

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

November 4, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Adams, Fred Kidder II, Tom Steketee

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh,

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm

- A. 2021 Budget Review** – the Selectboard reviewed each line item of the 2021 proposed budget. Adjustments were made to several line items
- Advertising – added \$500 – matching the 2020 budget
 - Legal Fees – added \$2,000 – matching the 2020 budget
 - Government Building – added \$1,000 to increase maintenance contracts, ground improvement and maintenance & repairs
 - Cemetery – added \$1760 to increase the number of weeks for mowing to a max of 30 - *Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kidder to increase the # of weeks worked to as maximum of 30. Motion Passed*
 - Police Dept – added \$500 for gasoline usage
 - Fire Department – deducted \$500 to lower equipment maintenance to \$3,500
 - Highway Department – added \$11,770 – primarily to adjust the benefits costs to reflect the max expense as the department will be looking to hire a third person. Other changes – road treatment reduced by \$3,000, equipment repair/replacement reduced by \$1,500, culverts reduced by \$1,000, gravel reduced by \$3,000, asphalt reduced by \$1,000
 - Waste Disposal-Household Hazardous Waste - added \$1,500 – the Selectboard decided to use this budget line item for the annual Household Hazardous Waste fee vs having a separate warrant article. As this is a regular annual expense, it will be included in the budget

These changes brought the proposed budget for 2021 to \$1,116,347, an increase of \$896 over the 2020 budget

- B. 2021 Warrant Articles review** – the Selectboard reviewed the 2021 proposed warrant articles
- **Article 3 – Appropriations to the Capital Reserve account** – the Selectboard increased the amount for the Fire Truck CRF funding to \$49,000 which brought the total appropriation to \$337,146 – an increase of \$53,446 over the 2020 request
 - **Article 4 – Appropriation of FEMA funds received in 2020 to be paid to the Road Improvement CRF** -the Selectboard is estimating the Town will receive a total of \$51,131 that will be paid back to the Road Improvement CRF at no cost to the Town.

- **Article 5** – *Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kidder to establish a Broadband Development CRF for the purpose of developing Town wide plans and/or a business model for a Town wide broadband system. The Selectboard will be names as the agents of the CRF, with initial funding of \$2,000. Motion Passed*
- **Article 6 – Charitable Appropriations** – requests from several charitable organizations totaled \$15,607, an increase of \$125 over the 2020 appropriation requests
- **Article 7 – Highway Truck purchase** – the Highway department is requesting \$219,824 to be used from the Highway Trucks CRF for the purchase of a 10-wheel dump truck
- **Article 8 – Funding to replace the High Bridge road Bridge** – the total project is estimated at \$68,000, and the Selectboard is requesting \$46,000 to be used from the Road Improvement CRF which will supplement the 2017 Warrant Article that approved \$22,000 to be used from the Road Improvement CRF
- **Article 9 – Discontinuing the Bridge Replacement CRF** – this CRF was established in 2011, but was never funded. The Selectboard is recommending discontinuing this CRF and using the Road Improvement CRF (Roads & Bridges CRF) for all road and bridge work

C. 2021 Review and adoption of the 2020 Tax Rate – the tax rate for 2020 was calculated at \$27.42 per \$1,000 of property value by the NH DRA. While the tax rate is lower than the rate for 2019 (\$29.98), the assessed value of homes increased an average of 20% (land remained relatively even). The overall valuation of Town property increased 12.28%

Given the current financial climate, the Selectboard agreed to apply \$200,000 from the Fund Balance to the tax rate, lowering it to \$26.13

Motion made by Steketee, seconded by Kidder to authorize \$200,000 from the fund balance to be applied to the tax rate calculation, resulting in a tax rate of \$26.13

Motion Passed

Dobbins-Marsh will make the adjustment and upload to the NH DRA portal

D. Other Business

- **Town Road #100** – Adams met with the Ted Eck, the easement property owner, a rep from the contractor and electric company, and Jim Hall, DuBois & King to discuss the pole placement which will allow for continuous electric service to residents near the project while the culvert is being installed. This will require additional clearing on the property owned by Mr. Eck and this will cost \$1,000. Mr. Eck would like the Town to directly pay the individuals that cleared the property. Because this is a FEMA project, Dobbins-Marsh will check with the NH DES to see if the expense qualifies and if making the direct payment will be allowed. Adams said he feels it will be allowed, but if FEMA doesn't approve this, the contractor may be billed for the fee. *Motion made by Kidder, seconded by Adams to approve the request for payment for a total of \$1,000. Motion Passed.*
- **Highway Garage Doors** – Steketee wanted to discuss the options for replacing the garage doors vs replacing the motors and one door. The costs to replace all

3 doors, hardware and replace two motors will be \$8,100 vs \$4,547 for the smaller project. Kidder would like to see a quote to replace two motors only. Adams reminded Steketee that 2-3 estimates are required, per the purchasing policy, for large expenditures less than \$10,000. Steketee will have Road Agent Straight obtain additional estimates for various options discussed above.

Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh