

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Town Hall, 139 Main Street, Rowley

February 26, 2024

6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Cliff Pierce, Vice Chair Christine Kneeland, Sheri David (Town Administrator Debbie Eagan)

ABSENT: Robert Snow, Deana Ziev

MEETING ATTENDEES: Sharon Emery, 11 Warehouse Ln, Rowley Volunteer Fire Protection Association; Bernie Cullen, 283 Wethersfield St; Joseph Perry, 7 Bennett Hill Rd; Don Duprey, 181 Boxford Rd, Rowley Volunteer Fire Protection Association; Doug Chadbourne, 234 Main St, Rowley Volunteer Fire Protection Association; Eiline B. Chadbourne, 234 Main St, Rowley Volunteer Fire Protection Association; Tristan Ashlock, Ipswich Local News; Merissa Titus-Abate, 473 Haverhill St, Rowley Fire Department

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman Pierce called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Pierce asked Joseph Perry to lead the pledge of alliance.

6:00 p.m. TO 6:05 p.m. PUBLIC COMMENT*

There was no public comment.

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Accept donations for the Council on Aging

Chairman Pierce read the following:

COA Director Ellie Davis has informed us that the COA has received a donation from the Friends of the Rowley Council on Aging totaling \$1,116.50 for kitchen supplies.

In accordance with State law, G.L. c.44 §53A, the Board needs to vote to approve this donation.

Christine Kneeland made a motion to accept the donation, Sheri David second, all in favor – AYE (3-0).

GENERAL BUSINESS

2. Sign Presidential Primary Election Warrant

Chairman Pierce read the following:

Town Clerk Catie McClenaghan requests the Board to vote to sign the March 5, 2024 Presidential Primary Election Warrant. The Board needs to sign five originals of the Warrant during the meeting.

Christine Kneeland made a motion for the Board to sign five originals of the Warrant during the meeting, Sheri David second, all in favor – AYE (3-0).

GENERAL BUSINESS

3. Request from the Rowley Volunteer Fire Protection Association (RVFPA) to use the Town Common on April 7, 2024 for Batting Blue for Autism and for a One-Day Entertainment License for an amplification system

Chairman Pierce read the following:

The RVFPA has two requests before the Board:

- 1) Request to use the Town Common for a Wiffle Ball fundraising event*
- 2) One-Day Entertainment License for the Wiffle Ball fundraising event*

The event is for Sunday, April 7, 2024 from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and includes: Wiffle Ball game between Police and Fire Departments; food trucks, face painting; bounce house; batting cage, DJ, and a String of Blue Lights around the Town Common. There will also be “out-of-pocket” voluntary donations to the Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism.

The RVFPA is requesting to use an amplification system, consisting of a microphone and with a speaker.

How does the Board wish to proceed with these two requests, including the request to place a bounce house on Town property?

The Board has had a long practice of not allowing sporting events on the Town Common, except for the children’s T-Ball program. Parks and Rec Chairman David Zizza feels that using one of the Town’s ballfields would be a great location for this event. Both Eiras and Veterans Field are available for use for this event and have ballfields and adequate parking.

Also, the Board has not permitted bounce houses on Town property due to their high-risk factor for injuries, installation issues, and high winds. Bounce houses are specifically excluded on the Town's insurance policy, due to their high-risk factor.

This application has been reviewed by the following departments:

Police

The Police Department requests all participants to park at the Town Hall to alleviate parking issues. PD on-duty personnel to monitor traffic.

Highway

The Highway Department requests any trash generated from the event be removed by the group holding the event.

Health

Food trucks will need to be permitted by the Health Department in a reasonable amount of time before the event. The parking location of the food trucks should also be reviewed for public safety. There is no mention of portable toilets being used. If one is used, it should be removed the next day or as soon as possible after the event.

Does the Board wish to authorize the use of the Town Common and grant the Entertainment License with the following conditions:

- No bounce house is permitted*
- Submittal of the requisite certificate of insurance to Natalie and Debbie*
- Trash be removed by the RVFPA*
- Event parking be at Town Hall*
- Parking areas and food truck locations be reviewed by Chairman Zizza and the Police Chief*

Alternatively, the Board could give the RVFPA permission to use either Eiras Park or Veterans Field, with the following conditions:

- Discuss the event with P & R Chairman David Zizza*
- No bounce house is permitted*
- Submittal of the requisite certificate of insurance to Natalie and Debbie*
- Trash be removed by the RVFPA*
- Parking areas and food truck locations be reviewed by Chairman Zizza and the Police Chief*
- All food trucks obtain permits from the Health Department*

How does the Board wish to proceed?

Chairman Pierce asked if anyone from Fire Department wishes to speak on this. Merissa Titus-Abate of RVFPA asked if there were any questions or if the Board wanted an overview. Pierce noted that Town has a long practice of not allowing sporting events on the Town Common and said David Zizza feels using Veterans Field or Eiras Park would be an excellent location. Titus-Abate said that we do not agree. She said that last year, they hosted an event for autism at the fire station and people who attended did not think that it was centralized in the Town. She said that the Town Common allows for more people to be centralized and being on the Town Common would be more visible to the public where people might stop and donate to a cause. Vice Chair Kneeland said using the Town Hall for parking is a concern. Titus-Abate said that last time they hosted the Veterans Day 5k, they got permission from Pine Grove to do overflow parking and that the Highway Department said they can open up their lot as well to keep cars off the main road. Kneeland said one of the problems is that the Town doesn't allow sporting events other than T-ball. Titus-Abate said that T-ball is a nice, hard ball where wiffle ball is plastic with a plastic bat.

David said that the issue is that little kids won't get it out of the center of the Common, but a wiffle ball hit onto Main Street on Saturday traffic could pose a problem and thinks that is why it has not been allowed for years to have ball games on the Common.

Sharon Emery said that there is a history of using the Common. She said they are not organized, but they are playing ball on the Common. Pierce asked if we want to make an exception for wiffle ball.

Titus-Abate said, it is going to be maybe four or five innings maximum with ten players. She said maybe an hour to get through a friendly game between Police and Fire. She said that it is meant to be a friendly event to bring people to the Common, cheer on Police and Fire, bring awareness to autism, and just have an overall community event. She said every event, including something that the Town wants to bring back, such as the Fourth of July, people want the Town Common used and celebrate the Town of Rowley. Pierce said could we make an exception for wiffle ball. Kneeland asked if the ballfield has a batting cage. Eagan confirmed that they have a batting cage. Emery said we have had carnivals, barbeques, and a circus on the Common. David said she understands that but the concern is that if someone hits a ball it will be Police and Fire playing and not little kids. She said that could happen. Emery said we have our own insurance. David said we are aware of that.

Joseph Perry said we did play softball many times for years and always regular full-size softball games. David said we would get inundated with phone calls every time a game was out there, and it was not just one person. Titus-Abate said we will put up electric signs to make sure everyone knows that the event is happening. David said either way bounce house can't happen. Pierce asked if someone wants to make a motion for Eiras

Park or Town Common. Kneeland said Eiras Park is more appropriate. Emery said we don't believe we can do it at Eiras Park. Titus-Abate said if we don't do a wiffle ball game, we can use Town Common. She said if we do a wiffle ball game, you prefer us to be in a baseball field. Kneeland said it will open a can of worms because we have other sporting events that continue to request the use of the Common for those activities and they have been told no the last couple of years.

Christine Kneeland made a motion to approve event at Eiras Park or Veterans Field. Sheri David second, all in favor – AYE (3-0).

Christine Kneeland made a motion to approve a one-day entertainment license for the amplification system, Sheri David second, all in favor – AYE (3-0).

GENERAL BUSINESS

4. Request from Rowley Youth Baseball & Softball to use the Town Common for T-ball

Chairman Pierce read the following:

Rowley Youth Baseball and Softball is requesting to use the Town Common for the upcoming T-Ball season which will run from May 1, 2024 through July 1, 2024, Monday through Friday from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

The Board has approved this request in the past.

Parks and Recreation Committee Chairman David Zizza is asking the Board to approve this request due to a shortage of field space for this program, which is geared to young children.

RYBS will be providing the requisite certificate of insurance, pending the Board's approval.

Does the Board wish to approve this request conditioned upon the following?

- 1) Rowley Youth Baseball and Softball to provide a certificate of insurance*

Christine Kneeland made a motion to approve request to use the Town Common for T-ball with condition, Sheri David second, all in favor – AYE (3-0).

GENERAL BUSINESS

5. Request from Police Chief Scott Dumas to be designated as the Authorized Contractor Signatory for the State Executive Office of Public Safety and Security Bullet Proof Vest Partnership Program

Chairman Pierce read the following:

Chief Dumas is asking the Board to vote to designate him to be the authorized contractor signatory for the Bullet Proof Vest Partnership Program. The Board will need to vote to authorize him to be the contractor authorized signatory and to authorize Chairman Pierce to sign the Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing Form. (Chairman Pierce will sign this after the meeting.)

Christine Kneeland made a motion to authorize Chief Dumas to be the contractor authorized signatory for the Bullet Proof Vest Partnership Program and to authorize Chairman Pierce to sign the Contract Authorized Signatory Listing Form, Sheri David second, all in favor – AYE (3-0).

GENERAL BUSINESS

6. Request from Fire Chief Mark Emery to be designated as the Authorized Contractor Signatory for the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security and the Department of Fire Services for the FY 24 Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant

Chairman Pierce read the following:

Chief Emery is asking the Board to vote to designate him to be the authorized contractor signatory for the Department of Fire Safety Equipment Grant. The Board will need to authorize him to be the contractor authorized signatory and to authorize Chairman Pierce to sign the Contractor Authorized Listing Form. (Chairman Pierce will sign this after the meeting.)

Christine Kneeland made a motion to designate Chief Emery to be the contractor authorized signatory for the Department of Fire Safety Equipment Grant and to authorize Chairman Pierce to sign the Contractor Authorized Listing Form, Sheri David second, all in favor – AYE (3-0).

GENERAL BUSINESS

7. Letter of resignation from Full-time Dispatcher Marc Pelletier

Chairman Pierce read the following:

Marc Pelletier has submitted his resignation to Police Chief Scott Dumas. The Board needs to vote to accept his resignation with regrets.

Sheri David made a motion to accept the resignation with regrets, Christine Kneeland second, all in favor – AYE (3-0).

GENERAL BUSINESS

8. Request from Police Chief Scott Dumas to lift the hiring freeze for the position of Full-time Dispatcher

Chairman Pierce read the following:

With the resignation of Marc Pelletier, Chief Dumas is requesting the Board to lift the hiring freeze so that he can fill this position. (Request is attached.)

Christine Kneeland made a motion to lift the hiring freeze for the position of Full-Time Dispatcher, Sheri David second, all in favor – AYE (3-0).

GENERAL BUSINESS

9. Request from Highway Surveyor Patrick Snow to appoint Marc Pelletier to the position of Unskilled Laborer

Chairman Pierce read the following:

Highway Surveyor Patrick Snow is requesting the Board to appoint Marc Pelletier to the position of Unskilled Laborer. Marc will be leaving his Police Department position on March 1, 2024 and transferring to the Highway Department. Debbie recommends that he be appointed to the Highway Department position effective March 2, 2024, so that his employment with the Town is continuous.

Christine Kneeland made a motion to appoint Marc Pelletier to the position of Unskilled Laborer, Sheri David second, all in favor – AYE (3-0).

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discuss hiring a company to do an assessment process for a promotion for the Rowley Police Department

Chairman Pierce read the following:

This agenda item was on the February 5, 2024 meeting agenda. The Board voted to pause the promotional process along with the assessment center indefinitely. Personnel Advisory Committee Chairman Larry White requested this action by the Board, so that he would have time to look into an inquiry he received. Chairman White has advised Chairman Pierce that there is no longer a need to “pause” this agenda item.

Chief Dumas filed a Conflict of Interest Disclosure form with the Board of Selectmen. His disclosure form states that he is hiring a company to conduct an assessment process for a promotion for the Rowley Police Department. He solicited proposals from three companies that conduct assessment centers in Massachusetts – Hanrahan, LLC, BadgeQuest, and Municipal Resources, Inc. His disclosure says he worked for BadgeQuest as an Assessor in the past. Chief Dumas would like to hire MRI, Inc., the company that submitted the lowest priced proposal in the amount of \$5,750 to conduct a one-day assessment center for up to five Police Captain candidates. The Chief contacted the State Ethics Commission and he was advised to file the form with his appointment authority, but no vote is required by the Board.

At the Chief's request, the Board voted to lift the hiring freeze on November 20, 2023 for the position of Police Captain. The Chief's request did not reference plans to hire a company to conduct an assessment center for the police captain position. The Job Vacancy Notice, which was posted on November 21, 2023, has a paragraph on the Selection Process which says that, "the process will consist of an assessment panel and an interview with the Chief of Police before a recommendation is made to the appointment authority." Chief Dumas does not have the funds in his FY 24 expense budget to pay for the assessment center. He plans to use the funds in the Police Department Donation Account to pay for this cost. The Accounting Department reports that the current balance in the Donation Account is \$6,246.17, which includes the recently accepted \$1,000 donation.

Chairman Pierce would like the Board to discuss the disclosure filing, the hiring of the company to assist the Chief in the selection process for the hiring of a police captain, and the use of the donation account for this expense.

Attached are:

- 1) Conflict of Interest Disclosure filed by Chief Dumas with email transmittal 1/30/24
- 2) Letter from Chief Dumas requesting the Board to lift the hiring freeze for the Captain position – 11/13/2023
- 3) Police Captain Job Vacancy Notice - posted with Town Clerk on 11/21/2023 by D. Eagan
- 4) Accounting Department Email Police Department Donation Account Balance 2/1/24
- 5) MRI Professional Services Agreement

Chairman Pierce said with regards to disclosure, he initially had a question as to whether this would present a conflict of interest that the Chief worked for one of these assessment companies, but the Chief sought advice from the States Ethics Committee. Pierce said he is persuaded now that there is not conflict of interest and any potential for a conflict would be remote. He said we don't need to approve and don't need a vote.

Pierce said with regards to issue as to whether the Chief can be allowed to use assessment center, how does the Board feel about this?

David said we should first explain what an assessment center is to the public. She said it is a consulting company hired to send Chiefs, either current or retired, to come to Town for the day to do scenarios or ask questions of candidates. She said, at the end of the day, they report their findings as to whom they favor. Pierce said he would be against the Town using its own funds to provide this service but has no problem with the Chief using monies in a donation account to pay for this. He said there is no restriction in the donation account and the implied restriction is everything that is used in account has to be for the benefit of Police Department. He said this clearly meets this requirement.

David said she does have a problem with this because it will cost nearly \$6,000.00 for this one day, which will leave just under \$500.00 in the donation account. She said that when people donate to the Police Department they have had a positive experience either with a police officer, dispatcher, Chief, and that's why they want to donate for something we wouldn't normally have. She said maybe they donate for food during a storm and that when people donate their \$10.00 or \$20.00, they are not donating it so we can hire a panel of Chiefs to assist with our hiring process. She said in the past, we have formed panels and thinks our Personnel Officer is more than willing to assist in forming a panel. She said Chief Sedgwick, who had a job here, is over in Georgetown. David said that she is pretty confident he would come back to be on the panel. She said that it would be better spent on a new med bag, defibrillator, and feels that we are becoming more diverse. She said she would like to see a Spanish class offered to all Public Safety, Police, Fire, Action EMTs, dispatchers and all who want to go to it. She said that is a better use of spending money out of donation account than hiring a consulting company to come in to help us hire someone. She said it doesn't make sense for \$6,000.00, especially out of that account. She said she doesn't think that is why people donate to that. Kneeland said she would agree and said since she has been on the Board and approved donations for Police Department, she would never think that it would be for hiring an assessment preview panel. She said she would like to think these donations would go to repairs, defibrillator or Police Department in general, without having to hire when we have a Personnel Officer who is quite capable of forming panels and has done so in the past.

Dumas said he respectfully disagrees with the use of the accounts now. He said that it's hard to anticipate hiring an assessment center and that assessment centers are pretty much an industry standard right now, particularly for high-ranking positions within the Town. Dumas said this next position that we are looking for, the Captain's position, could potentially be the next Chief of Police here. He said that it is important that we have a professional organization whose main goal is to come here and do that. He said

that they sit down with the Chief of Police and find out what you are looking for such as leadership, accountability, and community police-oriented personnel. He said they look for scenarios based on that then they have a ranking order and don't just say who they favor. He said that's the value and importance of it. Dumas said we did it for a Police Sergeant a year ago and paid for it out of the same account. He said between that and the drug forfeiture account, it's split evenly, so it is not like it has never happened before. He said the donation account, as well as the drug forfeiture account, are to be used for the needs of the Police Department for whatever they are and for unanticipated expenses. He said to impose your opinion as to what it should be used for, as opposed to people who are donating, he guesses that we will find out if they don't donate again. He said that they gave it to the Police Department, and they did it before he was Chief of Police and he is sure that they will do it after. Dumas said that it is generally the same people who do it because they like to donate to the Police Department because everything can't be funded all the time to the Board of Selectmen and the taxpayers. He said that we cannot anticipate every cost that comes up. Dumas said when Georgetown's succession plan imploded, ours imploded. He said we certainly didn't anticipate having to provide an assessment center or do a hiring process for a Captain's position. He said that he does not think you should impart your opinion on the spending of that account when there are no restrictions to it. Kneeland said there could be. She said there are not any right now but down the road, there could be restrictions. She said it is not a slush fund and does not think that's what the public view is for that spending. She said it is the Town's money. Eagan said it is voter's acceptance. Dumas said it is for unanticipated needs, training or to hire an assessment panel because we did not plan on having to do a hiring process. He said it states in the promotional policy that this is an alternative and hiring a professional assessment team to come out here and do it. David said the job requirements note an assessment panel of Chiefs, but it doesn't say you have to spend \$6,000.00 to hire a company to do that.

Dumas confirmed that we did an assessment center for the Sergeants. David said that she was not on the Board and that was nearly \$4,000.00. Dumas said it was more expensive and was \$6,500.00. He said that this is less expensive than it was. David asked if it was \$6,500.00 for three Sergeants. Dumas said it was \$6,500.00 for the assessment panel. David said in our paperwork, it is \$3,750.00 as an expenditure, so that is even worse. She said that is \$6,000.00 then and \$6,000.00 now, which is \$12,000.00 to fill two positions in a one-year period.

Dumas said the donation is to the Police Department and it does not go back into the general fund nor does the drug forfeiture account go back into the general fund. He said that it is not money taken from taxpayers. Dumas said that you are not making an example that the \$12,000.00 could be spent somewhere else because it is donated to the Police Department. David said she agrees with him one thousand percent but the \$12,000.00 could be spent on something worthwhile such as community outreach,

something for the kids at Pine Grove School, a Spanish class, a defibrillator, and does not think that spending \$12,000.00 over a one-year period to fill two positions is reasonable. She said that she does not think that the person who donates is doing so that we can hire people to narrow down applicants. Dumas confirmed that there are five applicants and that the leadership position in the Police Department and building towards a succession plan is very important.

David agrees with him but said she thinks that we can put a panel together to interview five candidates. Dumas confirmed that he is a certified assessor. Kneeland said that she has faith in Dumas that he can do this with the help of his department. Dumas said that he can't utilize people in his department because it is for a rank higher and they don't have anyone other than him. He said that it is one of the things that they need to be careful of and wants to be as transparent and open as possible without any people saying that he doesn't like someone and that's why the position was given to someone else. He said that is part of the problem and part of the reason that they had the assessment center for the Sergeants last time. Dumas confirmed that it was a single candidate and that it was on the agenda because he had to come before the Board and that both the assessment center and disclosure were voted on last time. Pierce said that he did not recall.

Pierce said it is an industry practice and there are reasons why you would want to do this and that Dumas runs the department. Pierce states that he would not be in favor of this if we were paying the bills, but it is coming from a donation account which has no restriction and is within the scope of the things that the donation account can be used for because it will benefit the Police Department. Pierce said if they want to put restrictions on it, they could.

Bernie Cullen, 283 Wethersfield St, said he used to design, run, conduct and evaluate assessment centers not for Police but for other types of roles and it is not a cheap process. He said that he does not know what the current market is or whether \$6,000.00 is high or low, but from an assessment of personnel, a well-designed assessment center is a much more objective and relevant assessment process.

Christine Kneeland made a motion to not approve the Chief's use of the donation for an assessment center, Sheri David second, Pierce opposed, all in favor – AYE (2-1).

Dumas said does this mean that he has to come before the Board of Selectmen every time he spends out of this account to get approval because there are no restrictions that he is aware of that requires him to do that. Kneeland said that the Board can discuss formulating restrictions because we did that with the Veterans Committee. Dumas said there are none right now. He said his question is if he has training and wants to spend \$3,000.00, does he have to come to the Board of Selectmen to seek

permission to spend money out of the account that has already been accepted into the budget. Kneeland said it would be nice to keep the Board informed. Dumas said do you want to know every penny that I spend out of my budget. He said that it is not like he has a checkbook in his desk and that it goes to the accountant and the accountant says it is approved and there are no restrictions on a donation account. David said she disagrees with the donation account funding an assessment center and leaving \$400.00 in the account. Dumas said do I need to come to the Board of Selectmen every time that I need to spend money out of the donation account.

Sheri David made a motion for the Board to establish acceptable expenditures out of the Police Donation account, Christine Kneeland second, all in favor – AYE (3-0).

NEW BUSINESS

2. Request from Police Chief Scott Dumas for permission to continue discussions with Beth Israel for a Jail Diversion Clinician

Chairman Pierce read the following:

Chief Dumas has requested the Board to authorize him to continue having discussions with Beth Israel Lahey to have a second Jail Arrest Division Clinician provide services. (See attached memo.)

If the Board is in agreement, the Board will need to vote to authorize Chief Dumas to continue these discussions.

Christine Kneeland made a motion to authorize Chief Dumas to continue these discussions, Sheri David second, all in favor – AYE (3-0).

NEW BUSINESS

3. Request from Lisa Peach Berthelette for a streetlight at 62 Christopher Road

Chairman Pierce read the following:

A resident of Christopher Road is requesting that the Town install a streetlight to the pole at 62 Christopher Road, because the area is very dark. (See attached.)

Selectman Sheri David investigated this request and provides the following commentary:

Hi Debbie,

I took a ride by 62 Christopher Rd. the other night. It is extremely dark in that area. I agree that a street light is necessary. I went by on Saturday and spoke

with Lisa, the resident. I advised her that we did receive her letter from RMLP and that we weren't meeting again until 2/26.

Sheri

Does the Board wish to grant this request?

Christine Kneeland made a motion to approve that the Town install a streetlight to the pole at 62 Christopher Rd, Sheri David second, Sheri David second, all in favor – AYE (3-0).

NEW BUSINESS

4. Update on the February 20, 2024 Triton District Communications Committee meeting

Chairman Pierce read the following:

There were two DCC meetings this month. Sheri attended the first one and Christine attended the second one. FinCom Chairman Larry White was also at both meetings. The three of them have been consistently requesting the School Committee adopt the Scenario budget proposal option which increases Rowley assessment by 5.47% or \$689,120 for a total of \$13,296,375. The School Committee received the letter from the Rowley Board of Selectmen. The Town of Newbury also sent the Triton School Committee a letter requesting scenario #3. Salisbury is requesting Scenario #2. Despite these requests, the Triton School Committee voted to adopt a \$52,070,447 tentative budget, reflecting Scenario #1.

The FY 25 School District enrollment is down by 134 students from FY 21. Furthermore, Rowley's enrollment was 732 in FY 21 and is 708 students in FY 25, which is a drop off 24 students over the five-year period. The FY 25 Tentative Triton Budget is \$52 million dollars for 2,156 students.

*Rowley's new property tax revenue, including the 2 ½% tax revenue and new growth is **\$602,846.***

*2 ½% \$457,647 + New Growth \$145,199 = **\$602,846 new tax revenue***

This following shows how much the Town's FY 25 new tax revenue is not enough to support the Triton Assessment increase. Please keep in mind, that there are two other school districts that will have potential increases in FY 25.

Scenario #1 – The amount the Triton School Committee adopted as their “Tentative Budget

\$602,846 Total in new tax revenue - \$847,461 Scenario #1 Triton Assessment Increase = **(-\$244,615 shortfall)**

Scenario #2

\$602,846 Total in new tax revenue - \$771,217 Scenario #2 Triton Assessment Increase = **(-\$168,371 shortfall)**

Scenario #3

\$602,846 Total in new tax revenue - \$689,120 Scenario #3 Triton Assessment Increase = **(-\$86,274 shortfall)**

In all three situations, the Triton Assessment increase is greater than our FY 25 new tax revenue. We obviously prefer Scenario #3. The Town builds a budget around the parameters of Proposition 2 ½. That is why we must always “level fund” expenses and are struggling to meet the needs of a growing Town. The Council on Aging has seen a growth in servicing our 60+ population. The need for adequate overnight coverage in the Fire Department is serious. The Town is giving a 2% cost-of-living increase to employees, yet it is understood that most Triton employees are receiving a 3% cost-of-living increase. While school enrollment is going down, the increases to the Triton assessment are going up at significant levels that can’t be supported without raising taxes through a Proposition 2 ½ operational override. We were in this same position last year and knew that the FY 25 Triton Budget was going to tip over the \$50 million mark.

Christine and Sheri will update the Board on the budget discussions that took place at the two DCC meetings this month.

Kneeland said she attended and requested scenario #3 on behalf of the Rowley Board of Selectmen and that Newbury requested scenario #3 and Salisbury requested #2. She said that they come back together to have budget discussions and a final vote will be on March 13. Kneeland stated that Chairwoman Litcofsky would meet with each Board and will reach out to her to schedule a meeting. David said School Committee has really been trying to work with us on what’s affordable. Emery asks to include the Finance Committee in the meeting. Cullen said there is a meeting and he has asked what scenario #2 would be like with cuts. Eagan said it can only go down not up.

NEW BUSINESS

5. Review and authorize Parks and Recreation Committee vendor contract extensions

Chairman Pierce read the following:

The Parks and Recreation Committee has voted to request the Board of Selectmen vote to extend the field maintenance contract with ELM. We have an option to extend it for the second year. There is no price increase. The price is \$24,000.

Christine Kneeland made a motion to approve the vote to extend the field maintenance contract with ELM, Sheri David second, all in favor – AYE (3-0).

OLD BUSINESS

1. Town Hall Annex Window Project update

Chairman Pierce read the following:

The Annex window replacement project will be starting the first week in March. We received funding through the Community Preservation Committee for this project. We have enough funds to replace 15 of the 30 windows on the first floor of the building.

Debbie asking the Board for authorization to file a second request with the Community Preservation Committee for funding to finish this project. We are planning to request \$80,000. This will include price increases due to inflation, construction contingency, and lead paint air quality testing. The CPC is meeting on Thursday, March 7, 2024, and Debbie would like to get the application submitted for this meeting.

Christine Kneeland made a motion to authorize to file a second request with the Community Preservation Committee for funding to finish the project, Sheri David second, all in favor – AYE (3-0).

Emery asked what are we doing while the windows are being done and what is happening with the Building Inspector and Health Department. Eagan said we are trying to work with the contractor on a definitive schedule and was informed that the COA Director is planning the whole month of March at different venues. Eagan said that the building will be occupied construction except when we do the meeting room windows. She said that we are not able to do the Inspection Department because we don't have the money and there are 15 windows that we won't be able to touch in this project.

FY 25 BUDGETS

- Agricultural Commission
- Town Counsel
- Personnel

- Hydrants
- ADA Compliance
- Parks and Recreation Committee
- Bradstreet & Dodge Properties
- Retirement
- Unemployment

Christine Kneeland made a motion to approve FY 25 Budgets, Sheri David second, Sheri David second, all in favor – AYE (3-0).

MINUTES

- January 22, 2024

Christine Kneeland made a motion to approve the January 22, 2024 minutes, Sheri David second, all in favor – AYE (3-0).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The Presidential Primary will be held on March 5, 2024 from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at St. Mary Church Hall Rear, 196 Main Street.
2. The Town is offering in-person early voting options for the Presidential Primary Election at Town Hall, 139 Main Street on the following dates:

Day/Date	Town Clerk Hours	EV Hours (proposed)
Tuesday, February 27, 2024	8:30 am – 2:30 pm	8:30 am – 2:30 pm
Wednesday, February 28, 2024	8:30 am – 4:30 pm	8:30 am – 4:40 pm
Thursday, February 29, 2024	8:30 am – 2:30 pm	8:30 am – 2:30 pm
Friday, March 1, 2024	8:00 am – Noon	8:00am – Noon

3. The Town has the following board vacancies:
 - **Conservation Commission**
 - **Housing Partnership Committee – Five members**
 - **Open Space Committee**
 - **Rowley Cultural Council**
 - **Zoning Board of Appeals – Alternate member**

Interested residents should send a letter of interest to the Board of Selectmen.
Positions are open until filled.

ADJOURN

Christine Kneeland made a motion to adjourn, Sheri David second, all in favor – AYE (3-0).

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary Restuccia
Assistant Town Administrator

ATTACHEMENTS:

1. Meeting memo for General Business #1
2. Letter from COA Director Ellie Davis with request to accept donations
3. Meeting memo for General Business #2
4. Warrant for Presidential Preference Primaries
5. Meeting memo for General Business #3
6. Letter from Rowley Volunteer Fire Protection Association to Board of Selectmen regarding April 7, 2024 Batting Blue for Autism event
7. Flyer for Batting Blue for Autism event
8. Application for the Use of the Town Common from the Rowley Volunteer Fire Protection Association
9. Application for a 1-Day Entertainment License Application from the Rowley Volunteer Fire Protection Association
10. Email from Police Chief Scott Dumas re: RVFPA Request to use Town Common and Entertainment License 4.7.24
11. Email from Highway Surveyor Patrick Snow re: RVFPA Request to use Town Common and Entertainment License 4.7.24
12. Email from Health Director Frank Marchegiani re: RVFPA Request to use Town Common and Entertainment License 4.7.24
13. Email from Natalie Lovett to Merissa Titus-Abate re: Autism Acceptance Event
14. Meeting memo for General Business #4
15. Application for the Use of the Town Common from Rowley Youth Baseball
16. Email from David Zizza re: Rowley Youth Baseball
17. Meeting memo for General Business #5
18. Email from Police Chief Scott Dumas re: BVP Program
19. Commonwealth of Massachusetts Standard Contract Form with Terms and Conditions for Bulletproof Vest Partnership Program
20. Meeting memo for General Business #6
21. Letter from Fire Chief Mark Emery to Board of Selectmen re: FY 2024 Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant
22. Grant award letter for FY 2024 Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant

23. Commonwealth of Massachusetts Standard Contract Form with Grant Agreement, Scope of Work, and Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing for FY24 Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant
24. Meeting memo for General Business #7
25. Resignation letter from Marc Pelletier
26. Meeting memo for General Business #8
27. Letter from Police Chief Scott Dumas re: hiring freeze
28. Meeting memo for General Business #9
29. Email from Highway Surveyor Patrick Snow re: laborer
30. Meeting memo for New Business #1
31. Meeting memo for New Business #7
32. Email from Police Chief Scott Dumas re: Disclosure with attachment
33. Letter from Police Chief Scott Dumas re: Hiring Freeze
34. Job Vacancy Notice for Police Captain
35. Email from Town Accountant Amy Lydon re: donation account
36. Professional Services Agreement from Municipal Resources, Inc.
37. Meeting memo for New Business #2
38. Letter from Police Chief Scott Dumas re: Permission to continue discussions with Beth Israel Lahey for an additional Jail Diversion Clinician
39. Meeting memo for New Business #3
40. Letter from Lisa Peach Berthelette requesting a street light at 62 Christopher Road
41. Meeting memo for New Business #4
42. Letter from Triton Treasurer Kevin Mahoney to Treasurer Karen Summit regarding FY25 tentative operating expenditures with attachments
43. FY25 Operating Budget Assessment Scenarios
44. Letter from Newbury Select Board Chair Alicia Greco to Triton Regional School Committee
45. Email from Salisbury Town Manager Neil Harrington Triton Superintendent Brian Forget
46. Letter from Chairman Cliff Pierce to Triton Regional School Committee re: FY25 Triton Regional School District Budget
47. Meeting memo for New Business #5
48. Year 1 Contract with Elm Services with attachment
49. Purchase order for 2023 Lawn Treatments with Grassmaster Plus, Inc. with attachments
50. Meeting memo for Old Business #1
51. Meeting memo for FY25 Budgets
52. FY25 Departmental Budget for Agricultural Commission
53. FY25 Departmental Budget for Town Counsel
54. FY25 Departmental Budget for Personnel
55. FY25 Departmental Budget for Hydrants

- 56. FY25 Departmental Budget for ADA Compliance
- 57. FY25 Departmental Budget for Parks and Recreation Committee
- 58. FY25 Departmental Budget for Bradstreet & Didge Properties
- 59. FY25 Departmental Budget for Retirement
- 60. FY25 Departmental Budget for Unemployment