



Town of Rowe
Joint Meeting
**Board of Selectmen & Finance
Committee**
Minutes
Thursday, November 09, 2023 – 6:00 p.m.

Board of Selectmen: Chair Charles Sokol, Selectmen Silva
Absent: Vice-Chair Semanie
Finance Committee: Marilyn Wilson, Loretta Dione, Dan Pallotta and Wayne Zavotka joined at 7:00pm
Town Officials: Town Administrator Brooke Shulda
Zoom Participation: Rosie Gordon, N.Grid - Nick DeRose, N.Grid - Rob Plourde

Call to Order: Chair Sokol called the meeting to order at 6:02pm.

Announcement of recording devices: ONE

Noteworthy Announcements: NONE

New Business:

1. 6:00pm – National Grid: Tunnel/Petrie Road Pole Hearing – At 6:02pm National Grid employees Nick DeRose and Rob Plourde join the meeting to explain the reasoning of the Pole hearing. Both state the pole hearing was to request permission from the Town and abutters, to install a new pole for line sensor monitoring purposes.

MOTION TO APPROVE PETITION: Chair Sokol made a motion to approve the petition and sign the orders provided by National Grid for the installation of one new pole on Petrie/Tunnel Road for the purpose of line sensor monitoring. The motion, seconded by Selectmen Silva was approved. (vote: 2-0-0)

2. 6:10pm – Laurie Pike - Open Space and Recreation Committee – 7 Year Action Plan: Laurie Pike joined the selectboard meeting at 6:10pm to further review the requirements/responsibilities of the Selectmen and Planning Board on behalf of the 7-Year action plan provided by the Parks Commission. Laurie clarified that all the actions listed on the plan are not expected to be completed, but rather what ideas are realistic for the Town of Rowe to move forward with over the next several years.
3. Broadband Grant, Discussion of Funds – MLP Manager, David Dvore, informed Selectmen of a \$25,000.00 (per year) grant called CAF II that was awarded to the Town on behalf of rural broadband development. As this will be the first year Rowe will receive these grant funds, Rowe will be receiving a total of \$75,000.00 dating back to 2021. The Selectmen discussed using the funds to pay down the broadband debt.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Chair Sokol made a motion to approve the \$75,000.00 CAF II grant and to utilize the funds to pay down the broadband debt. The motion, seconded by Selectmen Silva was approved. (vote: 2-0-0)

4. 6:45pm – Paul Graziano – Gracy/Deverell House Draft Report – Paul Graziano joined the meeting at approximately 6:35pm. Being a building preservationist, Mr. Graziano has volunteered to review and generate a report on behalf of the Gracy/Deverell House to see if these buildings are in reasonable enough shape for one of, or all three of the following: renovation, restoration and retrofit. Mr. Graziano explained both buildings are solid, and both have potential for use as community buildings. He discussed the idea of adding these buildings to the historic district, with the possibility of qualifying for grants. Chair Sokol, raised the point of building use. The Town would need to decide what the building would be specifically used for. Mr. Graziano requested TA to schedule a committee meeting for the beginning of December.

Ongoing Projects:

Road/Bridge Projects -

Yankee Road: Briefly discussed awarded funds.

Cyrus Stage Bridge: Awaiting Final Plans from Mass DOT. No new items to discuss.

Ford Hill Bridge: Change Order Request – TA gathered requested information regarding the Change Order on behalf of the slope stabilization. Clayton Davenport stated the “blanket was the best way to assist with slope stabilization as well as the most cost-efficient way for stabilization”. Gill Engineering corrected the requested amount of funds for the change order.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Chair Sokol made a motion to approve the requested change order provided by Davenport Construction LLC, and Gill Engineering in the amount of \$6,300.00 to assist with slope stabilization on behalf of the Ford Hill Road Bridge Project. The motion, seconded by Selectmen Silva was approved. (vote: 2-0-0)

Ford Hill Bridge, CONTINUED: TA requested a project extension of 6 months, waiting for approval and confirmation from the Small-Town Bridge Coordinator. TA also reached out to the contact person assigned to this bridge project to request if there are any additional options available for funding this project as it has exceeded the original budget by over \$170,000.00. TA was instructed to gather all necessary and supporting documentation over exceeding the budget to present to MASSDOT to see if the Town is eligible for further funding.

Tunnel Road Bridge: Selectmen reviewed the letter to landowners provided by Town Council. The selectmen approved the letter and requested TA to send letters via certified mail to both residents who reside in this location. Chair Sokol generated a cover letter to be attached to the letter provided by Town Council.

MOTION TO APPROVE LETTER: Chair Sokol made a motion to approve and send the letter provided by Town Council as written, to the occupying landowners across Tunnel Road Bridge. The motion, seconded by Selectmen Silva was approved. (vote: 2-0-0)

FY2025 BUDGET DISCUSSION - FINANCE COMMITTEE & BOARD OF SELECTMEN

1. ONE standard budget spreadsheet, not 3
2. Finance Chair and TA will meet more frequently than prior years
3. Grade & Step ONLY – Finance will update figures once COLA has been determined
4. REQUIRED: more detail within budget line
5. Finance Committee will assist with the articles within the voter booklet
6. FC is requesting more accurate figures for insurances and retirement

Old Business:

1. Police Chief Succession Plan – Finance Committee Chair, Dan Pallotta informed Selectmen of an option the Town may be able to request on behalf of Police Chief Shippee’s current situation. TA has been instructed to reach out to the POST commission (Peace Officer Standards and Training) to request the Town of Rowe’s Police

Department be exempt from the requirements of the Bridge Academy. This would allow Chief Shippee to remain the acting Police Chief in the Town of Rowe.

Warrants/Contracts:

1. Vice-Chair Semanie was unable to review, FY2024 Vendor & Payroll Warrants #10
2. Petrie/Tunnel Road Pole Hearing Documents
3. Ford Hill Change Order

Minutes:

1. Board of Selectmen Minutes October 26, 2023 - TABLED

Future Meetings:

Thursday, December 07, 2023, at 6:00pm

Thursday, December 21, 2023, at 6:00pm

Thursday, January 04, 2023, at 6:00pm

Adjournment: 8:00pm

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Chair Sokol made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:01pm. The motion, seconded by Selectmen Silva was unanimously accepted. (vote: 2-0-0)

Respectfully Submitted,

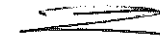
Brooke Shulda, Town Administrator

Approval Date:

Approved:



Chuck Sokol, Chair



Ed Silva, Selectman

Joanne Semanie, Vice-Chair

Documents:

1. Agenda for November 09, 2023
2. Board of Selectmen Minutes October 26, 2023
3. National Grid – Petrie/ Tunnel Road Pole Petition and Orders
4. OSPR 3-Year Plan
5. Gracy House Draft Report
6. Ford Hill Change Order