

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

May 31, 2018

Meeting held at Town Hall, 139 Main Street, Rowley, MA

10:30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Cliff Pierce, Vice Chairman Joseph Perry, Clerk Robert Snow, Robert Merry, David Petersen (Town Administrator Deborah Eagan, Assistant Town Administrator Amy Lydon)

PUBLIC ATTENDEES: None

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman Pierce called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Bob Snow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Discuss and sign June 18, 2018 Special Town Meeting Warrant

Joe Perry made a motion to open the Special Town Meeting warrant, Bob Snow second, all in favor - aye (5-0).

Eagan said the Article has been prepared which is necessary to respond to the certified Triton budget. Pierce read Article 2. Petersen outlined the following changes to the budget approved by Town Meeting on April 30th:

- Defer hiring third Sergeant for Police Department from July 1st to later in the year for a cut of \$10,000
- Defer hiring two firefighters until February/March – reduces Fire Department wage line
- An articles was funded for \$50,000 to address the dead trees in Town, so there will be a cut of \$5,000 to the tree expense line
- The new Triton budget needs to be voted on
- Cut Snow & Ice budget, which was increased by \$20,000, by \$10,000
- The Recycling budget needs to be increased, which is a current problem for all towns

Petersen said he hopes the voters understand where the cuts are coming from; we need to move on from the Triton crisis and start working on projects. He said we need to immediately sit down with Triton and discuss the FY 20 budget. He said it looks like we will be in the same position next year and this is becoming an impossible situation. Perry said Larry White made a great presentation on April 30th about a balanced

budget. He said we are trying to rebalance the budget without an override, and we are asking for the support of the voters. Snow said Rowley voters did not approve the override, and he has heard rumors that Salisbury feels Rowley sold them down the river. He said Rowley didn't, but the School Committee has sold people down the river by not listening to the voters in two towns that rejected the overrides. He said the School Committee didn't even look at the Plan B budget, and came back to the towns with a higher budget. He said this is disheartening, this is like old County government where a bill is sent to the towns and there are no checks and balances in the Triton Agreement. Pierce said we had to find a way to fund the additional \$314,000 Triton assessment, and we didn't choose to try for an override. He said this plan won't increase taxes and is the only responsible course of action. He said to fund the additional \$314,319 for Triton, \$185,000 is coming from Town budget reductions, and \$129,319 is coming from free cash. He said this gets the job done and he hopes people support it.

Pierce read Article 3, which rescinded the original vote to fund \$125,000 for OPEB. Pierce read Article 4 which funds OPEB by \$100,000, for a reduction of \$25,000 to partially fund Triton. Pierce read Article 5, which rescinds the vote to put \$50,000 into the Stabilization account, to partially fund Triton.

Petersen said for the past two years, Rowley has had substantial free cash due to the improved economy. He said free cash comes from the following sources:

- Motor Vehicle excise taxes – this amount is estimated by the Town but if many new cars are purchased, the tax income is higher
- Building permit fees
- Not spending all of the previous year's free cash
- Not spending all money appropriated in the Town budgets

Petersen said if the economy slows, the free cash will go down. He said free cash shouldn't be used to fund the operating budget like we have done for the past five years to fund Triton. He said these are one-time funds and we try to save some for the following year. He said free cash should be used for capital items, such as vehicles. He said the stabilization fund is for emergencies. He said if people have questions they should call and there is erroneous information on the Facebook page. Snow said years ago, Rowley started having a pre-Town meeting to be forthright and explain the budget. He said nothing has been hidden. Pierce said he encourages everyone to read the warrant, which will be on the website, which lays out the action plan to come up with the money needed, and gives explanatory information. Petersen said the warrant will also be delivered to all homes, and to contact the Selectmen's office if you do not receive one.

Joe Perry made a motion to close the Special Town Meeting warrant, Bob Snow second, all in favor - aye (5-0).

Bob Snow made a motion to sign the signatory pages for Special Town Meeting warrant, Dave Petersen second, all in favor - aye (5-0).

The Selectmen signed the signatory pages for the warrant.

ADJOURN

There being no further business before the Board, Chairman Pierce called for a motion to adjourn. Bob Snow so moved, Joe Perry second, all in favor - (5-0).

Open meeting adjourned at 11:03 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Lydon

Assistant Town Administrator

ATTACHMENTS

1. Triton budget certification letter dated May 17, 2018
2. June 18, 2018 Special Town Meeting Warrant