

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
September 28, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Adams, Chase Kling

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, Todd Haywood (called in), Jason Bachus, JJ Hebb, Lawrence Hibbard, Robb Day, Paula Graves, Rev. Jane Wilson, Ruth Hook, Bob Palifka

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kling to accept the minutes of the 09/14/2022 Public Hearing. Motion Passed 2/0

Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kling to accept the minutes of 09/14/2022 (as amended). Motion Passed 2/0

Reports

- A. **Assessor**-Todd Haywood called into the meeting to discuss the revised MS-1. After a conversation with the Town of Piermont, it was determined the property of Arnold Stygles was not assessed in their town, therefore, Haywood assessed it in Orford. The revised MS-1 reflects that addition. *Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kling to accept the revised MS-1. Motion Passed 2/0* The MS-1 and MS-1v will be signed and uploaded to the DRA portal.
- B. **Police Department** – Chief Bachus presented his August report to the Selectboard. The department responded to 66 calls for service, with the NHSP responding to 6 calls. Orford PD service calls included 3 thefts, 3 fraud cases, 2 drug violations, a DUI assist, 2 crashes and a municipal code enforcement. There was a total of 20 motor vehicle violations, with 2 summonses issued. During the month of September, Bachus closed out 14 on going cases, plus 6 new cases, leaving 4 active cases requiring extensive administrative work. The new police vehicle is waiting for additional parts to the interior cage to be installed before the upfitting work can begin. The delivery date to Orford is planned for some time in October.

The speed cart was deployed from August 31st to September 19th on Bridge Street facing Route 10, where the posted speed limit is 30 mph, resulting in significant findings. During this time period a total of 97,988 vehicles were detected traveling both ways on Bridge Street. This is an average of 5,443 vehicles per day (1,803 per day to Vermont, and 3,493 coming from Vermont). The average speed going towards Vermont was 27 mph (highest speed 56 mph), and the average speed coming from Vermont was 23 mph (highest speed 78 mph). As of September 19th, the cart will be moved to the other side of Bridge Street facing oncoming traffic from Vermont. Bachus will review the data to see if bicycles impact the average speed.

Bachus expressed his concern about High Bridge Road bridge, and potential liability to the Town due to its unsafe condition. He has observed individuals on, around and under the bridge on several occasions, and should the bridge have a partial or full collapse, the liability would be great. He is suggesting closing the bridge and posting "Danger/Risk

Warning” signs on both entrances. Rodney Taylor said he could remove the existing decking if the plan is to have the decking replaced. Concern was expressed that the exposed steel beams might generate an attractive nuisance which would create an even more dangerous situation. Concrete blocks can be placed, and warning signs, at both entrances to stop access to the bridge.

- C. **Parks & Playgrounds** – JJ Hebb discussed major maintenance work to be done to the Community Field, which include spring seeding and fertilizing of the soccer fields, herbicide spraying, late summer grub control and fertilizing and fall work on the baseball and softball fields. These expenses for 2023 will be included in the calculation to determine a new lease value to the Rivendell Interstate School. Hebb mentioned additional work will be needed to repair the baseball base paths that have become unsafe due to improper maintenance following games and practices. Hibbard asked if the new lease could address if the Town of the School has final say when mowing of the field is done. There was some conflict between the mower and coaches during soccer season.

Hebb addresses the issue of trash left on the Common – trash cans were left behind after an event, were then filled with trash which Parks & Playground members picked up and disposed. It was agreed to amend the permission form to clearly state what you bring to the Common must be removed when you leave. There is also an issue with dogs on the Common – the Town has a policy for no dogs on Town Property but no ordinance, which may be something the Board should address at the Annual Meeting.

- D. **Congregational Church** – Paula Graves and Rev. Jane Wilson spoke to the Selectboard about the possibility of taking over the main street Congregational Church to use as Town Offices/Community Center/Library. Currently the support the church receives isn’t enough to offset the maintenance/operating expenses. The benefits to the Town would be no loss of tax revenue, having town water, large parking lot with handicap ramps, fiber optics and a large meeting room, plus several rooms for offices. The electrical has been updated, two bathrooms and a kitchen on site. Currently Rev. Wilson and Graves are looking into the original deed to see if there are any restrictions in place to prevent the church being sold to a non-religious entity.
- E. **Budget Advisory Committee** – Ruth Hook discussed the letter sent to the Selectboard from the Budget Advisory Committee requesting the members be a part of the board meetings when the department heads present their budgets. They feel it will help them obtain a better flow of information if they can be included from the start. After some discussion, it was agreed the Selectboard will hold their work session with the department heads first, then open up the work session with each department head to allow budget advisory members to ask questions or for clarification on the information presented.

F. **Committee Reports**

- **Cemetery** – Kling met with Dave Smith of the Cemetery Commission to visit and inspect Dame Hill Cemetery and the East Cemetery. The reports were submitted to the Cemetery Commission and the Selectboard members to review. The Dame Hill Cemetery has unknown plot locations – ground penetrating radar, known as lidar could be used to locate the placement and size of probable graves. Dame Hill Cemetery is close to being what is considered a “closed”

cemetery. Lawn, tree and stone maintenance, and conservation are the main concerns currently. In the East Cemetery most of the headstones are in place with minimal damage. Some stones need cleaning, and parking for maintenance and general visitation is ok, but not adequate for large burial groups. What seemed to be a closed cemetery a short time ago offering no new plots and burials in currently existing new plots is now not the case. Future development in preparation for the “new section” needs and action plan, if one doesn’t exist.

All of the Orford Cemeteries need updated and upgraded mapping. Kling and Smith will be visiting the West Cemetery on September 29th looking over the new section to the cemetery.

- **Planning Board** – Kling attended in an unofficial capacity. The Planning Board denied the waiver request from Mark Miller and he will now need to hire an engineering firm to review the “street” for adequacy. Kling also reported a minor subdivision was not notified a co-owner of abutting property was not notified of the meeting. The Planning Board will meet on October 4, 2022 to address this minor subdivision request.

Old Business

A. Highway work update – The highway crew worked on ditching and grading several roads – the Quinttown Road complex area, Dublin Road, and Town Road #89 Culverts were replaced on Grimes Hill Road near McGoff Salvage and one near Jim McGoff’s house, then the area around the culverts were seeded and mulched. The culvert on Dublin Road was cleaned out. The crew excavated the area for the garage storage addition, with the concrete work to begin soon. Truck #2 lost power and was taken to Reed’s for repair. Overall there have been many positive comments about the work being done to the Town roads.

Kling is working with a resident on Upper Baker Pond road regarding water run off from the road coming into their basement. As the house is very close to the Town right-of-way, more conversation is needed around the issue.

The Selectboard discussed the 10-wheeler and the possibility of changing the order to include a manual transmission. The highway crew feel a manual transmission works better with a truck of this size, especially when loaded with material. Kling will discuss with Mike Wright, Road Committee member, and if in agreement the board will try to have the contract amended (which would most likely lower the purchase price).

B. Update of Outstanding Projects

- a) Historical Barns will be reviewed on Saturday, October 1st by Selectboard members. They will meet at the Town office to review historical information of each barn prior to a physical visit to the site.
- b) Mousley Brook FEMA Project – the Selectboard received a proposal from DuBois & King regarding an Engineering Study amendment to include advisory services performing research for the Selectboard on types of temporary bridge alternatives. The Selectboard agreed to revisit this amendment when a full board is in attendance.

New Business

A. Complaints – none received

B. Review of received “Notice of Intent to Cut Wood” – none received

C. Contracts – none received

D. Correspondence

- NH DOT Driveway Permit approved for Jason James, Map & Lot #008-093-40D
- Email received from Mark Neuroth, DuBois & King regarding utility pole relocation near the Archertown Road/Jacobs Brook bridge project. Permission will need to be obtained from two property owners.

E. Other

- **Mowing Bid** – the Selectboard reviewed the specs for the mowing bid with a small change being made. This will be posted on the webpage and in local newspapers with a bid submission date of October 26, 2022
- **E-coli Test results postings** – the Conservation Commission would like to discuss the process followed when an e-coli reading at the beaches are high. This will be added to the Selectboard agenda for some time in April/May 2023

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 to adjourn the meeting. Motion Passed 2/0

The meeting adjourned at 8:26 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh