

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

November 29, 2017

Meeting held at Town Hall, 139 Main Street, Rowley, MA
4:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Joseph Perry, Vice Chairman Robert Snow; Clerk Cliff Pierce (Town Administrator Deborah Eagan, Assistant Town Administrator Natalie Lovett) Robert Merry – ABSENT, David Petersen - ABSENT

PUBLIC ATTENDEES: Chief Scott Dumas – Police, Patrick Snow – Highway, Karen Summit – Treasurer, Jamie Snow

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman Perry called the meeting to order at 4:44 p.m. Perry announced that the meeting is being video and audio recorded by Rowley Community Media.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPOINTMENT Lt. Governor Karyn Polito for signing of Rowley Community Compact

Chairman Joe Perry welcomed Lt. Governor Karyn Polito and Senator Bruce Tarr. Lt. Governor Polito thanked the Board of Selectmen, and town employees for their service to the Town. She invited Senator Bruce Tarr to say a few words about the Town of Rowley.

Senator Bruce Tarr stated that he is proud to serve the Town of Rowley, and there is a tremendous partnership between himself, Representative Brad Hill, the Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator, and department heads. Senator Tarr stated that the Town is fortunate to have many people in the community that care a lot about what happens here each and every day and work to make sure that the needs of people get addressed and are addressed in an efficient and cost effective. Senator Tarr stated that the Community Compact for Rowley is important because it allows the community to take its existing resources and plans and leverage them with state resources in order to address specific tasks. Senator Tarr stated that the signing of the Community Compact symbolizes the partnership between state and town.

Lt. Governor Polito stated that what she loves about the Community Compact program is that it is not mandatory. Communities elect to participate in the program and choose the best practices that they would like to implement. Lt. Governor Polito asked Chairman Perry to speak about the best practices chosen by the Town.

Chairman Perry summarized the two best practices chosen by the Town:

Best Practice: Develop, document and implement Financial Policies and Practices including reserve levels, capital financing, and use of Free Cash. Such policies should identify the responsible parties and procedural steps necessary to carrying out the directed strategy or action.

Why did you choose this best practice and what assistance would you need to accomplish this best practice?

The Town of Rowley has many financial policies that are informal and retained solely through institutional knowledge. It is important that the Town formalize our financial practices to protect and enhance our credit rating and conform to Massachusetts municipal laws and best practices. While the Town finances are overseen by a "Fiscal Team" consisting of various department heads, the Team could benefit from the assistance of formal policies that will promote efficiency, accountability and transparency and promote consistency in Rowley's municipal government. Given our size (2-3 staff members for Treasurer/Collectors Department, 2 part time staff members in accounting, 1 ½ staff members in Assessing and limited resources in the Town Administrator/Selectmen's office), we do not have the resources to complete this work internally. We will require technical support in order to turn our informal policies into a formal Financial Policies and Practices manual.

Best Practice: Develop a Bridge / Culvert Preventative Maintenance plan to help prolong the life of these critical transportation assets.

Why did you choose this best practice and what assistance would you need to accomplish this best practice?

The Bridge and Culvert Preventative Maintenance plan would help the Town of Rowley to better understand how to extend the lifespan of our bridges and culverts by planning regular repairs and maintenance, thus deferring costly repairs or replacements to these structures. The Town of Rowley has several new bridges in particular, in addition to an older bridge and unknown number of culverts that would greatly benefit from such a plan. Additionally, the Town recently developed its first Paving Management Program for all of the Town's streets and sidewalks. A Bridges and Culverts Preventative Maintenance Plan would work hand in hand with this Paving Management Program to extend the lifespan of the Town's infrastructure. As the Town proceeds with implementing the paving program, it would be ideal to coordinate repairs to any bridges and culverts with paving of the roadways and to understand whether the culverts and bridges require any upgrades in order to comply with new stormwater regulations. The Town does not have the personnel or resources available to complete the Preventative Maintenance plan in house. We would require technical assistance in order to do so.

Lt. Governor Polito stated that each Community Compact is unique. These two chosen best practices are clearly priorities for the Town. Lt. Governor Polito commended the

Town for completing the Paving Management Plan and using the Bridge/Culvert Preventative Maintenance plan to complement that plan. Lt. Governor Polito stated that she understands that culverts and small bridges can be costly to maintain. Lt. Governor Polito stated that the state has developed a Small Bridges and Culvert grant to which the Town may consider applying.

Lt. Governor Polito stated that another way the administration has tried to assist Towns is with the passing of the Municipal Modernization Act. With the leadership of Senator Bruce Tarr and Representative Brad Hill, the legislature got the bill signed into law. The bill provides additional tools to communities to get their job done efficiently. The Administration's goal is to make each individual community in Massachusetts strong so that the next generation will chose to stay in Massachusetts.

Chairman Perry said that the Town is very lucky to be well represented in the legislature. Lt. Governor Polito thanked the Town Administrator for her work, as well. Bob Snow stated that he appreciates Governor Baker and Lt. Governor Polito's understanding and appreciation of the needs of small towns.

Bob Snow made a motion to authorize Chairman Perry to sign the Community Compact on behalf of the Board of Selectmen, Cliff Pierce second, all in favor - aye (3-0). Bob Merry – ABSENT, Dave Petersen - ABSENT

The Community Compact was then signed by Lt. Governor Polito and Chairman Joe Perry.

ADJOURN

There being no further business before the Board, Chairman Perry called for a motion to adjourn. Cliff Pierce so moved, Bob Snow second, all in favor - (3-0). Bob Merry – ABSENT, Dave Petersen - ABSENT

Open meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Natalie Lovett
Assistant Town Administrator