Board of Selectmen's Meeting
Conference Room at Rindge Town Offices
Date: Wednesday, July 15th, 2026
Time: 6:00 pm

MEETING MINUTES

Present: Chairman Larry Cleveland, Vice Chair Bob Hamilton, Selectboard Member Tom Coneys, Town Administrator Max Vandervliet, Executive Secretary Victoria Stenersen, and members of the public.

At 6:01 pm, Larry Cleveland opened the meeting to the public with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Selectmen's Announcements: No announcements.

Selectmen's Appointments: This item was tabled for two weeks for the Trustees to provide two appointment recommendations pursuant to NH RSA 31:22. The Board is the appointing authority. Craig Clark, Fitzgerald Road, added that alternates need to be appointed by the Board yearly. Claudia Stewart was appointed as an alternate last year. He will confirm with Claudia that she wants to be reappointed.

Payroll: Larry motioned to approve the payroll for 07.09.2026 & 07.16.2026. Seconded by Bob, it passed 2-0.

Accounts Payable: Bob motioned to approve the accounts payable for 07.09.2026 & 07.16.2026. Seconded by Larry, it passed 2-0-0. Tom Coneys arrived at 6:04 pm as the motion was made.

Minutes: Larry motioned to approve the minutes for 06.17.2026, 01.28.2026, and the non-public minutes from 05.20.2026 and 05.26.2026. Seconded by Tom, it passed 3-0.

Old Business:

Request to expend funds from the Fire Department CRF (RSA 31:19-a): This item was tabled for two weeks due to the lack of three quotes.

New Business:

Request for Authorization to Expend Funds from the Police Mileage Budget Line: Larry presented the request. In late 2024, the Police Chief Rachel Malynowski requested to purchase new service pistols using the last of the ARPA funds. Those funds were used for another purpose. The current service pistols are about 13 years old, and the sights keep coming loose. The Police Department currently has 6 officers. The first quote provided was 12 pistols, weapon lights, and holsters for $12,805. Larry had the quote revised to 8 pistols with handgun lights & optics, 8 right-handed holsters, and 2 left-handed holsters for a total of $8,659. The trade-in value is $4,590 for the current weapons. This brings the actual expenditure to $4,069.68. Rachel is requesting to take the expenditure out of the Mileage Budget line because they have the funds, as they are not sending anyone to the academy this year. They are switching from a 40 caliber to a 9 mm, which will reduce the annual cost of ammunition. They have 40 caliber ammunition that they will be trading in for the new ammo. They do not have a quote for that yet.

Larry motioned to approve the expenditure of $4,069.68 from the Police Mileage Budget line to purchase 8 Glocks, 8 right-hand holsters, 2 left-hand holsters, and 8 weapon lights. Seconded by Bob, it passed 3-0.

Request for Authorization to Purchase from the Fire Detail Revolving Fund (RSA 31:95-h): Fire Chief Bob Faas's requested to purchase two thermal imagers for $8,060.00, four gas meters for $6,211.25, an easy IO system for $1,860.9, and 3 sets of fire gear for $3,599.24. His total request was for $19,731.44.

- The fire department has two thermal imaging cameras. One of them is malfunctioning. At the last house fire, Bob bought his own because the ones that Rindge currently has are unreliable and outdated.
- The 4 gas meters he is requesting measure oxygen (O_2), carbon monoxide (CO), hydrogen sulfide (H_2S), and lower explosive limit (LEL). Tom asked about the association purchasing the gas meters. Chief Bob responded that they are fundraising, but it will take time. They had several great donors, like P.O.O.R., who donated money to the association. Tom asked about the status of the current gas meters. Chief Bob answered that two are non-functional and the third has a battery compartment issue. He added that they are okay now, but they may need to ask another organization or department to take those calls soon. He explained Rindge should take those calls if they have the capacity and capability. Bob H. asked about the calibration equipment for the gas meters because they recently purchased new calibration equipment. Chief Bob responded that the problem is that each manufacturer and each type of meter have different calibration gases at different percentages.
- The easy IO system is typically used for patients who are in cardiac arrest when it is difficult to get IV access. The Fire Department currently has a manual IO system, so they have to hand-crank the drill. They are requesting a mechanical IO system. The easy IO system is easier to use and is less painful for patients.
- He wants to replace 3 of the 7 sets of fire gear that are expired. He would like to replace the other 4 next year from the budgeted line for bunker gear. The gear that he currently has is non-compliant, but he will take care of his employees first. The Fire Department currently has about 30 sets of fire gear. In the long term, they are looking to replace 3-4 sets of gear per year. The NFPA standard replacement cycle for fire gear is 10 years. If gear is damaged during an incident, they may have to replace that set before the expiration date.

The donations they receive from various organizations and the fees earned by the Building and Life Safety Inspector, Roger Seppala, are deposited into the Fire Detail Revolving Account. The current balance is over $40,000, with more funds being deposited from fireworks permits next week.

Roberta Oeser, Main Street, stated that P.O.O.R. donated $1,525.00 to the Town of Rindge to be used to purchase gas meters. She stated it needs to be accepted by the Board, and it must be used for the stated purpose. She requested that they reduce the expenditure by the amount that P.O.O.R. donated. The check should have gone into the General Fund and not the Revolving Fund. Chief Bob requested confirmation that the check went to the General Fund. All the other donations received by the association were deposited into the Revolving Fund. Roberta stated that it is not legal to deposit donations into that fund. She recommended transferring the funds into the line-item undesignated revenue. The board agreed to accept the donation later and note that it is for a specific purpose. Chief Bob explained that he would like to purchase another gas meter that measures freon in the future. There was a brief discussion about a preventative maintenance program for the equipment and making it a line item.

Tom motioned to allow the expenditure of $19,731.44 for the above-stated items from the Fire Department Revolving Fund. Bob H seconded the motion; it passed 3-0. Max reminded the board to sign the sheet in the blue folder implemented by Finance Director Leo Smith to prevent duplicate payments.

<u>Roadway Committee Recommendations (RSA 674:40-a)</u>: There were two recommendations before the Board.

1. *No-Thru Trucks Postings at the intersection of Old Cathedral Road and Fitzgerald Road and the intersection of Drag Hill Road and Woodbound Road*: Larry agreed with Police Chief Rachel's idea for no-thru truck signs because no-thru traffic signs are not enforceable. He added that DPW Director Mike Cloutier agreed as well. Bob H. asked about Chief Bob's recommendation to notify Google and Waze. Victoria responded that both Google and Waze have platforms to edit their maps. She will put the change in after the Board approves. There was a discussion about specifying a

weight limit, delivery trucks, and leaving the sign up to interpretation. Larry motioned to accept the recommendation from the Roadway Committee to post signs stating no-thru trucks at the intersection of Old Cathedral Road and Fitzgerald Road and the intersection of Drag Hill Road and Woodbound Road. Seconded by Tom, it passed 3-0.

2. *Application to Improve/Maintain Class VI Roads Bowers Hill Road and Bemis Tavern Road*: Larry explained that the application is for agricultural use so that the applicant, Bruce White, can tap the maple trees. He has received permission from the State of NH because it owns the land both roads pass through. Craig Clark, Fitzgerald Road, explained that Bruce proposed filling potholes and possibly replacing a culvert so the roads are passable. He is not planning to make any major improvements. Roberta Oeser, Main Street, questioned if they were Class A Trails or Class VI Roads because the town voted to make them Class A Trails (see page 22 of the 2012 Town Report). Class A Trails can be maintained for agricultural purposes. Roberta added that she believes they are gated and no motorized wheeled vehicles are allowed except for agricultural purposes. Tom stated that they should find out if it is a trail and post it. Larry asked who controls the locks on the gates. Roberta responded that NH Fish and Game does. Larry motioned to accept the recommendation from the Roadway Committee to approve the application from Bruce White to Improve/Maintain Class VI Roads or Class A Trails for Bowers Hill Road and Bemis Tavern Road. Seconded by Tom, it passed 3-0.

Discussion of Cutoff Date and Planning for Municipal Financial Software: Max stated that the BS&A software the Town currently uses is sunsetting in November. If they want to continue with BS& A, the Town needs to transition to their new iteration. The consensus among the staff who utilize the platform is to remain with BS&A. Max expressed that it is more practical to do so because switching to a new company would likely create a nightmare. He stated that he is not expecting approval now but wants to start the conversation. The preliminary estimate is for $45,660.00, which includes the annual fee. The implementation cost of $24,520 includes planning, portage of data, project management, and training for the Rindge staff. Max stated that the Town needs to take advantage of the training because Town employees are not utilizing all functions of BS&A. The total annual fee is $21,140, which is $676 more than the current rate and includes mandatory cloud storage. The entire process takes about four to five months to complete from the purchase date. He will get a formal proposal from the accounts representative that he and the Finance Director, Leo Smith, have been working with that the board will vote on.

The Town can use the current software while the transfer is occurring. The Town will receive a prorated credit based on the annual fee if the new software is implemented before the term ends. The annual fee for the new software starts once it is live. Tom recommended having the software go live at the end of the fiscal year. BS&A insists on 4 or 5 payments over the whole term. The annual fee will increase by about 3% year-over-year, which is about what it has been.

Tom asked what will come out of the Technology budget this year, as there is about $78,000 left. Max answered that some items have been miscoded, but almost all the money in the various lines of the Technology budget is spoken for. He added a caveat that there was a payment they encumbered on December 31st for Technology (see bottom of page 1 from December 31st BOS Minutes) and there was a Police technology invoice that was prepaid at the end of 2025 (see bottom of page 5 from January 7th 2026 BOS Minutes) so there may be funds remaining. Tom asked him to calculate what will still need to be paid before the end of the year and what the expected balance is.

Bob stated that if they approved the purchase now and paid quarterly installments, they would have to come up with $24,000 this year, and the software would be ready by January 1st. He asked Max to check in with our IT company if they are replacing hardware systems this year, because they used to do so on a rotational basis. Max answered affirmatively and added that he does not believe they will need to replace many because new computers were sitting in his office until recently. Craig Clark, Fitzgerald Road, stated that the TelTech committee recommended a regular replacement for the computers in the Town Offices. Larry asked if they should start the first payment or wait. Max stated that he would prefer to wait and get a firm quote in writing before getting approval. The contract needs to be signed by the end of October.

Tom stated it may be worthwhile to see what the third quarter financials look like.

Review and Decide on Property Tax Abatement Applications (RSA 76:16): The abatements approved and denied below were reviewed and signed by the Selectboard before the meeting.

Larry motioned to deny the following abatement applications; Map 20 Lot 19, Map 41 Lot 4, Map 40 Lot 6, Map 5 Lot 9 Sublot 5-1-2, Map 18 Lot 10, Map 50 Lot 3, Map 13 Lot 2, Map 40 Lot 18, Map 37 Lot 5, Map 10 Lot 21 Sublot 12, Map 37 Lot 9, Map 10 Lot 21 Sublot 2, Map 10 Lot 21 Sublot 16, Map 10 Lot 21 Sublot 6, Map 10 Lot 21 Sublot 11, Map 41 Lot 11, Map 37 Lot 22 Sublot 3, Map 40 Lot 10, Map 37 Lot 22 Sublot 1, Map 40 Lot 17, Map 10 Lot 21 Sublot 5, Map 10 Lot 21 Sublot 4, Map 3 Lot 8 Sublot 5-1, Map 14 Lot 16, Map 17 Lot 20, Map 41 Lot 13, Map 10 Lot 19 Sublot 1, Map 29 Lot 7 Sublot 3, Map 37 Lot 22 Sublot 2, and Map 37 Lot 7. Seconded by Tom, it passed 3-0.

Larry motioned to deny the following abatement applications: Map 6 Lot 98, Map 6 Lot 14, Map 2 Lot 41 Sublot 2, Map 7 Lot 26 Sublot 20, Map 10 Lot 21 Sublot 21, Map 34 Lot 19, Map 7 Lot 26 Sublot 41, Map 10 Lot 29 Sublot 2. Seconded by Tom, it passed 3-0.

Larry motioned to grant the following abatement applications: Map 26 Lot 3, Map 19 Lot 23, Map 34 Lot 13, Map 16 Lot 6 Sublot 2, & Map 34 Lot 29. Seconded by Bob, it passed 3-0.

Richard Swanson, Florence Avenue, asked if there is a written methodology for the $350,000 base rate for waterfront and the comparables used. Victoria responded that they can review the full statistical revaluation report provided by the Assessing firm. Richard asked why his abatement submitted in January has not been decided on yet. Max answered that the assessing firm did not review them in the order received but took them in a group. The firm turned them over as quickly as they could, and at this point, it is randomized. They will likely get through the last batch of them by July 29th, 2026. Larry explained that if they have not heard from the Town by August 1st, they should file an appeal with the Board of Tax and Land Appeals (BTLA) or Superior Court if they plan to do so.

John Burnell, US Route 202, asked if the deadline to file an appeal will be extended because the Town did not meet the due date of July 1st. Larry answered that the Town is not bound by law to meet the July 1st date; it is a soft deadline. John responded that in the documentation they received, it stated that they would know by July 1st whether their application was denied or accepted, and if they did not hear, then it was not accepted. He asked if they were supposed to wait until the end of July. If so, does that extend the deadline residents have to apply to the Superior Court or BTLA? Max answered that the due date will remain the same, but they should have a decision in two weeks.

The deadline of September 1st to file an appeal is state law as written in NH RSA 76:16-a and NH RSA 76:17. In NH RSA 76:16 II, it states that failure to respond shall constitute a denial. Residents can file an appeal with the BTLA or the Superior Court if they have not received a response after July 1st. The Town is still in the process of responding to the abatement applications, and residents may receive a favorable response, which is why the Board is advising applicants to wait until August 1st.

Kristen Giantonio, Pine Eden Road, asked if the recent changes on her property card on the Avitar website will be brought forward in two weeks because her property was not decided on this week, and the changes made may have been a part of her abatement. Max and the Board members were not aware of the changes made to her property card. Max recommended that she reach out to him. Kristen asked if they are considering putting together recommendations for future Board members for the next revaluation and selecting an assessing firm more available to the public. She recommended adding service level agreement requirements in the contract to increase the number of times and when they meet with the public. Larry stated that the problem is when they put the contract out to bid, there was only one returned, which was our current assessing firm. This is because of the severe shortage of assessing firms, even multiple states away. Max responded that at the outset of a new contract with Avitar, they can discuss forms of public engagement to add to the contract. This may increase the cost. Kristen explained how increasing engagement with the assessing firm would likely decrease mistakes and the number of abatements filed and increase the taxpayer's understanding of how the properties are valued. This process has been costly for her and many other taxpayers in town. Larry expressed appreciation for her courtesy towards them during the process. He explained how the previous firm had left a portion of the work undone and that there were many mistakes that Avitar had to fix when they took over two years ago. He expressed his sympathy for those whose property value increased significantly and for those who are going through the process. The cost for the Town to have a staff of four full-time assessors would be well over $300,000 versus the $100,000 they pay an assessing firm each year. Kristen explained that all the processes won't be complete until the end of 2027, which means the taxpayer paid extraordinarily disproportionate taxes for half of the time between revaluations. She thanked the Board for listening to her feedback.

Jennifer Helsel, Assessing Clerk, explained that some towns send letters months before their revaluation to educate residents on the process and notify them when it would occur. She was hired in December 2024 and had not gone through a revaluation before. Next time, if she is still with the Town, they will send out letters, add information to the website educating taxpayers, and have meetings. She does not want people to be blindsided. She mentioned doing a statistical revaluation halfway between the revaluations so that they are not waiting 5 years for a full revaluation.

John Burnell, US Route 202, asked if they disagreed with any of the recommendations that they received from Avitar on the abatements. The Board responded no.

Any Other Official Business:

Tom explained that there are improvements made to Bean Hill Road that are more extensive than the Board approved of in July 2024. They had given the applicant permission to fill potholes and ruts with gravel with the condition that the DPW Director stake out the area. Tom stated that there is now a complete driveway and upgrades to the road. He spoke with the Building Inspector, Roger Seppala, and he has not heard of a driveway permit being issued. He requested that someone investigate what is happening up there because they are not allowed to make those improvements without a driveway permit or a waiver. Larry asked Max to speak with Mike and have him go to Bean Hill Road to check it out.

Tom brought up a memo from the Police Chief about the department staffing, which he would like to add to the agenda. Larry agreed that the discussion needs to happen but would like to wait a little longer to see how they are doing budget-wise. Max stated that they should not have the discussion tonight but agree to have the discussion and consider the timeline of when it should occur. He would like the Board to have preliminary consensus on an idea going into budget season. Max asked if they would like to have it on July 29th as requested by the Police Chief. Larry asked him to wait before putting it on the agenda to see if anything pops up that would extend the meeting, as the discussion will take time. Max expressed that he would like to see the Board discuss it before meeting with Rachel.

Citizens' Forum: Larry opened and closed the forum at 7:35 pm. There were no public comments.

Informational Items, Communications, and Updates: There were none.

The board recessed at 7:35 p.m. until 7:44 p.m.

At 7:45 pm, Larry motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (e) lawsuits. Seconded by Tom, it passed by a roll call vote: Larry – aye, Bob – aye, Tom – aye. It passed 3-0.

At 7:54 pm, Larry motioned to return to public session. Seconded by Tom, the motion passed by a roll call vote: Larry – aye, Bob – aye, Tom – aye. The vote was 3-0.

Tom motioned to seal the minutes from the non-public session indefinitely as it could render a proposed action ineffective. Seconded by Bob, it passed by a roll call vote: Larry – aye, Bob – aye, Tom – aye. It passed 3-0.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria Stenersen

Victoria Stenersen
Executive Secretary