



**Town of Rowe**  
**Board of Selectmen**  
**Minutes**

Thursday, June 26, 2025 – 6:00 PM  
Rowe Town Hall, Meeting Room #1

Position	Name	P	A
Chair	Joanne Semanie	x	
V-Chair	Marilyn Wilson	x	
Selectmen	William Baker	x	

**IN-PERSON AUDIENCE:** Loretta Dionne, Justine Krumm, Ramon Sanchez, Donna Butzke, Susan Gleason, Jeff Bailey, Lynne Shulda

**ZOOM PARTICIPATION:** Rosie Gordon

**TOWN OFFICIALS:** Board of Health Chair Herb Butzke, Board of Health Kathy Atwood, Board of Health Clerk Christine Bailey, Town Administrator Brooke Shulda

**Call to Order:** Chair Semanie called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

**Announcement of recording devices:** None.

**Noteworthy Announcements:** None.

**Appointments:**

6:00 PM – Historic Commission – Justine Krumm

Justine Krumm attended the meeting to update the Board of Selectmen about the Historic Commission's public meeting on Wednesday, June 25th. She explained that the Commission plans to hold a public hearing but requires funding for newspaper advertising. The Town Administrator mentioned that there are remaining funds in some administrative accounts that could cover the advertising costs. The selectmen agreed with this plan.

6:10 PM – Open Space and Recreation - Tunnel Road Land Acquisition Update – Justine Krumm

Justine Krumm informed the selectmen that the original offer submitted to the owners of the Tunnel Road property was turned down. The OSRP and Mass Audubon are working together to come up with another plan.

The OSRP committee nominated Justine to serve as the Authorized Project Manager for the Tunnel Road Land Acquisition. In order for Justine to serve as the authorized project manager, the Board of Selectmen must appoint her and sign an authorization form, as well as the Conservation Commission Chair.

**MOTION TO APPOINT: Chair Semanie motioned to appoint Justine Krumm as the Authorized Project Manager for the Tunnel Road Land Acquisition Project. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Wilson, was unanimously approved. (vote: 3-0-0)**

6:20 PM – Standardizing Committee & Commission Operations – Justine Krumm

Justine Krumm briefly reviewed the “standardizing committee and commission operations” booklet she prepared with the selectmen. Her goal is to create a guide for new members of boards, committees, and commissions who are unfamiliar with local government. The selectmen agree that this is a useful idea.

The Board of Selectmen requested the Town Administrator to add this to the upcoming July 17, 2025, meeting agenda for them to review and adopt the proposed booklet.

**New Business:**

1. 1-Year Appointments

Chair Semanie read aloud the list of 1-Year Appointments to the rest of the board members. All three Selectmen agreed with appointing each member of the community to the boards, committees, and commissions as listed, provided by the Town Administrator.

**MOTION TO APPOINT: Chair Semanie motioned to appoint all community members on the 1-Year appointment list to the boards, committees, and commissions as listed. The motion, seconded by Selectmen Baker, was unanimously approved. (vote: 3-0-0)**

2. 3-Year Appointments

Chair Semanie read aloud the list of 3-Year Appointments to the rest of the board members. All three Selectmen agreed with appointing each member of the community to the boards, committees, and commissions as listed, provided by the Town Administrator.

**MOTION TO APPOINT: Chair Semanie motioned to appoint all community members on the 3-Year appointment list to the boards, committees, and commissions as listed. The motion, seconded by Selectman Baker, was unanimously approved. (vote: 3-0-0)**

3. Concerns Regarding the Cliff Swallow Colony on Town Hall

A recent meeting brought together employees and residents to discuss concerns regarding the health risks linked to the droppings of the Cliff Swallow colony nesting on the Town Hall building. Employees articulated their worries about the potential impacts on health, while residents who wish to retain the colony also shared their perspectives.

Some residents advocated for the birds, asserting that the swallows have a right to inhabit the Town Hall. One resident announced plans to circulate a petition aimed at preserving the colony, asserting that the ultimate decision should involve input from the town voters.

During the meeting, Board of Health members, employees, and residents presented to the Board of Selectmen the health risks associated with Cliff Swallow droppings. These risks include limitations on opening office windows for fresh air and the inability to use air conditioning units during the summer months in several offices at Town Hall. Herb Butzke, Chair of the Board of Health, remarked that the Board has the authority to override the petition to maintain the colony, citing the health risks posed to employees working within the building.

The Board of Selectmen confirmed that the Board of Health can override the petition and supports discontinuing the installation of artificial nests on the Town Hall building to preserve the health and well-being of Town Hall employees.

\*Please note that the Board of Health members, Loretta Dionne, Justine Krumm, and Ramon Sanchez departed the meeting at 6:54 PM

4. Gracy House Funds

The Town Administrator inquired with the Selectboard regarding the remaining Gracy House funds and whether they preferred to close out the projects this year to transfer the funds to free cash. Chair Semanie insisted that the projects should remain open for now, but if the funds are not used in the next fiscal year, then the projects should be concluded, and the funds should be allocated to free cash. Vice-Chair Wilson and Selectman Baker were both in agreement.

## 5. North Cemetery Legal Costs

The Town Administrator informed the Selectmen of the legal costs associated with the North Cemetery Land purchase. She requested permission to reclass \$2,060.25 from the legal account to the North Cemetery Land Legal account. The Board agreed that those funds should be reclassified to the appropriate account.

### Old Business:

1. Fire Chief Succession Plan/Fire District – no discussion.
2. Personnel Policy Manual – Requested clarification on Holiday time.

### Ongoing Projects:

Yankee Road: The TA informed the Board that she is working on easements related to the project. She also informed the Board that she will be reaching out to Dan Tobyn with the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities to check on the status of the environmental review.

Tunnel Road Bridge: Please see unforeseen business.

Hazelton Road Culvert: no update.

Cyrus Stage Bridge: no update.

### Warrants/Contracts:

1. Chair Semanie Reviewed Warrants - FY25 Vendor, Payroll, & NBSU Warrants #25

### Minutes:

1. May 30, 2025 – Meeting Minutes
2. June 05, 2025 – Meeting Minutes
3. June 10, 2025 – Meeting Minutes

**MOTION TO APPROVE & SIGN: Chair Semanie motioned to approve and sign the meeting minutes for May 30, 2025, June 05, 2025, and June 10, 2025, as written. The motion, seconded by Selectman Baker, was approved. (vote: 3-0-0)**

### Future Meetings:

1. Thursday, July 17, 2025 – 6:00 PM
2. Thursday, July 31, 2025 – 6:00 PM
3. Thursday, August 14, 2025 – 6:00 PM
4. Thursday, August 28, 2025 – 6:00 PM

### Mail:

1. Brookfield Renewable – Notification of Herbicide Application.
2. National Grid – Vegetation Management Plan.

### Unforeseen Business:

1. Sam Rice Brook Bridge: MassDOT District 1 Bridge Engineer, Mark Devylder, will be working with the Highway Superintendent and Town Administrator on temporarily reducing the bridge to one lane until beam end repairs are made. The Town Administrator will reach out to Gill Engineer

to request their assistance in bringing the bridge up to MassDOT's required standards. The Town Administrator spoke with the Town's representative, who stated Chapter 90 funds can be utilized for the engineering and repair of the bridge.

2. Tunnel Road Bridge: It was determined by the MassDOT legal department that the bridge is owned by a Railroad Entity. The Town Administrator will request proof of ownership from the District 1 Highway Director, Francisca Heming.
3. Highway Department Heavy Equipment Operator/Laborer Job Description and Advertisement: A member of the Highway Department is retiring in August. The Town Administrator requested Selectman Bill Baker to review the current job description and to make any revisions he deems necessary. At the July 17<sup>th</sup>, Board of Selectmen meeting, the Board will review the job description and make any suggested revisions for finalization. The Town Administrator will put together a job advertisement for the Board to review, also at the July 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.
4. Line-Item Transfer Request: There is a deficit of \$18,000 in the snow and ice account. The Highway Superintendent requested a line-item transfer of \$18,000 from the Road Surface Maintenance Account to fund the deficit in the snow and ice account.

**MOTION TO APPROVE & SIGN: Chair Semanie motioned to approve and sign the line-item transfer request submitted by the Highway Superintendent as written. The motion, seconded by Selectman Baker was unanimously approved. (vote: 3-0-0)**

**Citizen Comments:** None.

**Adjournment:** 7:42 PM

**MOTION TO ADJOURN: Chair Semanie motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 PM. The motion, seconded by Selectman Baker, was unanimously approved. (vote: 3-0-0)**

Respectfully Submitted,

Brooke E. Shulda, Town Administrator

Approval Date: July 31, 2025

Approved by:

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Joanne Semanie, Chair

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Marilyn Wilson, Vice-Chair

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Bill Baker, Selectmen

**Documents:**

1. Agenda for June 26, 2025
2. DRAFT - Standardizing Committee & Commission Operations
3. Swallow Emails/Letters
4. 1-Year Appointment List
5. 3-5 Year Appointment List
6. MAIL: Brookfield Renewable
7. MAIL: National Grid

8. May 30, 2025 – Meeting Minutes
9. June 05, 2025 – Meeting Minutes
10. June 10, 2025 – Meeting Minutes