

Town of Rowe
Board of Selectmen

MINUTES

Thursday, January 26, 2022 – 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Sokol, Vice-Chair Semanie, Selectman Silva
ALSO PRESENT: Executive Secretary Janice Boudreau
AUDIENCE: Finance Committee: Loretta Dionne, Marilyn Wilson, Dan Pallotta (at 6:23 p.m.)
Police Chief Julie Shippee, Fire Chief Dennis Annear, Terry I. Green

Call to Order: Chair Sokol called the meeting to order at 6:13PM

Announcement of recording devices: One

Noteworthy Announcements: None

BOARD OF SELECTMEN BUSINESS:

Warrants/Contracts:

Hampshire Power Agreement:

Executive Secretary investigated alternative suppliers to help with the rising cost of energy. Hampshire Power offered a contract for a 6-month variable rate and offering 1-to-3-year contract. The contract presented was reviewed for risks.

MOTION TO SIGN: Chair Sokol made a motion to sign the Hampshire Power Contract for an initial Term of Service for 6 months variable term rate with option to negotiate one to three year fixed rate after 6 months.

Agreement for Services- Clayton D. Davenport Trucking, Inc.:

An Agreement was provided by Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) for the bid award to C. Davenport Trucking, Inc. for review and approval. FRCOG handled the formal bid process for the Park to rebuild the tennis courts at the park.

MOTION TO SIGN: Chair Sokol made a motion to approve the 'Agreement for Services between Clayton D. Davenport Trucking, Inc. and the Town of Rowe for the Rowe Tennis Courts Improvements Project for the amount of \$108,000.00. The motion, seconded by Selectman Silva, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

Assessors – CAI Technologies Assessing Services Contract: Tabled until next meeting

Finance Committee Chair Pallotta joined the meeting at 6:23 p.m.

Joint Meeting with Finance Committee Budget Hearings 6:00pm:

Police Department:

The grades and step wages for the Police Dept. were reviewed and acknowledged for FY24:

- Chief Shippee at Grade L Step 8
- Office Noyes at Grade H Step 4 and Officer Hyytinen at Grade H- Step15

Chief Shippee acknowledge that the necessary Training in FY23 is at 200 hours for \$4734.00. There is enough money in the training budget only to complete the necessary regular training. She also explained the Capital Request for a taser. It was discussed that in lieu of a stronger Use of Force that a taser is an effective device. Questions about how often is the taser used and whether it is appropriate in Rowe. It was acknowledged that it was not frequently used.

Discussion about the POST Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) requirements were discussed and how Officer Noyes can complete the required POST training by June of 2023. There was discussion about making it known to legislators that the new requirement of training part-time officers to full-time officer standards was imposing undue hardship to small towns.

Chief Shippee spoke about other additional requirements were mandated by the state and was asked to provide a list of the items mentioned.

Emergency Management:

It was hoped that Chief Annear could remain on as Emergency Management Director.

Fire Department:

There discussion about the outgoing chief who was about to reach retirement age and that there were ongoing discussions with Charlemont to find a mutually agreeable solution for succession.

Fire Chief reported there were 84 calls last year up from the prior year. Lots of mutual aid calls which is the way the system is going. Chief put a higher amount in payroll for FY24 due to increase in call volume. The sale of fire truck for \$67,500.00 is happening now and the money would be returned to the general fund.

The cost of gear went up and Chief established a new policy that requires a recruit successfully complete the 6 weekend training before purchasing gear.

Capital Improvement Projects Requests include the following:

- Roof needs replacing and is starting to leak on the backside. (Cost to be Determined)
- Generator for the Fire Station increased from previous projection so need an additional (\$15,000.00)
- Pagers for the new system from 400 mhz to 800 mhz to meet new system that allows communication throughout the state. (\$11,000)
- There was discussion about a chassis replacement to make a smaller truck. Tanker Remount on new chassis (\$340,000)
- Addition to Fire Station Study and Design (\$10,000)

Municipal Light Plant:

Chuck Sokol said he is resigning from his position as Deputy MLP Manager effectively July 1, 2023 at the start of the new fiscal year such that any and all discussions of the Deputy MLP compensation for the coming fiscal year will have no effect on him personally.

There was discussion about the increase in compensation and adding compensation for the Deputy MLP Manager. There needs to be some effort made to find someone to replace David Dvore who has indicated he may be ready to retire.

There was discussion about the payment of the rest of the broadband loan which would be \$400,000 after the FY23 payment in March. It was noted that ARPA Funds should be looked at for possibly paying next year's installment.

Audience:

Treasurer spoke about Finance Committee comments that were made in a prior meeting about her and the Accountant that implied that things were not getting done by their offices. The timeliness of certifying Free Cash was discussed and it was noted that the necessary documents have been filed and that there has been a delay from the Dept. of Revenue. She also spoke about the transfer of funds from the Summer Youth Program from the Highway Dept. to the Park Dept. and that it needed to be done in a Special Town Meeting.

Ms. Green addressed Chair Pallotta's complaint that the overpayment of \$25,000 to Franklin County Regional Retirement System (FCRRS) had not been made. She said she could not pay the amount since there was not invoice generated to do so and referenced MA General Law (MGL 56 §52). She also indicated that the FCRRS has been great to work with and that they were always responsive. Mr. Pallotta apologized for comments that were made about her in a prior meeting.

Future Meetings:

The next Board of Selectmen meeting would be February 2, 2023 at 6:00 pm.

Adjournment:

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Chair Sokol made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)


Respectfully Submitted,

Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary

Approval Date: *FEBRUARY 2, 2023*

Approved:

Chuck Sokol, Chair



Ed Silva, Selectman



Joanne Semanie, Vice-Chair

Documents:

1. Agenda January 19, 2023
2. Police Department Budget
3. Police Dept. CIRR Request
4. Emergency Management Budget
5. Fire Department Budget
6. Fire Dept. CIRR Requests
7. MLP Budget
8. MGL Section 56 §52
9. Deputy MLP Manager Letter of Resignation