

Deliberative Session

Meeting Minutes

February 1, 2020

First Meeting: Saturday, February 1, 2020

Voters on Checklist: **4,398**

Voters Attending Meeting: Approximately 65

Second Meeting: Tuesday, March 10, 2020

Ballots Cast: 1349

Town Moderator Charlie Eicher called the meeting to order at 9:00am. Charlie introduced Boyl Scout Troop 308 of Rindge; Members included August Swinehart, Jack Sementa, Lula Swinehart, Dane Aucoin and Marcus Sementa. John Sementa led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance. Charlie then introduced Town Administrator Sarah Gravell. He introduced the Board of Selectmen; Chair, Bob Hamilton, Roberta Oeser, and Karl Pruter. Department Heads; Police Chief, Daniel Anair, Director of Public Works, Michael Cloutier and Director of Public and Life Safety, Rick Donovan, Recreation Director, Daniel Bemis. Town Officials; Finance Director, Laurie May, Acting Town Clerk, Pat Hildreth, assistant town clerk Lauralei Knight, assistant Craig Clark. He introduced the Budget Advisory Committee Members; Chairman, Sharon Rasku, and Philip Motta. Library Director Donna Straitiff, Supervisors of the Checklist; Roberta Letourneau, Lisa Wiley and Karla MacLeod were also introduced. He also announced that it will be Roberta Letourneau's last deliberative session as Supervisor of the Checklist and has served the town for 14 years and the town is very grateful for all she's done.

Charlie explained the process of the meeting and asked if anyone had any questions, he then went over article 1 which is the election of officers.

Article 1:

To choose all necessary Town Officers for the year ensuing.

Selectman

3 years, 1 Seat

Bob Hamilton - 1040

Town Clerk	3 years, 1 Seat
Lauralei Knight - 680	
Brenda Lashua - 575	
Tax Collector	3 years, 1 Seat
Carol Cersosimo - 462	
Carol Donovan - 802	
Planning Board	3 Years, 2 Seats
Samuel Bouchie - 674	
Jeffrey Dickler - 622	
Jonah Ketola - 661	
Treasurer	3 Years, 1 Seat
Helen Rogers - 1103	
Town Moderator	2 Years, 1 Seat
Charles Eicher - 1087	
Budget Advisory Committee	3 Years, 2 Seats
Sharon Rasku – 970	
Write In – Tom Coneys - 250	
Supervisor of the Checklist	6 Years, 1 Seat
John McCracken - 1038	
Cemetery Trustee	3 Years, 1 Seat
William Harper - 1075	
Cemetery Trustee	2 Years, 1 Seat
Arwen Mellor - 1077	
Zoning Board of Adjustments	3 Years, 1 Seat
William Thomas - 1035	
Zoning Board of Adjustments	1 Year, 1 Seat

George Carmichael - 995

Library Trustee

3 Years, 1 Seat

Linda Dodge - 1097

Trustee of Trust Funds

3 Years, 1 Seat

J Dwight Schenk - 1057

Article 2:

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Million Thirty Seven Thousand Eight Hundred and Twenty Five Dollars (\$5,037,825) for the purpose of furnishing, constructing and installing facilities and equipment to make available to every residential and business address in the Town of Rindge a "Fiber to the premises" network by Consolidated Communications Enterprise Services, Inc. ("Consolidated"), with Two Million Five Hundred Seventy Nine One Hundred and Twenty Five (\$2,579,125) Dollars of such sum to be raised through the issuance of bonds or notes, under and in compliance with the Municipal Finance Act, RSA 33:1, et seq, as amended; and Two Million Four Hundred Fifty Eight Thousand Seven Hundred (\$2,458,700) Dollars of such sum as a donation from Consolidated; to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for, obtain and accept federal, state or other aid, gifts, and donations which may be available for said project and to negotiate, sell and deliver said bonds and notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to take any other action or to pass any other vote relative thereto. (3/5 Vote Required) There is no tax impact.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectman 3 in favor, 0 opposed. Recommended by the Budget Advisory Committee, 5 in favor, 0 opposed)

Roberta Oeser made a motion to amend Article 2 to add "thousand" after twenty five , motion was seconded by Jed Brumer and the motion was carried by a hand count. Roberta went over the article and also mentioned that Rob Koester from Consolidated was there to answer any questions. Slides were shown to discuss the internet speeds. Roberta also stated that there was no tax impact.

Article 2 will appear on the ballot.

Yes - 1151 No - 174

Article 3:

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to enter into a five year lease/purchase agreement and equip a new Fire Rescue Truck to replace the 1998 Freightliner FL60 rescue in the amount of Two Hundred and Sixty Five Thousand (\$265,000) Dollars, with said amount to

be offset by trading in the current rescue for Fifteen Thousand (\$15,000) Dollars, said lease to be payable over a five year term, and further to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Five Thousand Eleven Dollars and Seventeen Cents (\$55,011.17) for the first year's payment for that purpose. The lease agreement contains an escape clause.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectman 3 in favor, 0 opposed. Recommended by the Budget Advisory Committee, 6 in favor, 0 opposed)

Karl Pruter went over the article and stated that this is an essential piece of equipment for the town. The cost impact will be about \$20 per year per property.

No changes to Article 3, the article will appear on the ballot.

Yes -917 No -395

Article 4:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling Four Million One Hundred Seventy Five Thousand (\$4,175,000) Dollars. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be Four Million One Hundred Sixty One Thousand Seven Hundred and Sixty Seven (\$4,161,167) Dollars which is the same as last year with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Rindge or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectman 3 in favor, 0 opposed. Recommended by the Budget Advisory Committee, 6 in favor, 0 opposed)

Bob Hamilton addressed Article 4. The budget will have a 3% wage increase over the 2019 budget. He also said there will be a modest increase in operating budget. Increases were contractual obligations or mandated. They are also looking at individual salaries and trying to bring them up to national standards. Arthur Knight asked the question if there was any consideration to adjusting to a 53 week pay year. Bob answered that it wasit would be divided by 53 pay periods resulting in a reduced weekly paycheck but the same annual salary.

No changes to Article 4, the article will appear on the ballot.

Yes - 867 No - 433

Article 5:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Million Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand (\$1,250,000.00) Dollars for engineering, environmental permitting and construction for the replacement of the Wellington Road Bridge over Converseville Brook (NHDOT Bridge No. 154/069), and to authorize withdrawal of \$1,000,000 from the unassigned

fund balance to participate in the NHDOT Municipal Managed Bridge Aid Program where the town will be reimbursed 80% of the costs. To further raise and appropriate the town's portion of the project (remaining 20%) of 250,000 which will be offset by \$146,000 from the Wellington Road Bridge Replacement Capital Reserve Fund and \$104,000 from the unassigned fund balance. This special warrant article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI until the project is finished or 2022, whichever occurs first. There is no tax impact. (Majority Vote Required).

(Recommended by the Board of Selectman 3 in favor, 0 opposed. Recommended by the Budget Advisory Committee, 6 in favor, 0 opposed)

Roberta Oeser went over Article 5. It is basically allowing the selectmen to use general funds that the town has been saving for the past 8 years. The road will be closed during construction, but its important to get work done before the state closes the road. No tax impact.

No changes to Article 5, the article will appear on the ballot.

Yes - 1122 No -191

Article 6:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ninety-Two Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventy-Six (\$92,976) Dollars for the third payment on the Fire Department Engine One replacement voted on and approved by the Town pursuant to Article 5 of the 2018 Town Warrant. The lease agreement contains an escape clause.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectman 3 in favor, 0 opposed. Recommended by the Budget Advisory Committee, 6 in favor, 0 opposed)

Karl Pruter went over Article 6 . He stated that this is the third payment of five . There will be some tax impact.

No changes to Article 6, the article will appear on the ballot.

Yes - 1120 No -196

Article 7:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ninety Two Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty (\$92,840) Dollars for the purpose of purchasing and equipping a new Backhoe to replace the 2006 backhoe and with an additional Twenty Thousand (\$20,000) Dollars for the purchase from the Transfer Station Revolving Fund and said purchase to be offset by trading in the old backhoe for \$23,500 and the remaining amount of \$49,340 to be raised through general taxation.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectman 3 in favor, 0 opposed. Recommended by the Budget Advisory Committee, 5 in favor, 0 opposed)

Bob Hamilton made a motion to amend article 7 from \$92,840 to \$112,840 then the remaining amount of \$49,340 to \$69,340.

Roberta Oeser seconded the motion. Motion carried. Bob stated that the new backhoe will be for plowing and the plow can turn sideways and be more efficient in the cemeteries.

Article 7 will go on the ballot as amended

Yes – 720 No - 584

Article 8:

To see if the town will vote to establish a Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of repair and maintenance of existing town buildings and facilities and to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty Thousand (\$40,000) Dollars to be placed in this fund and to authorize Forty Thousand Dollars to be withdrawn from the unassigned fund balance which represents sales of tax deeded properties. Further, to name the selectmen as agents to expend said fund. There is no tax impact.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectman 3 in favor, 0 opposed. Recommended by the Budget Advisory Committee, 6 in favor, 0 opposed)

Roberta Oeser went over Article 8. There are some concerns to the town buildings. No tax impact.

No changes to Article 8 the article will appear on the ballot.

Yes -1092 No -229

Article 9:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand (\$50,000) Dollars to be added to the Highway Department Equipment Capital Reserve Fund previously established.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectman 3 in favor, 0 opposed. Recommended by the Budget Advisory Committee, 6 in favor, 0 opposed)

Karl Pruter went over the article, there will be an \$18 tax impact. He stated that this is a fund to build for the future issues to help maintain a steady tax rate instead of a last minute impact. Al Lafave made a motion for - reconsideration. Mark Tanner seconded.

No changes to Article 9, the article will appear on the ballot.

Yes -861 No -456

Article 10:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twelve Thousand (\$12,000) Dollars for the Cemetery Expendable Trust Fund previously established. This is the third of a five year project that will end after the five years.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectman 3 in favor, 0 opposed. Recommended by the Budget Advisory Committee, 6 in favor, 0 opposed)

Bob Hamilton went over article 10. There is no tax impact. The money would be used to repair gravestones at the Hillside cemetery and to help maintain the roads.

No changes to Article 10 the article will appear on the ballot.

Yes - 1064 No - 236

Article 11:

Shall the Town vote to increase the Optional veteran's tax credit for service-connected total disability from \$2,000 to \$4,000, as allowed by New Hampshire RSA 72:35, I-a, effective January 1, 2020, pursuant to NH Senate Bill 341. The optional tax credit for service-connected total disability shall replace the standard tax credit in its entirety and shall not be in addition thereto. (Submitted by petition)

Recommended by the Budget Advisory Committee, 3 in favor, 2 opposed, 1 abstention)

Craig Clark spoke about Article 11. He stated that it is a state provision and why would we not take advantage of it. William Gunther asked why there would be opposition? Phil Motta said that the article is open ended and not knowing what the cost would be that tax payers would pay the difference. Kathy John moved to amend the article by saying it should be a 100% disability. Arthur Knight seconded the motion. Judy Unger-Clark asked if the article can be amended by a motion. Roberta Oeser checked the RSA and read it out loud. Lisa Wiley also commented that the article wording would have to stay the same according to statute 23-A. John Hunt also read his version of total disability. Arthur Knight withdrew his second to the motion made by Kathy John. Charlie read the motion again.

No changes to Article 11, the article will appear on the ballot.

Yes -822 No -482

Article 12:

Shall the Town of Rindge refuse to accept any roads as a public highway until any further acceptance is voted upon by the legislative body? If passed, this policy takes effect immediately. (Submitted by petition)

Ronnie Hamilton made a motion to strike the first sentence in Article 12 and have it read "Shall the Town vote, as provided by RSA674:40 -A, to rescind the selectmen's delegated authority to accept dedicated streets under RSA 674:40 with the authority to revert back to the Legislative Body (town voters) at annual Town Meetings."

Acceptance of these roads (to be class 5 roads) by the Town requires a larger highway department budget for maintenance, as well as capital improvements for equipment and road repairs, and can place an undue burden to the taxpayers. As more developments that have been approved and /or will be approved, it is expanding our budget services. While Fire and Police Departments budgets will be stressed, the Highway Department will feel the largest impact.

This article does not take away anyone's right to put in a petition warrant article for a road to be accepted, such as Scott Lane back in 2011 as the legislative body(voters) approved their .5 miles as an official town road. It passed 839 to 751. This article also does not infringe on Homeowners Associations,, and other private roads whereas neighbors have verbal agreements to maintain their roads. Most have said they like it that way. Under New Hampshire law, for a non-public road to become a public highway, the road must be “accepted “ by vote of the Town meeting, the only exception is if the town has, by previous vote of Town meeting delegated acceptance under RSA 674:40-A.

So the “intent” of this petition warrant article is to simply take the acceptance of rads from the BOS and place it into the hands of the legislative body- the voters. The Roadway Committee would still be following Ordinance K and their obligation and responsibility of addressing issues concerning Town roadways and highway safety, and participating, resolving and/or providing recommendations to the Board of Selectmen, who would in turn submit it in a Warrant Article for the legislative body-voters to be put on the ballot.

Jim Qualey seconded the motion. The motion carried by a hand vote.

Article 12 will be placed on the ballot with an amend.

Yes - 635 No -612

Article 13:

To see if the Town will vote to re-instate the Growth Management Ordinance (GMO) as amended in 2008 which limits the number of building permits that can be issues in a calendar year for residential construction. A copy of the ordinance can be obtained by the Planning Department for review. If passed, this ordinance can only be rescinded by a vote of the legislative body (voters). (Submitted by petition)

Not recommended by the Planning Board, 0 in favor, 6 opposed.

Charlie Eicher read the article and stated that this article cannot be amended, and will go on the ballot as is.

No changes to Article 13, the article will appear on the ballot.

Yes - 480 No - 819

Article 14:

To see if the Town will re-instate the Impact Fee Ordinance (originally passed by voters in 2003, and rescinded by the voters in 2017) that will authorize the Planning Board to assess impact fees for residential development and to adopt regulations to implement the provisions of the ordinance. If passed, this ordinance will be retroactive to January 1, 2020. This can only be

rescinded by the legislative body (voters). These fees would help to off-set the costs to essential services, like our Police, Fire and Highway Departments. (Submitted by petition)

Not recommended by the Planning Board, 0 in favor, 6 opposed.

Charlie Eicher went over article 14, this article cannot be amended, and will appear on the ballot as is.

No changes to Article 14, the article will appear on the ballot.

Yes - 463 No -832

Article 15:

Shall the Town vote to adopt a Noise Ordinance in accordance with RSA 31:39, I (n), to promote an environment free from excessive noise which unnecessarily jeopardizes the health and welfare of the citizens of the Rindge and degrades the quality of life in this community, without unduly prohibiting, limiting or otherwise regulating the function to certain noise-producing equipment which is not amenable to such controls yet is essential to the economy and quality of life of the community. The purpose of this Ordinance is to establish standards for the control of noise and noise disturbances in the Town by prohibiting specific activities during designated times and by setting maximum permissible sound levels within the Town. The prohibited hours of creating excessive noise is generally late evening through early morning hours. (Submitted by petition)

Evelyn Goodspeed spoke on this article. She stated that she has lived in Rindge over 20 years and have had some noise issues such as construction work going on at 10:00 oclock at night while she is tring to sleep. She has called the police , but they cannot help, she has also brought it to the attention of the selectmen but they could not help either. There is currently no noise ordinance in Rindge. 80% of New Hampshire towns have a noise ordinance and they noticed less call volume.

Al Lefabre made the motion to limit reconsideration of the article and Philip Motto seconded.

No changes to Article 15, the article will appear on the ballot.

Yes - 592 No -710

Article 16:

We the town of Rindge hereby call upon our State and Federal elected representatives to enact carbon-pricing legislation to protect New Hampshire from costs and environmental risks of continued climate inaction. To protect households, we support a Carbon Fee and Dividend approach that charges fossil fuel producers for their carbon pollution and rebates the money collected to all residents on an equal basis. Enacting a Carbon Cash-Back program decreases long-term fossil-fuel dependence, aids in the economic transition for energy consumers, and keeps local energy dollars in New Hampshire's economy. Carbon Cash-Back has been championed by US economists (Jan 17, 2019 WSJ) as the most effective and fair way to deliver

rapid reductions in harmful carbon emissions at the scale required for our safety. (Submitted by petition)

Pat Martin presented a slide show. The pricing advantage of a carbon fee are: 1. most cost -effective 2. econmy-wide, 3. fastest way to reduce emissions 4. self-financing 5. enables carbon dividends 6. empowers the American people 7. justifies regulatory streamlining 8. unlocks innovation 9. technology -neutral 10. enhances competitiveness 11. puts America in the driver's seat and 12. promotes bipartisanship. How this works, charge a fee on fossil fuels at the source 2. return 100% of net revenue to households as a dividend and 3. carbon border adjustment. Some of the benefits are less carbon emissions over the next 12 years, families would get paid (annual dividend for a family of 4 in year 10) , a healthier environment, and jobs will be created (2.1 million jobs created over 10 years in local communities).

Yes – 538 No -748

Charlie Eicher asked if there was any other business.

Craig Clark just wanted to thank Nancy Martin for all the years of dedication and service to her job. The audience gave her a round of applause.

Bob Hamilton made a motion to adjourn and Roberta Oser seconded . The meeting ended at 10:20.

Robert Hamilton- Chairman

Roberta Oeser

Karl Pruter