



Town of Rowe
Board of Selectmen
Minutes

Thursday, January 15, 2026 – 6:00 p.m.

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

BOARD OF SELECTMEN: Joanne Semanie, Bill Baker

FINANCE COMMITTEE: Dan Pallotta, Jeff Bailey

ZOOM PARTICIPATION: Finance Committee Members; Wayne Zavotka and Ed Silva, Library Feasibility Study Committee Member Justine Krumm

TOWN OFFICIALS: Town Administrator Brooke Shulda

IN-PERSON AUDIENCE: None

Call to Order: The Selectboard continued their 5:00 PM meeting.

Announcement of recording devices: None

Noteworthy Announcements: None

Selectboard Meeting Minutes for the Joint Selectboard/Finance Committee Meeting

Budget Hearings:

1. Highway Department

The Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee reviewed the FY2027 Highway Department budget as submitted by Highway Superintendent Lance Larned. There was an expected increase in Superintendent Salary and the DPW worker wages, and decreases were noted in the electricity, vehicle fuel, and operation budget lines. The overall budget requested decreased by 2.47%.

FY26 VOTED: \$645,878

FY27 REQUESTED: \$629,925

2. Library

The Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee reviewed the FY2027 Library budget as submitted by Library Director Molly Lane. There was an expected increase in Library Director Salary and library staff wages, and a slight increase in the electricity and CWMARS Membership budget lines. The overall budget requested increased by 0.87%.

FY26 VOTED: \$80,809

FY27 REQUESTED: \$81,511

Library Feasibility Committee Member Justine Krumm joined the meeting via Zoom to review the status of the Library project schedule. Ms. Krumm explains the following:

“Project Schedule (Current Projection)”

January 2026

- Finalizing architectural and engineering drawings

- Drafting complete coordinated construction document sets
- Prepare bid-ready specifications and packages

February – March 2026

- Advertise for bids
- Conduct pre-bid coordination
- Respond to RFIs and issue addenda
- Review bids and establish construction schedule
- Make contractor recommendation

June 2026 – April 2027

- Construction phase, including ongoing construction administration, site visits, and coordination”

Finance Committee Chair Pallotta stated he would review the final design with the architect and assist the Library Feasibility Committee with the bid process. He requested that the Town Administrator forward his contact information to Ms. Krumm.

3. Town Clerk

The Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee reviewed the FY2027 Town Clerk budget as submitted by Town Clerk Kevin Balawick. There was an increase in the operations and election teller budget lines. The overall budget requested increased by 21.19%.

FY26 VOTED: \$19,510

FY27 REQUESTED: \$23,645

Operations: requested to increase by \$75 for transcription services for Annual and Special town meetings.

Election Teller: requested to increase due to the expected State Primary, State Election, and Local Elections.

At this time, the stipend is unclear, as the Town Clerk position will transition from elected to appointed. The Board of Selectmen will be working to establish a job description outlining all Town Clerk responsibilities and to discuss whether to keep the position as a stipend or change it to an hourly rate.

The Town Administrator reminded the Selectboard and Finance Committee of the discussion during the FY2026 Town Clerk budget hearing about how the hours for the position should fluctuate year-to-year due to election cycles. Finance Committee Chair Pallotta reminded them that this decision is to be made by the Selectboard, as they are the appointing authority.

4. Council on Aging

The Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee reviewed the FY2027 Council on Aging budget as submitted by the Council on Aging. The Council on Aging requested to increase the budget by \$2,000. The overall budget requested increased by 22.22%.

FY26 VOTED: \$9,000
FY27 REQUESTED: \$11,000

The Council on Aging requests an increase in its annual budget from \$9,000 to \$11,000 to support expanded programs, including senior clinics, social activities, and educational initiatives. Currently, clinic expenditures are nearing the existing budget limit, and new activities such as social drop-in hours, technology training, and affordable field trips are planned to enhance senior engagement.

NOTE: The Town Administrator briefly left the meeting at 6:03 pm and rejoined the meeting at 6:23 pm.

The Finance Committee adjourned their meeting, departed the meeting room, and ended their Zoom participation at 6:55 PM.

The Selectboard remained in session.

Unforeseen Discussion:

1. Town Building Cameras: Chair Semanie briefly discussed the need to update or install additional cameras on town buildings, particularly on the Fire Department building.

Future Meetings:

1. Wednesday, January 21, 2026 – 6:00 PM – Budget Hearing
2. Thursday, January 29, 2026 – 6:00 PM – Budget Hearing
3. Thursday, February 05, 2026 – 6:00 PM – Budget Hearing
4. Thursday, February 12, 2026 – 6:00 PM – Budget Hearing
5. Thursday, February 26, 2026 – 6:00 PM – Budget Hearing
6. Thursday, April 16, 2026 – 6:00 PM – Vote FY27 Final Budget

Adjournment: 7:03 PM

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Brooke E. Shulda, Town Administrator

Approval Date: 2/05/2026

Approved by:



Joanne Semanie, Chair

VACANT, Vice-Chair



Bill Baker, Selectmen

Documents:

1. Agenda for January 15, 2026
2. Department Budgets