

Town of Rowe
Joint Meeting
Finance Committee & Board of Selectmen
Minutes
Thursday, February 15, 2024 – 6:00 pm
Rowe Town Hall, Meeting Room #1

Board of Selectmen: Chair Sokol, Vice-Chair Semanie
Finance Committee: Vice-Chair Marilyn Wilson, Loretta Dione, Wayne Zavotka, Susan Gleason
Absent: Selectmen Ed Silva, Finance Committee Dan Pallotta
Departments: Accountant Dave Fierro, Treasurer/Collector Ben Gelb
Town Officials: Administrative Assistant Donna Butzke, Town Administrator Brooke Shulda

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

Announcement of recording devices: NONE

Noteworthy Announcements: NONE

6:00pm Budget Hearings

1. Treasurer/Tax Collector – Operations is requesting to remain level funded for FY2025. Treasurer/Collector believes operations will decrease in FY2026. No special projects requested.
2. Accountant – Expenses are requested to remain level funded, with a 3% increase for Software Licensing. The salary is based on shared services with the Town of Monroe, which are negotiated and contracted over 3-year terms. No special projects requested.

PLEASE NOTE, CHAIR SOKOL DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE DISCUSSION REGARDING THE WAGES AND SALARIES OF BROOKE SHULDA AND MEREDITH SOKOL.

3. Board of Selectmen – Increases in services; IT support, elevator maintenance, town wide notifications. Health Insurance increased by 8%. Slight decrease in FRCOG services.

General Government Expenses:

NEW - Facilities Maintenance Manager Operations – requesting \$26,000.00
NEW - Town Administrator Expenses – Requesting \$2,000.00

Personnel:

Maintenance Supervisor – requesting 500 hours per year vs 8 hours per week
Snow Removal (TH, FD, Hut) – requesting 40 hours per year
MLP Deputy Stipend – Requesting \$3,000.00 per year

Free Cash Requests:

Attic Shelving - \$1,200.00
Snow Blower - \$1,000.00
Informational Sign/Board - \$5,000.00
Tree Lights - \$350.00

Board of Selectmen Business:

New Business:

1. Veterans Services – District Agreement (refer to warrants/contracts section)

Old Business:

1. Fire Chief Succession Plan: **no discussion.**
2. Police Department Succession Plan: **briefly discussed.**
3. Town Administrator Job Description – **add to General Bylaws.**
4. 2022 Audit – **no discussion.**
5. Town Line Sign – **on backorder.**
6. Safety Complex – Exterior Paint – **no discussion.**

2024 ATM/STM Articles:

1. Police Department Succession Plan – **SEE ABOVE**
2. Town Clerk – Appointed vs. Elected – **TABLED**
3. Gracy House Funding – Stabilization of Structure - **TABLED**
4. Fire/EMS District – **TABLED**
5. North Cemetery Donation Compensation – **TABLED**
6. Highway Department – RFP – Roadside Mowing - **TABLED**
7. Library - Feasibility Study – **briefly discussed the possibility of adding the library to a historic district.**
8. Board of Health – **Opioid Stabilization Fund**
9. Accountant Requested Article – **Establish an article to fund capital stabilization of 2.5% greater than the prior year.**

Road/Bridge Projects:

Yankee Road: **Awaiting response from Engineering Firm regarding a meeting proposal.**

Cyrus Stage Bridge: **No discussion.**

Ford Hill Bridge: **No discussion.**

Tunnel Road Bridge: **briefly discussed the invoice received by the highway department.**

Warrants/Contracts:

1. Vice-Chair Semanie reviewed **FY24 Vendor & Payroll Warrants #17**
2. Veterans Services – District Agreement: The Department of Veteran’s Services received Upper Pioneer Valley re-application for continued operation of veteran’s services district for the City of Greenfield and surrounding towns (towns listed on agreement). The contract terms of this contract shall be for Fiscal Years 2025 and 2026, namely July 01, 2024, through June 30, 2026.

MOTION TO SIGN AGREEMENT: Chair Sokol made a motion to sign the Upper Pioneer Valley re-application provided by the Department of Veteran’s Services for continued operation of veteran’s services for the following fiscal year(s), FY25 and FY26. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie was approved. (vote: 2-0-0)

Mail/Unforeseen Business:

1. dcr Massachusetts - Enclosed Series of Public Safety Notices – TA scanned all documents to the “Keeper of the Dam’s” to review and explain said “public safety notices”.

Minutes:

1. Board of Selectmen Minutes – February 01, 2024

MOTION TO APPROVE: Chair Sokol made a motion to approve the February 01, 2024, minutes as written. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie was approved. (vote: 2-0-0)

2. Board of Selectmen Minutes – February 08, 2024

MOTION TO APPROVE: Chair Sokol made a motion to approve the February 08, 2024, minutes as written. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie was approved. (vote: 2-0-0)

Citizen Comments:

None

Future Meetings:

Thursday, February 29, 2024, at 6:00pm – Joint Meeting BOS/Finance
Thursday, March 14, 2024, at 6:00pm – Board of Selectmen
Thursday, March 28, 2024, at 6:00pm – Board of Selectmen
Thursday, April 11, 2024, at 6:00pm – Board of Selectmen

Adjournment: 7:34pm

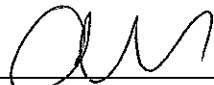
MOTION TO ADJOURN: Chair Sokol made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:34pm. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie was approved. (vote: 2-0-0)

Respectfully Submitted,

Brooke Shulda, Town Administrator

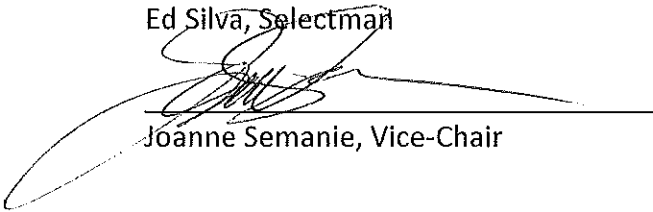
Approval Date:

Approved:



Chuck Sokol, Chair

Ed Silva, Selectman



Joanne Semanie, Vice-Chair

Documents:

1. Agenda for February 15, 2024
2. Budget Hearing Documents
3. Veteran's Services District Agreement
4. Board of Selectmen Minutes – February 01, 2024
5. Board of Selectmen Minutes – February 08, 2024
6. Mail/Unforeseen: Enclosed Series of Public Safety Notices