

**Town of Rowe**  
Board of Selectmen – Minutes  
Wednesday, April 17, 2019 – 6:00 pm  
Rowe Town Hall - Hearing Room 1

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**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Chair Jennifer Morse at 6:03 p.m.

**Present:** Jennifer Morse, Chair, Dennis May, Vice Chair, Chuck Sokol – Member  
Executive Secretary Janice Boudreau  
Finance Committee: Paul McLatchy III, Laurie Pike  
Fire Chief: Dennis Annear

## OPEN MEETING

Announcement of recording devices & noteworthy information: one recording device

## APPOINTMENTS

- **JOINT MEETING WITH FINANCE COMMITTEE – 6:00 p.m.**
  - **FY2020 Budget**
  - **Dennis Annear – Fire Chief**
    - Establishing Fire Dept. : Chief Annear discussed that there was no way to determine how Rowe legally established the Fire Dept. in Rowe following review of Town records. He said there were 3 ways for a town to establish a Fire Dept:
      - a). through a Board of Engineers that manages the dept. and this is largely going away in most towns
      - b). Vote MGL Chapter 48 Section 42 – Strong Chief designation which gives the chief the authority to hire, fire and operate according to the established budget, however, could establish procedures and enforce them. The Chief could be removed for cause by the Board of Selectmen.
      - c). Vote MGL Chapter 48 Section 42A – Weak Chief designation which gives the authority to the Board of Selectmen.
    - Strong Chief Designation: Chief Annear recommended the town vote to designate authority to the Chief because at the moment the Chief only has authority only at the fire; the rest of the authority is with the Board of Selectmen. He explained that, if in the future the town wishes to consider joining a regional fire district, that is it important to clarify the establishment of the Fire Dept. and take a town meeting vote to clarify. In addition, it would be a good idea to establish the Police Dept. and Chief Annear emphasized that the Board of Selectmen is ultimately the authority.

**Motion to Include Police and Fire Strong Chief Designations on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant:** Chair Morse made a motion to adopt Chapter 48 Section 42A designating the Fire Chief as a strong chief and Chapter 41 Section 97A, designating the Police Chief as a strong Chief. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair May, was unanimously accepted. (3-0-0)

- Special Projects: Chief Annear explained special projects with a filter for engine 1 for \$10,000 and the DCR 3063.00 – 50% match grant, a generator for \$15,500.00 due to the current generator put in 1984 only powers one-third of the building and if that is

the emergency operations center in the future, that it needs to be able to function more fully. Chief Annear discussed purchasing a fire truck from the Town of Charlemont since it would be upgrading what Rowe has from a 26 year old engine to a 2003 truck that Charlemont does not need or use. The older truck does not meet standards and has some problems and does not meet national standards. Chief Annear said the purchase of 8 new Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) would last for 15-20 years and inspected each year. It would also include 3 bottles for each unit, 2 are required and it was recommended Rowe have 3 due to having to take to another location to fill. It is a safety issue to have the new style which activates automatically.

- Sale of Truck: Chief Annear recommended selling the 26 year old truck once the purchase of the new truck was completed.
- Regional Fire Discussion: Chief Annear said that discussions about regionalization would occur sometime in the future as small towns can't afford to have all the necessary equipment. It could be funded by the same method as other regional plans by coming up with an agreeable method of assessing each town.
- Fire Chief Vehicle: Chief Annear discussed the shared vehicle with Charlemont. He explained the lease policy and the Rowe share was \$5,500.00.
- Budget Request: Chief Annear said that there were some radio failures and there is a need to get back radio contact with Southern Vermont and Berkshire County and he made commitments for the radio and hose testing and finds the Operations budget is short funding. He requested the radio for \$3,300.00 and the hose testing for \$2000.00. It was agreed to add it to the Special Town Meeting as an article.

Chief Annear left the meeting at 7:24 p.m.

- Review Special Town Meeting Warrant: Select Board Members reviewed the Special Town Meeting draft Warrant for May 13, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.

**Motion to Recommend:** Following review of the Special Town Meeting Warrant, Vice-Chair May made a motion to recommend Articles one through five (1-5 ) of the Special Town Meeting Warrant for May 13, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. The motion, seconded by Chair Morse, was unanimously accepted. (3-0-0)

- Review Annual Town Meeting Warrant: Select Board Members reviewed the Annual Town Meeting draft Warrant for May 13, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.  
Goal Post: Town meeting vote to transfer the oversight and authority of the Goal Post publishing from the Planning Board to the Board of Selectmen. The Planning Board voted to stop oversight at a recent meeting. It was agreed that it would be good to put it before voters.  
Articles Reviewed: Articles 5 through 11: General Government, Public Works, Public Safety, Public Health and Sanitation, Library, Park, Culture and Recreation, Pension & Insurance. Chair Morse disagreed with the need for two administrative positions at \$86,000 + benefits but will support at town meeting since she acknowledged the need for help to complete tasks. It was the opinion of Chair Morse that going with a Town Administrator is the way to go and that it works in the two other towns she works for with much larger populations. There was a discussion about trying to limit budget increase to 2.5% growth to each department. Chair Morse noted that she abstained from discussion and voting for the budgets pertaining to the Town Clerk, Fire Department and Emergency Management Budgets.

Education Budget Discussed: It was noted that forty percent of the School budget increase is due to the increase in costs of the secondary school budget. School choice monies were discussed and it was noted that the school choice monies use were decided upon by the School Committee. There was discussion about the need to understand how the choice monies were being used. Concerns were expressed by several members about the need for further explanation about the school budget.

Gracy House Future: Chair Morse said there were no volunteers to be on the be on the Committee, so its future remained unclear.

Old Home Day: Chair Morse said there was no formal committee for Old Home Day and that there would be a chicken barbeque, a DJ and fireworks and that she would reach out to Park Manager to see what he would take on for the day.

General Bylaw to Amend Bylaw: There was a proposed article related to the authority the Finance Committee had over the Capital Improvement Plan. Following discussion, it was agreed to table the Article for the Bylaw for now.

**Motion for Finance Committee to Oversee Capital Improvement Plan**: Member Sokol made a motion to have the Finance Committee oversee the Capital Improvement Plan. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair May, was unanimously accepted. (3-0-0)

Finance Committee Members Paul McLatchy III and Laurie Pike left the meeting at 7:27 p.m.

## OLD BUSINESS

- MLP Updates:
- Streetlight Reduction Discussion: Member Sokol reported that letters had gone out to area residents that would be affected by several streetlights being turned off that were not necessary. There were no objections reported back from the property owners contacted.

**Motion to Discontinue Streetlights**: Member Sokol made a motion to discontinue the streetlights presented on the map presented. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair May, was unanimously accepted. (3-0-0)

- All Boards/Committees Follow Up: Chair Morse said the All Boards & Committee Meeting was good.
- Structure over Post Office Boxes: Tabled until a later date

## NEW BUSINESS

- Debit Card Policy: Select Board members reviewed a policy for the debit card that Town Accountant prepared with the help of Tom Scanlon, auditor.

**Motion to Adopt Policy**: Member Sokol made a motion to adopt the Debit Card Policy as presented by Town Accountant. The motion, seconded by Chair Morse, was unanimously accepted. (3-0-0)

- Time Sheets for Multi Department Employees: Chair Morse said that she requested that employees that work in different departments have a timesheet put on the same sheet so their supervisors could view the hours they worked in each department. It was agreed that Treasurer would implement the decision.

- Board of Assessors - Contract with Sansoucy for Valuation, Consulting & Expert Witness Services: The contract with Contract with Sansoucy for Valuation, Consulting & Expert Witness Services presented by the Assessors was reviewed.

**Motion to Sign:** Following review, Chair Morse made a motion to sign the 'Contract with Sansoucy for Valuation, Consulting & Expert Witness Services'. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair May, was unanimously accepted. (3-0-0)

## MINUTES

- March 20, March 27 and April 3, 2019: The Minutes of March 20, 2019 were reviewed.

**Motion to accept Minutes of March 20, 2019:** Upon review, a motion was made by Chair Morse to accept the Minutes of March 20, 2019 as amended. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair May, was unanimously accepted. (3/0/0)

Other Meeting Minutes tabled until a later date.

Chair Morse said that DPW Highway Superintendent would attend the next meeting to discuss dirt roads.

## EXECUTIVE SECRETARY UPDATES

- Upcoming FY20 Fuel Bids: The Fuel Bids will come in on May 13<sup>th</sup> and need to be signed by
- OSHA Requirements Discussed: It was agreed to check the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) hearing tests requirements for the Highway Dept. to see if their annual hearing tests met the (OSHA) requirements.

## CORRESPONDENCE

Select Board members reviewed mail and no action was required.

## NEXT MEETING

It was agreed to meet and sign the Warrant on Monday, April 22, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. to sign the Annual and Special Town Meeting Warrants only.

**AJOURNMENT:** Seeing no further business, Member Sokol made a motion to adjourn the Meeting at 8:36 p.m. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair May, was unanimously accepted. (3/0/0)

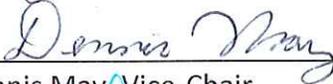
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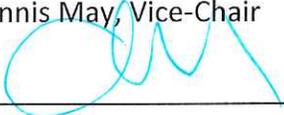
Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary

Approval Date: May 1, 2019

Approved:

  
Jennifer Morse, Chair

  
Dennis May, Vice-Chair

  
Chuck Sokol, Select Board Member

**Documents:**

- Agreement- Sansoucy Contract for FY20-FY23 for Valuation, Consulting & Expert Witness Services (12 pgs.)
- FY20 Annual Town Meeting Warrant
- FY20 Special Town Meeting Warrant – May 13, 2019
- Debit Card Policy
- Cyber Liability Renewal Application
- FY 20 Budget Worksheet
- Executive Secretary Email: re: ATM Warrant Updates
- Town Counsel Email: re: ATM & STM Warrant Articles
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**Mail:**

- DEP – Re: W. MA Regional Recycling Program
- FCSWMD – Response to DEP letter
- MassDOT – Re: Zoar Rd./Shippee Brook
- Town Clerk resignation letter
- Hampshire Power Letter
- US Dept of Transportation Letter: Re: Yankee Road