

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

February 22, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Adams, Jen Carter, Chase Kling

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, Eric Darrow, Engineer, Steve Williams, Chief Bachus, Charlie Smith

Call Meeting to Order

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

Archertown Road Hill project update – Erin Darrow, engineer from Right Angle Engineering, PLLC presented the summary for the proposed Archertown Road improvements. There is approximately 3,000 linear feet of road, starting near the intersection of High Bridge Road up and over the hill east, that's in extremely poor condition. A center line survey of the road will need to be completed, along with geo technical borings. (Darrow will send a list of information needed to Adams and he will check with DuBois & King to see what they have on file from their previous work on this project).

The consideration is to determine the most cost-effective approach to improve drainage and repave to improve road conditions. Their proposal consists of ditching the project area, replacing existing culverts, reclaiming to 6" depth and injecting with calcium chloride, installing 6" of crushed gravel and geogrid, (a plastic fabric that allows water to flow thru it), then repave. These plans are preliminary at this time, but the work schedule is estimated to have the site survey completed in the spring 2023, proposal documents in late May/early June 2023, and start construction in late summer/early fall 2023. During construction, the most cost and time effective way to complete the project will be to close the road from 7:00 am – 5:00 pm M-F.

Concerns were expressed about the water coming off the hill and the impact on the abutters property along with possible future damage to the road. Contacting abutters to review the plan will be on the to-do list.

Darrow will provide materials to display at the Annual Meeting for attendees to review. If the warrant article that's requesting funding for this project is approved, the Selectboard will hold a public hearing to discuss in detail the plan.

Regarding the flat section of the project, from approximately Michael Gilbert's driveway (247 Archertown Road) to Blackberry Hill road, the road will be reclaimed, and left as a gravel road until additional funds for paving are approved at the 2024 annual meeting. Charlie Smith obtained some free fabric that can possibly be used on that section of the road.

Approval of Minutes

- *Motion made by Adams, seconded by Carter to accept the minutes of 02/08/2023 (as amended) Motion Passed 2/1 (Adams, Carter-yes, Kling-no)*
- *Motion made by Adams, seconded by Carter to accept the minutes of the 02/13/2023 work session Motion Passed 2/0 (Kling was not in attendance)*

Reports

- A. **Assessor**-Todd Haywood called into the meeting to review the abatement recommendation for David Cole. After meeting with Mr. Cole, the abatement was prepared based on a change in condition to his house, and view of the unsightly property across the road. After a brief discussion, Haywood agreed to revise the abatement amount to only reflect the change in condition to the house, and re-submit for the Selectboard to sign at their next meeting. 2022 Equalization Assessment Data certificate was prepared and requires the Selectboard signature. *Motion made by Adams, seconded by Carter to support the 2022 equalization assessment data certificate. Motion passed 3/0* Haywood will process additional abatement received by March 1, 2023, and once inventory forms are returned, he will update property data based on information provided.
- B. **Police Department** – Chief Bachus submitted his report for January. There were 94 calls for service, with the State Police responding to 6 calls. The Orford PD calls consisted of 34 non-criminal, 3 motor vehicle crashes, disorderly conduct, public intoxication and 5 parking issues. There was a total of 47 motor vehicle enforcement actions, with 4 summon issued. With active investigatory calls for service reduced, Bachus has been able to spend more time patrolling, and staggering his hours. Tracking calls for service by time blocks, there were 2 calls for service between midnight and 8:00 am, 68 calls for service between 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, and 21 calls for service between 4:00 pm and midnight.

Adams addressed the complaint discussed at the last Selectboard meeting concerning speeding on Bridge Street, and tire marks and burning rubber left by vehicles on the bridge. Bachus said he's been patrolling as late as 9:00 pm and usually there's not much activity. He has been concentrating more on Bridge Street and Route 10 during his normal work hours, and when traffic increases in the summer months (especially when the Thetford bridge closes), he plans on using some of the part-time officer hours to do some targeted enforcement. Bachus also feels it's more important to be on duty for the start of the school day than patrolling Bridge street between 9:00 pm and 1:00 am.

Bachus reported that as of March 1, 2023 he will no longer be the Police Chief in Fairlee. VT. Resigning from this position was a decision to have more family time, and assured the Selectboard that Orford has always been his priority.

C. **Selectboard attended committee meetings recap**

- Planning Board – Carter attended the meeting held on February 14, 2023. The Planning Board approved the major subdivision submitted by Tim Chase for property owned off Route 25A. The approval of the subdivision was based on the requirement that “each owner of property served by the Country Lane must enter into an agreement with the Town stating the Country Lane will be improved by the private owners to meet the then existing new road standards if, at some future time, the owner(s) shall petition the Town to layout the road”. This document is to be recorded at the Registry of Deeds.

- Cemetery – Kling reported that Dave Smith, Commissioner, is looking into joining the NH Cemetery Association which would allow him to interact with other commissioners in the State.
- Upper Valley Ambulance – Adams attended their monthly meeting – currently the organization doesn't have a director, but the duties of the director position are being divided between 3 staff members. Currently staffing is okay, and they are running 2 full time crews. In addition to full time employees, the organization employs part-time medical students.

Old Business

A. Update of Outstanding Projects

- Archertown Bridge at Jacobs Brook – DuBois & King have assigned Megan Ooms as the primary engineer for this project. She and Mark Neuroth are finalizing the Preliminary Plans and Engineering Estimate, but need to confirm the availability with staff who will be finalizing the work and quality control checks. They are planning to have the reports available for the March 8th Selectboard meeting.
- Mousley Brook Culvert project – Adams to discuss the scope of the project with Mark Neuroth from DuBois & King. There is concern over the options presented in the Conceptual Study, as the Town wanted to look at installing a bridge as an option, as well as an option to replace the culvert.
- Orford Library/Community Center Consultant report review – the board requested Dobbins-Marsh to send the report to the library trustees for review and comments to be addressed at a future meeting.

B. Junkyard License review – The board agreed to extend the current license for McGoff Salvage to expire on June 30, 2023. A contract for the new license holder will start July 1, 2023 and will be sent for completion.

C. Other – Emergency Operating Center (EOC) – Kling had asked Adams who has the authority to open the Emergency Operations Center? Adams reported his conversation with Paul Hatch at the NHDES – anyone that has the authority designated by the Selectboard can open the EOC, which is usually the emergency management director or the Selectboard. Usually the authority is assigned when pre-planning for an emergency. Emergencies are declared by the Selectboard, but opening the EOC doesn't always constitute a Town level emergency. A meeting has been scheduled for March 10th for the members of the Emergency Management team (Selectboard members, Emergency Management Director, and department heads from the Fire, Police & Highway Departments) to review the storm events on December 21st and 22nd and to plan for a smoother operation in the future. In the meantime, if an emergency occurs, Adams will contact Carter via text or email, and Kling via phone.

New Business

- A. Review & Sign MS-636 (Budget)** – the board reviewed and signed the 2023 MS-636. It will be posted, along with the 2023 warrant on Friday, February 24, 2023
- B. Review of received “Notice of Intent to Cut Wood”** – none received
- C. Complaints** – none received

D. Contract – the 2023 – 2025 mowing contracts between the Town of Orford and Lawrence Hibbard were signed by the Selectboard. (one for the Community Field and one for the remaining lawns intown). The mowing bid was awarded to Hibbard in November 2022

E. Correspondence

- **Letter of Resignation** - Dennis Streeter resigned as a Fence Viewer to be effective following the Annual Meeting on March 14, 2023.
- **VISA Application** – the application to increase the card limit to \$5,000 was reviewed by the board. Because there are three departments accessing the same limit, recently the card has reached the maximum amount and charges were denied. *Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kling to approve the application to increase the VISA credit limit to \$5,000. Motion Passed 3/0*

F. Other – Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) needs to be updated (every 5 years, and we last updated in 2018). The cost for this project is \$4,000 and there are grants available to cover this cost 100%. *Motion made by Carter, seconded by Adams to hire June Garneau or Mapping & Planning Solutions to update the EOP Plan. Motion Passed 2/1 (Adams, Carter-yes), (Kling-no)*

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(a) for personnel matters at 8:45 pm. A roll call vote of member's present was taken with a decision in the affirmative

The Board resumed the regular meeting at 8:59 pm. A motion was made by Adams, seconded by Kling to seal the minutes of the nonpublic session. Motion Approved.

Adjourn

Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kling to adjourn the meeting. Motion Passed.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh