

Town of Rowe – FY2013
Board of Selectmen – Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 20, 2013 – 5:00pm – Town Hall

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Wilson at 5:00pm.

Present: Chairman Marilyn Wilson, Selectman Susan Gleason

Absent: Selectman Noel Abbott

Also Present: Town Coordinator Ellen Miller, Assessors Chair Rick Williams, Ann Foshay, Jodi Brown

Guests Present: Kevin Parsons, attorney for Seaboard Solar; Dave Thomas of Seaboard Solar

Proposal: Attorney Parsons reiterated to the Select Board that their offer to the Town of Rowe for the proposed large industrial solar farm on the Dykeman property at 468 Tunnel Road is a PILOT agreement for \$36,000 per year with a 1.5% increase per year for 20 years. Assessors Chair Rick Williams stated that he believes that large scale solar farms are not tax exempt; however, he did state the PILOT's are often used as they are a known quantity for the town; i.e., values don't fluctuate every three years. However, he believes the \$36,000 offer is very low when compared to the valuations—and resulting tax payments—of the town's other electric generating facilities. He spoke with Glenn Walker who has done valuations on our town's electric generators. Mr. Walker and George SanSoucy, who has also done industrial valuations for Rowe, gave a presentation to MA DOR on this subject. Mr. Walker agreed that a PILOT agreement is the way to go. However, Chairman Williams added that if the proposed facility is worth \$10 million, using our current tax rate the tax bill would be \$130K/year. Rick Williams stated that he will get information from other towns re PILOT agreements. Mike Loin suggested he contact Assessor Wilfred Cournoyer of the Town of Southwick as they have a new solar array there.

Dave Thomas stated that he is confident that the state sales tax on solar farms will pass which will make the PILOT agreements go away. Attorney Parsons stated that if that happens, the Town of Rowe will be made good; i.e., the town will receive whichever is higher (sales tax or PILOT). The \$36,000 PILOT is based on \$6,000 per 6MW of generation. Also, there would be no draw on town services as there will be no employees at the site and no families moving to town to work at the facility.

Mr. Thomas stated that they have a 6MW solar project in Ware MA which will probably be done next month. They also have a 9MW project on a landfill. None of their other projects have broken ground yet.

The Select Board stated that they feel rushed by the timeframe requested by SS. Mr. Thomas stated that initially they had looked at a site in Heath owned by Lenny Roberts. Lenny suggested to them to look at his property in Rowe. That property had several wetland issues. They then found the Dykeman property which was much more suitable and has no wetland issues. It is forested land that will require clearing 36 or so acres for the array. They are now up against a deadline (June 20th).

Mr. Thomas stated they can no longer offer the Dykemans the opportunity to continue to live at their dwelling on the property as there is not enough road frontage for a building lot in addition to the solar farm lot. The road frontage of the lot is 435 feet. If their project moves forward the dwelling will be demolished.

Noise: Mr. Thomas stated that there will be no humming or vibration sounds from the facility. National Grid's switchyard on Tunnel Road is 60-65db. There would be no change in db levels if the solar array was fed into that switchyard.

Mr. Parsons and Mr. Thomas stated they will be back in town on June 5th and will have further conversations with the town at that time. They were thanked for attending the meeting.

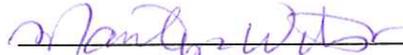
sg mw

Ballot Box for Town Meeting: Chairman Wilson stated that only one ballot box can be used at town meeting. Vice Chairman McLatchy had asked Ms. Miller to arrange for an additional ballot box to speed up the voting process at the May 21st Special Town Meeting to be held at the Fire Station. Chairman Wilson stated that the matter is under the purview of the Town Clerk, and that the Town Clerk does not want more than one ballot box.

Adjournment: The Select Board voted unanimously (3/0/0) to adjourn the meeting at 6:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen B. Miller, Town Coordinator

Approved:



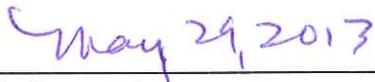
Marilyn Wilson, Chairman



Susan P. Gleason, Vice Chairman

[Absent]

Noel Abbott, Selectman



Date Approved

Attachments:

- Agenda