



Town of Rowe
Board of Selectmen Minutes
Thursday, May 4, 2023–6:00 p.m.
Rowe Town Hall – Hearing Room 1
and Via Remote Participation

Board of Selectmen: Chair Charles Sokol, Vice-Chair Joanne Semanie, Selectman Silva
Present: Executive Secretary Janice Boudreau, Administrative Assistant Brooke Shulda
Audience: Rep. Natalie Blais, Corinne Coryat, Police Chief Shippee

Call to Order: Chair Sokol called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Announcement of recording devices- One

6:00 pm Meeting with State Representative Natalie Blais

Representative Blais introduced herself as she recently replaced Paul Marks as our representative. Topics discussed were the following:

Yankee Road Funding:

Executive Secretary explained that the final plans were presented in early March and that there was a funding shortfall of \$750,000.00 from the previous estimate. The current project costs are 1,300,000.00 and with the MassWorks grant of \$600,000.00, the shortfall needed funding. The project presents a unique situation since it is a road to the former nuclear plant site, now housing the spent fuel. It is important that emergency vehicles have access to the site and the road is now one-lane and continues to deteriorate. Rep. Blais said she would write a letter of support and recommended re-applying for the MassWorks grant for the full amount needed.

Tunnel Bridge:

Selectman Silva discussed the situation on lower Tunnel Road with concern over the deterioration of the bridge that is believed to be owned by the railroad company. Since it is a private bridge, there is little that can be done. To build another bridge would cost an estimated twenty million or more which would not be possible for the two homes affected who rely on the bridge. Selectman Silva also asked about whether there was any assistance to take over the homes by eminent domain.

Fire Chief Home Rule Request:

Selectmen asked Rep. Blais to process a Home Rule Petition with legislature to extend the Fire Chief appointment past the mandatory 65-year age and work until age 70 due to the small town's inability to find someone to serve in the shared position with Charlemont. She said once the certified town meeting vote was sent to her it would take 6 to 9 months to approve.

Post Training:

Selectmen discussed the difficulty for small towns to pay for the huge cost (\$10,000) for towns to have their part-time policeman take the required Mass Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) and the concern once trained will seek full-time employment elsewhere. Rep. Blais provided some information about a grant funding to reimburse \$3000.00 of the training costs.

School Funding:

There was discussion about school choice funding and the inequity of receiving \$5,000 per pupil which does not cover the cost of education for that student. As a result, Rowe School is covering the unfunded balance. Since

Rowe has more school choice students or two-thirds of the students, Selectmen expressed that the calculation should be reviewed. Rep. Blais said she would keep us apprised of future meetings on the topic.

Burn Timing:

Chair Sokol expressed an issue with the burn timing for the hilltowns and that the closing time for brush burning ended too early. Rep. Blais agreed to look into it.

Rep. Blais and Corrinne Coryat left the meeting at 7:19

New Business:

Police Detail Rate Discussion – Request from Police Chief:

Police Chief Shippee asked to have the Police Detail pay increased from \$50.00 per hour to \$57.00.

MOTION TO INCREASE RATE: Selectman Silva made a motion to increase the Police Detail pay rate to \$57.00 per hour retroactively starting on April 1, 2023. The motion, seconded by Chair Sokol, was unanimously accepted. (3-0-0)

Bear Feeding Issue:

Chief Shippee said there was an issue with several town residents feeding bears, one was reported as having 8 bears on their front lawn. She said Environmental Police were speaking with one of the alleged offenders. It was agreed to write an article to put in the Goal Post. Executive Secretary found in her research that since it is on private property, there is no recourse. She said that several towns had added a bylaw addressing the feeding and fines listed and brought a sample bylaw for review. It was agreed to look into the bylaw in the future.

Chief Shippee left the meeting at 7:40 pm

Warrants/Contracts:

5-Year Appraisal Agreement Sansoucy Associates – Hydroelectric Generating Properties:

5-Year Appraisal Agreement Sansoucy Associates – Electric Transmission & Distribution Properties:

The Board of Assessors presented two reviewed and approved contracts for review and approval for appraisal work.

MOTION TO APPROVE AGREEMENTS: Vice-Chair Semanie made a motion to accept the following Agreements: 5-Year Appraisal Agreement Sansoucy Associates – Hydroelectric Generating Properties and the 5-Year Appraisal Agreement Sansoucy Associates – Electric Transmission & Distribution Properties. The motion, seconded by Chair Sokol, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

Agreement: Warner Bros, LLC and the Town of Rowe – DPW Garage Parking Area

Agreement: Warner Bros, LLC and the Town of Rowe – Rowe Roadway Resurfacing:

Agreements and related documents were reviewed for the DPW garage parking area paving and the 7 road paving resurfacing projects with Warner Brothers, LLC.

MOTION TO APPROVE AGREEMENTS: Vice-Chair Semanie made a motion to accept the Agreement with Warner Bros, LLC and the Town of Rowe – DPW Garage Parking Area for \$93,205.00 and the Agreement with Warner Bros, LLC and the Town of Rowe – Rowe Roadway Resurfacing for \$144,361.81. The motion, seconded by Chair Sokol, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

MOU Between Charlemont and Rowe Regarding Interim Fire Chief Employment:

Selectmen reviewed and discussed the updated Memorandum of Understanding with Charlemont for shared Interim Fire Chief services having Doug Annear as acting chief while the legislation to extend Dennis Annear appointment is pending.

MOTION TO APPROVE AGREEMENT: Vice-Chair Semanie made a motion to accept the Memorandum of Understanding Between Charlemont and Rowe Regarding Interim Fire Chief Employment of Doug Annear commencing on June 1, 2023. The motion, seconded by Chair Sokol, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

MOTION TO SET PAYRATE: Chair Sokol made a motion to set the payrate for Doug Annear with Grade H and step 10 for FY24 at \$26.67 for 8 hours per week.

Intermunicipal Agreement Between the Towns of Rowe and Monroe for Shared Accounting Services:
Selectmen reviewed the 3-year Agreement renewal for the shared Accounting services with Monroe for David Fierro, Jr.

MOTION TO APPROVE AGREEMENT: Chair Sokol made a motion to accept the 3-year Intermunicipal Agreement Between the Towns of Rowe and Monroe for Shared Accounting Services for David Fierro, Jr. The motion, seconded by Chair Sokol, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

Minutes:

Board of Selectmen Minutes of March 27, 2023, March 30, 2023 and April 6, 2023:

MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES: Chair Sokol made a motion to approve the Minutes of March 27, 2023, March 30, 2023 and April 6, 2023 with a correction. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

Board of Selectmen Minutes of April 13, 2023:

MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES: Chair Sokol made a motion to approve the Minutes of April 13, 2023 as written. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie was accepted. (Vote: 2-0-1 Selectman Silva abstained from the vote)

Board of Selectmen Minutes of April 20, 2023:

MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES: Vice-Chair Semanie Sokol made a motion to approve the Minutes of April 20, 2023 as written. The motion, seconded by Selectman Silva was accepted. (Vote: 2-0-1 Chair Sokol abstained from the vote)

BOARD OF SELECTMEN BUSINESS:

Ongoing Projects:

Policy Updates and Review:

Police Policies Review Submissions:

MOTION TO DELAY: Chair Sokol made a motion to delay approving the police policies until further review and editing. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

Road/Bridge Projects: Yankee Road Project/ Ford Hill Road Bridge/ Cyrus Stage Road Bridge:
Discussed earlier in the meeting

Tunnel Road Bridge Discussion:
Discussed earlier in the meeting

New Business:

Policy Update: Written Information Security Program (WISP):

Executive Secretary discussed the new Written Information Security Program policy to review and consider adopting. It is a new requirement for added cyber security and to meet state requirements to protect information. It explains to employees what information needs to be protected. Since each employee using email and workstations on our server needs to know the information, it was agreed to include it in the Employee Handbook.

MOTION TO ACCEPT POLICY: Chair Sokol made a motion to accept the Written Information Security Program (WISP) and include it in the Personnel Policy Manual. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

Appointment – Council on Aging:

Council on Aging member Brooke Shulda recommended that Donna Butzke be added to the Council on Aging.

MOTION TO APPOINT: Chair Sokol made a motion to appoint Donna Butzke to the Council on Aging for a one year term ending in 2023. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

Future Meetings:

The next Board of Selectmen meeting would be on May 11, 2023 at 6:00 pm.

Adjournment:

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Chair Sokol made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:41 p.m. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

Respectfully Submitted,

Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary

Approval Date:

Approved:



Chuck Sokol, Chair



Ed Silva, Selectman



Joanne Semanie, Vice-Chair

Documents:

1. Agenda May 4, 2023
2. Board of Selectmen Minutes of March 27, 2023
3. Board of Selectmen Minutes of March 30, 2023
4. Board of Selectmen Minutes of April 6, 2023
5. Board of Selectmen Minutes of April 13, 2023
6. Board of Selectmen Minutes of April 20, 2023
7. MOU Between Monroe and Rowe for Shared Accountant Services
8. MOU Between Charlemont and Rowe Regarding Interim Fire Chief Employment
9. Job Description for Administrative Assistant – Fire Department
10. Written Information Security Program (WISP)
11. 5-Year Appraisal Agreement Sansoucy Associates – Hydroelectric Generating Properties
12. 5-Year Appraisal Agreement Sansoucy Associates – Electric Transmission & Distribution Properties
13. Agreement: Warner Bros, LLC and the Town of Rowe – DPW Garage Parking Area
14. Agreement: Warner Bros, LLC and the Town of Rowe – Rowe Roadway Resurfacing
15. Certificate of Liability Insurance- Warner Bros., LLC (DPW)
16. Certificate of Liability Insurance- Warner Bros., LLC Umbrella (DPW)
17. Roadway Resurfacing Contract – Warner Bros., LLC
18. Certificate of Liability Insurance- Warner Bros., LLC (Roadway)
19. Certificate of Liability Insurance- Warner Bros., LLC Umbrella (Roadway)
20. Town of Rowe Payment Bond – Warner Bros., LLC (Roadway)
21. Letter to Hemings MA Hwy District 1 re: Yankee Road
22. Motions for ATM – from D. Pallotta
23. Solar Panels Project – Citizen Donation
24. Executive Secretary Updates

Mail:

1. KP Law Pandemic Updates
2. 3 ACO Incident Reports: 4/1, 4/10, & 4/22
3. Email: Congressman Neal re: funding for Yankee Road