

**TOWN OF RYE - SELECT BOARD
MEETING
Monday, September 12, 2022 – 5:30 p.m.
Rye Town Hall**

Present: *Chair Phil Winslow; Vice-Chair Tom King; and Selectman Bill Epperson*

Others Present on behalf of the Town: *Interim Town Administrator Kevin Walsh*

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Winslow called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

II. NON-PUBLIC SESSION (1) per RSA 91-A:2, I (b) Collective Bargaining

At 5:32 p.m., Phil Winslow made a motion to go into Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:2 I (b) Collective Bargaining. Seconded by Tom King. Roll Call: Epperson – Yes, Winslow – Yes, King - Yes.

At 6:31 p.m., Phil Winslow made a motion to come out of Non-Public Session. Seconded by Bill Epperson. Roll Call: Epperson – Yes, Winslow – Yes, King - Yes.

6:30 p.m. RECONVENE PUBLIC MEETING

III. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Winslow reconvened the public meeting at 6:34 p.m. and led the pledge of allegiance.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Selectman Epperson announced that September 12th is National Women in Law Enforcement Day. Lieutenant Heather Cote of the Rye Police Department has been in law enforcement for over 20 years. She started her police career with Rye Police in 2000 and was a familiar face around town and in the schools for nearly 14 years. She returned to Rye after retirement to continue contributing to the Department and the Community. Over the course of her career, Lt. Cote worked extensively with the juvenile population. She became a forensic interviewer spending time with the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force. Lt. Cote is also as a trained crisis negotiator and was a member of a regional SWAT team as a negotiator for a number of years. She is currently the Department's training coordinator and is passionate about making the Department the best place it can be. Rye is lucky to have her as part of the Rye Police Department.

Selectmen Epperson continued that National Police Woman Day is celebrated each year on September 12th. The day acknowledges and celebrates the contribution of female police officers who enforce law and order around the country. Today, only roughly 10% of the police force in the United States is made up of women. National Police Woman Day hopes to rectify that by encouraging more women to join the service. Campaigns and events are organized to urge more women to take up law enforcement roles. Along with expressing gratitude to these officers, the day also hopes for a future where law enforcement bodies will have stronger female representation.

The Select Board thanked Lt. Heather Cote for her service to Rye.

- V. PUBLIC COMMENT** – (at the beginning of meeting, for any comment by any Rye resident on any topic. Requested time limit, up to 5 minutes each person.)

Steven Borne, 431 Wallis Road, reminded everyone that David Burdick, UNH Research Associate Professor, will be giving a presentation on Why Healthy Tidal Marshes Matter, which will be held at the Rye Public on Thursday, September 15th, 6:00 p.m. He also spoke about the increasing market price of the homes at Sea Glass Lane, which was approved as a fifty-five plus community. Mr. Borne submitted an outline from a project by the League of Women Voters. The project involves looking at town's websites to see if there is sufficient information to help voters with upcoming elections. The outline lists information that should be available through a town's website. The League of Women Voters reviewed this with the N.H. Secretary of State and it was approved by the N.H. Attorney General. This list of information will be going out to communities. Mr. Borne noted that he scored Rye and the website did not score very well. The information should be easily accessible to voters. Rye has an option of implementing this and improving how well essential information is communicated to voters.

- VI. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS** - (to be discussed at the meeting only if pulled off the consent agenda by one of the three Selectmen.)

Chair Winslow pulled all three items from the consent agenda for discussion.

- A.** Request from Steven Firestein, M.A., Volunteer Director for Kids Cancer Connection, Inc. for a proclamation recognizing September 25 – October 1 as Childhood Cancer Awareness Week in Rye

Chair Winslow read the following proclamation:

Whereas: The American Cancer Fund for Children and Kids Cancer Connection report cancer is the leading cause of death by disease among U.S. children between infancy and age 15. This tragic disease is detected in more than 16,000 of our country's young people each and every year; and

Whereas: One in five of our nation's children loses his or her battle with cancer. Many infants, children and teens will suffer from long-term effects of comprehensive

treatment, including secondary cancers. An estimated 400,000 children and adolescents are diagnosed with cancer globally each year; and

Whereas: Founded nearly thirty years ago by Steven Firestein, a member of the philanthropic Max Factor cosmetics family, the American Cancer Fund for Children, Inc., Kids Cancer Connection, Inc. along with Lions Clubs International are dedicated to helping these children and their families; and

Whereas: The American Cancer Fund for Children and Kids Cancer Connection provide a variety of vital patient psychosocial services to children undergoing cancer treatment at The Children's Hospital at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Norris Cotton Cancer Center in Lebanon, as well as participating hospitals throughout the country, thereby enhancing the quality of life for these children and their families; and

Whereas: The American Cancer Fund for Children and Kids Cancer Connection also sponsor toy distributions, Laughternoon - Laughter is Healing, positive appearance programs, pet-assisted therapy, KCC Supercar Experience, educational programs and hospital celebrations in honor of a child's determination and bravery to fight the battle against childhood cancer.

Now, therefore, I, Philip D. Winslow, Chairman of the Select Board of The Town of Rye, on behalf of the members of the Select Board and the residents of Rye, do hereby proclaim

**September 25th through October 1st as
"Childhood Cancer Awareness Week"**

in the Town of Rye and urge everyone to recognize and honor the children and their families affected by this deadly disease.

Seconded by Bill Epperson. All in favor.

- B.** Parsons Field Application: Seacoast Youth Sports – Flag Football requesting permission to use the field for practice on Monday nights from 9/12/22 – 10/24/22, 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Motion by Phil Winslow to approve the application of Seacoast Youth Sports contingent upon the certificate of insurance listing the Town of Rye specifically, and the \$50.00 per day to be waived. Seconded by Bill Epperson. All in favor.

- C.** Request to re-route traffic on Monday, October 10, 2022 on Washington Road for a water line install across Washington Road for the Town Hall Annex

Deputy Police Chief Scott Blaisdell explained that the section of road right in front of the Town Hall Annex will be shut down on October 10th for a water line installation. The traffic will be rerouted through the school parking lot, which is closed that day as it is a holiday. There will be cones and officers on site to make sure the traffic flows safely.

Motion by Phil Winslow to accept the proposal to reroute the traffic in front of the Town Hall Annex on Monday, October 10th. Seconded by Bill Epperson. All in favor.

VII. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. MRI – Final Values

Ed Tinker, an Assessor for Municipal Resources, Inc., met with the Select Board to review the final results of the town wide revaluation. The 2022 final assessed value is \$3,435,370,900. This is an increase of \$1,107,725,400 from the 2021 assessed value. The goal of the revaluation was to adjust all property assessments to market value. This ensures a fair and equitable distribution of the tax burden. The median assessment to sales ratio for one year is 98.40 where the IAAO Standards are 90% to 110%. The coefficient of dispersion (COD) for one year is 7.87 where IAAO Standards is less than 20.0. The price related differential (PRD) is 1.004 where the IAAO Standards are 0.98 to 1.03. Had the revaluation not been completed, the assessment to sales ration would have been approximately 57.3%, with a COD of 18.24 and a PRD of 1.09.

B. Deputy Chief Blaisdell & Lt. Cote – Presentation of Body Camera Program

Deputy Chief Scott Blaisdell and Lt. Heather Cote gave a presentation to the Select Board regarding the Body Camera Program that the Department has been working on for a number of months. The program started with Lt. Cote doing some legal research, and looking at internal investigations and complaints. They also spoke with other communities, similar to Rye, who are using body cameras and compared the different types that are available. The State is now able to provide funding to large and small police departments to provide an opportunity to have this equipment to as many departments as possible. The equipment itself is expensive, but most of the expense comes from the storage of the data that has to be retained. The State has outlined the parameters of how long certain data has to be kept and processed inhouse. Data for serious felonies have to be retained for the life of the statute of limitations. A basic call for service is something that would be kept for a shorter period of time; such as, thirty days.

The Rye Police Department follows the 21st Century Policing Pillars. These pillars can be applied to why the Department would benefit from this equipment. The first pillar is building trust and legitimacy in the community. No matter how well the officers do their job, complaints will happen. When those complaints happen, there are policies and people in place to investigate each one. A general internal investigation can take from three to ten hours and it requires a supervisor to spearhead that work. In researching other police departments, it was found that there was a dramatic reduction in the length of time that it took to investigate citizens' complaints. Also, adding the use of body cameras enhances transparency and helps to create trust within the community.

Having the body cameras will also allow for the Department to have more oversight of the officers on the road. Policy dictates that body camera footage be reviewed on a periodic basis with adjustments being made as necessary; such as, additional training for either that one officer or the whole department. The cameras can also be looked at as a deterrent to crime. Seeing the camera might change the way someone may act in a situation. With regards to training,

developing the future of the Department, and the increase in civil liability, this program has a place in the Rye Police Department. From a wellness and safety perspective, the officers want this technology while they do their jobs.

Deputy Chief Blaisdell reviewed the costs for the Axon Body Camera program:

- 15 body cameras
- Docking station
- Warranty
- Online licensing; cloud storage
- Software licensing
- Cameras are weather resistant. If anything happens to the device over the course of the agreement, Axon will replace it during the term of the contract.

Total cost: \$60,482

Rye has been approved to receive a state grant in the amount of \$27,482 with approximately \$33,000., or \$6,600 yearly over the 5-year period, being paid by Rye. The intent is to include this program in the budgeting cycle for 2023.

The Select Board expressed their support for the program.

C. Town Center Committee Next Steps

Chair Winslow noted that an email was received from Kaitlyn Coffey summarizing the Town Center Committee's last discussion of making a three-person task force to oversee the construction progress for the TAP Grant and maintaining the overall vision for the center of town. The committee is looking for more clarity.

Vice-Chair King explained that there are people who have the background and skills to do the contracting. A lot of people on the Town Center Committee don't have those skills or interest. The question is how to separate that work from the Town Center Committee in order to minimize the administrative burden on everyone, while still allowing those functions to occur.

Interim Town Administrator Kevin Walsh noted that Tom Jameson from DOT is predicting that the TAP Grant process will be able to begin in November. It's important for the Town to be ready to move forward and have a contractor picked by that November date.

Selectman Epperson expressed his support for having a task force/subcommittee who are qualified to make those kinds of decisions.

After a brief discussion, the Select Board agreed to ask the Town Center Committee to meet with the Board at their October 17th meeting. Vice-Chair King will follow up with Kaitlyn Coffey.

Vice-Chair King noted that there are opportunities for more residents to be involved with the town center effort, either on the contract or visioning side. If residents are interested in being involved, they may contact Janice Ireland in the Selectmen's Office; 603-964-5523.

VIII. CORRESPONDENCE

A. Community Power Update from the Energy Committee

Howard Kalet, Rye Energy Committee Member, gave an update to the Select Board in regard to Community Power. The Community Power Coalition of NH (CPCNH) has 20 communities onboard, which represents 20% of the State, with another 36 communities who have expressed interest. It's very close to half the State who have expressed interest. The commitment time comes towards the end of this year, when they develop the full policies and cost sharing agreement. At that point, there will be further discussions and the Energy Committee will evaluate others and bring them forward. The rate payers will be notified once the rates are determined in the spring. Everyone who is an Eversource customer will be notified a minimum of 30 days before the rates go into effect. Mr. Kalet submitted a package with the agreement and addendum that CPCNH legal staff has reviewed and approved.

Vice-Chair King pointed out that one of the NH Utility Commissioners wrote a statement about what an incredible opportunity this is for N.H. Residents to take control of their own energy costs. They have deregulated the system, which has been a 20+ year process. This is one of the final steps. The next step is to actually put this in place, and have people embrace this and shop for their energy.

Mr. Kalet noted that Rye Energy Committee will be holding a "Button Up" seminar by the end of the year. Insulation and other things that can be done to tighten up a house will be discussed. At that time, they will also be speaking about Community Power.

Motion by Phil Winslow to approve the modified Energy Aggregation Plan as presented. Seconded by Bill Epperson. All in favor.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

None

X. OLD BUSINESS

A. Town Hall Annex Update

Interim Town Administrator Walsh reported that the water main hookup is scheduled for the Town Hall Annex. The inside of the building is completely framed. The fire suppression system is on site and is being installed.

B. Harbor Road Bridge Update

DPW Director Jason Rucker gave an update to the Select Board regarding the Harbor Road bridge. An onsite meeting was held on October 2nd with a contractor and the bridge engineer from Hoyle, Tanner Engineering. The group discussed repairs, options, timeframes, and possible hurdles at that site walk. It was agreed at that meeting that a nondestructive scan should be completed for the bridge. A tentative date for that scan has been scheduled for the last week of

September. The test will scan the beams and girders to determine where the deficiencies lie and to what extent. From that information, they will be able to discern a legitimate load grading for the bridge and justify what is being done as far as road closures and how fast the repair schedule needs to be.

Mr. Rucker reviewed some of the scenarios that were discussed for the repair or replacement of the bridge. It was noted that the best scenario would be to repair the bridge, as a replacement would involve costs that are exponentially higher. A replacement would also require a lot of State permitting and would be a long-term project. The intent is to repair the bridge in the most cost-effective way that will get the longest life out of the bridge. He further spoke in regards to possible costs for the repair of the bridge. He will keep the Select Board updated on the results from the scan and how the project can be funded through the town, state, and possible grant opportunities.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Meeting Minutes

1. Meeting, August 10, 2022, 3:15 p.m., Town Hall

Motion by Phil Winslow to approve the minutes of August 10, 2022 as presented. Seconded by Bill Epperson. All in favor.

2. Non-Public Session, Wednesday, August 10, 2022:

(1) per RSA 91-A:3 II (d) Acquisition

(2) (2) per RSA 91-A:3 II (b) Hiring

Motion by Phil Winslow to approve as written and seal the minutes of the Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (d) Acquisition. Seconded by Bill Epperson. All in favor.

Motion by Phil Winslow to approve as written and seal the minutes of the Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (b) Hiring. Seconded by Bill Epperson. All in favor.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Bill Epperson to adjourn at 8:29 p.m. Seconded by Tom King. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dyana F. Ledger