Select Board Meeting Minutes **October 5, 2026**

Present: Chairman Dan Haskins, Selectman Colton Andrews Selectman Seth Alexander, and Town Administrator Ronald Boucher.

I. Call to Order.

Chairman Dan Haskins called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and noted that the meeting was being recorded using artificial intelligence for note-taking purposes.

II. Pledge of Allegiance.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. Approve meeting minutes from September 8th.

The Board reviewed the meeting minutes from September 8th, 2026. No questions or concerns were raised regarding the minutes.

MOTION: Selectman Andrews motioned to approve the meeting minutes from September 8th.
SECOND: Selectman Alexander seconded.
VOTE: All were in favor.

IV. Bid opening for West Road Culvert grant.

The Selectboard opened bids for the West Road Culvert Grant project. Bids received were from Rifenburg Contracting Corp. in the amount of $1,723,420; Western Earthworks in the amount of $988,525; Clayton D. Davenport Trucking in the amount of $1,594,440; Northern Construction Service in the amount of $2,530,890; and J.H. Maximillian in the amount of $2,979,381. The bids were opened and recorded, and Highway Superintendent Kyle Hurlbut will review the bids and project scope before making a recommendation to the Selectboard.

V. DPW updates.

Before proceeding with the DPW report, the Selectboard recognized Highway Superintendent Kyle Hurlbut for 20 years of service to the Town of Clarksburg. The Board expressed its appreciation for his dedication, hard work, commitment, and continued service to the Town through various weather conditions, long workdays, and challenges associated with maintaining the Town's infrastructure. The Board congratulated Mr. Hurlbut and thanked him for his 20 years of service. Town Administrator Ron Boucher also spoke in recognition of Mr. Hurlbut, noting his commitment to the Town and his careful consideration of Town expenditures.

VI. Appoint Jeannie Landrie for a 3-year term to the Council on Aging to end in 2029.

The Selectboard considered the appointment of Jeannie Landrie to a 3-year term on the Council on Aging, ending in 2029.

MOTION: Selectman Andrews motioned to appoint Jeannie Landrie to the Council on Aging for a 3-year term to end in 2029.
SECOND: Selectman Alexander seconded.
VOTE: All were in favor.

VII. Continuation of DPW updates.

Highway Superintendent Kyle Hurlbut provided an update on current DPW operations and equipment. Building maintenance work is progressing, including painting and other work at the Town facilities. Notices regarding the upcoming cemetery closing have been posted, and the department is preparing for winter operations. Winter equipment and supplies are generally ready, with some remaining equipment work underway. The department is also awaiting delivery of a new truck, with delivery anticipated around December or January.

Mr. Hurlbut reported that a 2015 truck with approximately 110,000 miles is experiencing significant mechanical problems, including injector issues, high fuel-line pressure problems, and computer-related faults. Estimated repair costs were discussed as ranging from approximately $3,000 to $5,500. Because the truck is currently in limp mode and has limited power, the Board discussed whether it would be more practical to trade the vehicle rather than invest additional funds in repairs. The dealer has indicated a trade-in value of approximately $4,000. After discussion, the Board indicated support for pursuing the trade-in option rather than making the necessary repairs.

Regarding road work, the department has addressed drainage and washout concerns on McKay Hill and performed catch-basin work on Eagle Street. Work on other areas, including Houghton and Jordan streets, remains to be completed. The Middle Road project was discussed, with the contractor expected to complete structures and crossings this year and paving anticipated in the spring. The project is subject to a June 1 completion requirement for the Town's state reporting.

Mr. Hurlbut also reported that a work order has been opened regarding utility poles that need to be relocated. VanZandt began work on the Eagle Street sewer project on October 5. The

department encountered an issue locating the anticipated first connection and planned to continue investigating the line the following day.

VIII. Route 8/River Road bridge updates.

The Board provided an update on the Route 8/River Road bridge project following a meeting with Clayton D. Davenport Trucking and representatives from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation. The project remains on schedule for the temporary bridge and roadway to reopen prior to the Columbus Day weekend, weather and construction conditions permitting.

The Board discussed concerns regarding access to East Road once the temporary bridge work is completed. Due to the configuration of the bridge structure, slopes, and retaining wall, MassDOT determined that normal public travel on East Road through the affected area would be unsafe because of the limited width between the structures. The Town and project representatives developed an emergency-access plan utilizing collapsible delineators across the approximately 10-foot-wide paved area near the McKinney residence. The delineators will be capable of being lowered to permit emergency vehicles, including fire and ambulance vehicles, to pass through. The area will not be open to general public traffic.

The Board discussed the importance of maintaining emergency access and noted that the original proposal had involved a chain-link fence and locked gate. Following discussions with project officials, the collapsible delineator system was developed as a safer alternative that would allow emergency vehicles to access the area without requiring personnel to unlock a gate.

The Board also discussed the anticipated timeline for permanent reconstruction of the bridge. MassDOT has indicated an estimated five-to-seven-year timeframe before permanent bridge construction begins, and the Town has received notification that the permanent bridge has advanced through the MassDOT design process.

The Board discussed the importance of communicating the anticipated reopening date to residents, particularly because the Columbus Day weekend is an important weekend for local businesses and seasonal activities. The Board requested that the Town communicate the expected reopening as soon as possible, while noting that the reopening remains subject to weather and construction conditions.

IX. Review and approve FY 27 Q2 sewer commitment.

The Selectboard reviewed the FY27 second-quarter sewer and water commitment. The sewer commitment was $105,332.72 and the water commitment was $3,020, for a total commitment of $108,350.72.

MOTION: Selectman Andrews motioned to approve the FY27 Q2 sewer commitment.
SECOND: Selectman Alexander seconded.
VOTE: All were in favor.

X. Review and approve the warrant for the 2026 State Election.

The Board reviewed the warrant for the 2026 State Election. The election will be held at the Clarksburg Community Center, 712 West Cross Road, on Tuesday, November 3rd, 2026, from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM.

MOTION: Chairman Haskins motioned to approve the 2026 State Election warrant.
SECOND: Selectman Andrews seconded.
VOTE: All were in favor.

XI. Review new building permit fee schedule.

Town Administrator Ron Boucher discussed proposed changes to the Town's building permit fee schedule. Information was obtained from Williamstown, North Adams, and Adams and used as a comparison when reviewing the Town's current schedule. The proposed changes would increase application fees by $10 while leaving the per-thousand-dollar project amounts unchanged. Some portions of the existing schedule were also clarified and streamlined. The Board reviewed the proposed changes and expressed support for the revisions.

MOTION: Selectman Andrews motioned to approve the proposed changes to the building permit fee schedule.
SECOND: Selectman Alexander seconded.
VOTE: All were in favor.

XII. Amend vacation and sick time for Town employees.

Chairman Haskins abstained from the discussion regarding employee vacation and sick time. The Board discussed proposed amendments to Section 15 of the Town of Clarksburg

Personnel Policy Manual concerning vacation benefits for Town employees and DPW employees.

The proposed changes would increase vacation benefits for new and existing employees. For general Town employees, new employees would begin with two weeks, or eight days, of vacation, followed by 12 days for years one through four, 16 days for years five through nine, 20 days for years 10 through 19, and 24 days for 20 or more years of service. For DPW employees, the proposal would provide two weeks of vacation upon hire, three weeks for years one through four, four weeks for years five through nine, and five weeks for employees with 10 or more years of service.

The Board discussed the importance of employee benefits for recruitment and retention, particularly considering the Town's compensation levels.

MOTION: Selectman Andrews motioned to approve the proposed changes to the Town and DPW employee vacation and sick time.
SECOND: Selectman Alexander seconded.
VOTE: Both were in favor with Chairman Haskins abstaining.

XIII. Town Treasurer/Tax Collector and Town Accountant reports.

The Treasurer/Tax Collector was unavailable to attend the meeting. The Town Accountant was also unavailable. Their respective reports were therefore postponed until the next Selectboard meeting.

XIV. Town Assessor report.

Assessor Amber Holland provided an update on the Town's property data collection and assessment work. MFS conducted data collection on September 17 and 19 and had reviewed approximately 500 of the Town's 863 properties. If the work continues at the current pace, the data collection is expected to be completed in October. Data entry and valuation work will begin after the FY2028 assessment cycle gets underway.

The Board discussed how changes in property assessments resulting from improvements would affect future tax bills. It was explained that changes resulting from the new assessment work would not be reflected until the applicable FY2028 tax billing cycle.

The Assessor also reported that CATALIS is completing sales studies for residential and commercial properties. Because that work is not yet complete, there is insufficient time to incorporate all of the information into the FY2027 tax-rate process.

Public utility appraisals have been completed and entered into the Town's assessment system. Available and legible building permits have also been entered. Applications for Chapter land appraisals have been sent out, and the Board of Assessors is scheduled to meet on October 20 to review exemption applications, including veterans' exemptions.

Ms. Holland discussed the Town's outdated tax maps. The maps have not been updated since February 2025 because an upgrade is required for the Town's GIS and assessment systems to communicate properly. The required Access GIS upgrade was quoted at $1,800. The Board discussed available funding and the possibility of utilizing existing departmental funds or available funds at the end of the fiscal year. The Board agreed that updating the tax maps is necessary and important for the Town's operations.

MOTION: Selectman Andrews motioned to approve the $1,800 purchase of the Axis GIS system upgrade.
SECOND: Selectman Alexander seconded.
VOTE: All were in favor.

XV. Town Administrator updates.

The Town Administrator provided an update regarding a recent moratorium on new Berkshire Gas connections. The impact to Clarksburg is expected to be limited, although new construction requiring natural gas service may be affected. The Town Administrator noted that the issue has been communicated by Berkshire Gas and that neighboring communities have also addressed the matter.

The Town Administrator also presented information regarding online permitting software for the Building Department. The proposed system would allow residents to apply for and pay for building permits online and would integrate with UniPay. The system would also assist with identifying outstanding property taxes and improve communication and tracking among the Building Department, Treasurer/Collector, Assessor, and Town Hall staff.

The proposed system would require an initial setup cost of $6,500, followed by an estimated $3,000 for the remainder of FY2027, $4,725 for FY2028, and $4,961 for FY2029. The

Town Administrator explained that the proposed increase in building permit fees was partly intended to help offset the cost of implementing an online permitting system.

The Board expressed general support for moving toward an online permitting system but discussed concerns regarding implementing the system during the current fiscal year because the expense was not included in the FY2027 budget. The Board favored waiting until FY2028, when funding could be included in the budget, with the goal of beginning the implementation process in advance of July 1, 2027.

The Board also discussed researching alternative permitting software providers and obtaining additional quotes. The Town Administrator reported that Adams uses the proposed system and that Williamstown has experience with both the proposed system and another permitting platform. The Board agreed that obtaining additional information and comparing costs would be beneficial before making a final decision.

XVI. Public comment.

Chairman Haskins opened the floor to public comment. During public comment, Martha Tanner of 901 River Rd. asked whether school bus routes would return to their normal routes once the Route 8/River Road bridge reopens. The Board explained that the bus company and school would need to coordinate the change and that the Town would contact David Suki to confirm the plans. The Board noted that the bridge was currently scheduled to reopen prior to Columbus Day weekend, but that weather or construction conditions could affect the schedule. Until the reopening is confirmed, the existing bus route should remain in place. No further public comments were offered.

XVII. Adjournment.

MOTION: Chairman Haskins motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:44 p.m.
SECOND: Selectman Andrews seconded.
VOTE: All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Markell Shea, *Town Executive Assistant*

Selectboard,

Dan Haskins, *Chair*	**Colton Andrews**, *First Vice Chair*	**Seth Alexander**, *Second Vice Chair*