Rowe Finance Committee
October 8, 2020
6:30 P.M. via Remote Participation

Present: Christopher "Selmi" Hyytinen, Paul McLatchy III, Laurie Pike
Absent: Chair Wayne Zavotka, Vice-Chair Loretta Dionne
Audience of Citizens: None

Note: Due to the national COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was held via remote participation as authorized by executive order of the governor. All votes are taken via roll-call vote.

Call to Order: In the absence of both the chair and vice-chair, Secretary McLatchy called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 6:36 P.M., with a quorum of the committee present.

Minutes: The minutes of September 22nd were presented. A motion was made by Mr. Hyytinen and seconded by Ms. Pike to approve the minutes as written. The roll-call vote was unanimous in favor:

Chris Hyytinen Yes Laurie Pike Yes Paul McLatchy III Yes

Webinar: Mr. McLatchy asked for permission from the other members to "attend" a webinar series for the state Association of Town Finance Committees (ATFC) to be held later this month. This replaces their annual meeting due to the pandemic. There is a $25 fee. A motion was made by Mr. Hyytinen and seconded by Ms. Pike to request $25 from administration to pay for this registration fee. The roll-call vote was unanimous in favor:

Chris Hyytinen Yes Laurie Pike Yes Paul McLatchy III Yes

Warrant Review: Members reviewed the warrant for the upcoming Special Town Meeting (attached). The explanation for Articles 3 & 4 mention that the Finance Committee agrees that the amounts appropriated from stabilization should be replenished from Free Cash when certified. Members were comfortable with this wording.

Article 1: $130,000 from Stabilization for the Ford Hill Culvert Project. The town received a $500,000 grant, but the entire project cost could run up to $630,000. This amount covers the balance, and any leftover funds will be returned. A motion was made by Mr. McLatchy and seconded by Mr. Hyytinen to recommend Article 1. The roll-call vote was unanimous in favor:

Chris Hyytinen Yes Laurie Pike Yes Paul McLatchy III Yes

Article 2: $29,500 from Capital Stabilization to replace the school tractor. The school needs to either purchase a new tractor or spend nearly $7,500 to replace the existing one that does not fully meet their needs and has already been in an accident. A question was raised on the value of the trade-in and whether or not the DPW desired the old tractor. Mr.

Hyytinen said he does not want to invest too much money in this, which Ms. Pike and Mr. McLatchy agreed with. Mr. Hyytinen will speak with the DPW Superintendent to see if he does, in fact, want this piece of equipment.

Ms. Pike asked whether or not this will eliminate the need to contract out for plowing at the school. Members were not sure, but it seemed likely as this new tractor will have better capabilities than the existing tractor.

A motion was made by Mr. McLatchy and seconded by Mr. Hyytinen to recommend Article 2. The roll-call vote was unanimous in favor:

Chris Hyytinen	Yes	Laurie Pike	Yes	Paul McLatchy III	Yes

Article 3: $9,000 from Stabilization for the purchase of security and monitoring equipment at the school. This project was initially approved for the Annual Town Meeting, but due to concerns over Covid and a possible need to tap into free cash, it was postponed. Money is being appropriated from a stabilization fund, but it is the hope to replenish this from free cash once it's certified. Mr. Hyytinen asked if there were any discounts for having security equipment. Mr. McLatchy will research. A motion was made by Mr. McLatchy and seconded by Mr. Hyytinen to recommend Article 3. The roll-call vote was unanimous in favor:

Chris Hyytinen	Yes	Laurie Pike	Yes	Paul McLatchy III	Yes

Article 4: $3,500 from Stabilization to pay for cemetery land legal fees. This project was also approved for the Annual Town Meeting, but was delayed. As it had already been approved, a motion was made by Mr. McLatchy and seconded by Ms. Pike to recommend Article 4. The roll-call vote was unanimous in favor:

Chris Hyytinen	Yes	Laurie Pike	Yes	Paul McLatchy III	Yes

Article 5: $26,000 from Capital Stabilization to replace the Park Structure. As both Mr. Hyytinen and Ms. Pike are also Park Commissioners, no votes could be taken.

Article 6: $15,000 from Capital Stabilization to purchase, install, and/or program emergency communications equipment. The county is moving to a new state radio system, and will need new radios and other equipment to use. The state is providing a grant for basic units, this covers the difference for upgrades.

Mr. Hyytinen asked about repeaters, but Mr. McLatchy said that this was not for that and did not recall it being brought up with the Selectmen when this article was being discussed. As there is a cost of nearly $13,000 per repeater, this should be looked into. Ms. Pike suggested that the Fire Chief have a handout that listed the equipment being purchased.

A motion was made by Mr. McLatchy and seconded by Mr. Hyytinen to recommend Article 6. The roll-call vote was unanimous in favor:

Chris Hyytinen Yes Laurie Pike Yes Paul McLatchy III Yes

Article 7: To move $3,750 from the Town Nurse Wages Line to the Board of Health Operations line. The Board of Health needed to have some paving work done prior to the fall, and after approaching the Finance Committee for a reserve fund transfer, it was agreed that they should spend out of their operations and replenish it by transfer. As the town does not have a nurse yet, there are excess funds in this line. A motion was made by Mr. McLatchy and seconded by Mr. Hyytinen to recommend Article 7. The roll-call vote was unanimous in favor:

Chris Hyytinen Yes Laurie Pike Yes Paul McLatchy III Yes

Articles 8 & 9: These articles are not financial, so no action was taken.

General: Members discussed their desires to have more time to review articles before recommendations have to be made. Many questions were brought up tonight that they would like to have had a chance to get answers to before making recommendations. It would be their preference to obtain warrants around a month before town meeting so that a meeting can be held to review the articles, ask questions, and then come back at a subsequent meeting to make formal recommendations.

Next Meeting: The committee will meet on October 15th with the Board of Selectmen and October 20th for the roundtable discussion.

Adjourn: A motion was made by Mr. McLatchy and seconded by Mr. Hyytinen to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 P.M. The roll-call vote was unanimous in favor:

Chris Hyytinen Yes Laurie Pike Yes Paul McLatchy III Yes

Respectfully Submitted,
Paul McLatchy III, Secretary

Approved: December 8, 2020

Paul McLatchy III, Secretary

Unable to be signed by entire committee due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Attachments:

- Agenda
- Town Meeting Warrant

Town of Rowe, MA
Rowe Finance Committee
Thursday, October 8, 2020 at 6:30 PM
Via Remote Participation

REMOTE PARTICIPATION INFORMATION:

Meeting Host:	zoom.us
Meeting ID:	288-065-7034
URL:	https://zoom.us/j/2880657034
Telephone:	312-626-6799

1. Call to Order
2. Announcement of visitors online
3. Agenda Approval
4. Secretary's Report
5. Audience of Citizens
6. Special Town Meeting Article Review
7. Request for Permission to "Attend" Massachusetts Association of Town Finance Committees Annual Meeting Webinars ($25)
8. Any unforeseen business from the last 48 hours
9. Adjourn

Paul McLatchy III, Secretary

Posted and filed at 1:00 PM on Friday, October 2, 2020
by Paul McLatchy III

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

Town of Rowe
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

FRANKLIN, SS.

To either Constable of the Town of Rowe in the County of Franklin,

GREETINGS:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are directed to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Rowe, qualified to vote in the elections and town affairs, to meet at the Rowe Fire Station Parking Lot in said Rowe on **Saturday, the Twenty-Fourth of October at 12:00 P.M.** and to act on the following articles:

ARTICLE 1: To see if the Town will vote to **APPROPRIATE** from the **MUNICIPAL STABILIZATION FUND** the sum of $130,000.00 for the **FORD HILL CULVERT PROJECT**, or take any action in relation thereto.

Explanation: The town has received a $500,000 grant to replace the culvert on Ford Hill Road. Estimates for engineering and construction range from $500,000 to $630,000. It is unlikely the entire $130,000 will be needed, but the town cannot proceed until full funding is in place. Any unspent funds will be returned to stabilization upon project completion.

NOTE: 2/3 Vote is required to appropriate from a stabilization fund.

Requested by the Board of Selectmen

ARTICLE 2: To see if the Town will vote to **APPROPRIATE** from the **CAPITAL STABILIZATION FUND** the sum of $29,500.00 to replace the **SCHOOL TRACTOR**, or take any action in relation thereto.

Explanation: The school's tractor needs extensive repairs totaling almost $7,500. It is not ideal for the hilly terrain of the school, which has already resulted in an accident. This new tractor is better equipped for the school grounds and will allow for snow removal during winter months. As of now snow cannot be cleared until either the existing tractor is repaired, or a new tractor is purchased. This equipment can also be used at the Park.

NOTE: 2/3 Vote is required to appropriate from a stabilization fund.

Requested by the School Committee

ARTICLE 3: To see if the Town will vote to **APPROPRIATE** from the **MUNICIPAL STABILIZATION FUND** the sum of $9,000.00 to install **SECURITY AND MONITORING EQUIPMENT** at the Rowe Elementary School, or take any action in relation thereto.

Explanation: The school needs additional cameras within the building as there currently are none. This project will also include sensors and alarms for the refrigerator/freezer so that if they should fail during a period of time when the school is not open (i.e. the weekend, a vacation, etc.), someone will be notified to avoid the loss of potentially thousands of dollars in perishable food.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this project was delayed during budget season. It was initially slated to be spent from Free Cash, but as it has not been certified for FY21, it will need to come from other funds. It is the intent of the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee to replenish these funds from Free Cash when it is certified.

NOTE: 2/3 Vote is required to appropriate from a stabilization fund.

Requested by the School Committee

ARTICLE 4: To see if the Town will vote to **APPROPRIATE** from the **MUNICIPAL STABILIZATION FUND** the sum of $3,500.00 to pay for **CEMETERY LAND LEGAL FEES**, or take any action in relation thereto.

Explanation: The town appropriated funds to purchase land to expand the North Cemetery. However, there are additional costs involved to ensure the land is cleared for purchase.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this project was delayed during budget season. It was initially slated to be spent from Free Cash, but as it has not been certified for FY21, it will need to come from other funds. It is the intent of the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee to replenish these funds from Free Cash when it is certified.

NOTE: 2/3 Vote is required to appropriate from a stabilization fund.

Requested by the Board of Selectmen

ARTICLE 5: To see if the Town will vote to **APPROPRIATE** from the **CAPITAL STABILIZATION FUND** the sum of $26,000.00 to replace the **PARK STRUCTURE AND SAND**, or take any action in relation thereto.

Explanation: The wooden park structure is over twenty years old and needs replacing. This will also require additional sand to level the structure area.

NOTE: 2/3 Vote is required to appropriate from a stabilization fund.

Requested by the Park Commission

ARTICLE 6: To see if the Town will vote to **APPROPRIATE** from the **CAPITAL STABILIZATION FUND** the sum of $15,000.00 to purchase, install, and/or program **EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT**, or take any action in relation thereto.

Explanation: The county will be transitioning to a new radio system operated by the state as the existing network is failing and cannot be repaired. New radios will be needed to operate on this system. These funds help to augment grant moneys from the state to purchase better radios and necessary accessories.

NOTE: 2/3 Vote is required to appropriate from a stabilization fund.

Requested by the Fire Chief

ARTICLE 7: To see if the Town will vote to **TRANSFER** from the **TOWN NURSE WAGES** line the sum of $3,750.00 to the **BOARD OF HEALTH OPERATIONS** line, or take any action in relation thereto.

Explanation: The Board of Health needed to have the compactor ramp paved before fall. While there were excess funds in the Nurse's wages line due to a lack of a nurse, the Board was unable to expend these funds directly and therefore spent out of their operations. This transfer replenishes those funds.

Requested by the Board of Health

ARTICLE 8: To see if the Town will vote to **ACCEPT** the provisions of **CHAPTER 54, SECTION 16A OF THE MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAWS**:

In any city or town which accepts this section, if the warden, clerk or inspector, or the deputy of any such officer, if any, is not present at the opening of the polls, the city or town clerk may appoint a person to fill such vacancy who shall be an enrolled voter of the same political party as the absent officer, if any competent person enrolled in such party is present and willing to serve.

or take any action in relation thereto.

Explanation: Acceptance of this general law allows for the Town Clerk to make appointments on election day if there are any last-minute vacancies in staffing. Otherwise the Board of Selectmen is still the appointing authority for all election workers/officers.

Requested by the Town Clerk

ARTICLE 9: To transact any other business of a lawful and pertinent nature that may come before the meeting.

And you are directed to serve this warrant by posting up attested copies thereof at the **Rowe Town Hall** and the **Rowe Transfer Station** in said Town, fourteen days at least before the time of holding said meeting.

Hereof fail not, and make due return of the Warrant, with your doings thereon, to the Town Clerk at the time of said meeting, as aforesaid.

Given under our hands this First Day of October, Two Thousand and Twenty.

ROWE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Charles Sokol, Chair

Joanne Semanie, Vice-Chair

Edward Silva, Selectman

A true copy, Attest:

Julie Shippee, Police Chief

FRANKLIN, SS.

Pursuant to the within Warrant, I have notified and warned the inhabitants of the Town of Rowe by posting up attested copies of the same at the **ROWE TOWN HALL** and the **ROWE TRANSFER STATION, FOURTEEN** days before the date hereof, as within directed.

Julie Shippee, Police Chief

12.5.2020
Date