

**TOWN OF RYE – BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
**Wednesday, November 29, 2018**  
**9:00 a.m. – Rye Town Hall**

*Present: Vice-Chair Phil Winslow and Selectman Keriann Roman*

*Others Present: Finance Director and Assistant Town Administrator Becky Bergeron,  
Police Chief Kevin Walsh and Police Executive Assistant Jessica Doucette*

**9:00 p.m.**

**I. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Vice Chair Phil Winslow called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and lead the Pledge of Allegiance

**II. WORK SESSION – Town Wide Fees**

Vice Chair Winslow started the work session by asking for clarification on the goals of this project.

Selectman Roman stated that the review of fees is to identify areas to increase overall revenue; in particular from nonresidents.

- **Police Department**

Chief Walsh presented the Board with a spreadsheet that his department had been working on for the last couple of years. He explained that it includes:

- Beach Front Communities in Maine
- Beach Front Communities in New Hampshire (including Exeter)
- Beach Front Communities in Massachusetts

**The areas of comparison include:**

- Permit Parking
- Other Options – Lots and Meters
  - Do these communities have infrastructure that supports parking enforcement?
- Fine Structure
  - What do these communities charge for permit parking and no parking violations?

- Last Fine Increase
  - When was the last time fines were increased in these communities? If it was 5-10 years, the fines maybe much lower than Rye.
- Late Penalties
  - How many days before late penalties are applied?
- Appeal Process
  - How many days in their appeal process?
- Tow Vehicle and/or Boot Ordinance
- Open Container Fines

Chief Walsh also presented the Board with a parking ticket for review. He reported that a future goal of the department may be to go electronically with hand held devices. He reported that the department went to an online payment system in 2016. In 2009, the department completed a Parking Survey. At that time, parking fines were increased from \$25.00 to \$30.00 with a 15% penalty for nonpayment after 5 days - \$45.00. Permit parking fines stayed at \$50.00 with a 15% penalty for nonpayment after 5 days - \$75.00.

**Data collected from 2016-2018:**

Parking Fees for Private Parking Lots

- Carriage House \$ 20.00
- Dunes/Sandpiper \$ 20.00
- Wallis Sands Park \$ 15.00 Car load \$30.00 Bus or RV
- Jenness State Beach \$ 2.00 per hour May to October
- The State charges a \$20.00 fine for any parking violation.
- Handicap violations - State statue of \$250.00.

The data shows that Rye's parking violation fine of \$30.00 is in the middle to low range.

Chief Walsh recommended an increase in parking fines to \$40.00. He also recommended that the permit parking fines be increased from \$50.00 to \$100.00. This is the same as Hampton and North Hampton.

**2018 Year to Date Statistical Data:**

- Tickets Issued 1,760
- Paid Tickets 1,198
- Revenue \$48,855

Nonpayment of tickets result in a court summons and/or suspension of driver's license.

Chief Walsh stated that the department will be looking into how to streamline the system in 2019, in order to make it more efficient and to reduce administrative time. This could include a new software program.

Selectmen Roman stated that the Beach Committee will be making their recommendations as well. She believes that the fines that the Beach Committee will be recommending will be much higher than what the Police Chief has recommended.

Chief Walsh explained that if the fines are too high more tickets will be contested. Which will increase administrative time and costs.

### **Open Container Fines:**

Chief Walsh recommended increasing the open container fine from \$50.00 to \$100.00. With a penalty assessment of \$24.00. This is the same as Hampton and North Hampton. Seabrook is higher at \$186.00.

**The Board will take this under advisement pending the Beach Committee's report and additional input from Chair Jenness.**

**Executive Assistant Jessica Doucette** presented the Board with the administrative fees for the department. She reported that she did a survey of these fees with other neighboring towns; which included Stratham, Greenland, Newmarket and Newington. She pointed out that for the most part, Rye is right on par with its fees. She added that for the "Right to Know" request, the municipality is only allowed to charge for the actual cost of providing the information (copy costs). She reported that the department does not charge residents for reports because they are tax payers. These fees are typically for nonresidents. She recommended that no increases should be made at this time.

- **Building Department**

**Building Inspector Peter Rowell** explained that most of his department fees have not changed.

He recommended to add to the building department fees:

Someone found without a permit will need to pay the permit fee plus a penalty of 100% of the permit fee (twice the permit fee).

Additionally, he recommended:

- Re-inspection fee of \$50.00 on a third field inspection (this was \$25.00).
- Renewal of a building permit is \$25.00 if done prior to expiration and \$50.00 after expiration. Building Permits are good for one year.
- Non-posting of the building permit is \$50.00.

Mr. Rowell also pointed out that there has never been a fee for Health Inspections. He researched other town's fees. The fees range from \$40.00 to \$100.00. He recommended that for a large facility, the fees for the inspection should be \$100.00 for the first hour and \$50.00 per additional hour.

**The Board will take this under advisement pending input from Dr. Snow and Chair Jenness. Also, the Board requested further research of other towns.**

- **Fire Department**
  - **Ambulance Fees**

Fire Chief Cotreau explained that Comstar handles the billing and collection of ambulance fees for the Town. They also handle the town's billing policy. They send out three bills and then a notice of collection if the bill is not paid. Comstar charges 5%. The fees are based on the level of service provided. There are two levels of services; BLS - Basic Life Support and ALS – Advanced Life Support. There are two levels of ALS; ALS1 and a more advanced ALS2. The Town only charges for calls where there is a transfer to a hospital.

The current fees are:

- BLS \$500.00
  - ALS1 \$800.00
  - ALS2 \$900.00
  - Plus \$10.00 per mile transport fee.
- **2017 Statistical Data:**
    - Total Charges \$243,000
    - Total Allowable \$158,000
    - Percent Collected 98%
      - Reduction largely due to Medicare and Medicaid Allowance.

Comstar's rate comparison to twenty-five other towns shows that Rye is fourth from the bottom in fees. If Rye increased its fees by 100% it will put the Town at the 80% range. (Note: This will not double the revenue due from Medicare and Medicaid.) The Town's existing rates are already at the maximum allowed for Medicare and Medicaid. Medicare and Medicaid cover 80% of the town's total ambulance runs.

If the Town increases its rates to the 100% mark (80% range), the fees would be:

- BLS \$1,000.00
- ALS1 \$1,600.00
- ALS2 \$1,800.00
- Plus \$20.00 per mile transport fee.

The Chief projects an increase in revenue of \$56,000.

The Chief provided information for increases of 25%, 50%, and 100%. He recommended an increase that will take into account the total expenditures of the department, including wear and tear on the vehicles. He stated that he would be satisfied with an increase of 50% and phasing in an increase over a couple of years.

**The Board will take this under advisement pending input from Chair Jenness. Also, the Board requested further information regarding the number of ambulance runs for Rye residents versus non-residents.**

**Other Fire Department and Permit Fees:**

Chief Cotreau reported that the only other fee that the Town currently charges for is \$25.00 for blasting permits. The Fire Department sent out a request for fee structures to the other towns in the district which included; Somersworth, Portsmouth, Durham, North Hampton, Hampton, Newington, Greenland, Exeter, Stratham, New Castle, Hampton Falls and Seabrook. He pointed out that a lot of the towns have no fees as well. However, Newington and Durham have more commercial charges, such as, false fire alarms. The Chief's recommendations for additional fees is based on 50% of the data rates of the other towns. He explained the reimbursement costs would be implemented only in the case of gross negligence and for non-emergency stand-by, which would be for an event that requires firefighters on standby (private fireworks, road races, etc.)

Selectman Roman suggested that there should be an ordinance requiring non-emergency stand-by for all events over a certain number of people in an event.

**The Board will take this under advisement pending input from Chair Jenness.**

The Chief explained that the most important thing in implementing these new fees and permits will be educating the public.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Phil Winslow to adjourn 11:15 a.m. Seconded by Keriann Roman. All in favor.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dyana F. Ledger