

Board of Selectmen  
February 20, 2024  
Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

Present: Selectmen Ed Haskell, Bob Berti and Isaac DeWever  
Town Administrator Joe Chivell

6:30 PM Meeting was called to order by Board Chair Ed Haskell.  
Payroll and accounts payable checks were reviewed and signed.

Documents to review & sign:

- Payroll worksheet
- Intent to Cut 7-001 003
- Agreement with CAI

6:30 PM Police Department Update –

Rumney Police Chief, Greg Patten, met with the Board of Selectmen to provide a Department update.

Chief Patten asked if he could speak with the Board of Selectmen in nonpublic session to discuss a personnel issue.

6:32 PM Selectman, Ed Haskell, made a motion to enter nonpublic session as allowed in NH RSA 91-A:3, II(a). The motion received a second from Selectman, Bob Berti. There was no discussion on the motion. Following a roll call vote, the motion passed 3-0.

6:40 PM Selectman, Ed Haskell, made a motion to leave nonpublic session and return to public session. The motion was seconded by Selectman, Isaac DeWever. There was no discussion on the motion. Following a roll call vote the motion passed 3-0.

During the nonpublic session, discussion involved the Town of Campton offering current Rumney Police Officer, Thomas Sturges, an additional three dollars (\$3.00) an hour over the \$29.00 an hour he is currently being paid, a sign on bonus, five hundred (\$500.00) dollar a week retention pay, three (3) weeks' vacation, ninety-six (96) hours sick time, a take home vehicle, with no on-call requirements, to leave Rumney and take a position with the Town of Campton Police Department. Chief Patten reported that Thomas Sturges had submitted his letter of resignation effective February 25, 2024.

Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, suggested that the Board act on the notice of resignation. Selectman, Isaac DeWever, made a motion to accept Thomas Sturges letter of resignation. The motion received a second from Selectman, Ed Haskell. Selectman, Bob Berti, wanted it noted that he was upset and disappointed with the actions taken by Thomas Sturges. Berti explained that Sturges had met several times with the Police Chief and met once with the Board of Selectmen prior to his being hired and had a full understanding of the pay and benefits being

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offered. The Town was patient and allowed a delay in hiring, so that Sturges could complete his last few months of service to the police department he worked at in Connecticut, and then supported his efforts to transfer his police certification from Connecticut to New Hampshire, to leave Rumney just six (6) months later. Berti stated that he would acknowledge the letter of resignation but would not vote to accept it. Both Selectmen Haskell and DeWever noted their disappointment and noting their support for Chief Patten and his efforts to provide police coverage to Rumney. The motion was tabled with no action taken. It will be noted in Thomas Sturges personnel file that he resigned and is not subject to rehire.

Chief Patten reported that the Body Cameras and docking station have arrived. The docking station has been installed and he will work on registering the cameras. The cruiser camera equipment is scheduled to be installed April 16<sup>th</sup>. Axon will handle the installation on-site.

Chief Patten let the Board know that the Fleet Camera system works best by downloading the camera information to the docking station via cellphone system. Chief Patten let the Board know that AT&T offers a 1<sup>st</sup> Net system for emergency services. He added that AT&T has added antennas up the Route 25 corridor, so he could have coverage in most of Rumney. Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, suggested that it is time that the Town provide a cellphone package to the Police Department so that personal phones are not being used for police work. The Board agreed and asked that the Police Chief provide a cellphone agreement to them for review.

Chief Patten reported that call volume is up. Types of activity being handled are thefts, noting the areas around us have started to see catalytic converter thefts again, Domestic violence calls, sexual assaults, drug activity is up, criminal threatening, and burglaries that occurred over the winter are being reported.

#### 6:50 PM Conservation Commission -

The Board of Selectmen met with the members of the Conservation Commission to discuss the request made by Bruce White to purchase 1.4 acres of land on the west end of the former Rumney Rest Area parcel. Bruce White is the abutter of Rumney Rest Area parcel. During the process of purchasing the Rumney Rest Area, the Town was required to have the parcel surveyed. During the survey, it was found that the western boundary line of the Rumney Rest Area is located further west than Bruce White, and the two prior owners of that property knew of, in that White's parcel has 1.4 acres less of land than he had thought. This led to White's request to purchase that area from the Town.

Janice Mulherin, chair of the Conservation Commission, explained that the Conservation Commission had been asked to work with the Board of Selectmen, financially, to obtain the Rumney Rest Area parcel. Their intent to obtain the parcel was to protect the Baker River Watershed. The Conservation Commission is not in favor of a straight up sale of the 1.4 acres. Mulherin added that it may not be the current owner that may disrupt the area in question, but if there are no restrictions put into place, and if the parcel is not owned by the Town, future generations could cause disruption of the area affecting the watershed. There was a discussion on whether there should be a sale of the 1.4 acres in question, who receives the funds from the sale, the different types of restrictions that could be put into place and the timetable to work this out.

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Selectman, Bob Berti, stated that he is not sure if any sort of sale of this property should occur without the issue going before the Town's people.

It was decided that the Conservation Commission would develop recommendations during their upcoming March meeting, providing them to the Board of Selectmen to review in the March 18<sup>th</sup> meeting, then invite Bruce White to an April meeting to discuss options to address his request.

#### 7:30 PM Town Administrator Report -

Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, reported to the Board he and Road Agent, Nick Coursey, have started having monthly web meetings with the State of NH-DOT and HEB Engineering regarding the Buffalo Road Bridge Replacement project. Chivell explained the difficulty that he is having in getting a response to the required Construction Administration Service from anyone other than HEB Engineering. Chivell reported that Nick Coursey met with representatives from NH-DOT, USFS, and HEB regarding the trees that need to be removed from the worksite. The trees that need to be removed were marked and bids for the work have been requested. The Bridge Project is on schedule to go out to bid in April, and the work to be done in August and September of 2024.

The Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Town Report drafts have been reviewed and approved to go to print.

The 2024 Warrant Articles and MS-626 were provided for review and signing by the Board members. Each document was signed by all three members of the Board. Copies will be posted at the Town Office, Russell School, and Rumney Post Office. Copies will be submitted to the NH-Department of Revenue, with the original being given to the Rumney Town Clerk.

A copy of a quote to reprogram several of the radios that the Fire Department received as a donation was provided for review. Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, explained that the Rumney Fire Chief will ask to be authorized to have the work done when he is at the March 4<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

#### 7:45 PM Old Business –

The Public Budget Hearing held on February 12<sup>th</sup> was reviewed. The Board felt that the Hearing went well. Selectman, Bob Berti, suggested that the Moderator be reminded that Article 15 was submitted by Petition and may want to ask if the supporter(s) of the petition want to speak.

Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, stated that he spoke with Fire Chief, Evan Hacker, about being prepared to speak to Article 14, testing of Hose and Ladders.

Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, stated that he will be trying to set up a meeting of the Rest Area Committee now that Spring is nearing.

#### 7:50 PM New Business –

The Board members were provided with a copy of the current Employee Agreement between the Town and the Police Chief. Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, explained that the current

agreement is due to expire in May 2024. Chivell stated during the next two meetings a new agreement should be created and presented to the Police Chief. Chivell asked the Board to give some thought to goals and pay raise methods they would like to see in the new agreement.

An initial draft of the Fire Chief Job Description was provided to the Board for review. The description was a combination of several like size towns and input that had been discussed over the past year.

During the initial review, Board members stated that it was a good document and should be close to being the job description they can work with.

8:15 PM Selectman, Isaac DeWever, made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Selectman, Ed Haskell. There was no discussion on the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

Sincerely submitted,

Joe Chivell  
Town Administrator  
Rumney, NH

Up-coming Meeting Dates

Planning Board	February 27, 2024
Board of Selectmen Meeting	March 4, 2024
Trustee of Trust Funds	March 7, 2024
Town Elections	March 12, 2024
Town Meeting Business Session	March 14, 2024
Board of Selectmen Meeting	March 18, 2024