

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

August 25, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Adams, Fred Kidder II (via phone), Chase Kling

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, Jason Bachus, Laurence Duffy, Charlie Pierce, Dawn Farmer, Pierre Kozely, Tom Thomson

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

The meeting recessed for the Public Hearing at 5:31 pm

The meeting reconvened at 5:45 pm

Roll Call – John Adams-present, Chase Kling-present, Fred Kidder, present via phone

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Kidder, seconded by Kling to accept the minutes of 08/11/2021 (as amended)

Motion Passed 2/0 (Adams abstained)

Reports

- A. **Assessor**-Todd Haywood called in to the meeting to discuss the 2021 MS-1 form. The net valuation increased by \$2,059,683 which includes \$1,015,100 of utility values. State and school tax rates are based on the assessed values less utilities.

Motion made by Kling, seconded by Adams to accept the 2021 MS-1 Motion passed 3/0

Kidder asked what impact high sales values will have on future assessments – will Orford have over inflated home values? Haywood said the State equalizes the assessments based on sales that occur in town annually. The assessor doesn't change the assessed value in Avitar, but as the State equalizes the values the level of assessment will likely change from year to year.

Haywood reported on his conversation with Heidi Miller regarding the water front assessment on one of the camp's properties, and discussed with her the reason for the change. Kling asked how the assessment is applied to commercial/seasonal properties. Haywood said there is no "summer camp" exemption to apply and properties are assessed based on land acreage, building valuations and improvements. Water frontage is assessed separately and is in line with the assessment of other property owners with water frontage.

Cyclical data verification will begin within the next month in Orford – this is to update records based on improvements and changes to what's currently on file. This is NOT a re-assessment.

- B. **Police Department** – Chief Bachus presented his July report to the Selectboard. There was a total of 66 calls for service and the NH State Police responded to 4 calls. The Orford PD calls included residential alarms, animal complaints, 12 assists to other agencies, 6 criminal follow-ups, thefts, suspicious persons and an untimely death. Motor vehicle enforcement included 24 motor vehicle stops, with 7 summonses issued.

Bachus continues to research the best option for the cruiser replacement costs. He's hopeful that the cost will be less than the funds in the Cruiser Capital Reserve account, but with rising costs this might not be possible.

Bachus continues to receive concerns about speeding from residents. This includes residents on Bridge Street, Route 10, Route 25A and Dame Hill road. Bachus varies his days, time and locations to patrol. Can the excess speeding be contributed to summertime activity? Bachus some speeding can be attributed to this, but it's become a year-round issue. Unfortunately, with 10 criminal arrests (five of which are felony level), and two untimely deaths, the required paperwork cuts into his patrolling time. The presence of police officers does curb a lot of speeding, as does the electronic speed signs (plus those signs can help gather actual data to be used for analysis).

Members of the Bridge Street group spoke on their concerns of fast traffic on their road. Duffy said the speeding has increased significantly over the last 2-3 years, both coming and going from the bridge. It appears to him to primarily be NH and Vermont vehicles. He'd like to see additional help to patrol this street, and because Bridge Street is a state highway, can Orford ask the State Police (NHSP) to assist with this issue. Bachus said he can request this, but most towns on NH are in the same situation, and with the NH SP short staffed it's unlikely Orford will get extra help. Even if the NHSP agreed to patrol Bridge Street, this would be a low priority if a more serious call comes in. The other issue is the noise from trucks and motorcycles – and the faster they go, the louder they get. Bachus said he's not aware of any NH Law on noise, however, if a muffler is changed after the vehicle has been inspected, Bachus can require them to be re-inspected.

Kozely said the primary time for speeding are between 6:30am – 8:00 am and 3:45 pm – 5:30 pm. He feels more police presence is needed and if more tickets are issued drivers will start to slow down. Thomson would encourage Bachus to increase his presence especially as school is starting. Bachus said he uses roadside discretion with speeders. If the speed isn't significantly over the speed limit, he usually gives a warning which goes into the system, and if he stops that driver again they will get a ticket. He will also give a reduced ticket if the violation is way over the speed limit, and lets the driver what the ticket would cost if he'd written for the actual speed vs the ticketed speed.

Old Business

A. Quinttown Road Condition – Thomson presented a complaint to the Selectboard regarding the lack of maintenance of Quinttown Road, Mousley & Marsh Roads and the lack of repair to the Mousley bridge over Jacobs Brook. Thomson said some portions of these roads haven't been maintained for 2 ½ years, when it comes to grading and ditching, and almost the entire railing on the north side of the bridge has been broken or damaged. Thomson presented copies of emails between himself and the Selectboard liaison from May 2020 regarding the lack of grading from the 4 corners to Dixon's camp on Quinttown Road. He was told that the full extent of Quinttown Road would be graded, however, it was not. In October 2020 the Highway department used the leaf blower to the end of Quinttown Road, and essentially blew leaves into the ditches on both sides of the road, but no grading occurred for the last 3,000 feet (4-corners to Dixon's camp). Thomson discussed this with Kevin Sawyer, road crew employee, and was told by Sawyer that the Road Agent told him not to grade that 3,000' of the road as

it didn't need it. Thomson reminded the Selectboard this is a Class V road and we receive state funding to maintain these roads.

Thomson is very frustrated with the lack of maintenance of this section of road and is thankful that Hurricane Henri didn't hit as expected. With almost no crown in this road, and the lack of ditching, the hurricane could have caused significant damage.

Thomson feels a schedule is needed for cleaning out culverts every spring and fall. He feels the clogged culverts caused a lot of damage to our roads during the July 2017 storm and previous ones.

Thomson mentioned a tree that was down and partially in the Quinttown Road. It was there for several weeks, and normally he would have cut it and removed it. But after another citizen was reprimanded for doing some grading, he didn't feel comfortable doing the work himself. The Selectboard said the Road Agent can give permission to help. Thomson formally requests the Selectboard notify the Road Agent when Quinttown Road is graded/ditched, the work is done to the end of the road, not just to the 4-corners. Thomson will submit photos of these areas early next week for their review.

B. Hazardous Properties Status – Dobbins-Marsh reported she's not received any response to the last few emails sent to the property owner of the old Orford Inn. The Selectboard will discuss what the next action will be at the 09/08/21 board meeting.

C. Update of Outstanding Projects

- a) Archertown Bridge at Jacobs Brook – at this time there is no update to report
- b) Town Road #100 (FEMA) Project Update – Adams reported the guard rails were installed and Bob Durfee of DuBois & King has created the punch list that will be reviewed with the contractor and Adams at a completion meeting.

Kling (as an abutter) said the road has large chunks of 6" minus crushed ledge that the contractor put down under lament. This has created a dangerous situation. He requested the contractor return to finish the job properly and have the road repaired. Adams will notify Bob Durfee to discuss with the contractor.

D. Engineer Fee to create bid specs and project cost estimation of the Clough Brook culvert on Orfordville Road – Kling feels that local contractors can best replace this culvert. We have the NH DES wetland permit, and many local contractors understand the DES requirement to work in the wetlands, and also understand what the job entails. Kling will spearhead this project and speak with several local contractors about the project.

E. Historical Barn Reviews – the Selectboard agreed to send letter to the property owners with historical barns requesting a list of updates and photos to support the work done.

New Business

A. Approval of Reimbursement Request for Town Expenditures made on behalf of the Trustee of the Trust funds – Dobbins-Marsh presented the list of expenses paid by the Town that are to be reimbursed by the Trustee of the Trust Funds.

Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kidder to approve the list for submission to the Trustees of the Trust Funds in the amount of \$46,505.26. Motion passed 2/0 (Kling was a no vote)

B. Town Hall Heritage Trust Capital Reserve account –The Trustees of the Trust Funds want to invest the funds into an account earning a higher interest rate, but need to know if any spending of this account will occur over the next 6-12 months. Dobbins-Marsh will email the chair of the Historical Society regarding this issue.

C. Bean Brook Road maintenance – Kidder received two separate complaints regarding the lack of summertime maintenance on Bean Brook Road. Because Piermont and Orford share the maintenance for some of the road, there seems to be confusion on which town is responsible for which seasonal maintenance. Kidder will speak to Road Agent Straight and have him contact the Piermont Road Agent to discuss what each town is responsible for, then draft a document outlining the agreement.

D. UV Lake Sunapee RPC Appointment Renewals

Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kling to reappoint Edmond Cooley and Mark Burger as representatives to the UV Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission for a two-year term. Motion passed 3/0

E. Restructure of Special Fund cash accounts per Auditors – the auditors recommended changes for two cash accounts, and the Treasurer made the following suggestions:

- **Parks & Playgrounds** should be combined with the Parks & Rec Capital Reserve fund. This would be accomplished by a warrant article at the 2022 annual meeting. This would allow payments to be approved and tracked by the Selectboard, with reimbursement coming from the Parks & Rec CRF. The Selectboard agreed with this suggestion.
- **Special Projects** – this account is primarily used for the band stand concerts. The recommendation is to close this account. Funds from the sale of books can be deposited into the general fund (a small amount), and funds from fund raising for the bandstand would be turned over and managed by the Bandstand Committee. This would require the Bandstand Committee become its' own entity. The Selectboard instructed Dobbins-Marsh to email the members of the Bandstand Committee and let them know that as of 12/31/21 funds in this account will no longer be available to them unless they have re-organized into their own entity with a separate federal ID#

By making these changes to these accounts, all cash accounts will have oversight by the Orford Selectboard.

F. Review of received “Notice of Intent to Cut Wood”

- Property Owner: Marjorie Green, Map & Lot #08-89-29, Logger: Bruce Streeter
- Property Owner: Robert Hodge, Map & Lot #07-32-20, Forrester: Tom Hahn
- Property Owner: N William White, Map & Lot #08-27-15, 15A, 16, 16A, Forrester: Tom Hahn

G. Contracts – Dobbins-Marsh reported the contract for propane and heating oil for the term of 09/01/2021 – 05/31/2022 has been renewed with Dead River. The rate per gallon for propane is \$1.699, and for heating oil is \$2.4627 - Dobbins-Marsh received quotes for fixed rates from 4 companies, with Dead River offering the lowest price.

H. Other

1. Kling is still waiting to hear back from the NH DES regarding the culvert on Grimes Hill road. He noted the culvert is clogged again, and feels a Selectboard member should be at the site when the highway crew is cleaning out the culvert. Should toxic fumes be present, the crew will cease working immediately and NH

- DES will be contacted again. Kidder said he'd take a look at the culvert then contact NH DES – Dobbins-Marsh will send the contact information to Kidder.
2. Blackberry Hill road – Adams mentioned the top section of the road seems very narrow due to ditching – it may need some fill added back. Adams asked Kidder and Kling to take a look at this and they will discuss at the next Selectboard meeting.
 3. The highway department purchased fuel from Wings as the diesel pump failed. Straight has contacted a repair company to either repair or replace the pump. Dobbins-Marsh is working on the application to submit to the NH DOT which will allow the Town of Orford to purchase diesel from the NH DOT (located in Orford) for emergency situations. Dobbins-Marsh will also check to see if Orford can purchase all their diesel from the NH DOT.
 4. The Road Agent sent a request to the Selectboard to look over some road blockage on Lower Stonehouse Mtn road. Kling visited the site and didn't see anything to indicate blockage.

Manifests, Payroll and Accounts Payable folders

The manifest, payroll and accounts payable folders were reviewed and signed where necessary

Adjourn

Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kidder adjourn the meeting. Motion Passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh