

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

September 27, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Adams, Kevin Follensbee, Chase Kling

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, Jason Bachus

Call Meeting to Order

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

Approval of Minutes

- *Motion made by Adams, seconded by Follensbee to accept the minutes of 09/13/2023 (as amended) Motion Passed 3/0*
- *Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kling to accept the minutes of 09/20/2023 Motion Passed 3/0*

Reports

- A. **Assessor**-Todd Haywood submitted his report. One appeal has been filed with the NH Board of Tax & Land Appeals by Eversource. The BTLA will order parties to meet in effort to settle this matter before it is scheduled for a hearing. He expects the deadline to be around the end of February 2024. Cyclical inspections have begun and will continue thru the end of 2023. Haywood will also be completing the equalization sales ratio study for Orford in the next month or so.
- B. **Police Department** – Chief Bachus presented his report for August. There were 209 calls for service, with the NHSP responding to 7. Calls for service included 29 traffic stops (resulting in 8 summons), 7 animal complaints, 2 frauds and 1 theft. Calls for service occurred as follows: 6 calls between midnight and 8:00 am, 75 calls between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm, and 30 calls between 4:00 pm and midnight. The Speed Cart repair estimate is \$1582.99 Thru Bachus' investigation, he was able to identify an individual responsible for the damage and the case is now in the legal system. Restitution is hopeful, but not assured unless ordered by the court. The invoice has been submitted to Primex for insurance reimbursement. The animal neglect investigation has concluded, with no evidence found that the owner had not negligently deprived or caused any animal of the necessary care, sustenance or shelter. Bachus conducted the investigation with assistance from the Piermont Police Chief, NH SPCA, and the NH Vet Technicians. On October 13th, Orford PD and approx. 4 other local departments will hold a night training at the Orford sandpit. The training will start around 6:00 pm to approximately 9:00 pm. Bachus asked the Selectboard to grant an exception to allow this after dark shooting. *Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kling to grant an exception for this event. Motion passed 3/0* Starting in October, the Police Dept. Report will be moved to the 2nd Wednesday Selectboard agenda.

C. Selectboard attended meeting recap

- **Parks & Playgrounds** – Follensbee attended the P&P meeting – only Robb Day could attend, so there was no quorum. Day did discuss an estimate received to repair the bandstand in the amount of \$60,000, but felt it will most likely be less than that for the repairs. The members of P&P will be on the 10/11/2023 Selectboard agenda to discuss in greater detail.
- **UV Ambulance** – Adams attended the UV Ambulance meeting. They are still waiting for their new ambulance to be delivered, but with strikes ongoing, it could be awhile. The group discussed the 2024 rate increase – currently it's being estimated at a 5-6% - the actual rate increase will be set at their October 24th meeting.
- **Broadband** – Adams reported that Grafton County received a grant of just under \$12 million for the broadband middle mile in Grafton County. The grant requires a cash match of \$5 million, which will come from the Grafton County Undesignated Fund balance. The middle mile should not have an impact on the local installation of broadband by NH Broadband or Lyme Fiber.
- **Highway** – Kling reported on the Archertown Road Hill project – work is progressing in a timely manner. Signs are out on the road and “low shoulder” signs will be placed on 9/26. The road will be closed until the end of October 2023, and asphalt grinding is scheduled to start October 9th. Tim Chase has been contracted to grade the gravel roads, which is mostly done. The beavers returned to the Indian Pond road culvert and are being trapped/removed. Kling spoke with David Noyes – he pulled the culvert by his driveway and rented an excavator, but was asking for input from the Town on how to install. Kling suggested he talk to Roger Hadlock for advice, but Hadlock could not do the work for him as it's Noyes' responsibility to replace the culvert. Kling also addressed the possibility of extending the apron on Quinttown Road. Log trucks and other truck traffic cause potholes between the end of the apron and Con Valley Trucking's mailbox. Kling suggested looking at this section of the road to include in the paving warrant article for 2024.

Old Business

A. Update of Outstanding Projects

- Streetlight Project – the project has been completed. Affinity LED Lighting will pick up the old Eversource lights and tote bags next week, and will notify Eversource to remove the two lights per the Selectboard's request.
- Grader Cover – we are still waiting for an estimate from Len Gray.
- Mousley Brook bridge guardrails – the Selectboard requested contacting Herb Austic to look at the drive surface and the guardrails to determine what repairs need to be done.
- Orford Town Office basement stairs – Herb Austic replaced the basement stairs and added a handrail.
- Small Town Garage – Kling suggesting having Herb Austic look at the small garage on Route 25A to identify repairs needed in order to be used by the Police Department.

- Clough Brook culvert replacement – Ted Nutter & Roger Hadlock will work to contact Ed Paige for a start date for the project.
- Archertown Road Hill Project – addressed during the Highway Report

B. Policies – First Review

- Complaint/Investigatory Policy – the Selectboard reviewed the policy and suggested several changes to the draft. Adams will update and the policy will be re-addressed at the October 11, 2023 meeting.
- Social Media Policy – the policy was revised to incorporate suggested changes from Town Council. Adams will revise and distribute to department heads for review and comments.

New Business

A. Policy Introduction – Selectboard Guidelines & Procedures – the draft policy was reviewed – Kling asked what does “privileged purview of a Selectman” refer to – Dobbins-Marsh will research. It was also suggested adding references to education and training opportunities, and if a list of ordinances and policies should be included in this document. Dobbins-Marsh will update, with a revised draft to be reviewed at the October 11, 2023 meeting.

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

C. Complaints – Kling read his response to complaints filed by Shawn Garran on 09/05/2023, 9/12/2023 (in writing, Garran requested this complaint be withdrawn, but Kling did not accept this request), and 9/12/2023 (filed on behalf of the Orford Fire Department). The responses will be typed up and mailed to Garran. Kling stated he feels the Selectboard should appoint a liaison to the Fire Department so the board can learn first hand what’s going on during trainings and meetings. The Selectboard discussed which member should be appointed. With no consensus of who the liaison would be, it was agreed that Adams would reach out to Fire Chief Straight to obtain their next meeting date, and all Selectboard members would attend.

D. Contracts

- **Morton Salt** – the contract was amended to reflect the purchase of 100 tons at a rate of \$88.01 per ton for Bulk Safe-T salt. *Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kling to enter into a purchase agreement with Morton Salt as offered on the quote letter. Motion Passed 3/0*
- **Cargill Salt** – the contract reflected a purchase of 175 tons of salt at a price of \$89 per ton. *Motion made to enter into a purchase agreement with Cargill Salt as offered in the quote letter. Motion Passed 3/0*

E. Correspondence

- **Right to Know workshop** – NHMA is holding a Right-to-Know workshop on October 12th in Concord for any board member that wishes to attend.
- **Thomson Fuel Celebration** – The Selectboard were invited to attend a celebration for Thomson Fuels 5-year anniversary on September 30th
- **NH DES Request for Community EV charging Grant** – NH DES will be holding two webinars pertaining to a grant to install EV charging stations.

F. Other

- Approvals for Town Property Use requests
 - UVLSRPS request to use the Niles Room for a Composting Workshop
 - Rivers Edge request to use the Community Field for a 1-day soccer event
 - Neighbors Unite request to the Common for a “Touch a Truck” event
- Request for Reimbursement from the Capital Reserve accounts for expenses paid by the Town of Orford. *Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kling to request reimbursement by the Trustees of the Capital Reserve accounts in the amount of \$97,004.71 Motion Passed 3/0*
- Adams discussed the phone conversation between himself, Dobbins-Marsh and Anna Cole, attorney for the Town regarding how the Orford Volunteer Firefighters are compensated. If paid by the hour when at a call, they become employees’ if paid a flat fee per call, then they can be considered on-call volunteers. Cole suggested changing the pay structure as of January 1st 2024 which would allow time to notify members of the change. Dobbins-Marsh will contact Cole again to discuss the importance of being paid as a volunteer vs as an employee. She will also reach out to Enfield and Canaan fire departments to see how they handle pay for their volunteers.

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 Kling to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II(a) for personnel matters at 8:22 pm. A roll call vote of member’s present was taken with a decision in the affirmative

The Board resumed the regular meeting at 8:35 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 adjourn the meeting. Motion Passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh