

Town of Rowe – FY2013
Board of Selectmen – Minutes
Tuesday, October 23, 2012 – 6:00pm
Rowe Town Hall

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Abbott at 6:11pm.

Present: Chairman Noel Abbott, Vice Chairman Paul McLatchy III, and Selectman Marilyn Wilson

Audience: Donna Flagg, Bill Knittle, Ann Foshay, Ellynn Packard, Lisa Miller, Cindy Laffond, Becky Richardson, Joyce Boutwell, Betty Vernes, Rosie Gordon, Ron Gordon, Kris Swenson, Robin Reed

SCHOOL FIRE MATTERS:

- **School Committee:** School Committee Chair Lisa Miller addressed the Board stating that they will be meeting the next evening to discuss future plans. A memo had been sent to the School Committee asking that they inform the Select Board of their thoughts and decisions concerning the school property (*see memo attached*). She asked that the Select Board tone down their speculation for the future of the school site. As the School Committee has responsibility for the property she asked that the School Committee be allowed to take action on the disposition of the site and future plans for the school. Chairman Abbott stated that her points were well taken. He added that the Select Board had just learned prior to their meeting last week that the School Committee has control of the buildings, grounds and contents. Vice Chairman McLatchy added that the Select Board does understand that the School Committee would need to vote to allow other use(s) of the property; and that they will wait until the School Committee decides what they are going to pursue. Selectman Wilson stated that the Select Board has advocated for the School Committee in this matter since the beginning. Lisa Miller also requested that the School Committee be brought into any meetings held to form the School Building Committee. The Select Board stated that that was always their plan. Ms. Miller was assured that this will be a collaborative process and was thanked for attending the meeting.
- **Work Bee to Retrieve Useable Equipment:** School Committee member Cindy Laffond reported that any usable items that could be safely removed were moved from the school site during the work bee on Saturday. [Thirteen residents took part.] Items were cleaned and stored in the Soule barn. She spoke with a musical instrument professional at Gerry's Music in South Hadley who determined that the instruments salvaged from the school would not be usable, but that he would give credit to the town for any parts that he could use. Ms. Laffond then asked that the purchase orders (totaling approximately \$8,000) for musical instruments that was held by the Select Board at last week's meeting be approved. The Select Board voted unanimously (3/0/0) to approve the two purchase orders.
- **Purchase Orders for Replacement Items/Use of Salvageable Items:** One additional purchase order is being held at this time. The PO is for SmartBoard peripheral equipment. A memo was sent to the School Committee asking them if salvageable items from the school could be used rather than buying new items. Specifically the Select Board asked about the possible reuse of: Laptops (18) and MacBooks (18) and their charging cabinets, SmartBoards and their peripheral equipment, and musical instruments. The musical instruments were approved for purchase (see bullet above). Principal Knittle reported the other items [laptops, MacBooks, SmartBoards] will discussed by the School Committee at their meeting tomorrow evening. [*PO for SmartBoard equipment and memo to SchCom attached.*]
- **Additional Bus:** The School Committee has approved adding an additional large bus so that the school day can convene and dismiss at the usual time—8:15am and 3:15pm. They will discuss this matter at their meeting on October 24th. The Select Board has been requested to approve this additional bus. The School Committee will provide an explanation for their approval of this additional bus. The Select Board will act on the matter at their next meeting on October 30th. It is presumed that insurance "relocation" funds will pay for this additional bus.
- **Inventory:** Principal Knittle stated that he will have the school building inventory completed within two weeks.

- **Temporary Assistance:** Selectman Wilson reported that she had contacted three temporary staffing agencies. She assessed that one was not very good, one was fairly good, and one was excellent. She recommends Premier Staffing Services. The Select Board voted unanimously (3/0/0) to use Premiere Staffing Services to present candidates for both the Accounting Assistance position and Administrative Assistance temporary positions for the Rowe School Fire matter. Anyone interested in either of these positions should work through Premiere Staffing to apply. Selectman Wilson was asked to contact all individuals that have expressed interest in the positions to have them contact Premiere.
- **Central Office—Possible Fire Expenses:** A response to the Select Board's requests that the Town of Rowe be informed of any charges that would be forthcoming from the Central Office for costs related to the school fire was received from Supt. Buonoconti in a letter dated October 16th. The letter states the following:

“According to the current Three-District Shared Expense Agreement signed in June 2012, there is no mechanism to charge a district more than the agreed to percentages. Without such a mechanism, no invoices will be submitted to the Town of Rowe to cover additional Central Office time above the normal percentage allocated to the Town of Rowe.”

The Select Board is concerned that the FY2014 agreement that is being worked on presently may possibly be impacted by any Central Office additional fire-related costs. Chairman Abbott noted that following last year's Tropical Storm Irene that, which did considerable damage in both the Hawlemont and Mohawk districts—but no damage for Rowe School, there no changes to the Three District Agreement to address additional costs incurred by Central Office staff. The Selectmen hope/expect that the Rowe school fire will be handled similarly. Selectman Wilson will attend the School Committee meeting tomorrow evening to discuss the Selectmen's concerns and ask that the School Committee take an official vote to assure it does not impact the 3DA for FY2014.

- **School Building Committee:** Bill Loomis and Dennis May (representing the Finance Committee) have submitted written requests to be appointed to the School Building Committee. The following residents have requested appointment to the committee: Janet Cowie, Donna Flagg, Ann Foshay, Bill Loomis, Dennis May, Kerri McLatchy, Paul McLatchy III, Marjorie Morse, Bob Silva and Susie Zavotka. Non-residents interested in serving on the committee are: Bill Knittle, Michael Buonoconti and Joanne Blier. Appointment of committee members has been deferred at this time.
- **Public Forum to Discuss School Matter:** Deferred
- **Air Purifiers:** Ellen Miller reported that two air purifiers were purchased by the school and are running in the 2nd floor Storage Room. She spoke with School Nurse Barbara Griffin who stated that she was asked by Principal Knittle and Facilities Manager Robin Pease to purchase and run the air purifiers in the Storage Room where the paper records from the school building are being stored. Ms. Griffin did say that some of the papers in the boxes were damp/wet, and a few had mold on them—but they now seem dry. Ms. Miller checked with Ed May who inspected the units and stated they are not dehumidifiers, but air purifiers that take particulate out of the air. Particulate is not a concern, so he did not feel the units were warranted. The units were both running on high, and he turned them down to low. No other action was taken at this time.

Cultural Council: Acting Cultural Council Chair Ellynn Packard asked about the status of Meghan McLatchy's membership in the Cultural Council. Vice Chairman McLatchy stated that it was his understanding that she intends to resign, as she has moved out of town. He will speak with her again asking that she get this done as soon as possible so the Cultural Council can act on this year's applications for grant funds.

Police Chief Succession: Chairman Abbott welcomed Phil Adams, Executive Director of the Western MA Police Chief's Association and Hampden Police Chief (Ret.), and Rick Marchese, Chief Security Consultant of Universal Security Associates U.S.A.; past Executive Director of the MA Chiefs of Police; and East Longmeadow Police Chief (Ret.). They attended the meeting to discuss guidance they can provide the Select Board in their process to replace soon-to-retire Police Chief Henry Dandeneau. They estimate that they would need three trips to town—including holding a community meeting and meeting with individuals—to prepare a list of recommended options the town can take, and cost estimates for these options. They will prepare a contract for their services and send it right away to the town for approval. Once approved/signed it will be returned to Mr. Marchese. A tentative date to meet with townspeople was set for Thursday, November 8th. Funds for this work will need to be sought at a

Special Town Meeting. Messrs. Adams and Marchese were thanked for attending the meeting. *[See Noel Abbott emails attached concerning the matter.]*

Conservation Commission: The Select Board voted unanimously (3/0/0) to appoint Thom Chiofalo of Potter Road to the Conservation Commission.

Dog Officer: Chairman Abbott stated that Arthur Samuelson of Ford Hill Road may be interested in being appointed as Dog Officer. It was agreed to have Chairman Abbott speak to him and report back to the board.

Select Board Meeting Protocol: Selectman Wilson expressed her concern at the amount of time being allowed during BOS meetings for audience comments—many times as long as 1 to 1½ hours. She stated that the board is a working board with important business to handle at each meeting. These meetings are not public hearings. She suggested that the audience comment period be limited to 10-15 minutes—with each person being given a limit of 2 minutes to be heard. Vice Chairman McLatchy agreed with her suggestion. Chairman Abbott yielded to his fellow officers and asked Selectman Wilson if she would like to run the audience comment item on the meeting agendas. She agreed that she would be willing to do so. It was agreed that she handle the audience comment period on a trial basis.

Election Worker Appointments: At the request of Town Clerk Jenn Morse the following residents were unanimously (3/0/0) appointed as election workers: Jodi Brown, Carrie Silva and Susan Wood.

Assistant Town Clerk: At the request of Town Clerk Jenn Morse, Carrie Silva of Davis Mine Road was unanimously (3/0/0) appointed as Assistant Town Clerk.

Lock Box for Town Clerk: It was agreed that Selectman Wilson buy a lock box for Town Clerk mail. This is especially needed for secure receipt of Absentee Ballots that voters leave at the town hall.

Payroll Matter: Ellen Miller received an email from library employee Kelle Quist (which was copied to the Select Board members) which stated that since her employment started in 2008 her deductions for Federal and State taxes have been incorrect many times. Ms. Miller stated that she has printed out payroll information for every paycheck that Ms. Quist has received since starting employment with the town which shows that all Federal and State taxes have been deducted as she stipulated on her W-4 when she was hired. She will provide this information to Ms. Quist along with a copy of Circular E (IRS employer's tax guide) which shows that the appropriate taxes have been withheld. She will also supply Ms. Quist with blank W-4 and M-4 forms asking that she submit new forms if she would like to change her tax deductions.

Soule Barn Loft: Vice Chairman McLatchy stated that items from the Rowe School (desks, tables, chairs, etc.) have been placed in the Soule barn, and may be there for some time. He recommends that a loft area be built for storage of these items. It was agreed that he speak with DPW Supt. Taylor about this.

Treasury Update: It was reported that Donna Flagg and Lynn Hathaway are 50-55% complete with updating Treasury records. Only ten hours have been expended by Ms. Hathaway at this time.

BOS Meeting on November 6th: It was agreed to limit the agenda for the November 6th meeting—which is also the date of the Presidential Election—to critical items only.

Finance Committee:

- **Accounting System:** FC Chair Dennis May asked if copies of print-outs from the accounting software for the Reserve Fund and the Assistant Treasurer Wages could be provided to them for action on the Reserve Fund Transfer request for funds. Ms. Miller will provide the information. Selectman Wilson will forward log-in information to Mr. May so he can access the Fundware system.
- **Additional Committee Members:** Vice Chairman McLatchy asked Mr. May to put out feelers for two additional members for the Finance Committee, stating it would be very helpful if the committee had a full complement of members (5) for the soon-to-begin FY2014 budget discussions.

Broadband Committee: A notice will be put in the November *Goal Post* stating that the Select Board will be forming a new Broadband Committee and is looking for three individuals to serve on the committee. There is work to be done shifting through all of the vendors who may be interested in bringing high speed fiber optic service to townspeople.

Safe Combination: Selectman Wilson reported that she had spoken with Joe Boudreau of the DOR and three lawyers at the MA DOR who all stated that the combination of the town hall safe does not have to be changed upon the appointment of a new Treasurer.

Minutes: The following action was taken on meeting minutes:

- **August 28th:** Approved at October 16th meeting. Original signed this evening.
- **September 11th:** Approved at October 16th meeting. Original signed this evening.
- **September 25th:** Approved at October 16th meeting. Original signed this evening.
- **September 27th:** Unanimously (3/0/0) approved as amended.
- **October 2nd:** Unanimously (3/0/0) approved as amended.
- **October 9th:** Returned for correction.
- **October 16th:** Unanimously (3/0/0) approved as amended.

Warrants: Treasury Warrant TW13-09 and Payroll Warrant PW13-09 were unanimously (3/0/0) approved for payment.

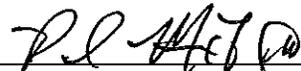
Adjournment: The Selectboard voted unanimously (3/0/0) to adjourn their meeting at 9:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,

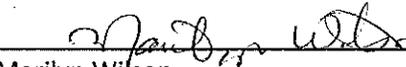
Ellen B. Miller
Town Coordinator

Approved:

Noel R. Abbott, Chairman



Paul McLatchy III, Vice Chairman



Marilyn Wilson

Oct 30, 2012
Date Approved

Attachments:

- Agenda
- Memo to SchCom re thoughts/decisions re school property
- N Abbott emails re Police Chief Succession
- POs for School Musical Instruments
- PO for SmartBoard peripheral equipment
- Memo to SchCom re use of salvageable items
- Emails concerning additional school bus
- Supt. Buonoconti letter re Central Office fire expenses
- Bill Loomis and Dennis May communications re Sch Building Committee
- K Quist email re payroll tax deductions