

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

February 16, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Adams, Chase Kling

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, Paul Hatch-NH DES

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm

Mousley Brook Culvert Project

Paul Hatch from the NH DES discussed with the Selectboard various options for replacing the culvert. The Town can go the FEMA route, or decide to complete the project on their own. Going thru FEMA - this will most likely be a 2 to 2 ½ year project. The Town needs to send out Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to various engineering firms, pick the firm that is the most qualified, then contract with the firm. The engineering firm will submit a project estimate, time line, create the spec sheet and put the project out to bid. FEMA needs to approve the design and the firm will need to complete a hydrology study and the wetland permits. FEMA requires the Town to replace the culvert in-kind and quantity, however, if the hydrology study calls for a larger culvert, FEMA will allow if they agree with the study results. In addition to this, the NH DES has its own codes and standards that must be met, even if FEMA disagrees. All this coordination adds extra time to the project.

Doing the project without FEMA involvement allow the Town to look at different options, such as a bridge vs culvert, a box culvert, building up header walls and using a half-culvert over the walls. An engineering firm must still be involved as they will complete the hydrology study and wetland permits, and possibly some design work.

While the total project may be costlier going thru FEMA, the net to the town may be less than if the Town pays for its project in full. All things for the Town to consider.

Adams asked about the timeline for a Wetlands Permit – currently the approval process takes up to six (6) months. What happens if the Town has an emergency washout – per Hatch, the Road Agent needs to take photos of the damage and apply to FEMA for assistance. In emergency situations, the NH DES can issue a same day wetland permit for 30 to 60 days which will allow for temporary repairs. Having the Road Agent and/or other highway personal be certified culvert installers it a big asset for the Town. This allows large culverts to be replaced when there's an emergency situation. If a contractor is Culvert Certified, the Town should obtain a copy of their certification to have on file.

The Selectboard and Hatch agreed that regardless of the project direction (FEMA or Town), the Town needs to start the RFQ process. Dobbins-Marsh will contact the Haverhill Town Manager to discuss the process they used for a recent bridge project.

Employee Handbook-First Review Section VII (pages 34-40)

The Selectboard reviewed the Employee Handbook, Section VII - Personal Days – a few language changes were made to this policy, as well as the Bereavement policy.

Other – Archertown Road/Jacobs Brook bridge

Dobbins-Marsh requested confirmation on the abutters that will require notification of the survey plan being submitted to the NH Secretary of State. The board confirmed it would be Peter & Linda Dooley and William & Sylvia Paxton. Other property owners near the project will be invited to a meeting with the engineer firm to discuss the plan at a future date.

Review of 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 Kling adjourn the meeting. Motion Passed 2/0

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh