



Board of Selectmen's Meeting

Rindge Recreation Center

Date: Wednesday, November 5th, 2025

Time: 6:00 pm

MEETING MINUTES

Present: Chairman, Bob Hamilton, Vice Chair, Tom Coneys, Town Administrator, Max Vandervliet, Executive Secretary, Victoria Stenersen, and members of the public. Selectboard Member Larry Cleveland joined via phone call due to extenuating circumstances.

The meeting opened at 6:01 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Bob.

Payroll & Accounts Payable: Bob motioned to accept the payroll and accounts payable for 10.30.2025 & 11.06.2025. Seconded by Larry Cleveland, it passed by roll call vote, Bob – aye, Larry – aye, Tom – no vote. The vote was 2-0-0.

Minutes: Bob motioned to accept the minutes from 10.22.2025. Seconded by Tom, it passed by a roll call vote, Tom – aye, Bob – aye, Larry – aye. The vote was 3-0.

Citizen's Forum: Bob opened the forum at 6:04 p.m. by reading the rules of order and closed the forum at 6:19 p.m.

Pat Martin, Farrar Road, announced that there were four events recently organized to help inform residents in town about educational funding. The NH Fair Funding Project hosted an event at RMS, laying out funding going towards the schools and explaining why rural towns are being hurt by the existing format. The school board had a presentation on the School of Excellence Award. There was a presentation hosted by the [League of Women Voters](#), which went over funding fairness, and legislators spoke with their constituents. At the most recent school board meeting, they started the budgeting process. There were revisions to ED306 that created unfunded mandates with new requirements for adequate education. She encouraged the board and residents of the town to learn where the problem is coming from and to address the legislators to assist rural towns.

Craig Clark, Fitzgerald Road, reminded everyone there is a service at Cathedral of the Pines at 10:30 am on Veterans Day, Tuesday, November 11th. The bells are rung at 11:00 am to remember the end of World War I, and the Rindge Veterans will be supporting with a firing squad and honor guard.

Simon Moseley, Pine Eden Road, stated that Avitar's final report does not address why they changed some of the waterfront multipliers and why they changed the assessment date range to six months. Per their contract, Avitar is required to review the past two years of sales, from April 1st, 2023, to March 31st, 2025. If they had reviewed those two years, there would be two additional sales for Pool Pond, but they arbitrarily disqualified two of the three sales. Although Avitar had stated they would use sales only up to April 1st, 2025, they included sales that occurred in August 2025, which resulted in potentially skewed numbers and an increased average. The average ratio of waterfront property on Pool Pond is 1.593; this means the average property increased 2.5 times as opposed to just 2 times. So, the Pool Pond properties alone will pay \$500,000 in taxes in the next 5 years. He argued that the lakes are disproportionately carrying the tax burden for the town, and this is not fair. If Avitar had used more data points for the Pool Pond valuation, then it would fall into the \$125,000 to \$160,000 range and bring the ratio closer to 0.9. The only way to get the valuation of \$317,000 is to use a single sale with no additional data points. Simon recommended that the Town have a third party evaluate the lakes to

mitigate the cost for the Town and its residents.

Richard Swanson, Florence Avenue, was shocked by the assessment of his home. He believes it is 50% higher than what they could ever sell their house for based on what they have seen in the market. They may not be able to afford to live in the house they worked for 30 years to pay for. They are transitioning to retirement, so they cannot count on their wages rising with the assessments on the house. He would support what Simon said; they need a real market assessment, not the inflated assessment from Avitar.

Old Business:

Update on the Town's Assessment: Bob read a statement about an update on the assessment, see attachment A. Bob added that the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) Commissioner said that some towns and cities are assessing more often than the 5-year cycle required. Some towns reassess every year, so assessments progressively increase. Other towns conduct reassessments every 2 years to fit within the 5-year requirement. The DRA Representative at the October 30th meeting did not seem to disagree with Avitar's methods of assessment. They explained that there is a process the DRA oversees (RSA 21-J:11), but it begins after tax bills are mailed. They look at the assessing firm's actions and see if they fell within the DRA's rules. Bob asked about the view assessments. Max answered that the view assessments had been considered previously and were incorporated into the land value. Bob stated that the decrease in the ratio matters because it brings us much closer to Jaffrey's 85% increase, which is a factor in the school district taxes. The MS-1 form, or the Summary Inventory of Valuation, was signed by the Board and submitted to the DRA by Max the previous day. After the statement, Max stated that he had invited Avitar to attend, but they could not come. The DRA Commissioner had hoped Avitar would attend another public meeting to provide information to the public. The final USPAP report is linked in [Update: Final Valuations for the Town of Rindge](#) on the front page of the website and under [2025 Final & Preliminary Reassessment Report](#) on the assessing page on the Town website.

Simon Moseley, Pine Eden Road, asked if the updated property cards would be made available online. Victoria answered that they would be, but is unsure when. Bob added that the tax cards can be picked up at the Assessor's Office. Simon asked if Avitar explained why they only used one data point, removed sales, and why they narrowed down the window. Bob responded that they used what are called qualified sales versus non-qualified sales.

Simon then asked what the timing is for getting a decision on the abatements, so other property owners on Pool Pond can save money on appraisals if previous abatements are accepted and the value of Pool Pond drops. Bob responded that Avitar said they would look at and make recommendations on the abatements as they come in. Tom added that the abatement process is for individual property owners and not grouped property owners. He suggested that when tax bills are mailed and they pay them, to submit the abatement application with supporting data that contests Avitar's data so it can be evaluated. If several property owners are granted abatements or provide enough data, it may make it easier for others in the same location. He also suggested getting an official appraisal from someone who is licensed by the state.

Simon asked if the Board will simply go along with what Avitar recommends or will review the application themselves to see if the data provided by the landowner supports an abatement. Tom responded that the abatement applications he has seen have a detailed description of opposing opinions, multiple data points, and a new recommendation. Until he sees the application, he cannot evaluate it. He added that he is not an expert, and each abatement will be reviewed individually based on their recommendation. Simon said that he thinks if there is a precedent set, and they evaluate Pool Pond like Pearly Pond or have a good number, the people who follow up do not have to go through the legwork and cost that he will have to. Tom said that he cannot answer that, but Avitar will evaluate each specific property's data.

Roberta Oeser, Main Street, commented that abatements cannot be submitted before tax bills go out, but that does not mean they have to pay their taxes before submitting an abatement application to the town. Simon added that this is not a one-time hit for the abatement; it is a 5-year plan. Everyone on the lake is going to get hit for 5 years at about 25% more

than the rest of the town, so it adds up.

Richard Swanson, Florence Avenue, asked what kind of discretion the Board has to go separately from the recommendation they received from Avitar for the total assessment. Bob responded that they have none. The Board either goes with what they submit, or they do not accept it, and the Town cannot bill for taxes. Richard then stated that they must see it as flawed. Bob responded that he had questions, and for 256 of them, he felt they were flawed and had major problems with. He went through the 70 pages of both the initial and final spreadsheet and made comparisons. The most egregious increases he had highlighted.

Larry stated to Roberta's point, it does not specifically say that you cannot file an abatement before you pay your taxes. But it does say that property taxes must be paid as billed, even if you apply for an abatement. Applying for an abatement does not delay the collection of taxes. If the abatement is granted, a refund with interest will be issued. Larry questioned if someone does not pay their taxes during the abatement process, they go past the deadline, which accrues penalties, and their abatement is denied, will they be at risk of paying higher taxes with the fines? Bob answered yes, that is correct, the Town can charge 12% interest per year, or 1% per month on unpaid taxes. If the abatement is accepted, they will not have to pay the interest, but they do not know how long the abatements will take. The penalty the Town would have to pay to the County is 10% per day for late payment, versus paying the Tax Anticipation Note (TANs), so the TANS would be cheaper. Bob added that this has been printed in the newspaper in the Monadnock Ledger and will be printed in the Keene Sentinel. He commiserated with the increase in taxes. Simon stated that the issue is not paying taxes, but paying taxes on the fair market value of their home.

Town Office Well Proposal: No updates, tabled for the following meeting.

New Business:

Reimbursement of Vehicle Registration Fee (RSA 261:153): Max said that Shana Eichner, Town Clerk, said it was due to a clerical or process error. Tom motioned to reimburse the vehicle registration fees of \$100.74 to Alan Keefe of 16 West Binney Hill Road. Seconded by Larry, it passed by a roll call vote, Tom-aye, Larry-aye, Bob-aye. It passed 3-0.

Authorization to Withdraw Funds from the Capital Reserve Funds for Revaluation to Repay the General Fund for 2025 Reassessment (RSA 35:1): Roberta Oeser, Main Street, explained that there was a bill from January that was authorized but was not covered by the amount of money that was previously withdrawn. The bill was paid using the General Fund and was not brought to the Board to pay out of the Capital Reserve Fund for Revaluation. Tom motioned to transfer up to \$21,715 from the Capital Reserve Fund for Revaluation to the General Fund for a payment previously made to the Contracted Assessing. Seconded by Bob, it passed by a roll call vote, Tom-aye, Bob-aye, Larry-aye. It passed 3-0.

Preliminary Discussion of Health Code Ordinance: Max explained that two or four weeks ago, the Board authorized the appointment of Homer Davis as the Health Officer. He started to address a failed septic system at 28 Monomonac Terrace, which has been ongoing since before 2011. The property is near the lake, which is impacting the environmental health of the lake and causing problems. Homer had spoken with the landowner, but the issue is that there is no consequence. So they would like to develop an ordinance to compel a landowner to remediate the issue.

Bob asked if the Town has any ordinance addressing health issues. Roberta Oeser, Main Street, said that she spoke with Homer about the problem, and there is a Zoning Ordinance that she sent him. In Article III, Section G, there is a statement that requires the maintenance of septic systems, or the Certificate of Occupancy can be pulled. This can be enforced by the Board of Selectmen or their designee. Certificates of Occupancy are not given until the septic system has operational approval, and the statement about maintenance gives it more teeth. She believes this can apply to this situation and agrees that they should create health ordinances. Max added that some of the department heads have stated that some of the ordinances are outdated. The Town might want to edit existing ordinances and create new ones.

Larry said he met with Homer recently and researched some RSAs. He read a portion of [RSA 485-A:37](#), maintenance and

operation of subsurface septic systems, and read [RSA 485-A:43 Section IV](#). He stated he absolutely does not want to fine people \$1000 a day, but there is recourse for the Town. Bob added that it might be enforceable by the state, but so far, the state has not enforced it at all. Max commented that Homer mentioned the state is not interested in taking this on. Larry stated that Homer indicated that this property is across the street from the water, so Homer does not think the sewage is reaching the water.

Roberta added that in 2011, there was an order from DES to regularly pump the septic system and provide receipts. Victoria responded that this was only supposed to be a temporary solution, and the owners needed to replace the system within a year. Larry said that he will ask Homer if he can get the receipts. Homer had also said there could be grants for the homeowners. Bob said they will leave it to Homer and see what he can do. He asked Max to share the RSA with Homer, and they can start writing out an ordinance to bring to the Board to review. Tom recommended involving the Town's attorney on this, so they stay within the law. This was tabled for now.

Notice of Intent to Cut for Map 7 Lot 91: This Intent to Cut is off of Perry Road, and they are requesting to cut 8 acres, including pine, oak, soft maple, and cherry. The Conservation Commission has been notified, as there are some wetlands on the property. They will notify the logger or the property owner if there are problems they foresee. Bob motioned to approve the Intent to Cut for Map 7 Lot 91 on Perry Road. Seconded by Tom, roll call vote, Bob – aye, Tom -aye, Larry -aye. It passed 3-0.

Request for Additional Town Email Addresses for Fire Department (RSA 41:8): Bob stated he is not generally in favor of adding more email addresses for the Town. Larry stated that Rick said the State is moving towards requiring that any officers on the scene need to complete the reports personally and not relayed through a third party because information gets lost. Rick is requesting emails for the officers who can run the scene and the reporting. They want a town email to use through OneDrive because it is a secure system and offers better HIPAA protection. Bob suggested sharing one email address and signing off with their name at the end of the email. Larry said he did not get a clear answer from Rick. He said his thought was having one address and everyone having the same password to access it. They could revisit this with him instead of creating six emails as currently requested. Max said it is \$1,800 per year for his request. Tom said he would agree with Bob. There needs to be a central system, and with the staff turnover, it could become a hassle. He also mentioned having the new fire chief determine how they want to disseminate information. The Board decided to talk with Rick and our IT, Gregg, about this. Tabled for now.

Any Other Official Business: No Other Official Business

Informational Items, Communications, & Updates: No Informational Items, Communications, or Updates

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria Stenersen

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Executive Secretary