

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

January 25, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Adams, Jen Carter Chase Kling

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, Chief Bachus, Bob Palifka

Call Meeting to Order

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

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Kling, seconded by Carter to accept the minutes of 12/28/2022 (as amended)

Motion Passed 2/0

Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kling to accept the minutes of the 01/11/2023 Public Hearing. Motion Passed 2/0

The minutes from the 01/11/2023 Selectboard meeting will be re-addressed at the 02/08/2023 Selectboard Meeting)

Motion made by Carter, seconded by Adams to accept the minutes of the 01/18/2023 Public Hearing. Motion Passed 2/1 (Adams, Carter-yes, Kling-no)

Reports

- A. **Assessor**-Todd Haywood (report only) reported the pending Board of Tax & Land Appeals (BTLA) scheduled for January 24th was withdrawn by the appellant due to lack of supporting evidence. To date he's received one application for abatement for the 2022 tax year, and will meet with the property owner on February 22, 2023. Haywood will be working to update land records for approved land changes that occurred between April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023 from the Planning Board. Inventory forms will be mailed out in February 2023, and he will work to update property information as they are returned.
- B. **Trustees of the Trust Fund** – Chris Crowley could not attend the meeting – this will be added to the 02/08/2023 agenda
- C. **Police Department** – Chief Bachus presented his December 2022 report. In December there were a total of 53 calls for service (NHSP responded to 8). Calls to the Orford PD consisted of 12 public service, 11 administrative, 9 non-criminal and 2 motor vehicle crashes. There were 12 motor vehicle enforcement actions. The speed cart repair is still pending, as Bachus is waiting for one of the technicians to research the issue and contact him with a possible solution. The new police vehicle is in service and being utilized. Bachus is in the final stages of “de-policing” the old cruiser. During the teardown process it was noticed that the headlights are not working – if it's not a small repair, Bachus said having Orford Service Center repair the headlights will yield a higher sale value than trying to sell with them not working. *Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kling to have the headlights repaired prior to the sale. Motion Passed 3/0*
Bachus has applied for and was approved for a grant to purchase a hand-held radar. Once he receives the written authorization from the State DOJ and Attorney he will order the radar. The grant is for \$1,675

In 2022, OPD had a total of 789 calls for service, with NH State Police responding to 72. As the pandemic has faded and “normalcy” has returned, motor vehicle accidents, animal complaints and agency assistance cases with DCYF and APS all increased 33-34% over 2021. The largest increase was investigatory cases, criminal threatening, disorderly conduct and family fights (up a combined 75%). Finally, there were four cases involving drugs and an ongoing, time consuming investigation that is being reviewed currently at the County Attorney’s office.

Finally, the State sex offender registry is in the process of going fully paperless. There are three options that have presented: 1-Using a tablet; 2-Using a signature pad that can be plugged into an already owned computer or tablet; 3-Continue printing the forms, completing and uploading to the State (which is the current process). The State provides the equipment with options 1 and 2, however, the Town would be responsible for future replacements and repairs. Because Orford only has a few registrants, he feels the tablet would be the most time saving option.

Kling mentioned the recent coverage in the paper regarding the murder case in Orford. A number of people remarked about the article and concerned with the situation, and wondering where the case stands, specifically if the State has dropped the ball. Bachus said there are times when the wheels of justice don’t move as fast as people would like, but there is a purpose and reasons behind that, but it is moving forward. As this is a State Police case, some information can’t be disclosed, and he has to refer questions to the attorney general.

Carter inquired about the event at Rivendell regarding a potential threat in early January 2023. Was Bachus called to the school, and is he part of the planning for drills. Bachus was notified of the January incident, along with the State Police. The following day, Bachus did a walk around the school, primarily as a presence. The school schedules drills throughout the year and he’s aware of these drills. He does attend several drills a year, but not all.

D. Recap of any Selectboard attended Committee Meetings

- Cemetery Commission cancelled their January meeting; however, trees were removed from the Dame Hill Cemetery with some cleanup work needed.
- Road Committee – the committee wants to have a mission statement to be added to the website. The committee had written up a mission statement that they want to be added to the web. The goal is to have a written document to use as a guide for the committee. Adams said when the committee was established, the Selectboard established language as to the purpose of the committee, which should be the mission statement. The Selectboard needs to meet with the Road Committee to review the mission statement and future projects the board would like the committee to work on.
- Planning Board – the Planning Board reviewed the major subdivision planned for Route 25A. There were several items missing from the application, and questions around the road (country lane or private driveway)? There were also questions on the drainage of the road/driveway. The applicant will provide the missing information to the Planning Board. There will be 5 lots.

Old Business

A. Review of River Road shoulder work – because Tim Cook and others could not attend this meeting – this will be added to a future agenda

B. Review the Budget Advisory Mission Statement - the board reviewed the mission statement present by the Budget Advisory Committee. It was accepted and will be added to the Town's webpage - Budget Advisory Committee

C. Other

- Diesel tank at the Highway Garage – following the diesel spill, the Town purchased a new 500-gallon tank at the time of the spill. Can we use this tank in order to have some diesel at the Highway Garage? Adams researched, and reported the Town is considered a lower risk by the State by having only 1-500-gallon tank. This tank can be used, but will need a secondary containment system that will hold the entire contents of the 500-gallon tank. It must be under a roof, and have a concrete pad for the transfer area. The secondary containment can be many things such as an old 2000-gallon tank cut in half, or concrete box. This tank should not be placed in the old tank location in case the State needs to do additional testing. Adams will work with the Road Foreman, along with Calkins Excavating to see what we can do to get the fuel station reinstalled at the Town garage.
- Mousley Brook Culvert replacement – DuBois & King submitted their Conceptual Study and Cost analysis to the board to review. This will be further discussed at the Feb 8th meeting
- Marjorie Green's property on Mud Turtle Pond road – per an email received from David Bischoff, the Town was notified the tenant moved the rock out of the right-of-way onto Ms. Green's property. Kling felt the rock was still too close to the road and the plow trucks have to plow around it. Kling will look at the location again and if necessary will take measurements and photos to send back to Ms. Green
- Baker Road – With several cars parked at the turn around (near Peggy Villars driveway) and in or near the travel lane, it makes plowing of the road difficult. Many of these vehicles are not residents but out of town/state cars to gain access to Mt. Cube. Orford Police Chief will place "No Parking" signs along the side of the road.
- Kling asked if there are specific criteria for hanging a photo of an elected official that served the Town on a long-term basis at the Town office. If the Selectboard think it's appropriate, he'd like to approach the family of Peter Thomson to get their opinion on this.

New Business

A. Review comments from the 1/24/23 Budget Public Hearing – The board reviewed the comments from the Budget Public hearing. Dobbins-Marsh discussed the Veterans' Tax credit article and per our assessor and Town attorney, it was agreed to change this into two warrant articles, as the NH DRA is requesting from towns. For this year, the appropriation for Rivendell Rec will stay with the Charitable Organization

funding warrant articles (may possibly be moved under Parks & Playgrounds for future budget years). The warrant article amending the Purchasing Policy definitions will be changed to include section #'s to help clarify the intent.

Motion made by Adams, seconded by Carter to submit the operating budget and warrant articles as amended. Motion Passed 3/0

B. Policy Introduction – The revision of the “Meeting Notices, Agendas, Minutes and other Official Required Postings” policy was reviewed with the Selectboard. Changes are being made to the policy to better align with RSA requirements.

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

Property Owner: Simon Thomson, Map & Lot #0-93-28 and 7-30-21, logger: Whyte’s Logging

D. Highway Updates – Kling reported Truck #3 lost fluids and is currently at ATG in Lebanon for repairs. As the department is down to two trucks, and if needed, they will hire a contractor to help with plowing. The department crew asked about the mechanics of obtaining work clothes. They’d like to group buy if possible, but individual members can also purchase at local vendors that will bill the town directly. The Road Foreman wanted clarification around what start time the crew uses when called back to the work. Is it from the time they leave their home, or the time they arrive at the garage? The Selectboard agreed their time starts when they arrive at the garage. Carter said she cleaned up the desktop computer at the garage, and helped create spreadsheets for the Road Foreman to use in 2023.

E. Correspondence – previously discussed

Manifests, Payroll and Accounts Payable folders

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

Non-Public Session

A motion was made by Adams, seconded by Carter to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II(c) for tax abatement request 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 7:44 pm. A motion was made by Adams, seconded by Kling to seal the minutes of the nonpublic session. Motion Approved.

Adjourn

Motion made by Carter, seconded by Adams adjourn the meeting. Motion Passed 3/0

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh