Board of Selectmen's Meeting
Conference Room at Rindge Town Offices
Date: Wednesday, August 12th, 2026
Time: 5:45 pm

MEETING MINUTES

Present: Chairman Larry Cleveland, Vice Chair Bob Hamilton, Selectboard Member Tom Coneys, Town Administrator Max Vandervliet, Executive Secretary Victoria Stenersen, Fire Chief Bob Faas, Building Inspector Roger Seppala, Assessing Clerk Jennifer Helsel, and members of the public: Dan Whitney, Craig Clark, Judy Unger-Clark, Roberta Oeser, Robert Terk, Michelle Cleveland, Mark Geiger, and Roni Hamilton.

Call to Order: Larry opened the public session at 5:45 pm.

At 5:45 pm, Larry moved to enter non-public session pursuant to RSA 91:A-3, II (b) hiring. Seconded by Bob, the motion passed by a roll call vote: Larry – aye, Bob – aye, Tom – aye. The vote was 3-0.

The public session was reconvened at 6:11 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Larry.

Larry moved to seal the minutes from the first non-public session until September 12th, 2026, as it could render a proposed action ineffective. Seconded by Tom, it passed by a roll call vote: Larry – aye, Bob – aye, Tom – aye. It passed 3-0.

Selectmen's Announcements:

- Bob announced that Larry Harris and Charlie Eicher passed away in the past week. The 2024 Town Report was dedicated to Larry Harris, and the 2025 Town Report was dedicated to Charlie Eicher. Both residents were long-term fixtures in town affairs and public service. The Police and Fire Department are meeting tomorrow afternoon to discuss plans for Larry's service.
- Bob reported that he tested the mail service a month after the US Post Office Director of Northeast Consumer Affairs stated he would work with the Rindge Post Office. He received the letter that he mailed to himself three days after mailing it on Saturday. Larry stated that he continues to receive other people's mail. Bob added that the mail sorting is done through Manchester.

Approval of Payroll, Accounts Payable and Minutes:

- Larry moved to accept the payroll for 08.06.2026 & 08.13.2026. Seconded by Bob, it passed 2-0-0.
- Bob moved to approve the accounts payable for 08.06.2026 & 08.13.2026. Seconded by Larry, it passed 2-0-0.
- Larry moved to accept the minutes from 07.29.2026 and 06.03.2026. Seconded by Tom, it passed 3-0.

Follow-up: Bob asked if they are going to move to paying the school district quarterly as opposed to monthly. Max stated that he will be meeting with the school on Tuesday next week. They previously agreed to meet with the Board to decide on next year's payment schedule.

Selectmen's Appointments:

Trustees of the Trust Funds: Bob referenced RSA 31:22 and noted that only two alternates can be appointed for a one-year term. Craig Clark, Chair of the Trustees of the Trust Funds, recommended appointing Jane Fedorowicz, Robert Terk, and/or Robert Martin as alternates to the Trustees. Jane Fedorowicz has a background in education and is on the Capital Improvement Program Committee (CIP). Robert Martin works in investment insurance. Robert Terk has legal experience and served on several trusts.

Decisions:

- Larry moved to appoint Robert Terk as an alternate Trustee to the Trustees of the Trust Funds. Seconded by Bob, it passed 3-0. This is a one-year appointment.
- Bob moved to appoint Robert Martin as an alternate Trustee to the Trustees of the Trust Funds. Seconded by Larry, it passed 3-0. This is a one-year appointment.

Old Business:

Request to Expend from the Fire Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) (RSA 31:19-a): Fire Chief Bob Fass presented a revised recommendation to replace the brush truck. See Attachment A for the quotes and schematics.

Chief Faas read the following statement. "Upon the request of the Board of Selectmen, the Rindge Fire Department went back to the drawing board and investigated the route of buying the cab and chassis separately from the body. In doing so, we found this to be a significantly more cost-effective means of obtaining a new brush truck. Deputy Chief Leger solicited three quotes from vehicle manufacturers and three quotes from body manufacturers as directed in the procurement guidelines. It is my recommendation that we purchase a 2027 Ford F-450 4x4 cab and chassis from Grappone Ford, along with the R350-X4H Skid Body Package from New England Truck Design, for $152,626.00. It will be $60,443 for the truck and $92,183 for the body. The only additional fees will be for graphics and lettering and the installation of mobile radios. The lettering will include the Town logo and Rindge Fire Department on the driver and passenger front doors, 26B1 below the A-post on the hood on either side of the vehicle, and Rindge on the front of the hood. Southwest New Hampshire Mutual Aid in Keene will transfer and install the mobile radios. He does not see those items exceeding $15,000 total."

During a lengthy discussion, the Board reviewed corrected pricing, the age and condition of the existing 26-year-old brush truck, future capital planning through CIP, NFPA service-life standards, and whether to preserve more money in the Fire CRF for other anticipated fire and facility needs. The total dollar amount in the Fire Department CRF is $215,000. Larry and Bob emphasized that voters had recently funded the reserve with the brush-truck replacement in mind and that delay would likely increase costs. Tom opposed the expenditure on the basis that additional reserve funds should be accumulated before proceeding. There are other future needs, and he does not see the brush truck as a primary need.

Dan Whitney, Butterfield Road, asked when they would expect delivery of the vehicle if it is ordered by mid-September. Chief Faas answered that it would be between the end of this year and early next year.

Decision: Bob motioned to authorize the expenditure of $162,626 from the Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund for the purchase of the 2027 Ford F-450 cab and chassis from Grappone Ford and the New England Truck Design R350-X4H brush truck body/skid unit and the graphics/lettering and radio installation. Seconded by Larry, it passed 2-1.

Follow-Up: Chief Faas will obtain the final pricing for graphics/lettering and complete the radio transfer and installation arrangements.

Review and Decide on Property Tax Abatement Applications (RSA 76:16):

- Larry moved to grant the abatement application for Map 45 Lot 96. Seconded by Bob, it passed 3-0.
- Larry moved to partially grant the abatement applications for Map 6 Lot 49-A, Map 17 Lot 25, and Map 19 Lot 25. Seconded by Tom, it passed 3-0.
- Larry moved to deny the abatement applications for Map 20 Lot 19, Map 45 Lot 97, Map 45 Lot 104, Map 45 Lot 105, Map 45 Lot 113, and Map 50 Lot 3. Seconded by Bob, it passed 3-0.

New Business:

Discussion of Staffing Capacity for Building Department: Larry stated that this agenda item is to discuss hiring another part-time position in Town Hall. At some point, it will likely need to be full-time. More houses, commercial buildings, small businesses, restaurants, etc., bring more people to the Town, which requires more services and increased taxes. About 150 to 160 houses have been approved to be built. This will require more medical and police services, increase the number of students in school, and create more roads to maintain. Larry read the vision statement from the Town of Rindge Master Plan. He urged residents to run for office on the Planning Board and Zoning Board. Larry explained that when builders and real estate agents run those boards, building will continue.

Chief Faas thanked Larry for his statement. He explained that the Building Inspector, Roger Seppala, currently covers job responsibilities and tasks previously divided among three positions: the Building Administrative Assistant, the Fire Chief/Building Inspector, and the Fire and Life-Safety Inspector. As a Firefighter/EMT, his responses have been narrowed to significant medical emergencies, car accidents, fires, and when the department is short-staffed. As the building inspector, his office hours are 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm on Monday through Thursday. He has Fridays off, and he may have to cut hours on Thursdays because he is limited to a 40-hour workweek. See Attachment B for inspection and permit information and details about the proposed office assistant position.

Roger described his current schedule. Inspections, reviewing and recording permits, and duties at the fire station are in the morning, and his office hours are in the afternoon. They discussed public frustration over access to the Building Department and the customers' expectations based on how the department was run previously. Larry suggested a position of 16 hours a week, with office hours from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm Monday through Thursday, for $20 to $25 an hour. It was also suggested to have Marie Mahon come in on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm for office hours. Roger has completed 300 inspections so far this year; each inspection averages about an hour. Tom suggested revising the organizational model of the fire and building department. He stated that the fees should fund the building department. The Board agreed that the proposed position cannot be implemented this year due to a lack of funds. They further discussed the building fees, the high medical call volume between 5:00 am and 6:00 am, the impact on other Town Office employees, and the current structure. Tom mentioned independent building inspections allowed by the State.

Follow-Up: Max suggested the Board define an approximate budget and then work with Roger and Chief Faas to propose a solution for the 2027 budget. This agenda item was tabled for future discussion.

Any Other Official Business:

Tom brought forward an email complaint concerning paving operations. Larry reported he spoke with DPW

Director Mike Cloutier, who was on site. The crew had left around 4:00 p.m., signage had been posted, and no property damage or injury was reported. Mike was on site when the complainant was there, and they could have spoken with him about his concerns. Tom suggested not issuing any driveway or building permits off a Class VI Road until a policy is in place. The Town is required to record waivers and proof of insurability with the County Registry.

Citizens' Forum: Larry opened the forum at 7:50 p.m. and closed the forum at 7:59 p.m.

Judy Unger-Clark, Fitzgerald Road, agreed with the earlier remarks concerning divergence from the master plan and the cumulative effects of development on staffing, equipment, facilities, and taxes. She urged better public education about the Town's growth and the increased demand of taxpayers. She explained that the Planning Board mainly consists of builders, and they create ordinances based on their interests. Judy also remarked that, as an older resident, she depends on timely emergency response services and views current staffing and service pressures as a serious concern. In closing, she thanked the road crew members who had worked on Fitzgerald Road and described bringing peaches to the crew at the end of the day as a gesture of appreciation.

Roberta Oeser, Main Street, suggested the Board read the abatement letters because she believes there is a property valuation based on who owns it and not the actual value. The property is valued as if it is buildable because it is located across from a property owned by the same person. Jenn responded that she would investigate it as she does not recall that verbiage. Bob added that he has read through all the letters from Avitar and does not recall that verbiage as well.

Informational Items, Communications, and Updates:

Bob announced that the State Primary Elections will be held on Tuesday, September 8th, 2026, from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm at the Rindge Memorial School Gymnasium.

At 8:00 pm, Larry motioned to go into nonpublic session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (c) for reputation. Seconded by Bob, it passed by a roll call vote: Larry – aye, Bob – aye, Tom – aye. It passed 3-0

The board returned to public session at 8:43 p.m. Bob motioned to seal the minutes from the second non-public session indefinitely, as it could adversely affect reputation. Seconded by Larry, it passed by a roll call vote: Larry – aye, Bob – aye, Tom – aye. It passed 3-0.

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

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria Stenersen

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Executive Secretary