



Board of Selectmen's Meeting

Rindge Town Office

Date: November 6th, 2024

MEETING MINUTES

Present: Selectmen: Chairman Karl Pruter, Vicechair Bob Hamilton, and Tom Coneys. Also present were Town Administrator Lori Rautiola, Budget Advisory Committee Members: Phil Motta, Daniel Whitney, Casey Burrage, Roberta Oeser, and Tina Sbrega, and members of the public.

The public meeting opened at 6:00 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Karl.

Selectmen's Announcements: Karl thanked the volunteers and staff who ran the election on November 5th and thanked the candidates who ran. Bob thanked the police officers who worked the elections. He announced the next P.O.O.R. Meat Raffle will be on December 7th, on December 14th is Wreaths Across America at the Hillside Cemetery at noon, and the school deliberative session will be on Wednesday, February 5th, 2025. Karl announced on Sunday morning that the RAMS would distribute turkeys to vets.

Consent Agenda: Karl motioned to accept the Payroll & Accounts Payable for 10.31.2024 & 11.07.2024, the minutes from 10.23.2024, and Special Event permits for the FPU Football games, the Rindge Chamber of Commerce event on December 11th at the Ingalls Memorial Library, and the Tree Lighting Ceremony on the Town Common. Bob seconded the motion, and it passed 3-0.

Citizens Forum: Karl opened the forum at 6:10 pm and closed the forum at 6:18 pm.

Roberta Oeser thanked Mike Cloutier for replacing the sign on Main Street. She commented that the board should use the ARPA Funds for some police department requests to decrease the budget. Roni Hamilton read an excerpt of the BAC Report from the 2011 Town Report on page 71 and complimented the department heads. She added she was thankful Mike Cloutier's contract was approved by Bob and Karl. Dan Whitney requested the political signs be taken down along the roads.

Old Business:

Approval of Masonry Quote for Meetinghouse: Karl motioned to accept the Spiker Masonry bid for \$10,200 for the repointing masonry and repair of the ramp. Bob seconded the motion, and it passed 3-0.

ARPA Updates:

Website Options: There was a discussion about archiving minutes and coverage under ARPA. Karl motioned to accept Revize's quote for \$14,100 for the project's cost with one year of annual hosting and \$2,300 a year for four years following. Tom seconded the motion, and it passed 3-0.

Air Quality Assessment – Town Office Quotes: The first quote was RPF Environmental for \$3,534 and the second was Green Home Solutions for \$475 for each air sample but the number of samples is undetermined. Green Home Solutions did not include radon testing and to add it would make the quote higher than RPF's. EOC Environmental did not supply a quote. Tom motioned to accept the quote from RFP Environmental from October 29th for \$3,534 and to utilize ARPA funds for this quote. Karl seconded the motion, and it passed 3-0.

Live Streaming: Tom motioned to allow Lori to sign the proposal for Town Hall Streams. Karl seconded the motion, and it

passed 2-0-1.

Karl requested Lori speak with the Police Chief, Rachel Malynowski about signage costs for ARPA funds.

New Business:

Library Donation – Generator: Karl stated the cost for the generator is \$79,634. Lori explained the funds will come from a donation made to the library. Donna Straitiff, Library Director, stated it needs to come to the board because there will be an ongoing maintenance fee that will be a part of the town's budget. Mike Cloutier, DPW Director, stated the cost will be about \$1,200 a year. Lori stated the generator was on the list of items for the Hazard Mitigation Plan. Karl stated there needs to be a public hearing in two weeks to accept the donation.

2024 Tax Rate: Lori stated the tax rate for the town came in at \$4.09 and the overall tax rate set by the DRA is \$25.31. She added the retainage amount is about 9.24% and to lower the tax rate for every ten cents is about \$76,000. The board discussed the rate, the town's revenues and expenses, and offsetting the rate. Karl motioned to set the overall tax rate at \$25.31. Tom seconded the motion, and it passed 3-0.

JOINT SESSION – Board of Selectmen and Budget Advisory Committee:

Tax Collector: There was a discussion of the proposed increase in the wages and hours for the deputy tax collector. No adjustments were made to the proposed budget.

Library: Donna Straitiff, Library Director, explained the proposed increase in the operating budget increased by \$2,730 or about 4%. The phone bill increased by \$2,160 and service contracts increased by \$570 due to increasing prices. Donna explains the library budget anticipating \$4,000 of unrestricted money to defray the budget creating a net of \$31,335 for operating. There was a discussion about the phone bill increase and copper wire lines. Mike Cloutier stated he could investigate it. Karla MacLeod explained that \$2,000 would need to be added to the current proposed wage salary line to a total of \$74,500. There is no COLA this year or a step increase for the library director's salary. Karla explained the hourly wage increase was for two increases of \$13.05 to \$15.00 and \$13.05 to \$17.50 an hour and then the rest receive a 3% COLA, and the custodians are getting a 5% COLA this year. BAC member, Tina Sbrega stated by adding the hourly and salary wages together and comparing it to last year there is about a 17.5% increase. Donna explained they hired a new youth librarian at a higher rate than last year and there is an extra pay period next year. Daniel Whitney, a BAC member, requested the exact difference in the rates for analysis.

Recreation: Dan Bemis, Recreation Director, explained the increase in the vehicle maintenance line of \$500 was because of the new vehicle. There was an increase in the telephone line of \$420 and the printing line moved to contracted services for \$450 which decreased the lease purchase payments line. The dues and subscriptions line increased by \$315 due to adding Adobe. They decided to move the Adobe subscription to the software budget in the technology budget. A question was raised about the revolving fund balance. Laurie May answered the balance was about \$79,000. There was a discussion about using the revolving fund to supplement more program expenses and continued discussion of program fees earned. Karl requested Dan and Laurie meet to move expenses to the revolving fund. There was a \$200 increase to the Office and Cleaning Supply line, a \$100 increase to the Christmas line, a \$210 increase to staff development, and a \$1,250 decrease to mileage. There was a brief discussion of the office and cleaning supply line.

Planning Board: Al Bump, Planning Director, explained the reduction to the advertising, postage, and contracted services budgets with the intent of requesting additional funds for the wage line item to hire and train a second secretary. The proposed hourly wage line is overestimated and will be adjusted to start on April 1st at 10 hours a week. There was a discussion on the reductions. They requested the new total be confirmed for wages and benefits by next week.

Department of Public Works:

Town Buildings: There was a discussion of the heat-oil and heat-propane budget lines. The general supplies line increased to \$13,000 from \$12,000. There was a discussion about reducing the electricity budget line and calculating the numbers to get an estimated total and the \$4,000 increase in the health insurance line.

Cemeteries & Parks and Playgrounds: Mike Cloutier, DPW Director, explained the cemetery wages will be reimbursed from the perpetual care fund. He is requesting \$5,000 to be added to the wages for the cemeteries budget. For the operating expenses, everything will stay flat except for decreasing the gasoline line to \$400. Mike asked to move \$2,500 from the parks and playgrounds wages line and transfer it to the cemetery wages line because the largest portion of mowing is for the cemeteries. There was a discussion of the previous year's budget for the cemeteries. Mike stated that Dwight Schenk, a Trustee, had said there was \$11,000 available to use from the perpetual care fund. There was a discussion about going to court to release the total amount from the fund to use. There was a request to add this to the agenda in the future.

A recess was taken at 8:19 pm and they reconvened at 8:33 pm.

Highway Department: Wages increased by 11% due to the 3% COLA, 2.5% merit increase overall, and 53 work weeks instead of 52. There was a question about the materials line. An advertising line was added for \$100, and the miscellaneous line was removed. The highway line painting line of \$12,400 was moved to Highway Projects and gasoline was reduced to \$2,900. There was a question about the health insurance stipend numbers.

Streetlights: Mike explained Tetrault Park will be added to the Streetlights budget, but it is proposed to be the same as last year.

Solid Waste: Mike explained the large increase in the solid waste budget. Monadnock Disposal Service proposal is \$135 per ton for household, \$145 for demolition and each pull is \$125. The price without the hauling fee is \$145 for Municipal Solid Waste and \$155 for the demo. The average would be about 100 pulls with that price. It would be cheaper to use the \$145 and \$155 prices. The rate proposed is for one year as there are no longer any long-term contracts, the rate will increase by \$10 next year. Dan Whitney asked about increasing the transfer station's fees to cover more of the cost as they have not changed in 6 years, and the price to run the station has increased by about 34% without increasing the tons produced. There was further discussion of the fees and disposal costs. Mike stated there is \$57,333 in the transfer station revolving fund and proposed taking out \$30,000 from the fund to offset the cost. They continued to discuss increasing the fees. They decided to take \$30,000 from the fund.

Historical Society: Karla MacLeod, a Historical Society member, explained the reasoning for the \$4,100 operating expense and stated the total remains the same as last year.

Any Other Official Business:

Camping Ordinance Approval: The Board discussed the necessity of putting the proposed ordinance on the town warrant and the language of the ordinance. Karl requested a public hearing for the camping ordinance in two weeks. The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria Stenersen

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Executive Secretary