

## **MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

March 9, 2020

Meeting held at Town Hall, 139 Main Street, Rowley, MA  
7:00 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Cliff Pierce; Vice Chairman Joseph Perry; Clerk Robert Snow; David Petersen; Deana M.P. Ziev (Town Administrator Deborah Eagan, Assistant Town Administrator Amy Lydon)

**PUBLIC ATTENDEES:** Karen Summit – Treasurer/Collector; Michael Sabatini; Dan Caluiai; Aaron Waltz; David Zizza – Finance Committee; Tom Corben; Lawrence White – Finance Committee; Roland Kneeland; Frank Todd; Shirley Todd; Cheryl Draper; George Pacenka; Kerry Perley; Bernard Cullen – 283 Wethersfield Street

### **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chairman Pierce called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He said the meeting is being video recorded by Rowley Community Media.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Chairman Pierce read an announcement about Coronavirus.

### **7:00 p.m. APPOINTMENT** Connor C. Perley for Eagle Scout Proclamation

Chairman Pierce read the letter from George Pacenka and the Proclamation. Pierce signed the Proclamation and presented it to Connor. Connor said his project was to build a footbridge trail behind White Farms. Pacenka said Connor is the 60<sup>th</sup> Eagle Scout in Town since 1942.

### **7:05 – 7:10 p.m. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments.

**7:05 APPOINTMENT** Frank P. Todd of Todd's River View Farm Trust to discuss proposed amendment of the Zoning District Map to change the zoning at 275 Main Street (Map 26 Lot 25-3) from Outlying District to Central District.

Chairman Pierce read the letter from Frank P. Todd. He said under Massachusetts general laws, before the Planning Board can hold a public hearing the landowner needs to present the information to the Board of Selectmen. He said the Board of Selectmen can't say it won't forward this to the Planning Board, and this is a formality. Pierce thanked Todd for coming in.

Joe Perry made a motion to refer this to the Planning Board, Bob Snow second, all in favor – aye (4-0). Deana Ziev– RECUSED.

**7:10 p.m. APPOINTMENT** Treasurer/Collector Karen Summit to discuss the following:

- FY 21 Treasurer/Collector Budget
- FY 21 Debt Budget
- Apply old bond proceeds to debt service
- Refund Bradstreet property Community Preservation Act bonds
- Tax Title Auction

**FY 21 Treasurer/Collector Budget**

Summit said the FY21 Treasurer/Collector budget have the 2% COLA and steps if applicable. She said the expenses are level funded.

Bob Snow made a motion to approve the FY21 Treasurer/Collector budget, Dave Petersen second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

**FY 21 Debt Budget**

Summit said the debt budget is showing a reduction with the following being paid off in FY20: Hunsley Hills, Highway truck and Fire ladder truck. She said there is still a temporary borrowing for the school project. She said 93.2% of the school debt is funded through overrides, and 6.8% is funded through the General Fund. She said the reason that taxes went up this year is due to the debt funded through overrides for the school, fire station and police station projects.

Joe Perry made a motion to approve the FY21 Debt budget, Bob Snow second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

**Apply old bond proceeds to debt service**

Summit read the memo she prepared regarding the Proceeds From Sale of Bonds from Completed Projects. She said she needs to verify this with Accounting, but she believes that we have old loan balances from completed projects of \$11,000 for the Pine Grove School project from 1987 and \$27,900 from the Landfill. She said these amounts can be used to pay down the debt on the Pine Grove School and Police & Fire Station projects.

Dave Petersen made a motion to apply the balances from these two projects to pay indebtedness for the Pine Grove Repair project, Bob Snow second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

**Refund Bradstreet property Community Preservation Act bonds**

Summit said municipal debt is callable after 10 years and to recall the debt there needs to be significant savings. She said we can save \$55,000 over the life of the bonds for the Bradstreet property.

Joe Perry moved that, in order to save interest costs, the Treasurer is authorized to provide for the sale and issuance of bonds under G.L. c. 44, Section 21A, to refund all or any portion of the remaining principal of and redemption premium and interest on the Town's General Obligation Bonds dated May 1, 2008 and that for this purpose the Treasurer is authorized to provide for the preparation and distribution of a Preliminary Official Statement; provided, however, that no bonds shall be issued under this vote unless and until the final interest rates and other terms of the refunding bonds are approved by the Board, Dave Petersen second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

### **Tax Title Auction**

Summit said there are 15 tax title parcels and she asked the Board to review the list and to let her know if there are any that the Town would like to keep. She asked if she can work with one or two Selectmen on this. Cliff Pierce and Bob Snow said they will work with Summit on this. Eagan said the final list will be brought back before the Selectmen for approval.

### **7:20 p.m. APPOINTMENT** Police Chief Scott Dumas to discuss FY 21 Police Department Budget

Deana Ziev recused herself and left the meeting room at 7:19 p.m.

Chief Dumas reviewed the summary memo included in his budget packet. He said the majority of the \$42,000 increase is contracted wages and benefits, and \$7,000 is for a front line cruiser. He said there is a zero increase in the expenses this year. He said he has an idea of the cost to run the new building, but he isn't entirely sure. He said the previous trailers were a similar size, but they were costly to heat and cool because they were inefficient. Pierce asked what holiday buyback is. Dumas said they pay for all eleven holidays upfront, and if someone works on a holiday they still get paid time and a half. Petersen said the budget looks good, and he likes the breakdown that shows the changes.

Bob Snow made a motion to approve the FY21 Police Department budget, Joe Perry second, all in favor – aye (4-0). Deana Ziev - ABSENT

### **GENERAL BUSINESS**

1. Request from North Shore Montessori School to hang poems on trees on the Town Common as part of Poetry Month

Pierce read the email request. Eagan said the Tree Warden had no objections.

Bob Snow made a motion to approve this request, Joe Perry second, all in favor – aye (4-0). Deana Ziev - ABSENT

Deana Ziev returned to the meeting room at 7:26 p.m.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **1. Update on Pine Grove School Project**

Chairman Pierce read the following:

*Debbie has been informed by Conservation Agent Brent Baeslack that the ConCom Permit for the Pine Grove School remains open. There are a few items remaining to be complete.*

*Debbie contacted Superintendent Forget last week regarding the Dore & Whittier's closeout paperwork. She told him that the Board of Selectmen is requesting a written statement from him saying that the building is completed and that the remaining issues including the recent issues involving: roof leaks; damaged floor and ceiling tiles; and restroom plumbing back-up incidences have all been replaced or repaired. She also asked him for an explanation on why the building was without heat for a portion of the day last Monday and for an update on the building electric costs.*

*Superintendent Forget indicated that was still a building punch list that was being finalized. He is going to look into this. Debbie told him that there was no rush on the part of the Board of Selectmen to sign the closeout paperwork, and that the priority for the Board is make sure all the work has been done, including the recent repairs and replacement of the recent items. She suggested he take his time and make the sure the list is complete.*

### **2. Discuss Dore & Whittier letter authorizing an audit of Dore & Whittier's expenses related to tax credits for the Pine Grove School Project**

Chairman Pierce read the following:

*This item was one of the documents in the "closeout" paperwork Larry Berger gave to Joe Perry for the Board of Selectmen to review.*

*Tom Mullen did not have any objections to the paperwork, though it was unclear what Dore & Whittier wanted from the Board of Selectmen because the letter was drafted for Superintendent Brian Forget's signature. Debbie met with Chip Heitkamp of Dore & Whittier last week. Chip said that the letter can be signed by the Town. Chairman Pierce asked Debbie to have the signatory on the letter by Joseph Perry, as the Chairman of the School Building Committee. Dore & Whittier changed the signatory to Joseph Perry.*

*The Board needs to vote to authorize Chairman Perry to sign the letter regarding tax credits for energy efficiency design elements at the Pine Grove School. After the Board votes, Chairman Perry will sign the letter.*

Joe Perry made a motion to authorize himself to sign this letter. The vote was not completed. In response to a question by Bernie Cullen, Pierce said this just creates tax

deductions, has no value for the Town, but has value for Dore & Whittier. Cullen asked who owns the credits and what are their value. Eagan said the tax credits are for Dore & Whittier who will conduct an audit at their own expense. She said these are credits for their business. Cullen said the credits are for money that the Town has spent and it is peculiar that they should derive an indirect benefit for the Town's payment of \$30,000,000. Larry White said Dore & Whittier designed an energy efficient plan that the Town approved and installed. He said they get the credit for this design. Petersen said we paid this architect to design the project. He said the State/Federal government offers incentives to be energy efficient. He said the architect gets rewarded with tax credits for this, and the Town gets rewarded with lowered energy costs. Tom Corben asked if they are still obligated to complete the punch list. Pierce said yes.

Joe Perry made a motion to authorize Joe Perry to sign the letter regarding tax credits for energy efficiency design elements at the Pine Grove School, Dave Petersen second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

**7:30 p.m. APPOINTMENT\*** Fire Chief James Broderick to discuss:

- FY 21 Fire Department Budget
- FY 21 Rowley Emergency Management Agency Budget
- Station Shift Coverage Plan

**FY 21 Fire Department Budget**

Fire Chief James Broderick said the FY21 Fire Department budget is pretty much level funded with contractual increases in payroll for staff. Pierce said he doesn't think we should approve the budget item for the public relations firm. Broderick said this firm would help them when they have incidents. He said for example during the Market Basket incident this year, this firm corralled the press and helped them to craft the message to send out. He said this firm also helped them when they had the roof fire at Pine Grove School. He said it is best if they have their own contract with this firm to get messages out. Pierce said Rowley is a small town and he doesn't see the need for this. Broderick said it would be best for the Town to have a blanket contract for the whole Town. Snow asked what the cost for this is. Broderick said \$4,000, which includes website design and public relations. Ziev said she doesn't think this is essential, and the contract with the Police Department can be shared. She said we should worry about staffing the Fire Department before this. Snow said the Fire Chief is in charge and is the Town's public relations person during emergencies. Broderick said it would be nice to have someone help him to craft messages during emergencies. Perry said he disagrees with this not being necessary and thinks we should have a professional team contacting the press. Petersen said the Police Department hired this firm without anyone realizing it, and the Water Department also uses this firm. He said we need to look at an overall contract. He said he assumes each department is paying the firm \$5,000 per year and he would like the two Chiefs and the Water Department to come up with a proposal to combine services for next year. He said the Town has a new website and the Chief can assign a firefighter to keep the Fire Department's page up to date.

Dave Petersen made a motion to approve the FY21 Fire Department budget less the \$4,900 for the public relations firm, Bob Snow second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

### **FY 21 Rowley Emergency Management Agency Budget**

Chief Broderick said the FY21 REMA budget is level funded.

Dave Petersen made a motion to approve the FY21 REMA Department budget, Bob Snow second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

### **Station Shift Coverage Plan**

Broderick said he has come up with a plan that satisfies his concerns about staffing and the Board's concern about increasing the hours that the fire station is staffed. He handed the plan out to the Board. He said this plan provides for 12 hours of coverage at the fire station as follows:

- **6:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.:** Shift 1: One Captain and One Firefighter on duty – two members working
- **8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.:** Shift 1: One Captain, One Firefighter and Fire Chief on duty – three members working
- **10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.:** Shift 1 and Shift 2: Two Captains, Two Firefighters and Fire Chief on duty – five members working
- **2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.:** Shift 2: One Captain, One Firefighter and Fire Chief on duty – three members working
- **4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.:** Shift 2: One Captain and One Firefighter on duty – two members working

He said this plan allows for four additional hours of coverage per day, for no additional money. Pierce said he liked the earlier plan with coverage until 8:00 p.m. better. Broderick said most calls are in the morning, and hopefully the call firefighters will be available in the evening. He said the other option is to hire more firefighters, but this is the first step towards expanding the hours. Petersen said he likes this plan, and from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. we would need to use any call firefighters. Broderick said this would save approximately \$8,000 in wages. Petersen said if there is an alarm after 6:00 p.m. the firefighters are still available and close by to respond. He said he thinks this is a good proposal, and he suggested that the Board ask the Chief to provide an update on how things are going in October. He said the update would include how they are doing money wise and man power wise with information on how many firefighters are responding to each call. He said we need to know this, especially if we will be looking to hire additional firefighters. Snow asked how many call firefighters we have. Broderick said 22, but we were as low as 19 a couple of years ago. He said most of the call force are full time firefighters in other towns. Petersen said we should get the following data after the first quarter of the new shift schedule: number and type of calls, time the call comes in, if it is a medical or fire call, and how many responded to it in the truck. Ziev said the safety of the firefighters is the number one concern and from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., we may not need additional people to respond to calls. She said she

thinks this looks good and it is a good way to ease into the new schedule. Pierce said he will be satisfied once we have the data.

Dave Petersen made a motion to approve the fire station shift coverage schedule as presented by Chief Broderick, Bob Snow second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

Broderick said the next step is to talk with the union about this. Tom Corben asked about the grant program to cover the cost for new firefighters. Broderick said it is called the SAFER program, and it funds the first two years for each position. He said in the past the Town had to submit a letter that if the Town was successful in getting the grant that it will use the grant, but for the last couple of years there have been no strings attached. Petersen said we hired Police Officers under that program in the past and we should look into this. Broderick said he can look into this, he thinks it is opening soon, it is very competitive and there is no guarantee that we will get this grant.

### **FY 21 BUDGETS**

- Town Hall

Eagan said she has submitted an Issues & Options Form for this budget. She said this budget has been tight the past couple of years. She said electrical costs seem to be increasing and this building houses the equipment for Rowley Community Media and the Town's IT server. She said general maintenance and elevator maintenance costs have increased. She said the \$1,800 increase will cover increases in electricity, janitorial supplies and maintenance costs. She said we haven't been seeing increases in oil costs, but that may change.

Dave Petersen made a motion to approve the FY21 Town Hall budget, with the increase, Deana Ziev second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

- Planning Board

Chairman Pierce said the Planning Board budget has increases for the salary and Merrimack Valley Planning Commission.

Bob Snow made a motion to approve the FY21 Planning Board budget, Joe Perry second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

- Zoning Board of Appeals

Chairman Pierce said the Zoning Board of Appeals is level funded except for the Administrative Assistant wage increase.

Joe Perry made a motion to approve the FY21 ZBA budget, Bob Snow second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

- Historical Commission & Historic District Commission

Chairman Pierce said this budget is level funded.

Joe Perry made a motion to approve the FY21 Historical Commission & Historic District Commission, Bob Snow second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

- Bradstreet Property & Dodge Reservation

Chairman Pierce said this budget is level funded. Petersen said the Finance Committee has questioned why money is put into this account in the past. He said currently the road to the camp needs to be re-graded, and this should be done annually. He said the Conservation Agent has requested that we replace the culverts into the Bradstreet property and into the camp. He said we hope to do one this year and one next year, but there isn't enough money with the road repairs. He said we definitely need \$8,000 for these properties. Eagan said we will be regrading the road and parking lot at the camp and the road to the Community Garden at the Bradstreet property.

Bob Snow made a motion to approve the FY21 Bradstreet Property & Dodge Reservation budget, Joe Perry second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

#### **MINUTES** – February 3, 2020; February 3, 2020 Executive Session

- February 3, 2020

Bob Snow made a motion to approve the February 3, 2020 minutes, Joe Perry second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

- February 3, 2020 Executive Session

Joe Perry made a motion to approve the February 3, 2020 Executive Session minutes, Bob Snow second, all in favor – aye (4-0). Deana Ziev - ABSTAINED

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Eastern Essex Veterans Board of Directors Meetings are now being video-recorded and shown on Rowley Community Media
- Vacancies:
  - 1) One vacancy on the Zoning Board of Appeals Associate seat;
  - 2) One vacancy on the Open Space Committee; and
  - 3) Several vacancies on the Rowley Cultural CouncilInterested residents should send a letter of interest to the Board of Selectmen or call the Selectmen's Office at 948-2372.

Perry requested the RCM test the equipment at the Pine Grove School ahead of the May 4, 2020 Town Meeting. Pierce read the coronavirus announcement from the Health Department.



**ADJOURN**

Chairman Pierce called for a motion to adjourn. Bob Snow so moved, Joe Perry second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

Meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Amy Lydon  
Assistant Town Administrator

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Memo from Board of Health regarding coronavirus
2. Proclamation for Connor C. Perley for Eagle Scout achievement
3. Letter from George Pacenka regarding Connor C. Perley's Eagle Scout achievement
4. Letter from Frank P. Todd of Todd's River View Farm with proposed Town Meeting warrant article for proposed amendment of the Zoning District Map to change the zoning at 275 Main Street (Map 26 Lot 25-3) from Outlying District to Central District
5. Email from Kirk Baker with Frank Todd's letter attached
6. Map of 275 Main Street
7. Board of Selectmen Public Comment Policy
8. FY 21 Treasurer/Collector Budget
9. FY 21 Debt Budget
10. Letter from Karen Summit regarding Proceeds From Sale of Bonds for Completed Projects, including attachments
11. Letter from Karen Summit regarding Refunding of Bradstreet CPA bonds including attachments
12. Letter from Karen Summit regarding Tax Title Possession Auction, including attachments
13. FY 21 Police Department Budget
14. Request from North Shore Montessori School to hang poems on trees on the Town Common as part of Poetry Month, including attached photos
15. Meeting memo regarding Old Business #1: Update on Pine Grove School Project
16. Meeting memo regarding Old Business #2: Discuss Dore & Whittier letter authorizing an audit of Dore & Whittier's expenses related to tax credits for the Pine Grove School Project
17. Dore & Whittier letter authorizing an audit of Dore & Whittier's expenses related to tax credits for the Pine Grove School Project
18. FY 21 Fire Department Budget package including payroll calculation sheets and Issues and Options Form
19. FY 21 Rowley Emergency Management Agency Budget
20. Letter from Chief Broderick dated March 9, 2020 regarding Revised Work Schedule for Rowley Fire Department

21. Letter from Chief Broderick dated February 20, 2020 regarding Adequate staffing for expanded hours of the Rowley Fire Department
22. Sample daily schedule for fire station coverage from 6:00a.m. until 6:00 p.m.
23. Town Hall FY 21 budget
24. Planning Board FY 21 budget
25. Zoning Board of Appeals FY 21 budget
26. Historical Commission & Historic District Commission FY 21 budget
27. Bradstreet Property & Dodge Reservation FY 21 budget
28. Draft minutes of February 3, 2020