Rowe Finance Committee
Joint Meeting with Board of Selectmen
September 19, 2019
6:30 P.M. at Rowe Town Hall – Meeting Room 1

Present:	Chair Wayne Zavotka, Vice-Chair Loretta Dionne, Christopher "Selmi" Hyytinen, Paul McLatchy III
Absent:	Laurie Pike
Board of Selectmen:	Chair Charles Sokol, Selectman Edward Silva
Other Attendees:	Executive Secretary Janice Boudreau, School Committee Member Matthew Crowningshield, Superintendent Jonathan Franzoni, Treasurer Joanne Semanie, School Committee Chair Susan Zavotka

Call to Order: Chair Zavotka called the meeting to order at 6:32 P.M., with a quorum of the committee present.

State Review: Recently the state Department of Revenue conducted a review of Rowe which included interviewing several individuals involved with the financial departments. They found it very positive that the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee work well together. They requested a copy of the budget calendar.

Budget: Members from both boards reviewed the draft budget calendar. A financial roundtable was scheduled for October 24th at 6:30. There will be an informational "all boards" meeting on October 28th. It was reported that the budget worksheets were being updated in time for this meeting.

Stipend: The Planning Board requested a stipend in their last budget, which was denied due to the desire to set a policy on stipends. However, Chair Zavotka and member Laurie Pike are not able to participate due to having a spouse that currently receives a stipend. In addition, Mr. McLatchy and Mr. Hyytinen both work for the Board of Selectmen, who could potentially be affected by any policy changes. It was agreed that finding willing individuals who would even be eligible to serve on this committee (i.e. not immediately related to an elected official) would be quite difficult.

Capital Plan: Members reviewed the definition and process of what might constitute a capital project.

Move: Members of the Finance Committee moved to Meeting Room 2 to continue their meeting at 7:07 P.M.

Capital (Continued): Mr. Hyytinen suggested that when someone is reviewing their capital project proposals, they should make sure that there is a need and/or way to improve efficiency with their project.

Minutes: The minutes of August 26th were presented. With no changes, they were approved as submitted.

School: The school will likely have several special projects in the next few years. A new surge protection system, security cameras, fuel tank removal, and the replacement of the shed were just some of the expected projects.

Next Meeting: The committee will next meet on October 24th as part of the financial roundtable.

Adjourn: A motion was made by Vice-Chair Dionne and seconded by Mr. Hyytinen to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 P.M. The vote was 4-0-0 in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Paul McLatchy III, Secretary

Approved: 1/16/2020

Wayne Zavotka, Chairman

Loretta Dionne, Vice-Chair

Paul McLatchy III, Secretary

Christopher "Selmi" Hyytinen, Member

Attachments:

- Draft Budget Calendar
- Email from State re: Wayne Zavotka Conflict of Interest Regarding Stipends

ROWE BUDGET CALENDAR

WHEN	EVENT	WHO
Aug - Oct	Certify Free Cash (used in coming FY19 revenue projections)	Town Accountant
10/22/19	Financial Roundtable	BOS, Fin Com and Assessors
28-Oct	Hold Elected/Appointed Officials Form to share information	BOS, Fin Com, Dept. Heads
	assessment of financial picture	
Oct. 15-30	Free Cash Certification	Accountant
Oct 31st	Begin Budget Process for FY 18	BOS, Dept. Heads, Fin Com, School
Oct 31st	Set Tax Rate	Assessors, BOS
Oct 1 - Nov 15	Help & Review Departmental Budgets	all Depts.
	Send out Notices and meet with Fin Com Liaisons	
Nov 1st	Begin Capital Planning process- including 5 year projections	BOS, Fin Com, Acctnt, all Depts.
Nov 4th	All Boards	
Dec 4th	Submit FY 18 Budget requests	all Departments
5-Dec	Budget & Capital Requests are due	
Dec 15th	Prepare initial revenue/expenditures projections including	BOS, Fin Com, Accountant
	capital expenditures	
Jan 1st	Release "House 1" first indication of state aid for FY18	Governor
Jan-Feb 1	Meet with Dept. Heads to review Budget Recommendations	Fin Com, Dept. Heads
March	If Legislature passes Local Aid Resolution,	State Legislature, DOR
	Cherry Sheets Issued	
March	Prepare final revenue/expenditure projection for FY18	BOS, Fin Com
	in preparation for Annual Town Meeting	
March	Prepare Town Meeting Warrant Recommendations	Fin Com

Rev. 06-28-17

ROWE BUDGET CALENDAR

May	Annual Town Meeting	
June	Make any reserve fund transfers necessary, to complete	
	fiscal year	

Your Inquiry

McDonald, TMichael (ETH) <tmichael.mcdonald@state.ma.us>

Thu 9/19/2019 4:26 PM

To: wzavotka@hotmail.com <wzavotka@hotmail.com>

Dear Mr. Zavotka,

Per your request, I am writing to confirm the advice you recently received regarding the conflict of interest law, G.L. c. 268A.

You are an elected member of the Finance Committee in Rowe ("Town"). You advised that the Finance Committee will be considering establishing a policy setting the criteria for stipends for Town committees. You advised that your wife is on the School Committee and currently receives a stipend. You further advised that stipends would vary across committees depending on the number of work hours a committee position entails as well as the number of times a committee meets per year. You indicated that Rowe has 390 residents and 45 of those residents serve on Town committees.

You inquired as to whether you could use the exemption in Section 19(b)(3) to participate in this matter, and if not, what your level of participation may be.

As I advised you, Section 19 provides in relevant part that a municipal employee may not participate in a particular matter in which an immediate family member has a financial interest. Section 19 encompasses any financial interest that is reasonably foreseeable, whether positive or negative. You advised that it is likely that your wife's stipend would be affected if the policy were adopted, possibly negatively. Since it is reasonably foreseeable that your wife's stipend would be affected, you must recuse yourself from any participation in this matter. Participation includes not only voting but also discussion. I would suggest making a statement for the meeting minutes stating that you are recusing yourself, and as a best practice, you should leave the room while the matter is being entertained. While you may remain seated with the public, you may not remain seated with the Finance Committee while this matter is being addressed.

While Section 19(b)(3) contains an exemption for a particular matter involving a determination of general policy if the interest of the municipal employee or members of his immediate family is shared with a substantial segment of the population of the municipality, this exemption is not available to you here. As we discussed, the State Ethics Commission does not consider a policy setting the criteria for stipends for Town committees to be a matter involving a determination of general policy. Even assuming that it was, because the stipends will vary across the Town committees, your wife's financial interest in the matter would not be shared with a substantial segment of the population, which the State Ethics Commission has determined is 10% of the population of a municipality.

I hope this advice has been helpful. Let me know if you have any questions about this advice.

Confidentiality. Both this e-mail and your request for advice are confidential by statute. This means that you are free to disclose this advice to anyone you wish, but that the State Ethics Commission may not disclose your request or any other identifying information unless you consent, or unless you misrepresent the contents of this e-mail.

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