

TOWN OF HEATH

MASSACHUSETTS



SELECT BOARD

MEETING MINUTES - TOWN OF HEATH SELECT BOARD

This meeting was held on Tuesday, August 25, 2026, at 4:00PM.
JACOBS ROAD MUNICIPAL CENTER – CAFETERIA - 18 JACOBS ROAD HEATH, MA 01346

Called to order at 4:01PM with Robyn Provost (Chair), Elissa Viarengo (Member), William Emmet (Member), and Mia Francesconi (Town Coordinator) present.

Others present included Tyson Howard (Highway Superintendent), Barbara Gordon, Ned Wolf (Finance Committee), Bill Fontes, Tim Eastman, Christian Eastman, Melinda Lannon, Tracy Siok, Larry Siok, Michael Shattuck, Sam Lane, Sheryl Stanton (Superintendent, Mohawk Trail Regional School District), Lisa Muenkel, Budge Litchfield (School Committee, Mohawk Trail Regional School District), Dena Briggs (Chair, Finance Committee), John McDonough (Police Chief), Martha Thurber (School Committee Chair, Mohawk Trail Regional School District), and Kyle Jarvis.

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

Review Agenda: Add: Letter of Intent, Former Library Space at Sawyer Hall; Community Choice Power Supply Program

4:00PM: Tyson Howard, Highway Superintendent – Number Nine Road Next Steps

R. Provost explained that T. Howard had presented a capital expenditure request for paving Number Nine Road using Chapter 90 funds (a state aid program) during his Highway Department budget hearing for FY '27. Since then, the plan has changed multiple times due to incorrect estimates and conflicting information. Throughout this time, she had repeatedly asked whether culverts were being replaced and drainage was being reestablished and she was repeatedly assured by T. Howard that these tasks were being/would be completed. She explained that only one culvert was replaced so far, very little of the drainage had been reestablished, and none of the roadside mowing was completed. She had personally inspected many of the culverts and believed that most needed replacement. She had also located a document written by the previous Highway Superintendent that listed all the culverts that needed to be replaced on the road, their locations, their size, and their estimated replacement cost. She explained that she was not comfortable spending large amounts of money to reclaim and pave a road when the work to remedy the drainage issues on the road had not yet been completed. She suggested that the Highway Department spend the remainder of the Fall replacing culverts, reestablishing drainage, patching potholes, and completing roadside mowing to prepare for reclaiming and paving in the Spring. In this scenario, the top coat of asphalt would likely be applied in the Spring of 2028 and could be funded by a grant. She had spoken with MassDOT's District 1 State Aid Engineer, David Stokes, who agreed with this plan and had previously informed her that it would not be in the Town's best interest to reclaim and pave a road without addressing the failing drainage infrastructure.

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T. Howard stated that he looked at all the culverts and did not believe that any more of them required replacement. E. Viarengo asked if T. Howard had used specific culvert evaluation criteria to come to this conclusion. T. Howard stated that all he could do was look at the culverts and there is no way to know when/if a culvert will fail. The public was then invited to comment on this agenda item.

M. Lannon asked the Board why the Town pays T. Howard if the Board doesn't trust him. E. Viarengo explained that this was not the case and it was possible that T. Howard was evaluating the culverts using a different set of criteria than others. M. Shattuck stated that he had noticed multiple cracked/broken catch basins and that bad catch basins ruin roads. T. Howard would look at the catch basins. T. Eastman stated that he needed significant repairs to his vehicle due to the poor condition of the road. He and M. Lannon explained that school buses and postal vehicles had also been damaged by driving over the road in its current state. S. Lane suggested that the Town reclaim the road and leave it dirt for the Winter to allow for easier culvert replacement. T. Howard stated that leaving the road dirt for the Winter would create a dust problem and would require that plow routes be changed. M. Shattuck and S. Lane agreed that the Town would be wasting money by patching the road instead of just repaving it. R. Provost explained that further discussion would need to wait for the next meeting as the next appointment had arrived. In the meantime, preparatory work on the road would continue.

5:00PM: Mohawk Trail Regional School District (MTRSD) Representative(s) – 2D8T Update & Discussion

S. Stanton and M. Thurber presented a slideshow summarizing the district's proposed project to move to a single campus model. They explained that the district was accepted into the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) process. A vote to authorize the district to enter into and fund the feasibility study will take place at special town meetings in each of the towns in the district between January and March of 2027. If the district is authorized to do this, the regional agreement and capital expenditure vote will likely occur in October of 2028, with the new district launching in July of 2030. Current construction cost estimates are between \$26,300,000 and \$37,600,000 with the cost of the feasibility study estimated to be between \$900,000 and \$1,200,000 which will be borrowed for a seven-year term. The district is aware of the transportation and preschool concerns that have been raised about the proposed single campus model and are working on ways to address them. R. Provost asked if the district had an alternative plan if the proposed project to move to a single campus model failed. S. Stanton stated that she did not believe that the district needed an alternative plan yet because it is the purpose of the feasibility study to determine if the project is feasible and therefore, if an alternative plan will be necessary. They explained that the district cannot feasibly continue in the direction they are going; enrollment and building utilization are extremely low. E. Viarengo asked if Hawlemont's agricultural programs will be continued if the district moved to a single campus model. They explained that the agricultural programs will not only continue but will be expanded to include high school. R. Provost urged the audience and those listening to the audio recordings to educate themselves about this project and to send in their thoughts and questions to the Select Board.

6:00PM: John McDonough, Police Chief – Review & Discuss Correspondence Received from Margo Newton & Bill Lattrell re. Golf Carts at Mohawk Estates

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J. McDonough explained that the correspondence from Margo Newton identified a lack of police presence in Mohawk Estates, problems with underaged people operating golf carts and golf carts being operated erratically. J. McDonough explained that he has limited patrol hours but spent almost four hours in Mohawk Estates after receiving this information and only saw one golf cart on a public roadway, Flagg Hill Road. He spoke with the operator of the golf cart who explained that they simply were not aware of the rules surrounding golf carts on public roadways and which roadways were public. He stated that signage should be erected by Mohawk Estates that lists the golf cart rules, including that residents are prohibited from operating golf carts on public roadways. The Board suggested that a meeting be scheduled with the new president of the Mohawk Estates board to discuss these issues. M. Francesconi will schedule this.

Public Comment

None.

Meeting Minutes: 07/28/2026

A motion was made by E. Viarengo and seconded by W. Emmet to approve the meeting minutes from July 28, 2026, as amended.

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Carries: 3-0

Meeting Minutes: 08/11/2026

A motion was made by E. Viarengo and seconded by R. Provost to approve the meeting minutes from August 11, 2026, as presented.

Vote: R. Provost, Yes; E. Viarengo, Yes; W. Emmet, Abstained

Motion Carries: 2-0-1

Meeting Minutes: 08/18/2026

A motion was made by W. Emmet and seconded by R. Provost to approve the meeting minutes from August 18, 2026, as presented.

Vote: R. Provost, Yes; W. Emmet, Yes; E. Viarengo, Abstained

Motion Carries: 2-0-1

Accounts Payable/Payroll Warrants

Approved by signature.

Town of Colrain Surplus Police Cruiser

M. Francesconi explained that she had a meeting with both the Fire Chief, Nicholas Anzuoni, who is also the Fire Chief for the Town of Colrain, and the Town of Colrain's Town Administrator, Diana Parsons. At this meeting, M. Francesconi reiterated the suggestion that the Town of Colrain continue to own and hold insurance for the surplus police cruiser and the Town of Heath pay to outfit it with the necessary equipment. The cruiser would be generically lettered as a Fire Department emergency vehicle, rather than being lettered for either town, and repairs would be completed by the Town of Colrain's

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mechanic with the Town of Heath paying for the parts. D. Parsons believed that the Town of Colrain Select Board would be receptive to this idea and planned to bring it to them at their next meeting.

Broadband Infrastructure Loan – Review & Authorize Payment

A motion was made by E. Viarengo and seconded by W. Emmet to authorize the Treasurer to make a payment on the broadband infrastructure loan, as presented.

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Carries: 3-0

Letter of Interest for Vacant Planning Board Position – Review Letter of Interest & Consider Peter Maitland for Temporary Appointment – Vote Possible

M. Francesconi explained that she had received a letter of interest from Peter Maitland for the vacant Planning Board position, asking that he be appointed to the position until the next election. E. Viarengo stated that one of the current members, Robert Dane, had recommended P. Maitland to her for this position. She noted that he seemed to be enthusiastic about volunteering for the community.

A motion was made by E. Viarengo and seconded by W. Emmet to temporarily appoint Peter Maitland as a member of the Planning Board until the next Town Election in May.

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Carries: 3-0

Western Franklin County EMS Regionalization Initiative – Update on Progress Made at Most Recent Meeting; Review Options Provided by FRCOG

M. Francesconi updated the Board on the progress of the group meetings, explaining that the group had decided on a first-year staffing model of one Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance 24/7 and one Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulance during the day. She provided the Board with the updated assessment option spreadsheets from the meeting and explained that she would continue to update the Board as she received more information.

Town Coordinator Office Hours – Discuss Shortening Office Hours to Decrease Disruptions

M. Francesconi explained that she had been finding it difficult to complete tasks that require concentration due to near constant interruptions during her office hours where she is open to the public. The Board requested that her hours where she is open to the public be decreased to twelve hours per week with the following schedule:

*Monday: 9:00AM to 1:00PM;
Tuesday: 9:00AM to 1:00PM;
Wednesday: CLOSED;
Thursday: 9:00AM to 1:00PM; and
Friday: CLOSED.*

Other Hours by Appointment Only

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S. Lane asked if these would be the only times that M. Francesconi would be working. The Board explained that M. Francesconi would still be working forty hours per week but would only be open to the public during the following days/times.

Town Coordinator Updates

M. Francesconi presented the attached document entitled *Town Coordinator Updates, August 25, 2026*.

Mail

- T. Howard (Highway Superintendent) re. Number Nine Road Quotations
- T. Howard (Highway Superintendent) re. Week of 08/03/2026 Weekly Report
- M. Newton & B. Lattrell re. Golf Carts & Police Presence in Mohawk Estates
- Various Sources re. Information on Town of Colrain Surplus Police Cruiser
- P. Maitland re. Interested in Becoming a Member of the Planning Board
- Informational Brochure on West County Ambulance Collaboration Project
- DRAFT Press Release titled "West County Studying Ambulance Collaboration"
- Types of Ambulance Services & Grant Eligibility
- G. Garland (Board of Health) re. Town Nurse Recommendation
- G. Garland (Board of Health) re. Plan for Town Nurse Contract
- A. Looman (Colrain Central School) re. Invitation to 1st Day Celebration
- J. Atwood (FRCOG) re. FRCOG Planning Updates
- D. Finn (MassDOER) re. Clean Energy Siting & Permitting
- S. Gruen re. PVMCD EPI Week 31 Weekly Surveillance Report
- S. Gruen re. PVMCD EPI Week 32 Weekly Surveillance Report
- J. Ameen (FCSWMD) re. August Recycling AMV & FY '26 Revenue
- M. Sumner (Town Clerk) re. FCTS District-Wide Ballot Vote Information
- M. Francesconi re. Information from FCTS Discussion on August 19, 2026
- Buckland Finance Committee FCTS Project Comparisons PowerPoint
- Buckland Finance Committee FCTS Project Impact on Towns PowerPoint
- Halifax Planning Commission re. DRAFT Halifax Town Plan & Cover Letter

New Business: Letter of Intent, Former Library Space at Sawyer Hall

Members briefly reviewed the Letter of Intent and continued this agenda item to the next meeting to allow for further review ahead of discussion.

New Business: Community Choice Power Supply Program

M. Francesconi explained that she expected to accept a new fixed electrical supply rate on behalf of the Select Board in the coming weeks at the advice of the Colonial Power Group. She would inform members of the decision once a contract was executed.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 8, 2026, 4:00PM

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Meeting Adjournment

A motion was made by E. Viarengo and seconded by R. Provost to adjourn the meeting of the Select Board at 7:55PM.

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Carries: 3-0

Respectfully submitted,

Mia Francesconi, Town Coordinator
Town of Heath

ATTACHMENTS NOT INCLUDED IN MAIL:

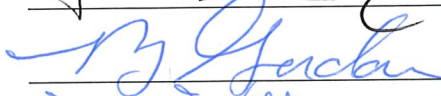
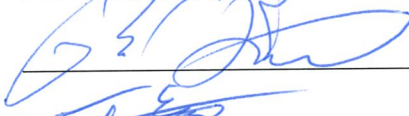
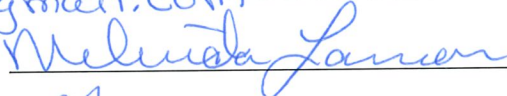
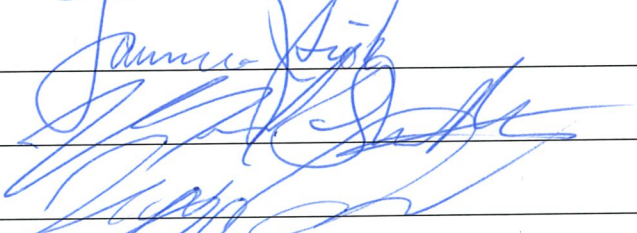
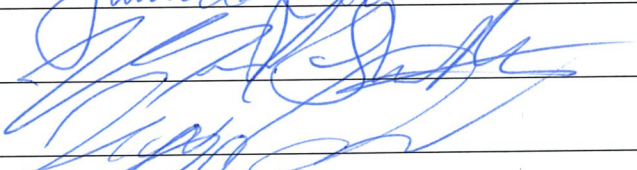
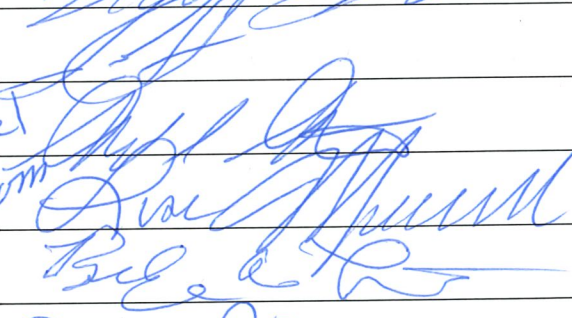
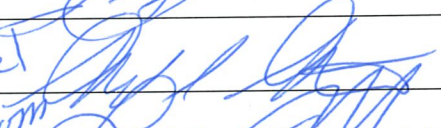
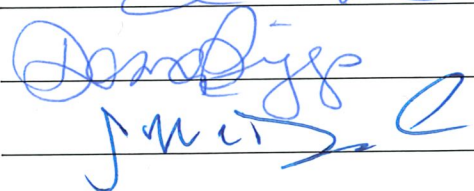
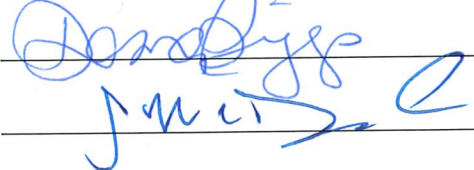
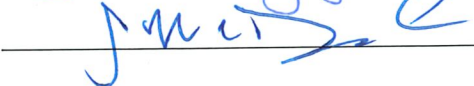
- *Sign-In Sheet, August 25, 2026*
- *Town Coordinator Updates, August 25, 2026*
- *Letter of Intent for Former Library Space at Sawyer Hall*

Heath
Select Board Meeting

DATE: August 25, 2026

Please Sign In

Name (please print)

PRINT NAME	SIGN
Tyson Howard	
Barbara Gordon	
Ned Wolf	
Bill Fontes	
TIM Eastman	
Curry Eastman	
Melinda Kannon	
Tracy Siok	
Larry Siok	
Michael Shattuck	
SAM LANE	
Sheryl Stanton	
LISA Muenkel	
Badger Litchfield	
Dena Briggs	
John McDevoy	

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TOWN COORDINATOR

TOWN COORDINATOR UPDATES

August 25, 2026

GREEN COMMUNITIES GRANT

One of the final report requirements for the Green Communities grant is that all projects pass their MassSave inspections. Unfortunately, the HVAC company is still in discussions with MassSave about the heat pump project because MassSave's inspection prompted some questions. We're hopeful that discussions will wrap up soon and we'll have final approval so we can move forward with submission of the final report. After the final report is submitted, there will be another inspection, then we'll receive the final disbursement of funds.

DEERFIELD RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION, WILD & SCENIC INITIATIVE

I spoke with Christopher Curtis of the DRWA who explained that he'd still like a letter of support from the Town of Heath. I sent him the Select Board's upcoming appointment availability.

GUARDRAIL ON ROUTE 8A

The guardrail was successfully replaced last Thursday.

TOWN CENTER KIOSK

The Highway Department was able to completely remove the town center kiosk, including the concrete, and it is stored in one of the shipping containers at JRMC.

TOWN NURSE POSITION

The Board of Health submitted a recommendation to the Select Board regarding the applicant that was interviewed a few weeks ago and requested a meeting with the Board to discuss their recommendation. I sent them the Select Board's availability. We will also need a recommendation from the interview committee in order to proceed.

TOWN CENTER ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

I spoke with the insurance company and informed them of our concerns with the lack of response from Liberty Mutual. They decided to push us through for coverage and have Mack Brothers Elevator scheduled to install the generic replacement part. The insurance company will be paying Mack Brothers Elevator directly for this work.

NO UPDATES

- Jacobs Road Municipal Center Sign
- Sawyer Hall Ramp
- #2 Heating Oil for Town Buildings
- Route 8A (Jacksonville Stage Road) Culvert Project

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TOWN COORDINATOR

- Flagg Hill Road Branch
- National Grid 3-Phase Project
- Cultural Facilities Grant
- Sawyer Hall Heating System
- Boards Clerk Position
- Overhead Doors at Highway Garage & Fire Station
- Burnt Hill-Catamount Trail Enforcement Order
- Jacobs Road Municipal Center Roof Leak
- Roller
- Heath Salt Shed Retaining Wall

August 25, 2026

Town of Heath Select Board

18 Jacobs Road
Heath, MA 01346

Re: Letter of Intent and Expression of Interest – Former Library Space at Sawyer Hall

Dear Members of the Heath Select Board,

I am writing to formally express my interest in leasing the former library space on the first floor of Sawyer Hall for **A Foragers Trade**, my locally operated small business.

I am proposing to use the space primarily as an office, studio, inventory and e-commerce workspace, with a small retail showroom component for antiques, vintage goods, art, books, natural-history items, and other carefully selected merchandise.

My business currently involves sourcing, researching, cataloging, photographing, marketing, and selling antique and vintage merchandise through online marketplaces, regional markets and shows, and retail vendor spaces. Sawyer Hall would provide a central location from which I could consolidate these activities while also establishing a modest public-facing presence here in Heath.

Proposed Use of the Space

The former library would function primarily as a clean, low-impact **office and studio environment**. Proposed activities would include:

- Storage and organization of antique and vintage inventory
- Research, identification, cataloging, and documentation of merchandise
- Product photography and preparation of online listings
- E-commerce order processing, packing, and shipping
- Office and administrative functions
- Display of selected merchandise in a small showroom
- Scheduled and occasional retail hours
- Customer appointments and local merchandise pickup
- Consignment and resale opportunities for area residents
- Acceptance of appropriate donated items
- Potential purchase of antiques, vintage goods, collections, and other items directly from residents

The proposed studio use would not involve industrial manufacturing, painting, refinishing, or similar high-impact workshop activities. The intention is to maintain the former library as an orderly office, studio, storage, and showroom environment.

Community Benefit

I believe this use could provide a practical service to Heath and surrounding communities while returning an underutilized municipal space to productive use.

A public-facing showroom would give residents an opportunity to shop locally for antiques, vintage goods, books, art, and unusual objects without requiring the operation of a conventional full-time retail store.

I would also like the business to provide an accessible local resource for residents who have items they no longer want but do not necessarily want to discard. Depending upon the item, I could potentially purchase it, accept it for consignment, accept it as a donation, or help determine whether it has a viable resale market.

This model encourages reuse and recirculation of existing goods while helping keep usable and historically interesting material from being unnecessarily discarded. It also creates an opportunity for older objects, books, household goods, art, and locally relevant material to remain in circulation.

My work with antiques and vintage material involves researching the history, age, origin, construction, and cultural context of objects. I would welcome opportunities for the Sawyer Hall showroom to reflect that interest in preservation and local material history.

Business Experience

A Foragers Trade builds upon my experience in independent business ownership, antique and vintage resale, e-commerce, regional flea and antique markets, vendor-based retail, research, inventory management, marketing, customer service, and business operations.

My professional background also includes project management, estimating, construction, land-based work, and business administration. These experiences have required organization, independent responsibility, financial planning, communication, and the ability to manage projects and physical assets effectively.

I believe that combination of experience would allow me to be a responsible steward of the Sawyer Hall space while developing a viable small business presence within the building.

Proposed Lease Terms

Because I would be establishing the Sawyer Hall location as a new component of the business, I would prefer to begin with a **month-to-month lease**, or another short-term arrangement agreeable to the Town, with the possibility of continuing or renewing the lease based upon the success of the arrangement.

I would like to propose an initial rental rate of **\$350 per month**, with the understanding that this is intended as a starting point for discussion with the Select Board.

I recognize that the Town's 2025 Request for Proposals established different minimum rental and lease-term expectations. Because the space remains available more than a year after that solicitation, I respectfully ask the Board to consider whether a revised rental arrangement may now be appropriate.

My goal would be to establish an arrangement that is financially sustainable for the business while providing the Town with rental income, responsible occupancy of the former library, and an additional small-business and community resource within Sawyer Hall.

I would be happy to meet with the Select Board to discuss the proposed use, answer questions, tour the space again if appropriate, and discuss lease terms and any requirements the Town may have regarding insurance, public access, signage, parking, or use of the building.

Thank you for considering my proposal. I appreciate the opportunity to explore bringing A Foragers Trade into Sawyer Hall and would welcome the chance to discuss how the space could serve both the needs of my business and the Heath community.

Sincerely,

Casey Clark
A Foragers Trade
Heath, Massachusetts