



Town of Rowe
Board of Selectmen
Minutes

Thursday, August 13, 2026 – 6:00 PM
Rowe Town Hall, Meeting Room #1

BOARD OF SELECTMEN: Joanne Semanie, Bill Baker, Ed Silva

TOWN OFFICIALS: Fire Chief Chris Goodhind, Town Administrator Brooke Shulda

AUDIENCE: Matt Stine, Cindy Laffond, Ellen Miller

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

Announcement of recording devices: No recording devices.

New Business:

1. Shared Fire Chief/Emergency Manager Contract

MOTION TO APPROVE AND SIGN: Chair Semanie motioned to approve and sign the shared Fire Chief/Emergency Manager contract between Christopher Goodhind and the Towns of Charlemont and Rowe, as written. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Baker, was unanimously approved. (vote: 3-0-0)

2. Fire Chief/Emergency Manager Appointment

MOTION TO APPOINT: Chair Semanie motioned to appoint Christopher Goodhind as the Fire Chief/Emergency Manager for a three-year term effective immediately, with a term ending June 30, 2029. The motion, seconded by Selectman Silva, was unanimously approved. (vote: 3-0-0)

Citizen Comments:

Resident Cindy Laffond joined the meeting to raise three topics:

1. 1. She was unaware of the retirements and resignations of 2 highway employees and was unaware that 2 new employees were hired for those vacant positions. She said residents should be informed about retirements and new hires.
2. 2. She stated that National Grid is removing trees but leaving the dead ones behind and strongly feels the dead trees should be removed as well.
3. 3. She expressed disappointment with how the sides of the roads looked.

Resident Ellen Miller joined the meeting to check the status of, and provide feedback on, the LED streetlight conversion. Miller recommended going with the dimmest LED option available.

New Business Continued:

1. Proposed Battery Project near Sherman Hydro Facility

Chair Semanie informed the board that relevant board and committee members would meet with Great River Hydro and a member of VHB regarding a proposed battery project on Monday, 8/17.

2. Northern Berkshire School Union Regional Education Study

The Town Administrator reminded the board that Rowe Elementary School is not participating in the NBSU Regional Education Study.

3. Seasonal Spare Plow Truck Driver

The Town Administrator asked the Selectboard how they would like to proceed with the vacant seasonal spare plow truck driver position. The board agreed that the highway superintendent should make the hire decision for this position.

Old Business:

1. Fire Chief Succession Plan: refer to "New Business #1 and 2".
2. Shared EMS Services: next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, 8/19, at 1 pm.
3. Shared Police Services: next meeting scheduled for Friday, 8/14, at 1 pm.
4. Personnel Policy Manual: in progress, no update.
5. Public Shade Tree Policy: in progress, no update.
6. Non-Resident Appointments to Boards/Committees/Commissions Bylaw
7. Right-of-Way Bylaw – the board believes this to be an unnecessary request, and asked for it to be removed from future meeting agendas.

Ongoing Projects:

Roads/Bridges:

Yankee Road: Town Admin informed the board that she met with the engineer and CoW to review the revised WPA documents and determined that further revisions were required before submission to the conservation commission.

Zoar Rd. Bridge over Sam Rice Brook: Town Admin informed the board of the weight-limit posting requirement.

Hazelton Road Culvert: Town Admin informed the board that she is awaiting the appraisal reports and successfully requested and received additional funding for the construction phase of the project through the MassDOT Small Bridge Grant.

Steel Brook Road Bridge: no update.

Sibley Road Bridge: no update.

Tunnel Road Bridge: no update.

Other Projects:

Oil Tank Removal: punch list items complete, awaiting engineer inspection (not scheduled, date TBD), and generator reset/inspection (scheduled for 8/21).

National Grid – 10W19: no update.

Record Organization: The Town Administrator informed the board that the records organization is progressing well, with approximately three-quarters, if not more, of the process completed. There are 20 to 30 boxes of records requiring proper disposal, and the board recommended exploring the services of a professional shredding company.

Verizon Decommissioning of Centrex Lines: Town Admin informed the board that Verizon is decommissioning its copper lines, and Admin Assistant Donna Butzke has taken the lead on this transition and will update the board as it progresses.

Warrants/Contracts:--

1. Review and Sign Warrants - FY27 AP Warrant #02A and AP, Payroll, Deduction & NBSU Warrants #03.

Chair Semanie reviewed and signed the warrants.

Mail:

1. None.

Minutes:

1. 05/22/2026 Meeting Minutes
2. 06/04/2026 Meeting Minutes
3. 06/18/2026 Meeting Minutes
4. 07/06/2026 Executive Session Meeting Minutes
5. 07/16/2026 Meeting Minutes

MOTION TO APPROVE AND SIGN: Chair Semanie motioned to approve and sign the meeting minutes for May 22, 2026, June 04, 2026, June 18, 2026, July 06, 2026, and July 16, 2026, as written. The motion, seconded by Selectman Silva, was unanimously approved. (vote: 3-0-0)

Future Meetings:

1. Thursday, August 27, 2026 – 6:00 PM
2. Thursday, September 10, 2026 – 6:00 PM
3. Thursday, September 24, 2026 – 6:00 PM – May opt out of holding the meeting due to Town Admin's scheduled absence, dependent upon potential time-sensitive deadlines.
4. Thursday, October 08, 2026 – 6:00 PM

Unforeseen Business (within the preceding 48 hours): None.

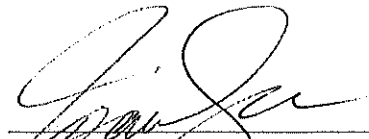
Adjournment: 7:11 PM

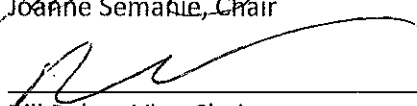
MOTION TO ADJOURN: Chair Semanie motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:11 PM. The motion, seconded by Selectman Baker, was unanimously approved. (vote: 3-0-0)

Respectfully Submitted,
Brooke E. Shulda, Town Administrator

Approval Date: 8/27/2026

Approved by:


Joanne Semahle, Chair


Bill Baker, Vice-Chair


Ed Silva, Selectman

Documents:

1. Agenda for August 13, 2026
2. Shared Fire Chief/Emergency Manager Contact
3. Fire Chief/Emergency Manager Appointment
4. Proposed Battery Project – Email
5. NBSU Regional Education Study – Email and NBESS Letter
6. Zoar Road Bridge over Sam Rice Brook – Email RE: Bridge Restrictions
7. Meeting Minutes – 5/22/2026
8. Meeting Minutes – 6/04/2026
9. Meeting Minutes – 6/18/2026
10. Meeting Minutes – 7/06/2026
11. Meeting Minutes – 7/16/2026