

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

January 13, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Adams, Fred Kidder II

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, Terry Straight, Sandra Marsh

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30

Roll Call of board members – John Adams and Fred Kidder II in attendance

Approval of Minutes

*Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kidder to accept the minutes of 12/23/2020 (as amended)
Motion Passed*

*Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kidder to accept the minutes of the 01/06/21 work
session. Motion Passed*

Adams announced the resignation of Tom Steketee as a Selectboard member, effective immediately. *Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kidder to regretfully accept Steketee's resignation. Motion passed.* Adams said RSA 652:12, RSA 669:63 and RSA 669:61 address the process to replace a resigning Selectboard member. Because the annual election of officers will occur within two months, the timeline to conduct a search for someone to fill the vacancy is limited, therefore, the Selectboard agreed to not fill the vacancy and will keep the Selectboard at two members, as allowed under RSA 669:61

Reports

- A. **Fire Department** – Chief Straight presented the December report to the Selectboard. The department had 9 calls in December – 4 medical, 3 fire and 2 mutual aid. For 2020 there were a total of 114 calls compared to 2019 with a total of 125. The department held a work detail, but there was no training due to COVID-19 restrictions. Some members of the department applied and received their COVID vaccines. The second round will be in 2-3 weeks. Adams asked if any of the fire calls presented opportunities for training to prevent fires in the future – Straight said no for these fires. Straight said other towns have been seeing an increase in chimney fires, but not Orford.
- B. **Highway Department** – Terry Straight presented the December report to the Selectboard. Straight asked if a conversation had occurred with the recycling center about timing of when plowing and sanding occurs. Sandra Marsh was asked for her recommendations and indicated the center needs to be ready for Saturday mornings. She would request the highway department check the center Friday afternoons/early Saturday mornings to plow and sand as necessary, and during the week following a snow storm. Sandra requested better communication between the road agent and herself in a better effort to coordinate other timings. Adams said he will act as the highway board liaison, and she is welcome to contact him as well.

The department replaced a hydraulic hose on truck #3, repaired an issue with the lights, and replaced two heater hoses on the same truck. Per the Primex report, a master battery cut off switch was installed on truck #3 and one will be installed on truck #2. The

crew cleaned up brush on Indian Pond road and repaired a washout on East Cemetery road (due to the heavy rains on 12/26/20). Straight is concerned about the well at the town garage and will keep an eye on the water flow. Straight also presented his spreadsheet for tracking usage of sand and salt per yard.

Kidder asked Straight about the Quinttown Road culvert replacement project. Straight said the contractor returned to look over the project and adding additional material to prevent water flow under the culvert. The project will be reviewed in the spring, but Straight said the project looked good at this time.

Recent storm activity was discussed with Straight and the decision to hire a contractor at \$100 per hour. Straight was asked about hiring a seasonal on-call plow operator vs hiring contracted help. Straight said one applicant opted to remain in his current position, and others didn't meet the qualifications for the position. Of local contractors, lack of proper insurance or other issues prevented hiring them. Kidder suggested hiring a contractor as seasonal on-call help which would allow them to operate the town trucks.

Old Business

A. Update of Outstanding Projects

- a) Historical Barn Review – a letter will be drafted to Trinity Farms regarding the removal of a barn from the program. The letter will be discussed at the 01/27/21 Selectboard meeting
- b) Sand Pit Reclamation Project – The Selectboard will form a committee to work on this project. Dobbins-Marsh will send the committee scope of work out on listserv to allow any other residents to express their interest in working on this committee. *Motion made by Kidder, seconded by Adams to establish the Town of Orford Sand Pit Reclamation committee based on the Scope of Work draft dated 01/12/21. Motion passed.* Tom Thomson will be appointed to this committee and John Adams will act as the Selectboard liaison. *Motion to appoint Tom Thomson to the Town of Orford Sand Pit Reclamation committee. Motion passed.*
- c) Safety Hazard (RSA 155-B) Properties Update – Dobbins-Marsh sent a follow up email to the property owner – no response received yet, but the property owner indicated he'd respond soon.
- d) Update on FEMA Projects - Town Road #100 discussed the ongoing challenge working with the contractor that was awarded the project. JP Sicard, contractor, has indicated winter shut down is allowed by NH DOT thru April 1, 2021, but they are willing to move forward with the project if the project dates are amended in the contract, which would eliminate the penalty for late completion. Adams said we could offer the contractor a negotiated penalty to cover the costs of the culvert rental and legal fees. Our town attorney has been put on notice and is reviewing the contract and addendums. The Selectboard will use their opinion to move forward with negotiations with the contractor.

FEMA is taking exception to our process for hiring engineering firms for FEMA projects. The Town followed its purchasing policy to hire the engineering firm, however, FEMA has its own requirements, which requires to bid every FEMA project for engineering services. Currently the engineering fees are higher than the project allows (15% vs 12%). FEMA will allow the Town to rebid the portion of engineering services that have not yet been provided – if the bids are higher than DuBois & King (D&K), FEMA will accept the current engineering expenses. Adams will contact D&K to discuss the FEMA percentage. With this information, the Town may need to look at revising its purchasing policy.

Sawyer Brook Headwall project – this will be put out to bid in late March/early April 2021

- e) **Broadband Update** – Adams created a scope of work for a broadband committee. Dobbins-Marsh will send the committee scope of work out on listserv to allow any other residents to express their interest in working on this committee. *Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kidder to establish the Town of Orford Broadband committee based on the Scope of Work draft dated 01/13/21. Motion passed.* Ted Cooley will be appointed to this committee and John Adams will act as the Selectboard liaison. *Motion to appoint Ted Cooley to the Town of Orford Broadband committee. Motion passed.* Once the committee is established, Adams will have information to report to the committee on NH Electric Cooperative and Topsham Communication’s initiatives for broadband services to the Town of Orford.

B. Rural Economic Development Grant – the Selectboard reviewed the documentation for accepting the Rural Economic Grant and feel it’s not the right fit for Orford. If Orford had a larger business district, it might be more sustainable, but it appears to have a lot of financial risk to the Town. This will be put on hold for the time being.

C. Review of 2021 proposed budget and warrant articles – final review prior to the January 21, 2021 public hearing – the Selectboard reviewed the proposes 2021 budget and warrant articles and agreed to leave as written. Dobbins-Marsh will post on the Orford website and have printed copies for residents to pick up if needed.

New Business

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

- Property Owner: Deborah O’Brien/Nancy Fleming, Map & Lot #008-108-03
Forrester: John O’Brien
- Property Owner: Tullando Farm, Rendell & Karen Tullar, Map & Lot #008-108-112/113, Forrester: John O’Brien
- Property Owner: Tullando Farm, John & Deborah O’Brien, Map & Lot #008-108-1
Forrester: John O’Brien
- Property Owner: Tullando Farm, Rendell & Karen Tullar, Map & Lot #008-110-30/32, Forrester: John O’Brien
- Property Owner: Tullando Farm, Rendell & Karen Tullar, Map & Lot #008-110-27
Forrester: John O’Brien

B. Contract – *Motion made by Kidder, seconded by Adams to approve the 2021 Upper Valley Humane Society contract with the Town of Orford. Motion Passed.*

C. Correspondence – none to review

Manifests, Payroll and Accounts Payable folders

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

Topics for Future Discussion

- A.** Town Meeting options during the pandemic

Non-Public Session

A motion was made by Kidder, seconded by Adams to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II(a) for personnel matters at 7:40 pm. A roll call vote of member's present was taken with a decision in the affirmative

The Board resumed the regular meeting at 8:13 pm. A motion was made by Kidder, seconded by Adams to seal the minutes of the nonpublic session. Motion Approved.

Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh