



Town of Rowe
Board of Selectmen
Minutes

Thursday, January 30, 2025 – 6:00 p.m.

Rowe Town Hall, Meeting Room #1 & Via Remote Participation

Board of Selectmen Attendance

<u>Position</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>A</u>
Chair	Joanne Semanic	x	
V-Chair	Edward Silva		x
Selectmen	William Baker	x	

FINANCE COMMITTEE: Dan Pallotta, Marilyn Wilson, Loretta Dione, Susan Gleason, Wayne Zavotka
IN-PERSON AUDIENCE: Town Clerk Kevin Balawick, Library Director Molly Lane, Treasurer Ben Gelb
ZOOM PARTICIPATION: Rosie Gordon
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR: Town Administrator Brooke Shulda

Call to Order: Chair Semanic called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
Announcement of recording devices: NONE
Noteworthy Announcements: NONE

Treasurer Ben Gelb attended the meeting to inform the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee about a significant increase in health insurance costs with the Hampshire County Group Insurance Trust for fiscal year 2026. Blue Cross Blue Shield's HMO plans will increase by 19%, while their PPO plans will increase by 20%. Mr. Gelb will provide the total increased cost number at a later date.

Treasurer Gelb departed the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Hearings

1. Highway Department

Highway Superintendent Lance Larned presented his budget to the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee. Aside from annual staff wage increases, he has requested maintaining the current funding levels for all existing accounts and is proposing adding a new account to support roadside mowing.

The requested budget includes:

- Roadside Mowing: \$42,000.00
- Roadside Mowing Equipment: \$2,100.00

The roadside mowing line item will fund five seasonal employees working 40 hours per week for 10 weeks at a rate of \$21.00 per hour. The \$2,100.00 allocation for equipment will cover purchases such as weed whackers and string.

Superintendent Larned departed the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

2. Council on Aging

Town Administrator Brooke Shulda presented the Council on Aging (COA) budget to the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee. She noted that the COA is requesting an additional \$1,000 to account for the rising costs of the foot care clinic, as well as the implementation of additional foot clinics throughout the fiscal year.

3. Library

Library Director Molly Lane presented her budget to the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee. Aside from the annual staff wage increases, there is a slight decrease in that budget line. The library trustees propose to combine the snow removal and custodial positions with those at the town hall, fire department, and highway department custodial and snow removal roles, as the library's custodial role only requires three hours of work per

week. Currently, snow removal is budgeted for 20 hours per year. Additionally, the library trustees are requesting two minimal budget increases for the Library Operations account and the CWMARS account.

Director Lane departed the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

4. Town Clerk

Town Clerk Kevin Balawick presented his budget to the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee. He has requested a \$1,000 increase to the Town Clerk stipend, along with some adjustments to the other Town Clerk accounts, as election-related needs often change.

Clerk Balawick departed the meeting at 6:39 p.m.

Citizen Comments:

NONE

Future Meetings:

- Thursday, February 06, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.
- Thursday, February 13, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.
- Thursday, February 20, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.
- Thursday, February 27, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

Adjournment: 6:51 p.m.

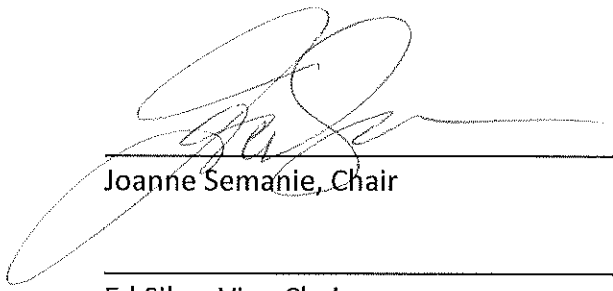
MOTION TO ADJOURN: Chair Semanie motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:51 p.m. The motion, seconded by Selectmen Baker, was approved. (vote: 2-0-0)

Respectfully Submitted,

Brooke E. Shulda, Town Administrator

Approval Date: February 27, 2025

Approved by:



Joanne Semanie, Chair

Ed Silva, Vice-Chair



Bill Baker, Selectmen

Documents:

1. Agenda for January 09, 2025
2. Highway Department FY26 Budget Submission Documents
3. Council on Aging FY26 Budget Submission Documents
4. Library Trustee's FY26 Budget Submission Documents
5. Town Clerk FY26 Budget Submission Documents