

Town of Rowe
Board of Selectmen – Minutes
Thursday, September 5, 2019 – 6:30 pm
Rowe Town Hall - Hearing Room 1

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chair Chuck Sokol at 6:32 p.m.

Announcement of recording devices: two recording devices

Present: Chair Chuck Sokol, Vice-Chair Jennifer Morse, Ed Silva, Selectman
Executive Secretary Janice Boudreau

Audience: Treasurer Joanne Semanie, Ken Fensky

Noteworthy Announcements: None

Audience of Citizens:

Ken Fensky discussed a problem with a catch basin on 93 Brittingham Hill Road. He also complimented the Goal Post.

Scheduled Presentations/Joint Meetings: None Scheduled

Correspondence/Citizen Comments as received: Reviewed, no action required

Municipal Light Plant Broadband Project Updates and Discussion:

- Chair Sokol reported that there was a tour of the broadband hut on Tuesday and Executive Secretary and Administrative Assistant would attend.
- Installations were slow, however, Sertex hired another subcontractor which would speed things up.

Liaison Reports (DPW, Fire, Police, Town Hall)

- Highway Dept.: Liaison Selectman Silva reported that he was in contact with DPW Superintendent Larned every Monday morning to review plans for the week. He would like to work with Superintendent to develop a road maintenance schedule.
- Other topics to speak with Superintendent in the near future were the potholes on Ford Hill Road, the plan for Davis Mine and Davenport Roads
- Fire Dept. Liaison Vice-Chair Morse asked to meet at the next meeting at the Fire Station to view the new fire truck and follow up about the Franklin County Public Radio System meeting that was held last week.
- Summer Youth Employment: There was discussion about having a meeting with Park Manager and DPW Superintendent to discuss the Summer Youth Program and how the two departments could work together. Park Commissioners were agreeable to the discussion.

Selectboard Business

New Business

1. FY2021 Budget: Chair Sokol said it was time to meet with the Finance Committee to discuss the process and schedule for FY21 Budget preparation. Also, that an All Town Boards Meeting be scheduled in November.
2. Property Tax Billing Schedule: There was discussion about how to resolve the cash flow problem

for the town and consider a quarterly billing system. There was discussion about concerning the o adoption of a MA General Law statute to change to preliminary billing and that discussion with Assessors and Collector would be required.

3. Special Town Meeting Warrant: Selectmen reviewed a draft Special Town Meeting Warrant and, following review, decided to postpone the meeting.
4. Town Accountant Position: Town Accountant submitted her letter of resignation and there was discussion about the position and the need to change accounting software since it was privately owned and the owner did not want to maintain in the future. Contracting services was discussed. There was a recommendation for Vadar software and that the Accountant had recommended a firm that could handle accounting for the town. It was decided to reach out to contact the firm.
5. Underground Fuel Oil Tank at School: An email from School Committee Chair Susie Zavotka addressed the issue of an oil tank that services the school generator needs to be moved to above ground. The generator services the school, however, the School Committee argues that since it services the town as their emergency shelter that any cost incurred for the generator be paid for by the town, not the school. Chair Sokol said further discussion regarding costs with the School Committee is needed to be scheduled in the future.

Old Business

1. Continued discussion:

- a) School Employee Retirement Deductions: Treasurer indicated that there had not been clarification about the town's decision to remain offering Social Security rather than OBRA by taking a vote. The Business Manager at Northern Berkshire School Union was questioning whether a formal decision had been made. There was discussion about the options and Treasurer will provide figures to the board for the yearly cost of Social Security before making a formal vote.
- b) Treasurer Hiring and Job Description: There was discussion about the Treasurer position and the need to attract a suitable candidate by expanding the position to offer benefits. It was decided that the position required a candidate with municipal experience and that the job description and advertisement would be reviewed and discussed further. There was discussion about combining the Treasurer and Collector position. Chair Sokol will speak to the current Collector.
- c) Town Counsel Appointment: There was discussion about appointing KP Law as Town Counsel.

Motion to Appoint: Chair Sokol made a motion to appoint KP Law as Town Counsel. The motion, seconded by Chair Sokol, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

- The KP Law Terms of Engagement letter was signed.

- There was discussion about the Administrative Assistant Paul McLatchy III be the point person to KP Law.

Motion to Appoint: Vice-Chair Morse made a motion to appoint Paul McLatchy III as the point of contact for KP Law. The motion, seconded by Chair Sokol, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

- Selectman Silva agreed to research training topics and schedule training with KP Law with a target of before the holidays.

- d) Facilities Manager Position: No interest let the school continue to discuss
- e) Employee Handbook and Policies Revisions: tabled until a later date
- f) Employee Evaluation Procedures and Timelines: tabled until a later date
- g) Comp Time Policy: tabled until a later date
- h) Employee Complaint Procedure: tabled until a later date
- i) Cannabis Cultivation Facility: tabled until a later date
- j) E-Mail Policies, Data Policy, Contracted IT services, E-Mail Migration: There was discussion about the options that Northeast IT provided for town computers to replace software that is aging out.

Motion to Upgrade: Vice-Chair Morse made a motion to go with Office 365 for town computers. The motion, seconded by Chair Sokol.

Motion Amended: Chair Sokol amended the motion to instruct Northeast IT to create a plan to move the town computers to Office 365 Business Premium applications and email as outlined in Option 5 in his spreadsheet and for third party spam filtering, encryption and archiving. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Morse, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

There was discussion about the funding involved for the upgrades. Executive Secretary will research and come back to next meeting with the results.

- k) Open Space Committee: Vice Chair Morse said that she, Paul McLatchy III, Laurie Pike and Sean Loomis, possibly a member from Planning Board and Assessors agreed to serve on the Open Space Plan Committee. The Committee formed in order to prepare an Open Space Plan to be able to open up more grant possibilities.

Motion to Appoint: Chair Sokol made a motion to appoint: Jennifer Morse, Paul McLatchy III, Laurie Pike and Sean Loomis to the Open Space Committee. The motion, seconded by Selectman Silva, was accepted. (Vote: 2-0-0 Vice-Chair Morse abstained from the vote)

- l) Emergency Action Plan for Mill Pond Dam and Pelham Lake Dam: A meeting is scheduled on September 6, 2019 with the Dam Keepers, Police Chief, Emergency Management Director, Vice-Chair Morse, Selectman Silva and Administrative Assistant to discuss the draft plan presented.
- m) Bylaw Committee Recommendations: for KP Law review
- n) Town Administrator: tabled until a later date
- o) Beautification of the Broadband Hut: Selectman Silva was in the process of obtaining quotes for the building and grounds.
- p) Situational Awareness Training: Vice-Chair Morse is waiting for a confirmation of a date from Emergency Response Consulting.
- q) Summer Youth Programs Structure: Item previously discussed in the meeting.

2. Follow-up on action items

- a) Administrative Staff items and additional town hall updates: Administrative Assistant updates were reviewed.
- b) Chuck Sokol items: Chair Sokol said he would be speaking with Patrick Carnevale, Director of Western MA Office of the Governor. There was discussion about Administrative Assistant contacting him to discuss grants.
- c) Jenn Morse items: items discussed earlier
- d) Ed Silva items:

Contracts: None

Meeting Minutes

A. 8/22/2019:

Motion to Accept Minutes: Following review, Chair Sokol made a motion to accept the Minutes of August 22, 2019 as written. The motion, seconded by Selectman Silva, was accepted. (Vote: 2-0-0 Vice-Chair Morse abstained from the vote)

WARRANTS:

Chair Sokol reported FY20 W06 and Payroll FY20 W05 were reviewed and signed.

Adjournment:

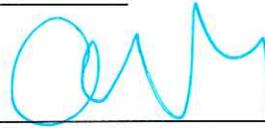
Seeing no further business, Chair Sokol made a motion to adjourn the Meeting at 8:19p.m. The motion, seconded by Selectman Silva, was accepted. (vote: 2-0-0)

Respectfully Submitted,

Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary

Approval Date: 9-19-2019

Approved:



Chuck Sokol, Chair

Selectman Jennifer Morse, Vice-Chair



Selectman Ed Silva

Documents:

- Agenda 9/05/19
- Action Items from 8/22/19
- DRAFT Minutes 08/22/19
- Administrative Assistant Updates
- Executive Secretary Updates
- Proposal for Town Counsel Legal Services – KP Law
- Terms of Engagement – KP Law
- Letter of Resignation – Town Accountant
- Special Town Meeting Warrant for 09/26/19

Mail:

- MMA Legislative Breakfast Meetings
- Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans' Services District