

# ANNUAL TOWN MEETING – RESULTS

Town of Rowe  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Saturday, May 15, 2021 at 10:00 AM  
Rowe Elementary School

**Moderator:** Robert Clancy  
**Town Clerk:** Paul McLatchy III  
**Board of Selectmen:** Chair Charles Sokol, Vice-Chair Joanne Semanie, Selectman Edward Silva  
**Town Counsel:** Nicole Costanzo, Esq. – KP Law

The Annual Town Meeting was held on Saturday, May 15, 2021 at the Rowe Elementary School, located at 86 Pond Road. Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the meeting had been delayed from May 11<sup>th</sup> in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 53 of the Acts of 2020.

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM by Moderator Clancy. In attendance were approximately thirty-two (32) voters and six (6) guests. Moderator Clancy opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence for those who had passed in 2020: John “Jack” Williams, James “Jim” Carse, and Florence Veber.

Moderator Clancy read out a brief greeting welcoming voters to the town meeting. He thanked members of the town employees and officials for their work during the pandemic and the Municipal Light Plant for ensuring high-speed internet availability during the pandemic. Both groups received a round of applause. He then informed voters of the rules of the meeting. Tellers were not appointed.

Assessors Chair Rick Williams spoke to the impact on FY22 taxes. If all articles were approved as presented on the warrant, taxes will increase approximately \$0.25 per thousand, or 4.7%. This will represent a \$54 increase on the average home tax bill.

Moderator Clancy turned to the Board of Selectmen for comments. No comments were made at this time. Moderator Clancy then read out the warrant greeting.

**MOTION:** A motion was made and seconded to consider and approve Articles 1-5 collectively as a consent agenda.

***Motion to Consider and Approve Articles 1-5 Collectively as a Consent Agenda  
Passed by Show of Hands, Not Unanimous (1 No Vote)***

**ARTICLE 1:** To act on reports of the Town Officers and Committees.

***Passed as Part of Consent Agenda***

**ARTICLE 2:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize, pursuant to M.G.L. c.44 §53E½ and the Town of Rowe General Bylaws, the following sums for revolving funds, or take any action in relation thereto:

Revolving Fund	Entity Authorized to Spend from Fund	Fees, Charges, or Receipts Credited to Fund	Program or Activity Expenses Payable from Fund	Restrictions or Conditions on Expenses Payable from Fund	Fiscal Years
Emergency Dispensing Site	Board of Health	Receipts Related to the Emergency Dispensing Site Operations	Dispensing medicines or medical supplies during an emergency	Limit of \$1,000.00	Fiscal Year 2022
Recycling Program	Board of Health	Receipts Related to the Recycling Program	Operation of solid waste and recycling programs, membership in and services of the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District, and the purchase of recycled content or environmentally preferable products	Limit of \$5,000.00	Fiscal Year 2022
Vaccine Services	Board of Health	Receipts from Insurance Billing	Vaccine Services	Limit of \$6,000.00	Fiscal Year 2022
School Programs	School Committee	Fees for School Programs	Offset Department Costs of School Programs	Limit of \$10,000.00	Fiscal Year 2022

Old Home Day	Old Home Day Committee	Receipts Generated by Old Home Day Activities and Programs	Expenses of Old Home Day	Limit of \$2,000.00	Fiscal Year 2022
Refuse Garden	Board of Health	Receipts Related to the Refuse Garden Operations	Operation of the town Refuse Garden	Limit of \$5,000.00	Fiscal Year 2022 and Subsequent Years
Planning Board Legal/ Consulting	Planning Board	Receipts Related to Fees for Special Permits and Other Work of the Planning Board	Legal consultation and representation	Limit of \$50,000.00	Fiscal Year 2022 and Subsequent Years
Park Programs	Park Commission	Receipts Related to Park Programs	Operation of programs run by the Pelham Lake Park	Limit of \$2,000.00	Fiscal Year 2022 and Subsequent Years

***Passed as Part of Consent Agenda***

**ARTICLE 3:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for, accept, and expend federal and state grants as may be available, or take any action in relation thereto.

***Passed as Part of Consent Agenda***

**ARTICLE 4:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the treasurer to enter into compensating balance agreements during the 2022 fiscal year, pursuant to M.G.L. c.44 §53F, or take any action in relation thereto.

***Passed as Part of Consent Agenda***

**ARTICLE 5:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the following sums and to set the stipends/salary compensation for all elected officials of the town as provided by M.G.L. c.41 §108, to be made effective from July 1, 2021, as follows or take any action in relation thereto:

**Elected Boards & Committees:**

Board of Assessors (3) .....	\$5,354
Board of Health (3) .....	\$4,938
Board of Selectmen (3) .....	\$5,928
School Committee (3) .....	\$4,564

**Elected Town Officers**

Constable.....	\$549
Moderator.....	\$439
Town Clerk .....	\$13,835

**TOTAL ELECTED OFFICIALS SALARIES FROM TAXATION.....\$35,607**

*A question was raised by Ramon Sanchez as to the status of a Stipend Review Committee which was approved at the 2020 Annual Town Meeting. Moderator Clancy reported that no one had expressed interest in being appointed. Mr. Sanchez volunteered to be appointed to said committee.*

***Passed as Part of Consent Agenda***

**ARTICLE 6:** A motion was made and seconded to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,150 for interest on indebtedness for the 2022 Fiscal Year.

***Passed by Show of Hands, Unanimous***

**ARTICLE 7:** A motion was made and seconded to raise and appropriate the following sums for the conduct of general government, including the charges and expenses of the various town offices, for the 2022 Fiscal Year:

**Administration**

General Administration.....	\$135,752
Municipal Audit.....	\$8,000
Executive Secretary .....	\$50,469
Administrative Assistant to the Boards.....	\$43,706
Town Hall Custodian Wages .....	\$19,422
Custodian Expenses .....	\$4,775
Legal .....	\$8,000
Tax Collector Salary .....	\$8,528
Tax Collector Operations.....	\$7,997
Treasurer Salary.....	\$28,397
Treasurer Operations.....	\$10,000
Assistant Town Clerk Stipend .....	\$1,200
Town Clerk Expenses .....	\$2,960
Conservation Commission.....	\$1,180
Council on Aging.....	\$3,800
Goal Post Editor Wages .....	\$6,304
Goal Post Operations .....	\$3,000
Veteran’s Services .....	\$4,869
FRCOG Services.....	\$23,044
Town Accountant Salary.....	\$44,373
<u>Town Accountant Expenses.....</u>	<u>\$3,972</u>
Subtotal Administration.....	\$419,748

**Board of Assessors**

Assessors’ Clerk Wages.....	\$12,000
Assessors’ Reval/Annual Updates .....	\$22,600
<u>Assessors’ Operations.....</u>	<u>\$9,900</u>
Subtotal Board of Assessors .....	\$44,500

**Planning Board**

Planning Board Operations.....	\$2,000
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**TOTAL GENERAL GOVERNMENT FROM TAXATION .....\$466,248**

*Passed by Show of Hands, Not Unanimous (1 No Vote)*

**ARTICLE 8:** A motion was made and seconded to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000 to the Planning Board Legal/Consulting Revolving Fund for the 2022 Fiscal Year.

*Passed by Show of Hands, Unanimous*

**ARTICLE 9:** A motion was made and seconded to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 to be used as a reserve fund, pursuant to M.G.L. c.40, §6 for the extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures for the 2022 Fiscal Year.

*Passed by Show of Hands, Unanimous*

**ARTICLE 10:** A motion was made and seconded to raise and appropriate the following sums for the operation and maintenance of public works and facilities for the 2022 Fiscal Year:

**Highway Department**

DPW Salaries and Wages .....	\$296,033
Roadside Work.....	\$5,000
DPW Operations .....	\$215,038
<u>Winter Roads .....</u>	<u>\$68,612</u>
Subtotal Highway Department.....	\$584,683

**Other Public Works & Facilities**

Street Lighting .....	\$5,500
Municipal Light Plant Operations.....	\$1,000
Municipal Light Plant Manager Stipend.....	\$6,800
<u>Dam Maintenance/Repair .....</u>	<u>\$1,200</u>
Subtotal Other Public Works & Facilities .....	\$14,500

**Cemetery Commission**

Cemetery Operations .....	\$15,000
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**TOTAL PUBLIC WORKS & FACILITIES FROM TAXATION.....\$614,183**

*Passed by Show of Hands, Not Unanimous (1 No Vote)*

**ARTICLE 11:** A motion was made and seconded to appropriate from any available fund the sum of \$141,851 for the maintenance, repair, improvement, and construction of town highways, or any other purpose allowed under Chapter 90, which amounts shall be reimbursed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts through funds made available by Chapter 90.

*Passed by Show of Hands, Unanimous*

**ARTICLE 12:** A motion was made and seconded to raise and appropriate the following sums for public safety for the 2022 Fiscal Year:

**Police Department**

Police Salaries.....	\$57,347
<u>Police Operations .....</u>	<u>\$10,200</u>
Subtotal Police Department .....	\$67,547

**Fire Department**

Fire Department Stipends & Wages .....	\$35,722
<u>Fire Department Operations.....</u>	<u>\$43,392</u>
Subtotal Fire Department.....	\$79,114

**Emergency Management**

Emergency Management Stipends.....	\$3,864
Emergency Management Operations .....	\$1,000
<u>Generator Maintenance.....</u>	<u>\$3,500</u>
Subtotal Emergency Management .....	\$8,364

**Animal Control and Inspection**

Animal Control Stipends.....	\$1,157
Animal Inspector Stipend .....	\$532
<u>Regional Dog Kennel.....</u>	<u>\$350</u>
Subtotal Animal Control.....	\$2,039

**TOTAL PUBLIC SAFETY FROM TAXATION.....\$157,064**

*Passed by Show of Hands, Unanimous*

**ARTICLE 13:** A motion was made and seconded to raise and appropriate the following sums for public health for the 2022 Fiscal Year:

**Public Health**

Health Department Stipends and Wages.....	\$77,394
Board of Health Operations .....	\$66,085

**TOTAL PUBLIC HEALTH FROM TAXATION .....**\$143,479

*Passed by Show of Hands, Not Unanimous (1 No Vote)*

**ARTICLE 14:** A motion was made and seconded to raise and appropriate the following sums for public schools for the 2022 Fiscal Year:

**Education**

Rowe School PreK-6 Operating Budget .....	\$1,146,527
Rowe School Secondary 7-12 .....	\$503,453

**TOTAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS FROM TAXATION .....\$1,649,980**

*Passed by Show of Hands, Unanimous*

**ARTICLE 15:** A motion was made and seconded to raise and appropriate the following sums for Rowe Town Library for the 2022 Fiscal Year:

**Rowe Town Library**

Library Wages .....	\$43,975
Library Operations .....	\$28,150

**TOTAL ROWE TOWN LIBRARY FROM TAXATION .....\$72,125**

*Passed by Show of Hands, Unanimous*

**ARTICLE 16:** A motion was made and seconded to raise and appropriate the following sums for management and operation of Pelham Lake Park for the 2022 Fiscal Year:

**Pelham Lake Park**

Park Wages .....	\$110,962
Park Operations .....	\$23,500

**TOTAL PELHAM LAKE PARK FROM TAXATION.....\$134,462**

*Passed by Show of Hands, Not Unanimous (1 No Vote)*

**ARTICLE 17:** A motion was made and seconded to raise and appropriate the following sums for culture and recreation for the 2022 Fiscal Year:

**Culture and Recreation**

Gracy House Operations .....	\$1,000
Beautification .....	\$500

**TOTAL CULTURE AND RECREATION FROM TAXATION .....\$1,500**

*Passed by Show of Hands, Unanimous*

**ARTICLE 18:** A motion was made and seconded to raise and appropriate the following sums for pensions and insurance for the 2022 Fiscal Year:

**Pensions and Insurance**

Franklin County Retirement Assessment.....	\$151,240
Unemployment Insurance .....	\$20,000
Group Health/Dental/Life Insurance.....	\$655,000
Medicare Tax – Town Share.....	\$27,000

**TOTAL PENSIONS AND INSURANCE FROM TAXATION .....\$853,240**

*Passed by Show of Hands, Not Unanimous (1 No Vote)*

**ARTICLE 19:** A motion was made and seconded to appropriate from free cash the following sums for special projects:

<b>ADMIN</b>	Oil Tank Removal from School.....	\$20,000
<b>ADMIN</b>	Oil Tank Replacement & Oil Removal.....	\$5,000
<b>PARK</b>	Tree Removal.....	\$9,500
<b>PARK</b>	Trail Assessment.....	\$4,420
<b>ASSESSORS</b>	Consultant/Legal Support .....	\$50,000
<b>CEMETERY</b>	North Cemetery Wall Repair .....	\$3,600
<b>FIRE</b>	Equipment Rack.....	\$8,000
<b>FIRE</b>	Wilderness Rescue Equipment .....	\$4,500
<b>OHD</b>	Fireworks- 2022.....	\$5,000
<b>TOTAL SPECIAL PROJECTS FROM FREE CASH .....</b>		<b>\$110,020</b>

*Passed by Show of Hands, Not Unanimous (1 No Vote)*

**ARTICLE 20:** A motion was made and seconded to transfer from Free Cash to the Stabilization Fund the sum of \$12,500 to replenish funds appropriated from the Stabilization Fund in October 2020.

*Passed by Show of Hands, Unanimous*

**ARTICLE 21:** A motion was made and seconded to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 for the purpose of paying down principal on the broadband debt.

*Passed by Show of Hands, Unanimous*

**ARTICLE 22:** A motion was made and seconded to appropriate from the Capital Stabilization Fund the following sums for Capital Improvements, Repairs, and Property:

<b>FIRE</b>	Utility Vehicle.....	\$300,000
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*Note: Town counsel clarified that this vote would be to purchase and equip a utility vehicle.*

*Note: Two-thirds vote is required to pass Articles removing sums from Stabilization funds.*

*Passed by Show of Hands, Unanimous*

**ARTICLE 23:** A motion was made and seconded to create and establish a new Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Stabilization Fund for the purpose of funding retiree benefits, including, but not limited to health insurance, dental insurance, life insurance, and pension assessments.

*Note: Articles creating new stabilization funds require a 2/3 majority vote.*

*Passed by Show of Hands, Not Unanimous (3 No Votes)*

*Moderator Declared 2/3 threshold met*

**ARTICLE 24:** A motion was made and seconded to transfer \$47,750 from Free Cash to the OPEB Stabilization Fund.

*Passed by Show of Hands, Not Unanimous (4 No Votes)*

**ARTICLE 25:** A motion was made and seconded to transfer \$47,750 from Free Cash to the Stabilization Fund.

*Passed by Show of Hands, Unanimous*

**ARTICLE 26:** A motion was made and seconded to create and establish a new Highway Stabilization Fund, for the purpose of funding infrastructure repairs and improvements, including, but not limited to: paved roads, dirt roads, bridges, culverts, and drains.

*Note: Articles creating new stabilization funds require a 2/3 majority vote.*

*Passed by Show of Hands, Unanimous*

**ARTICLE 27:** To transact any other business that may lawfully come before the meeting:

- Town Clerk Paul McLatchy III wanted to remind voters that elections would take place later in the day from 1-5 PM at the school gym and encouraged people to vote.
- Town Clerk Paul McLatchy III wanted to acknowledge Town Hall Custodian Danielle Larned for her work in keeping the building clean and safe during the pandemic. A round of applause was given for Ms. Larned.
- Principal Bill Knittle announced that teacher Janice Lapointe would be retiring at the end of this year and wanted to thank her for her 38 years of service. Ms. Lapointe received a large round of applause.
- Ramon Sanchez requested information on when the gym at town hall would be reopening. Board of Health Chair Margaret Rice stated that the ventilation in the gym area is poor, and that it could only be reopened during nicer weather when the windows could all be open. She also stated vaccinations would be required to use the gym.
- Park Commissioner Laurie Pike encouraged voters to spread the word that there were open spots in the summer youth Grasshopper Program (run by the Park for FY22).

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn and passed unanimously. The meeting was closed at 10:34 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul McLatchy III, Town Clerk  
May 15, 2021

A True Copy, Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rowe Town Clerk