



**Town of Rowe
Board of Selectmen
Minutes**

Thursday, February 27, 2025 – 4:30 p.m.
Rowe Town Hall, Meeting Room #1

Board of Selectmen Attendance

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

IN-PERSON AUDIENCE: Liam Creagan, Clay Connor

TOWN OFFICIALS: Police Chief Christopher Hyytinen, OSRC Justine Krumm, Treasurer Ben Gelb

ZOOM PARTICIPATION: Vice-Chair Ed Silva

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR: Brooke Shulda

Call to Order: Chair Semanie called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

Announcement of recording devices: None.

Noteworthy Announcements: None.

APPOINTMENTS:

1. Town Moderator: Bob Clancy

Town Moderator Bob Clancy attended the meeting to inform the Board of Selectmen that he will be unable to moderate the Annual and Special Town Meetings scheduled for the second Monday in May. The Selectmen proposed rescheduling the meetings to Saturday, May 24, 2025, with a start time of 10:00 a.m., followed by the Town election. Moderator Clancy agreed with the suggested change in date for the Annual and Special Town Meetings.

2. Open Space and Recreation Committee: Justine Krumm

OSRC member Justine Krumm attended the meeting to discuss the potential acquisition of a piece of property for sale on Tunnel Road. Ms. Krumm emphasized that this land could be utilized for conservation, historic preservation, or watershed purposes, highlighting its importance due to the local bat population. She also noted that if the town proceeds with the purchase, the park commission would be responsible for maintaining the property. The OSRC plans to explore land grants to assist with the purchase, and Mass Audubon may consider contributing 25% of the total cost.

3. Franklin Land Trust: Liam Creagan & Rowe Camp & Conference Center: Clay Connor

Liam Creagan and Clay Connor attended the meeting to request the Selectboard to sign off on the proposed trail license agreement between the Town of Rowe and Rowe Camp & Conference Center. The trail will connect the park to the area behind the Camp’s Chapel, utilizing an existing trail, and will extend behind the Town Library. It was noted that while the Town can continue to maintain the trail, it is not obligated to do so. Additionally, the agreement is revocable at any time.

MOTION TO APPROVE & SIGN AGREEMENT: Chair Semanie motioned to approve and sign the Trail License Agreement between the Town of Rowe and the Rowe Camp & Conference Center as written. The motion, seconded by Selectmen Baker was unanimously approved. (Roll Call Vote: Joanne Semanie – yes, Bill Baker – yes, Ed Silva – yes)

UNFORESEEN BUSINESS:

1. Police Chief Christopher Hyytinen –

Chief Hyytinen attended the meeting to express his belief that the employees of the Police Department should be in the same wage category as those in the Highway Department. He stated that the responsibilities of the Police Department are very similar, as both departments must respond to calls at all hours of the night and face hazardous conditions, just like the Highway crew. Chair Semanie stated that the BOS would investigate this request at a future meeting.

Chief Hyytinen requested that the Board of Selectmen (BOS) grant him the authority to increase detail wages automatically as prevailing wages rise, without needing to seek a vote from the BOS each time. Additionally, there was a discussion about implementing extra charges for the use of the police cruiser and for administrative fees. It was proposed that these additional charges be allocated to an account dedicated to saving for a new cruiser in the future. The BOS agreed to grant Chief Hyytinen the authority to raise detail wages as prevailing wages increase.

The Town Administrator was asked to discuss with the Treasurer the possibility of applying a surcharge to companies, such as National Grid or tree removal services, that do not make detailed payments promptly. In the past, these companies have delayed their police detail payments for extended periods, preventing officers from getting paid in a timely manner.

2. The Board of Selectmen requested the Town Administrator to schedule and coordinate a Power Outage Recap Meeting, following the recent approximate 3-day power outage due to high winds. The BOS decided to hold the meeting on Thursday, March 20, 2025, at 1:00 p.m.

New Business:

1. Executive Office of Economic Development – Contract Amendment
The contract amendment will allow funding to extend through June 30, 2026, instead of June 30, 2025. This contract is one of three funding sources being utilized for the reconstruction of Yankee Road.

MOTION TO APPROVE & SIGN CONTRACT: Chair Semanie motioned to approve and sign the Contract Amendment for the Rural Development Grant through the Executive Office of Economic Development as written. The motion seconded by Selectmen Baker was unanimously approved. (Roll Call Vote: Joanne Semanie – yes, Bill Baker – yes, Ed Silva – yes)

Old Business:

1. Fire Chief Succession Plan – Chair Semanie provided a brief overview of the recent meeting between the Town of Charlemont and the Town of Rowe regarding the proposed fire district. She explained that they reviewed the bylaw changes that need to be included in the Annual Town Meeting. Once the proposed bylaws have been reviewed by Town Council, Charlemont Town Administrator Sarah Reynolds will send them to Rowe.
2. Personnel Policy Manual Review – Not Discussed.

Road/Bridge Projects:

Yankee Road: Please see New Business #1.

Hazelton Road Bridge: No update.

Tunnel Road Bridge: No update.

Cyrus Stage Bridge: No update.

Warrants/Contracts:

1. Chair Semanie reviewed and signed FY25 Vendor & Payroll Warrants #18.
2. Town of Rowe/Rowe Camp & Conference Center – Through Trail Agreement
Please see Appointment #2.
3. Executive Office of Economic Development – Contract Amendment
Please see New Business #1.

Mail:

1. No Mail.

Minutes:

1. January 16, 2025 – Meeting Minutes
2. January 30, 2025 - Meeting Minutes
3. January 30, 2025 – Meeting Minutes – Budget Hearings
4. February 06, 2025 - Meeting Minutes – Budget Hearings

MOTION TO APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES: Chair Semanie motioned to approve and sign the following meeting minutes as written: January 16, 2025, January 30, 2025 – BOS Minutes, January 30, 2025 – Budget Hearing Minutes, February 06, 2025, Budget Hearing Minutes. The motion seconded by Selectmen Baker was unanimously approved. (Roll Call Vote: Joanne Semanie – yes, Bill Baker – yes, Ed Silva – yes)

5. February 13, 2025 – Meeting Minutes – Budget Hearings/BOS Business - **TABLED**

Citizen Comments:

None

Future Meetings:

1. Board of Selectmen’s Meeting – Thursday, March 13, 2025, time to be determined
2. Joint Board of Selectmen & Finance Committee Meeting, March 20, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.
3. Board of Selectmen’s Meeting – Thursday March 27, 2025, time to be determined
4. Joint Board of Selectmen’s & Finance Committee Meeting, Thursday, March 27, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

Adjournment: 4:04 PM


MOTION TO ADJOURN: Chair Semanie motioned to adjourn the meeting at 4:00 PM. The motion, seconded by Selectmen Baker, was unanimously approved. (Roll Call Vote: Joanne Semanie – yes, Bill Baker – yes, Ed Silva - yes)

Respectfully Submitted,

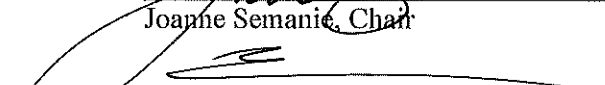
Brooke E. Shulda, Town Administrator

Approval Date: April 10, 2025

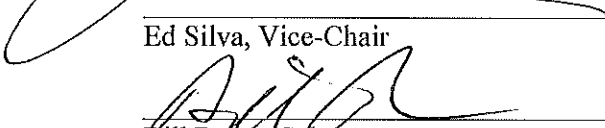
Approved by:



 Joanne Semanie, Chair



 Ed Silva, Vice-Chair



 Bill Baker, Selectmen

Documents:

1. Agenda for February 27, 2025
2. Town of Rowe/Rowe Camp & Conference Center – Through Trail Agreement
3. Executive Office of Economic Development – Contract Amendment
4. January 16, 2025, Meeting Minutes
5. January 30, 2025, Meeting Minutes
6. January 30, 2025, Budget Hearing Meeting Minutes
7. February 06, 2025, Budget Hearing Meeting Minutes
8. February 13, 2025, Budget Hearing/BOS Business Meeting Minutes