



Town of Rowe
Board of Selectmen Minutes
Tuesday, November 9, 2021–6:00 p.m.
Rowe Town Hall – Hearing Room 1

Board of Selectmen: Chair Charles Sokol, Selectman Ed Silva, Vice-Chair Joanne Semanie
Present: Executive Secretary Janice Boudreau
Audience: Via Remote Participation: Assessors Chair Rick Williams, Treasurer Terry I Green, Rosie Gordon, Accountant David Fierro, Meg Pallotta
Finance Committee: Chair Pallotta, Wayne Zavotka (via remote) Loretta Dionne
In Person: Ken Fensky

Call to Order: Chair Sokol called the meeting to order at 6:04 P.M.

Announcement of recording devices- One
Noteworthy Announcements- None

Appointment:

Meeting with the Finance Committee at 6:00 p.m.

Meet with Selectmen, receive Free Cash Certifications, New Growth, and receipts to date. Selectmen Capital Priorities, Levy expectations and direction:

Wage & Salary:

Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) was discussed. The Board of Selectmen explained the work they had done on creating a step based chart which required more explanation to departments for future use. Rather than using a set rate COLA it was a tool to offer guidance for setting wages for each department and position. The Board had to work on how to develop a policy for its use. It would be used as a protocol for guiding new positions and the rate of hire. Generally there was a 1.24 step increase each year. There was discussion about growing inflation and how that would impact the COLA recommendations.

Department Budgets:

In the past the practice has been to stay at a 2.5% increase on average. Assessors Chair Rick Williams explained the increase in the levy limit and how it changed in 2019 with the reappraisals of power companies.

Future Planning:

Finance Committee Chair Pallotta explained about using debt to fund some projects and increasing purchasing power and locking the funding in and have the known payment. He thought Rowe needs to start thinking long term and funding future.

Finance Committee:

Chair Pallotta said there needs to be a 5th member on the Finance Committee. Issue not yet resolved.

The Finance Committee, Rick Williams, Meg Pallotta, Terry I. Green, Dave Fierro left the meeting at 6:53 p.m.

Audience:

Ken Fensky asked about whether the town would be responsible for damages caused by a town snow plow to property pass the road right-of-way. Following discussion, it was agreed that Town Counsel would be consulted on the matter and Mr. Fensky would be notified of the information.

Minutes:

1. Board of Selectmen Minutes of October 28, 2021

MOTION TO ACCEPT MINUTES: Following review, Chair Sokol made a motion to accept the Minutes of the Meeting of October 28, 2021 as presented. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie was accepted. (vote: 2-0-0 Silva abstained from the vote)

Ongoing Projects:

1. Policy Updates and Review:

- Updates to the Personnel Policy Manual: The Board reviewed proposed amendments to the Personnel Policy Manual.

MOTION TO ACCEPT POLICY AMENDMENTS: Chair Sokol made a motion to accept the changes and additions to the Personnel Policy Manual as amended:

"11) Computer Usage and Communication

The town's electronic communications equipment, systems and /or tools should be used for town business only. Personal computer use that is deemed excessive or inappropriate by the town or computer use that is illegal is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. There is no use of town equipment permitted by unauthorized people including co-workers, friends and family of employee. New employees may be given a period of instruction on the town's computer equipment.

All Employee communication must be conducted in a professional, timely and manner, whether by telephone, written correspondence, email or in person. In all cases, employees represent the town. All town written communication must meet a standard set by the Board of Selectmen. Use the following standard fonts: Times New Roman, Calibri, Arial or Garamond with a clear and easily read size.

Email

Employees are responsible for the content, dissemination of their messages and the timely response to messages received. Personal email use that is deemed excessive or inappropriate by the Town, or emails that are illegal are prohibited and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. This responsibility includes ensuring that their messages are accurate, courteous and that do not violate another's right to privacy or confidentiality. If an employee has a question pertaining to the content of an email, they should consult with their supervisor.

All emails are public records. All email must include the following disclaimer:

All email created or received by an employee of a government unit is a public record. In Massachusetts, the term "public record" is broadly defined to include all documentary materials or data created or received by any officer or employee of any governmental unit, regardless of physical form or characteristics. G. L. c. 4, § 7(26). Email is, therefore, a public record and it is subject to the requirements of the Public Records Law. G. L. c. 66.

Security

The Town owns the contents of all files stored on its systems, all messages transmitted over its systems, and reserves the right to access them. The Town expressly reserves the right to monitor the use of the Internet by employees and to review and search all computers.”

Following discussion about the policies reviewed last week concerning supervisors and department heads responsibilities to submitting the proper paperwork to Treasurer prior to starting work for the town of Rowe, Chair Sokol composed a letter to be sent to all supervisors and those who are responsible for hiring to further explain the policies recently added by the Board.

MOTION TO SEND LETTER: Chair Sokol made a motion to send a letter to all board chairs, department heads and hiring authority for town employees and including policies adopted on October 28, 2021 regarding the hiring materials, submitting timesheets and documenting the training of town employees. The motion, seconded by Vice Chair Semanie was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

2. Police Policies Review Submissions: tabled until a later date
3. Bylaw Review: Prohibition Against the Burning of Structures: The Board reviewed the proposed bylaw provided by Town Counsel for the prevention of burning privately owned structures for Fire Department training purposes at town expense. It was agreed that it would be considered for inclusion to the annual Town Warrant next year.

Selectboard Business:

New Business:

Zoning Board of Appeals Use Variance: There was discussion about continuing to find members to serve and contact current members to set up a Hearing time for the review of a change of use application.

Old Business:

Cruiser Discussion:

Selectmen discussed the repair of the cruiser and the email that was sent to Police Chief regarding the cost of repairing the cruiser and that all were in agreement that there is not a need for 2 cruisers.

Soule Barn:

Executive Secretary reported that Steve Crowningshield would perform the repair.

Warrants/Contracts:

1. Review Warrants FY22W9 and FY21PW9- Vice-Chair Semanie to review on Friday.
2. Request for Chapter 90 Funding:
Board Members reviewed materials for reimbursement for Chapter 90 Funding.

MOTION TO SIGN REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST: Chair Sokol made a motion to sign the State Aid Reimbursement Request for \$168,600.00 for paving. The motion seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

Executive Secretary/Administrative Assistant Updates:

Future Meetings: Next Meetings would take place on November 16, 2021 for the All Board Meeting and November 23, 2021 on Tuesday due to the Holiday schedule.

Adjournment:

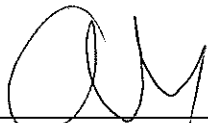
MOTION TO ADJOURN: Chair Sokol made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 p.m. The motion seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie, was unanimously accepted. (Vote: 3-0-0)

Respectfully Submitted,

Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary

Approval Date: *NOVEMBER 23rd 2021*

Approved:



Chuck Sokol, Chair

Ed Silva, Selectman



Joanne Semanie, Vice-Chair

Documents:

1. Agenda November 9, 2021
2. BOS Minutes October 28, 2021
3. Prohibition Against the Burning of Structures
4. FY22 Wage Schedule
5. Wage Worksheet
6. Personnel Policy Manual Draft Update
7. Police Policies
8. Chapter 90 Request for Reimbursement
9. Executive Secretary Updates