

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

Thursday, March 27, 2025 – 6:00 p.m.

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

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

**FINANCE COMMITTEE:** Dan Pallotta, Marilyn Wilson, Loretta Dione, Susan Gleason  
**ZOOM PARTICIPATION:** Principal Bill Knittle, Assistant Superintendent Tara Barnes, Superintendent John Franzoni  
**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:** Brooke Shulda  
**IN-PERSON AUDIENCE:** None

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

1. Review School Budget -

School Superintendent John Franzoni, Assistant Superintendent Tara Barnes, and Rowe Elementary School Principal Bill Knittle attended the meeting to review the School budget submitted for fiscal year 2026.

The Elementary School budget has increased by 2.99%. In contrast, the overall School budget shows an increase of 2.5%, not accounting for an additional \$57,000 requested to cover the increase in health insurance costs.

Dan Pallotta, Chair of the Finance Committee, has respectfully requested that the School Committee and Administration review their budget again to ensure it remains within the 2.5% increase limit. He pointed out that all other town departments have either maintained their budgets or reduced them, resulting in all departments being at or below the 2.5% increase threshold. Pallotta emphasized that it is unfair to expect other departments to subsidize the School, especially given that they frequently request budget increases exceeding 2.5% each year.

Selectman Bill Baker expressed his full support for the Elementary School but emphasized the need for greater fiscal responsibility.

- 2. Chair Pallotta provided an overview of the requested projects and the accounts from which the funds should be approved for expenditure.
- 3. Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) Recommendation –

Chair Pallotta recommended giving employees a 3% COLA increase for FY2026. He stated it should be noted that, in future years, if there are significant increases in budgets or Capital projects, the BOS may only be able to increase the COLA by 1%.

Marilyn Wilson, Vice-Chair of the Finance Committee, emphasized the significant health insurance increase faced not only by the town but also by the employees.

Both Chair Semanie and Selectman Baker were in favor of the recommended 3% COLA increase.

**MOTION TO INCREASE COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT FOR FY2026: Chair Semanie motioned to increase the Cost of Living Adjustment for employee wages for fiscal year 2026 by 3%. The motion, seconded by Selectman Baker, was approved. (vote: 2-0-0)**

**Citizen Comments:**

NONE

**Future Meetings:**

1. Joint Meeting – Board of Selectmen & Finance Committee – Thursday, April 04, 2025, at 6:00 PM

**Adjournment:** 7:03 PM

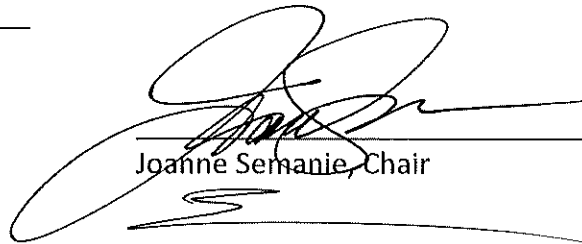
**MOTION TO ADJOURN: Chair Semanie motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:03 PM. The motion, seconded by Selectmen Baker, was approved. (vote: 2-0-0)**

Respectfully Submitted,

Brooke E. Shulda, Town Administrator

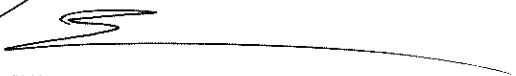
Approval Date: April 10, 2025

Approved by:



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Joanne Semanie, Chair



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Ed Silva, Vice-Chair



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Bill Baker, Selectmen

**Documents:**

1. Agenda for March 27, 2025