



**Town of Rowe
Board of Selectmen
Minutes**

Friday, December 20, 2024 – 9:00 AM
Rowe Town Hall, Meeting Room #1

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

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR: Brooke Shulda

IN-PERSON AUDIENCE: Park Commission Chair Laurie Pike, Greenfield Recorder Madison Schofield,
Finance Committee Member Sue Gleason (9:28 am)

ZOOM PARTICIPATION: Vice-Chair Ed Silva, Finance Committee Chair Dan Pallotta (9:17 am)

Call to Order: Chair Semanie called the meeting to order at 9:04 am.

Announcement of recording devices: NONE

Noteworthy Announcements: Town Administrator Brooke Shulda announced the presentation of the Boston Post Cane to Nan Williams on Thursday, December 12, 2024.

9:00 AM APPOINTMENT: Community Forest Stewardship Implementation Grant Application

Park Commission Chair Laurie Pike joined the meeting to review and briefly discuss this grant's goal (this was also discussed during the November 07, 2024, BOS meeting) and request that the Board of Selectmen sign the grant application.

Goal: “to establish regeneration in what is otherwise a fairly uniform middle-aged forest”. This will be accomplished “by creating two 2-acre patch cuts with reserves on either side of the Davis Mine loop trail, with a slash wall encircling the south clearing to protect climate-adapted seedlings such as oaks and maples for the deer browse.”

MOTION TO SIGN GRANT APPLICATION: Chair Semanie motioned to sign the Community Forest Stewardship Implementation Grant Application as written. The motion, seconded by Selectmen Baker, was unanimously approved. (Roll Call Vote: Joanne Semanie – yes, Bill Baker – yes, Ed Silva – yes)

Please note Laurie Pike left the meeting at 9:08 AM

9:15 AM APPOINTMENT: Police Cruiser Update

Police Chief Christopher Hyytinen could not attend the meeting due to an unexpected detail on Hazelton Road. He will join the January 02, 2025, Board of Selectmen’s meeting to give an update on the Police Cruiser situation.

9:17 AM - Dan Pallotta – Special Town Meeting Article Review

Finance Committee Chair Dan Pallotta attended the meeting to review the proposed Special Town Meeting (STM) articles. Due to the lack of supporting information, Dan will attend the January 02, 2025, meeting for further discussion.

Potential FY25 STM Items:

1. Police Department – Cruiser
Will be further discussed during the January 02, 2025, meeting
2. Transfer of Park Funds
Funds will be transferred from the Park Commission to the Highway Department
3. Highway Dept. New Vehicle
Will be further discussed during the January 02, 2025, meeting
4. Oil Tank Removal
The town administrator will provide a figure during the January 02, 2025, meeting.
5. Hazelton Road Culvert – Unexpected Police Detail Funds
Mr. Pallotta suggested bringing this to the spring ATM/STM, and the BOS agreed with his suggestion.

Please note Dan Pallotta left the meeting at 9:21 AM

New Business:

1. Town Hall hours of operation for 12/24/2024:
The Town Administrator requested permission from the Board of Selectmen to close the Town Hall at 12 PM on Christmas Eve, Tuesday, December 24, 2024. Most employees have family events scheduled and are using their paid

time off (PTO) to account for their regular working hours. The Board of Selectmen agreed to the proposed 12 PM closure of the Town Hall.

2. Tri-State Fire Mutual Aid Inc. (TSFMA) – Renewal of the Mutual Aid Agreement:

This is a three-year agreement involving multiple cities and towns within the states of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont. Currently, 47 fire departments are signatories of the TSFMA agreement. Established over eight decades ago, TSFMA provides a framework for community fire departments to assist each other in times of need. This agreement enables fire departments to operate across state lines.

MOTION TO SIGN AGREEMENT: Chair Semanie motioned to sign the Tri-State Fire Mutual Aid Agreement between Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont, as written. The motion, seconded by Selectmen Baker, was unanimously approved. (Roll Call Vote: Joanne Semanie – yes, Bill Baker – yes, Ed Silva – yes)

3. DEP Buy Recycled Policy – Annual Letter to all Departments with Purchasing Authority

This policy was adopted by the Town of Rowe in 1997 and has been reviewed and updated annually since then. It allows the town to support recycling activities by purchasing more products made from recycled materials, provided these products meet quality standards and are available at reasonable prices and terms. This demonstrates the town's commitment to using natural resources more efficiently and creating markets for materials collected through recycling programs.

MOTION TO SIGN POLICY: Chair Semanie motioned to sign the Department of Environmental Protection Buy Recycled Policy as written. The motion, seconded by Selectmen Baker, was unanimously approved. (Roll Call Vote: Joanne Semanie – yes, Bill Baker – yes, Ed Silva – Yes)

4. Open Meeting Law Guide and Certificate of Receipt -

The Town Administrator suggested that the Selectmen review the open meeting law guidelines and resubmit a certificate of receipt to the Town Clerk.

Old Business:

1. Fire Chief Succession Plan –

Chair Semanie informed Silva and Baker that Charlemont Town Administrator Sarah Reynold and Brooke will attend an in-person meeting with the Town of Buckland's fire district administrator. They will review and discuss the current bylaws related to their district and the differences in assessing and tax collection practices.

2. Personnel Policy Manual Review – TABLED

Road/Bridge Projects:

Yankee Road:

The Town Administrator informed the BOS that she is awaiting a proposal from Ransom Consulting LLC regarding the required environmental review.

Hazelton Road Bridge:

Gill Engineering Fedorah Berlus states that R10004 (Hazelton Rd. Culvert) can be replaced without removing the upstream structure abutting 48 Hazelton Road. The new proposed culvert will be sized appropriately so that the upstream structure can be removed at any time and will not endanger the new culvert if said structure fails. The Town Administrator explained that deciding whether to include the upstream structure is ultimately up to the Board of Selectmen.

UNFORESEEN BUSINESS RE: HAZELTON RD CULVERT –

The Town Administrator informed the selectmen about a hostile conversation she had on Thursday, December 19, 2024, at 3:05 PM, with the property owner at 48 Hazelton Road. During a phone call regarding New England Boring's scheduled bedrock evaluation on Hazelton Road near the property owner's driveway, she encountered extreme aggressiveness from him. He became so angry that she felt compelled to hang up the phone. Concerned about the potential for the angry property owner to come to Town Hall, she immediately reached out to Public Safety Administrator Julie Shippee for advice. Julie recommended that the Town Administrator contact Police Chief Chris

Hyytinen to inform him of the hostile situation. It should be noted that this is the second hostile telephone call she has had with this property owner.

Tunnel Road Bridge: No update.

Cyrus Stage Bridge: No update.

Warrants/Contracts:

1. Chair Semanie was unable to review FY25 Vendor & Payroll Warrants #12 & #13
2. Tri-State Fire Mutual Aid Inc. – Updated Agreement
3. Community Forest Stewardship Implementation Grant Application
4. DEP Buy Recycled Policy – Annual Letter

UNFORESEEN CONTRACT:

1. Gridwealth – Hampshire Power Corporation DBA *Gridwealth* Electric Terms for Service
Initial Term of Service: 12 months (no options less than)
Fixed Rate: 0.13284

MOTION TO APPROVE AND SIGN CONTRACT: Chair Semanie motioned to approve and sign the 12-month (January 01, 2025- January 01, 2026) electric terms of service contract with a fixed rate (\$/kWh) \$0.13284 between Gridwealth Hampshire Power Corp. and the Town of Rowe. The motion, seconded by Selectmen Baker, was unanimously approved. (Roll Call Vote: Joanne Semanie – yes, Bill Baker – yes, Ed Silva – yes)

Mail:

1. None.

Minutes:

1. November 21, 2024, Minutes

MOTION TO APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES: Chair Semanie motioned to approve and sign the November 21, 2024, meeting minutes as written. The motion, seconded by Selectmen Baker was unanimously approved. (Roll Call Vote: Joanne Semanie – yes, Bill Baker – yes, Ed Silva – yes)

2. December 05, 2024, Minutes - TABLED

Citizen Comments:

1. At 9:28 AM, Finance Committee Member Susan Gleason joined the meeting to inquire about the status of the vehicles scheduled for replacement in the upcoming proposed Special Town Meeting (STM). Chair Semanie explained that there is a proposed transfer of funds between the Park Department and the Highway Department, and that the town is interested in returning to the method of passing down used vehicles from the Highway Department to the Park Department.

Future Meetings:

1. Board of Selectmen's Meeting - Thursday, January 02, 2025, at 6:00pm
2. Board of Selectmen's Meeting - Thursday, January 16, 2025, at 6:00pm
3. Joint BOS & Fin Com Meeting - Thursday, January 30, 2025, at 6:00pm

Adjournment: 9:31 AM

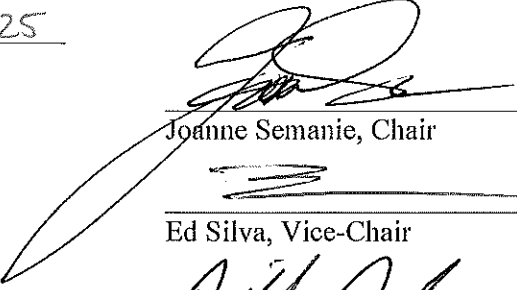
MOTION TO ADJOURN: Chair Semanie motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:31 AM. The motion, seconded by Selectmen Baker was unanimously approved. (Roll Call Vote: Joanne Semanie – yes, Bill Baker – yes, Ed Silva – yes)

Respectfully Submitted,

Brooke E. Shulda, Town Administrator

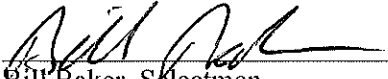
Approval Date: January 02, 2025

Approved by:



Joanne Semanie, Chair

Ed Silva, Vice-Chair



Bill Baker, Selectmen

Documents:

1. Agenda for December 20, 2024
2. Tri-State Fire Mutual Aid Inc. Agreement
3. DEP Buy Recycled Policy
4. Open Meeting Law Guide & Certificate of Receipt
5. Personnel Policy Manual
6. Infrastructure Updates from the TA
7. November 21, 2024, Minutes
8. December 05, 2024, Minutes