



**Town of Rowe  
Joint Meeting  
Board of Selectmen & School Committee  
Minutes  
Thursday, September 26, 2024 – 6:00 pm  
Rowe Town Hall, Meeting Room #1**

Position	Name	P	A
Chair	Joanne Semanie	x	
V-Chair	Edward Silva	x	
Selectmen	William Baker	x	

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE:** Chair Susie Zavotka, Vice-Chair Matthew Stine, Member Beth Balawick  
**SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION:** Principal Bill Knittle, Superintendent John Franzoni  
**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:** Brooke Shulda  
**IN-PERSON AUDIENCE:** Ellen Miller, Daniel Pallotta, Wayne Zavotka, Christopher Hyytinen  
**GREENFIELD RECORDER:** Maddison Schofield  
**ZOOM PARTICIPATION:** Kevin Balawick

**Call to Order:** Selectmen Semanie called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm  
**Announcement of recording devices:** NONE  
**Noteworthy Announcements:** NONE

## 6:00pm - School Committee - Preliminary Budget Discussion

The BOS reviewed and motioned to sign a letter requesting the School Committee and School Administration not to exceed over a 2.5% increase from FY2025. The benefit costs (insurance) were asked to be included in this 2.5% increase.

**MOTION TO APPROVE AND SIGN:** Chair Semanie motioned to approve and sign a formal letter TO the School Committee FROM the Board of Selectmen as written by the Town Administrator. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Silva, was unanimously approved. (vote: 3-0-0)

Finance Committee Chair Dan Pallotta explained to the School Committee that the town would soon reach the levy limit if departments continue to request more than a 2.5% increase. He very clearly stated that he was concerned not only with school spending but with all department spending.

Superintendent John Franzoni – questioned the treasurer's office line of communication with the NBSU. BOS Chair Semanie recommended informing the Town Admin or including the Town Admin in email requests.

Principal Bill Knittle – was pleased to present the BOS with the improved MCAS scores from the school year 2023-2024.

The School Committee adjourned and departed from the meeting at 7:13 pm.

### BOARD OF SELECTMEN BUSINESS

#### New Business:

1. Police Chief – Chief Christopher Hyytinen arrived at the meeting at 7:30 pm to give an update on the police cruise. Chief Hyytinen informed the BOS that the dealer covered the motor repair. The only expense applied toward the breakdown was the costs of towing the vehicle to McGovern in Greenfield, MA, and the diagnosis. Since this vehicle has a lengthy history, Chair Semanie requested a list of records for all maintenance and repairs made to the vehicle since purchase. It was explained that just because the repair was made doesn't mean the same issues will arise. It was suggested that Chief Hyytinen investigate the trade-in value of the 2019 Chevy Tahoe and investigate the cost of a new cruiser.

There was also a brief discussion of the older police cruiser's issues and the reasoning behind why it is not an efficient or well-equipped police vehicle.

2. Town Clerk—Town Clerk Kevin Balawick requests the BOS vote to reduce in-person early voting hours to 25% of the Town Hall's operating hours. This means early voting will be held in person at the Town Hall on Monday through Thursday from 9:00 to 11:00 am over 10 days.

**MOTION TO APPROVE: Chair Semanie motioned to approve the Town Clerk's request to reduce in-person early voting hours to 25% of the Town Hall's operating hours (2 hours per day). The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Silva was unanimously approved. (vote: 3-0-0)**

3. Historical Society—Ellen Miller, a member of the Historical Society, attended the meeting to seek the Selectmen's support for a brochure promoting the Historical Society's not-for-profit organization. The brochure aims to encourage financial contributions to the museum and Historical Society. Ellen proposed that these brochures can be included with the Town tax bills.

### **Old Business:**

1. Fire Chief Succession Plan – tabled.
2. Audit – Roselli, Clark & Associates Auditing Firm – TA emailed draft audit copies.
3. Annual Employee Reviews and Plan— TA will send to BOS via email.

### **Road/Bridge Projects:**

#### Yankee Road:

TA informed BOS that she will be taking onboarding training with HUD regarding the federal funding process.

#### Cyrus Stage Bridge:

Not discussed.

#### Tunnel Road Bridge:

TA discussed the ongoing concerns.

Hazelton Road Bridge: The TA informed the BOS that a meeting would need to be held in person at the Hazelton Road Bridge area site to discuss the upstream structure on one of the abutting property owners' lands. Selectmen agreed to the proposed in-person site visit. The TA will reach out to each BOS member to coordinate the meeting dates, times, and details. The TA will also draft a letter to the abutting property owner for BOS review and approval.

### **Potential FY25 STM Items:**

1. Planning Board – ADU – it was discussed that this item may not need to be included in the proposed STM.
2. Historic Commission – Bylaws
3. PD – Cruiser - POTENTIAL

### **Warrants/Contracts:**

1. Chair Semanie reviewed Fiscal Year 2025 Warrants 05.

### **Minutes:**

1. Board of Selectmen Minutes – August 29, 2024
2. Board of Selectmen Minutes – September 12, 2024
3. Board of Selectmen Minutes – September 18, 2024

MOTION TO APPROVE: Chair Semanie motioned to approve and sign the Board of Selectmen minutes from August 29, 2024, September 12, 2024, & September 18, 2024, as written. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Silva, was unanimously approved. (vote: 3-0-0)

**Mail:**

**Unforeseen Business:**

**Citizen Comments:**

**Future Meetings:**

Thursday, October 09, 2024, at 4:00pm

Thursday, October 24, 2024, at 6:00pm

**Adjournment:** 8:07pm

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Chair Semanie motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:07pm. The motion, seconded by Selectmen Baker was unanimously approved. (vote: 3-0-0)

Respectfully Submitted,

Brooke E. Shulda, Town Administrator

Approval Date: November 21, 2024

Approved by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joanne Semanie, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ed Silva, Vice-Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bill Baker, Selectmen

**Documents:**

1. Agenda for September 26, 2024
- 2.