Rowe Finance Committee
April 4, 2018
6:30 P.M.
Rowe Town Hall

Finance Committee: Chair Wayne Zavotka, Loretta Dionne, Paul McLatchy III
Audience of Citizens: None

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chair Zavotka at 6:39 P.M., a quorum of the committee present.

Agenda: The agenda was reviewed, and "letters" was added.

Letters: Joint letters from the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee were presented that were addressed to the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Council on Aging, and Board of Health. Each letter thanked the other board for their work on the budget, and explained the changes to the budget. On each letter, a motion was made by Chair Zavotka and seconded by Mr. McLatchy to sign. All four votes carried unanimously.

Reserve Fund Transfer Requests: The following requests were acted on:

Street Lighting: A request from Executive Secretary Janice Boudreau for $1,500 for street lighting, to account 01-5-424-4000. Last year the budget was cut from $5,500 to $4,000 during budget season, but the town is charged a flat fee based on the number of lights, rather than by actual electricity used. A motion was made by Chair Zavotka and seconded by Mr. McLatchy to approve the request. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Treasurer: A request from Treasurer Joanne Semanie in the amount of $1,000 to be transferred to the treasurer's stipend/treasurer's consulting expenses line, account 01-5-145-000. Former treasurer Kris Nartowicz has been consulting throughout the year. This would allow her to be paid. A motion was made by Chair Zavotka and seconded by Mr. McLatchy to approve the request. The vote was unanimous in favor.

-JOINT MEETING WITH BOARD OF SELECTMEN-
The Finance Committee joined the Board of Selectmen in the next room at 7:06 P.M.

Board of Selectmen: Chair Jennifer Morse, Selectman Chuck Sokol
Executive Secretary: Janice Boudreau
Board of Assessors: Chair Rick Williams
Audience of Citizens: Kris Swenson, Marilyn Wilson

Budget: Assessor Williams reported on the budget. As of tonight, the budget will use $34,022 from the Assessors' overlay surplus, and $15,592 from free cash. This will result in a split tax rate of $7.08 residential, and $15.19 commercial/industrial/personal. Compared with last year's rates of $6.86/$14.73, this represent approximately a 3.2% increase.

Health Insurance: Citizen Marilyn Wilson requested that the Board of Selectmen lower the town's percentage of the health insurance to 75% from the current 85%, citing a large portion of the population being seniors on fixed income, as well as lower rates in the surrounding towns. She said that it would be hard to consider a 2½

override when other cuts could be made. Selectman Sokol said that the board has looked into lowering the rate incrementally over a few years. Mr. McLatchy (who recused himself from discussion on insurance) said that the 2½ override was only being considered as an option at the beginning of the season, and is now most likely not being considered at all, due to a lack of need.

Bylaw Proposal: Mr. McLatchy brought copies of the bylaw proposal approved by the Finance Committee. It involves striking the following language from Article III, Section 11 of the bylaws:

"No person holding any other elective town office and no employee of the Town earning more than $2,500 per year shall be eligible to serve on said committee."

And replacing it with:

"No member of the Board of Selectmen or the School Committee shall be eligible to serve on said committee. Members of the Finance Committee holding other town offices or positions must recuse themselves on all matters pertaining to that department."

Mr. McLatchy explained to the Selectmen that there is not a large enough voter pool to draw from to limit eligibility for the committee. In the last decade, only 130 of the 270 voters in town have served in *any* capacity, including positions that are more titular than anything (field driver, fence viewer, measurer of wood, bark, and lumber, etc…) In addition, the two boards that are banned from holding a seat on the Finance Committee- the Board of Selectmen and School Committee, control 91% of the town's budget. The Finance Committee has been looking for new members, but everyone has declined, and there are limited individuals to ask.

The Selectboard reacted positively to the proposal and asked for a draft article to add to the warrant.

Move: The Finance Committee ended its joint meeting at 8:04, and moved back into the Selectmen's office.

Minutes: The minutes of December 28th, February 14th, and February 21st were presented. On the minutes of December 28th and February 14th, a motion was made by Chair Zavotka and seconded by Ms. Dionne to approve the minutes as presented. The vote passed unanimously. On the minutes of February 21st, a motion was made by Ms. Dionne and seconded by Chair Zavotka to approve the minutes as presented. The vote passed unanimously.

Next Meeting: The Finance Committee will meet jointly with the Board of Selectmen on April 18th at 6:30.

Adjourn: A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting, which carried unanimously. The meeting was closed at 8:15.

Respectfully Submitted,
Paul McLatchy III, Secretary

Approved on: 4/25/18

Wayne A Zavotka
Wayne Zavotka, Chairman

Paul McLatchy III, Secretary

Loretta Dionne
Loretta Dionne, Member