



Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes February 14, 2024

The meeting started at 5:00 p.m. with Marybeth Quill, Karl Pruter and Bob Hamilton present. Marybeth motioned to enter non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (a) (personnel), seconded by Karl; approved 3-0.

Marybeth re-opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Marybeth Quill, Chair, Karl Pruter, Vice Chair, Bob Hamilton, Selectman, & Members of the public

Marybeth made a motion to seal both of the two non-public sessions, pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (a), for reputation. Karl seconded the motion and it passed by roll call vote – Karl, aye, Bob, aye, Marybeth, aye.

Selectmen's Announcements: Bob Hamilton gave multiple announcements: The POOR Meat Raffle is on March 2nd starting at 2 p.m., the Rindge Chamber of Commerce is the co-sponsor. Last month the co-sponsor was the Jaffrey-Rindge Education Foundation and 15 football players from Franklin Pierce University volunteered. Local voting is on Tuesday, March 12th at the Rindge Memorial School from 7 am to 7 pm. The Town is looking for volunteers.

Consent Agenda: Payroll & Accounts Payable for 2.8.2024, 2.15.2024 and Meeting Minutes for 1.31.2024. Marybeth made a motion to accept the consent agenda as written. Karl seconded the motion and it passed 3-0.

Citizens Forum:

Casey Burrage stated that two of the old AEDs that were donated to the Fire Department from the police department are still serviceable until the end of the year. One was placed on one of the fire apparatus and the second was placed in the Meeting House. 911 was updated on the AED in the Meeting House. After they expire, they will need to be removed and a decision will need to be made whether they will be used for training purposes or disposed of.

Roni Hamilton asked about discontinuing the clear bag rule at the Transfer Station and instead use green, black, or blue bags due to difficulty finding clear bags for trash and pellet bags are readily available. Marybeth mentions she will talk to Market Basket to see if they will stock more clear bags due to the difficulty of obtaining clear bags.

Old Business:

ARPA Updates – Casey Burrage gave an update on the SCBA project: An incorrect assumption was made on the quote where the company quotes the total number of bottles at 50% which resulted in the error of removing \$13k from the quote which equals half of the bottles. Casey also noted one of the companies had quoted the wrong model for the air-pack. He continued that the two companies had originally quoted different models so a new quote was requested. The original request was for an air pack that has a disconnection for the regulator on the shoulder for maintenance and cleaning purposes. The difference in the two packs is about \$150 option per pack and they have not received the updated quote yet. The plan is to get another quote.

Karl mentioned he is looking in to the fact that they have \$40k set aside in the Fire Capital Reserve Fund but has been told they cannot use it and is looking in to the original warrant article. There was a discussion on whether or not the Town has the authority to expend without voters' approval. Bob clarified that the question Karl raised is that the claim made is that

the warrant article did not give the select board the authority to expend the money. Marybeth stated if Article 12 passes in March it is not a non-issue.

Bob stated the Board needs to meet with Rick Donovan, Fire Chief, and Laurie May, Finance Director, to go over the figures for ARPA. Marybeth states that she has already reached out to Laurie May and the plan is to get together within the next two weeks and have a work session to get it worked out. Marybeth stated she did not want to do it during budget season which is why the meeting has not taken place yet.

New Business:

Monadnock Disposal Service agreement: Karl says that this has been foreshadowed because the Town of Rindge was in a very good situation with them and when the contract came around Monadnock Disposal wanted to change the cost so they are expecting a bit of a boost at some point in the cost. Mike was not present to go over the proposed agreement so the Board was unsure of the exact differences in cost between the past contract and the proposed one. Marybeth assumes that Mike is recommending the board to agree to the contract because it is a necessary service. Bob states that maybe at this point in time they may want to look at other companies but Monadnock Disposal has been treating the Town well at the lowest cost for years. Marybeth states that Monadnock Disposal tends to match other companies' prices when it is brought to their attention. Bob states that it looks like that in the new agreement it costs \$120 per ton for solid waste, \$130 per ton for construction debris, \$90 per ton recyclables which claims mixed paper and cardboard co-mingle. Karl states that he thinks the recyclables cost is up \$10. Bob states that they are currently taking the cardboard separate, and says that they need to find out from Mike whether they still mean they have to be separated or if it is now single stream disposal of both paper and cardboard. Marybeth states that they need to wait for clarification before a decision is made. Karl asks whether there is a time limit on when they need to make a decision by. Bob says he will reach out to Mike tomorrow for explanation on any increases. The board tabled the agreement.

Informational Items, Communications and Updates:

Bob provides an update that Meeting House Oversight Committee met on February 13, 2024. There was a discussion about the scope of work for the steeple painting and repairs, painting of the building, the horse sheds and shed roof. The Town received a grant from LCHIP and Moose Plates and the Town's portion of matching funds will be consisted as follows: \$101K from LCHIP Grant, \$50K from Wood Trust Fund, \$20K from the Moose Plate Grant (specifically for the horse shed), and \$31K in capital reserve money so in total they have \$202K which is enough money to complete the job with those funds. They anticipate to start the work at the end of July or beginning of August and it needs to be completed by the end of October because it is predicated upon the LCHIP Grant.

Bob gave an update on the school deliberative session. A budget of \$32 million was passed and will be presented to the public. There was an attempt to cut the budget by \$495k which was poorly received. There was an attempt to take the deliberative default budget out of the warrant article which was also poorly received and eventually deemed illegal.

There was an amendment to add \$89k to the budget which passed. Bob stated that it may be time to look again at splitting off of the Jaffrey-Rindge Cooperative School District. He provided the opinion that their spending is becoming ridiculous and stated the fact that the state itself surpassed the \$20k per student average and our school district is \$6k over that average already. There was an attempt to force the sale of the properties on Route 202 that is owned by both Jaffrey and Rindge which was poorly received. If Rindge gets out of the cooperative district, which would take a while to do so, there is a bond to finish being paid for the building of Rindge-Memorial School's gymnasium, cafeteria, etc. This bond should be finished being paid off within the next couple of years. If the district split that would not be included and also the land should be split between the two towns so that Rindge could have the location for a modest building to be built to take care of the needs of our school district.

Tom Coneys commented if you take the warrant article and add the two suggested budget cuts then the default that was proposed on December 2, 2023, at \$31.4 million it went up to \$31.9 million before the deliberative session, which was the

default and also doesn't include the teacher's contracts. If you take the proposed budget that was presented at the deliberative, \$31.7 million, and you add \$90k and the \$550k that will be added as a result of the teacher's contract which is not in the proposed budget, you are very sure that what they originally proposed is about a \$1.6 million increase from last years approved budget. Adding on, if you add what they spend from the outside funds, which was also removed to this years proposed budget, it adds up significantly. Based on their numbers it is about \$1.65 per thousand, so for a \$350k house which is pretty typical you are asking them for about \$600 just for the school portion. He said that he went to three meetings and there really were no number discussions. Karl stated that the finance committee meets ahead of time and he attended two of those meetings. Tom stated that it appeared they did not want people to be paying attention and there seems to be no accountability.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:26 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria Stenersen
Executive Secretary