

**TOWN OF ROME, MAINE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
JANUARY 8, 2018
MINUTES**

Chairman Richard LaBelle called the meeting of the Board of Selectmen to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Office at the Rome Community Center in Rome. Selectmen LaBelle, Stratton, and Charles were present. A quorum was declared. Also present at all or parts of the meeting were Kimberly Brooks, Carroll Bubar, Gary Foss, State Representative Gary Hilliard, Tammy Lyons, Ed Pearl, Jr., and James Wroblewski.

Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Stratton/Charles Motion to accept minutes for December 26, 2017 selectmen's meeting.
LaBelle, Stratton, Charles in favor (3-0)

Stratton/Charles Motion to accept minutes for January 1, 2018 selectmen's meeting.
LaBelle, Stratton, Charles in favor (3-0)

State Representative Gary Hilliard held discussions with the Board regarding the current setup of emergency dispatch services. Assistant Fire Chief Ed Pearl provided an update/overview of the dispatching process. There is a difference in answer and response depending on whether the call is initiated from a landline or cell phone. There are also different dispatch centers depending on your cell location within the town. The Town currently pays for dispatching services to Augusta, Skowhegan, and Waterville.

The Board expresses a strong desire to see processes and services streamline and likely centralized. This has an impact on responses to medical emergencies or calls for service.

Representative Hilliard suggests developing a coalition of communities in similar positions that may be impacted. It would then allow for more traction to be gained and possibly cause change. Representative Hilliard also suggests contacting Maine Municipal Association to get a better understanding of the association's position on dispatching services.

Fire Chief Gary Foss provides expanded background on the existing dispatching services structure and how it came to be.

Stratton/Charles Motion to accept the resignation of Barbara Holt from the Budget
Committee.
LaBelle, Stratton, Charles in favor (3-0)

Charles/Stratton Motion to accept a \$200.00 donation to Rome Fire & Rescue from Lincoln
and Faye Nye.
LaBelle, Stratton, Charles in favor (3-0)

Treasurer and Tax Collector Tammy Lyons stated that the auditors are still planned to be in the office on January 25 and 26. Ms. Lyons also has questions about the proposed transition from elected to appointed positions. The Board provides an overview of the proposal and reiterates the importance of understanding that it will take over a year to transition, so not to interfere with currently elected officials. This proposal will expand office hours for all services at the Town Office.

- Charles/Stratton Motion to warrant an article proposing the transition of the position of Town Clerk from elected to appointed, effective Town Meeting 2019.
LaBelle, Stratton, Charles in favor (3-0)
- Charles/Stratton Motion to warrant an article proposing the transition of the position of Treasurer from elected to appointed, effective Town Meeting 2019.
LaBelle, Stratton, Charles in favor (3-0)
- Charles/Stratton Motion to warrant an article proposing the transition of the position of Tax Collector from elected to appointed, effective Town Meeting 2019.
LaBelle, Stratton, Charles in favor (3-0)

The Town's audit firm has been contacted for a written opinion related to the proposed transition from elected to appointed positions. The Board will also seek opinion from current legal counsel regarding this proposal.

The Board schedules public hearings on the proposed conversion from elected to appointed positions. Hearings will be held on January 22 and February 5. It is important that the public be well aware of the implications and be well-educated prior to voting on the issues.

The Board schedules Budget Committee meetings for January 29 and January 30 at 6:00 p.m., pending availability of the Board. Selectman Stratton will confirm availability with the membership and the dates may be confirmed at the next meeting.

- LaBelle/Charles Motion to warrant an article for the raising and appropriation of \$43,000 for solid waste disposal.
LaBelle, Stratton, Charles in favor (3-0)
- LaBelle/Charles Motion to warrant an article proposing the raising and appropriation of \$98,186 for Town salaries.
LaBelle, Stratton, Charles opposed (0-3)
- Stratton/Charles Motion to warrant an article proposing the raising and appropriation of \$98,669 for Town salaries, to include an increase to \$14.50 per hour for the Town Clerk and Excise Tax Collector.
LaBelle, Stratton, Charles in favor (3-0)
- Stratton/Charles The meeting be adjourned.
LaBelle, Stratton, Charles in favor (3-0)

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly R. Brooks
Assistant to the Selectmen