary occupancy permitting. Members noted that discussion about the future of the Boards' Clerk position must continue, but that the temporary Board of Health Clerk could be allowed to continue until a plan for the position was in motion.

A motion was made by E. Viarengo and seconded by W. Emmet to extend the temporary appointment of Cindie Garland as Board of Health Clerk past July 1, 2026, until a motion is made to the contrary.

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Carries: 3-0

Town Center Kiosk – Review/Discuss; Approve NEW Proposed Location – Vote Possible

Members reviewed the proposed new location for the kiosk in the Town center. The proposed new location put the new kiosk right next to the other kiosk in front of Community Hall. P. McGahan suggested that new kiosk be moved near the two sections of split-rail fence adjacent to Community Hall. This location is further away from the other kiosk while being out of the direct sight of the complainant and would allow visitors to prop their bicycles up against the fence to read the information on the kiosk. W. Emmet will propose this new location to the Planning Board.

Jacobs Road Municipal Center Sign – Review/Discuss Design & Timeline – Vote Possible

E. Viarengo presented her proposed design for the Jacobs Road Municipal Center sign. Members discussed and approved of the new design, noting that its simplicity was preferred when compared to the previous design. W. Emmet will provide the design to Jason Clark of Clarks Custom Paint.

MTRSD Enrollment Calculation Error – Review/Discuss Request from Charlemont Select Board

Members reviewed the proposal from the Charlemont Select Board asking for a letter to be sent to Senator Paul Mark's office that requests a legislative earmark to compensate Charlemont for their overpayment due to the enrollment calculation error. Members expressed their concern that Hawley had not been invited to participate in this earmark request. M. Francesconi will follow up with the Charlemont Select Board.

Deerfield River Watershed Association – Questions re. Wild & Scenic Initiative

Tabled pending additional information from the Deerfield River Watershed Association.

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6:30PM Board of Health – Discuss Town Nurse Position; Vote to Approve Job Description; Vote to Approve & Post Job Advertisement – Vote Anticipated

Members reviewed the Town Nurse job description and advertisement supplied by the Board of Health. R. Provost suggested that the sentence in the job description regarding the Nurse's compliance with Select Board policies be revised. M. Francesconi will revise the job description ahead of the next Select Board and Board of Health meetings. Members discussed the timeline of hiring a new Town Nurse with the Board of Health, noting that funding for overlap of the incoming Town Nurse and outgoing Town Nurse would only be available through the close of the fiscal year.

A motion was made by E. Viarengo and seconded by W. Emmet to post the job advertisement for the Town Nurse position on the website and the Town's official posting locations.

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Carries: 3-0

ADA Transition Plan

M. Francesconi presented the ADA Self Evaluation and Transition Plan that she had received from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments. Members reviewed the plan, noting that they would continue review and discussion as an ongoing agenda item at future meetings.

Highway Department – General Discussion; Taylor Brook Road Bridge; Colrain Stage Road Paving; Chapter 90 Funds; Number Nine Road & Sumner Stetson Road

M. Francesconi had no updates on the Taylor Brook Road Bridge, Chapter 90 Funds, Number Nine Road, and/or Sumner Stetson Road. Colrain Stage Road paving was complete, and the Highway Department was working on the shoulders.

Community Hall – Elevator, Cupola, & Storm Windows

M. Francesconi had no updates regarding the elevator and cupola. R. Provost has no updates regarding the storm windows.

Sawyer Hall – Heating System

M. Francesconi explained that the Building Maintenance Coordinator had received no updates regarding next steps for the heating system but had inquired again and hoped to hear back soon.

Jacobs Road Municipal Center – HVAC; Interior Security Cameras; Roofing

M. Francesconi explained that the issue with air in the water lines had been resolved, the interior security cameras were installed and running and the roofing over the gymnasium and cafeteria was nearing completion.

Tri-Town Landfill – Clearing of Vegetation; Invasive Species Eradication

M. Francesconi was waiting on a quote for invasive species eradication but expected to receive the quote soon.

Town of Colrain Surplus Police Cruiser

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M. Francesconi had no updates as the Colrain Town Administrator was out of office on an unexpected leave of absence.

Route 8A (Jacksonville Stage Road) Over Underwood Brook Culvert/Small Bridge

M. Francesconi will be working with the engineering company to apply for grant funding to cover construction costs. Now that Town Meeting approved the acquisition of necessary easements, she will work with Town Counsel to begin the acquisition process.

Public Comment

None.

Mail

- Select Board DRAFT Minutes from May 5, 2026
- Select Board DRAFT Minutes from May 9, 2026
- L. Cregan (Franklin Land Trust) re. Behl-Amter Conservation Restriction
- Board of Health re. DRAFT Town Nurse Job Posting
- Board of Health re. DRAFT Town Nurse Job Description
- C. Rabbitt re. Town Nurse Position Concern
- C. Rabbitt re. April Town Nurse Monthly Report
- Fiscal Year 2026 Appointments as of July 18, 2025
- Office Assistant Job Description Approved October 26, 2021
- Boards' Clerk Job Description Approved June 18, 2024
- G. Garland re. Boards' Clerk Job Description Edit Suggestions
- S. Litchfield re. Board of Health Clerk vs. Boards' Clerk
- S. Gruen re. Board of Health Clerk vs. Boards' Clerk
- W. Emmet re. Planning Board Updates
- J. Clark re. Jacobs Road Municipal Center Sign Design
- P. McGahan re. Renaming the Municipal Center
- W. Lataille & W. Sparks re. MTRSD Enrollment Calculation Error
- C. Curtis re. DRWA Wild & Scenic Initiative
- S. Litchfield re. Shutesbury Post Office Closure
- M. Freeman re. Council on Aging Patio & Flowers/Garden
- M. Cutter re. Glass Block Wall in JRMC Common Area
- G. Garland re. Heat Advisories/Emergencies & CodeRED
- R. Ide (National Grid) re. Smart Meter Functionalities & Progress
- J. Ameen (FCSWMD) re. April Recycling Costs
- KO Law, P.C. re. Municipal Aggregation Annual Report
- There's an advisory from Green Mountain Power regarding the Searsburg Wind Facility that has oddly shaped maps. I'm going to pass this advisory around at the meeting as it couldn't be easily scanned in as an electronic file (it came via snail mail).

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Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 2, 2026, 5:30PM

Meeting Adjournment

A motion was made by E. Viarengo and seconded by W. Emmet to adjourn the meeting of the Select Board at 8:07PM.

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Carries: 3-0

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mia Francesconi', is written over the typed name.

Mia Francesconi, Town Coordinator
Town of Heath