

# TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

January 11, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Adams, Chase Kling

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, Terry Straight, Carl Johnson, Steve Williams, Bob Palifka, Bill Paxton, Laurence Duffy

## Call Meeting to Order

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

Kling wanted to honor two residents that recently passed away, Peter Thomson who served as the Town Moderator for many years, and Jim McGoff who served as a Selectboard member, as well as a member of the Budget Advisory Committee and the Planning Board.

## Approval of Minutes

The minutes from 12/28/2022 were discussed and minor correction made, however, only Kling and Jennifer Carter attended that meeting and they will need to approve the minutes at the next Selectboard meeting.

## Reports

- A. **Fire Department** – Chief Straight presented his report from December. The department responded to 37 calls, for a total of 186 calls in 2022 (there were a total of 139 calls in 2021). Of these calls in December, 20 were during the December 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> storm. The department held a training on December 5<sup>th</sup>, and checked the trucks and equipment on December 19<sup>th</sup>. Chief Straight attended a School Safety meeting at Rivendell on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. During the storm on the 16<sup>th</sup>, there were several calls that required medical assistance, wires being down, and trees across the road. (Trees on the road are considered fire related if the call goes to dispatch). Straight mentioned the internet at the fire station needs to be upgraded. During the storm several members had to use hot spots on their phones to access the internet. Straight would like to upgrade the band width and relocated the router to be accessible for the department. Adams asked Straight to obtain an estimate to install fiber optics at the station – possibly some of the ARPA funds could be used to pay for the upgrade.

Kling wanted to address the storm and the process followed when opening the EOC. Kling asked who decided to open the EOC – Johnson said he did as the Emergency Management Director. Kling was concerned that not all the Selectboard members were contacted, and as acting road agents, they all should have been, as well as the Police Chief. Kling asked if the incident report has been filed with the State that addresses what happened and why it was declared an emergency. He said it's hard to work together when not all parties are involved. Johnson said he was new to the role, and agreed the process needs improvement. When Johnson activated the EOC it allows him to log into the State of NH. Because the entire town was out of power, this allowed Johnson to contact someone he knows at Eversource which helped to expedite service being restored to the Route 10 corridor in Orford. But this emergency was not as severe as the

events back in July 2017. Adams said he dropped the ball in not contacting the other Selectboard members. If a shelter had been opened he would have contacted the others, but because opening the EOC was only to establish communication with the state, he didn't think to do that. Johnson will be scheduling a meeting with all parties involved to review the procedure to avoid errors made in the future.

Kling also addressed contacting the Highway road crew after they had left for home for the night. The Selectboard, as acting Road Agents, should have been notified and made calls, if warranted, to Town employees (not by anyone else). The road crew has been working since 3:00 am and only stopped working as there was no place to obtain diesel for the trucks, as the State garage generator wasn't working. Kling felt unless there was a major structural fire, it was wrong to contact the road crew members at home for non-emergencies. Chief Straight said there were several trees down across roads, and the fire department needed the highway crew to help remove them. Kling said contacting town employees was not his responsibility. The crew started again around 4:00 am the next day, and Stacey Thomson brought down a tanker of diesel so they could continue plowing. Kling said a report should have been presented to the Selectboard as an overview of the events, and was frustrated that it was not. All agreed better communication is needed, and a plan of action will be part of the discussion on how to better coordinate during an emergency.

- B. Highway Department** – Williams reported the check engine light on Truck #1 is on – parts have been ordered to fix the problem. The 10-wheeler is being built and should be completed by April 2023, then will go to Viking to have the package added. The loader will need 4 new tires and rims sometime in 2024 – currently the cost is approximately \$9,300. The department purchased 3/8" chip stone to add to the salt, which will extend the amount of salt being used this winter. The crew is also cleaning up around the garage – Williams asked if the Town wants to sell anything for scrap metal. Next spring the department will start ditching road in town. It is cost effective to dump the material on private owned property vs taking each load back to the pit each time. Does the Town have some type of permission form that property owners can sign off on, should they agree to this? The Town will need to create one. The highway garage doors need work as there is no chain fall. During the storm, with no power, the generator struggled to raise the doors. Williams will contact Rutland Overhead Doors to obtain an estimate to add the chain fall.
- C. Recap of Selectboard attended committee meetings**  
Road Advisory Committee – the committee discussed options to construct the grader cover. Waste blocks could form the base, with a dome with steel bracing anchored down. Austic will look into pricing for this type if construction.

## **Old Business**

- A. Year-Round structure off Piermont Heights Road – Sally Tomlinson** addressed the yurt on her property with the Selectboard. When an artist friend's best laid plans fell through at the last minute, she offered the to set her up in the yurt for the interim, while they searched for a permanent site. During that period, the friends mother passed away, which delayed their search while they dealt with that occurrence. The tenants

carry water to the structure and remove all gray water into a pit on the property (less than 5 gallons per week). They use a humidor system to compost human waste – none of this is near running water or wetlands. The humidor system is lined with hay, so rain water can filter through and help with composting. The board suggested using a portable toilet as an option to composting., which they will look into. It was agreed that the tenant, Tomlinson and the Selectboard will reconnect within 3 months regarding the tenants living situation.

**B. Community Field Lease – Barrett Williams, Rivendell** – Williams could not attend the meeting which will be rescheduled

**C. Budget Advisory Committee recommendations – Bob Palifka** presented the Budget Advisory’s recommendations pertaining to the proposed 2023 budget and warrant articles

- Operating Budget – accepted as presented at \$1,347,495
- Capital Reserve Accounts funding – it was recommended to reduce the Highway Truck CRF funding by \$5,000 – total request for funding the Capital Reserve funds will now be \$426,322  
*Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kling to reduce the funding to the Highway Truck CRF to \$81,799. Motion passed 2/0*
- The committee suggested changing the wording to read “to request funds to cover additional charges for trucks on order, increasing the request to use additional funding from the Highway Truck CRF from \$35,000 to \$45,000, and amend Warrant Article 7 to a three-year non-lapsing article  
*Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kling to increase the funding request to \$45,00, and revise to a 3-year non-lapsing warrant article. Motion Passed 2/0*
- Highway Equipment warrant article #11 – adding the word Segmented to the description of the grader cutting edge  
*Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kling to amend the warrant article to include the description of Segmented Grader Cutting Edge. Motion Passed 2/0*

**D. Additional Changes to Warrant Articles**

- Highway Generator – after reviewing the written estimates, the Selectboard agreed to reduce the request from \$22,000 to \$16,000
- Streetlight Project – per the most recent analysis of costs for this project, the Selectboard agreed to increase the request from \$13,200 to \$15,000

**E. Update of Outstanding Projects**

- a) Highway garage storage addition - Herb Austic has completed the exterior construction of the addition. The cement floor has also been poured. After the first of the year 2023, Austic will start work on the interior of the addition.
- b) Archertown Road Hill – Williams asked if trees could be cut along the uphill side of Archertown Road hill. After a brief discussion, it was agreed to wait to do this work until after the annual meeting to see if the warrant article passes. Letters of Intent could be prepared and be ready to mail the day following the annual meeting if the article does pass.
- c) Archertown Bridge at Jacobs Brook – Per the email received from Mark Neuroth, DuBois & King, preliminary plans and cost estimates will be submitted to the Town of Orford and NH DOT by January 27, 2023

- d) Mousley Brook Culvert FEMA Project – DuBois & King is working to finalize the Conceptual Study and cost estimation – this information should be ready by January 20,2023

#### **New Business**

- A. Budget Advisory Committee Mission Statement** – Palifka presented a draft Mission Statement to the Selectboard for review. After a brief discussion of suggested revisions, the Budget Advisory Committee will re-work the Mission Statement and present to the Selectboard at the 1/25/2023 meeting
- B. Review of received “Notice of Intent to Cut Wood”** none received
- C. Complaints** – none received
- D. Correspondence**
- Ford Extended Service Plan for the 2019 Ford F150 Police Vehicle was received – a copy was provided to Chief Bachus to review
  - Septic Plan Approval for Construction was received for Evan Loschiavo, map & Lot #008-091-32B4
  - Hazard Mitigation Plan quarterly filing – a copy will be sent to the Emergency Management Director, Carl Johnson
- E. Other** – The policy for Meeting Notices, Agendas and Minutes needs to be revised to better match the State regulations. Dobbins-Marsh will work on the revisions for the Selectboard to review at a future meeting.

#### **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 8:15 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh