

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

April 24, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kevin Follensbee, Chase Kling, Larry Taylor

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, Ted Nutter, Robb Day, Ann Green, Gary Dimick, Brad McCormack, Tom Steketee

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Public Comments - none

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Taylor, seconded by Follensbee to accept the minutes of 04/10/2024 (as amended) Motion Passed 3/0

Reports

- A. **Bandstand/Parks & Playgrounds Committees** – Members of both committees met with the Selectboard to discuss the pending repairs to the Bandstand. Day presented a document outlining the history of concerns with the structural integrity of the bandstand. One of the primary challenges is finding a contractor with time to repair the base. Two bids have been received by Parks & Playgrounds (Stan Graton II for \$57,000, and Tim Olsen's Building Construction for \$36,500), and the Bandstand Committee has received an estimate from Graton Assoc – one would install a reinforced concrete slab for the bandstand to be placed on, and one would rebuild the existing floor system with PT framing and AZEK decking. The estimates are \$34,260 and \$42,000 respectively.
- Green said the Bandstand Committee is looking into funding to cover the cost for repairs. A loan from the Mascoma Foundation of up to \$25,000 is an option, but the Bandstand Committee will need to finalize their 501 3c application to qualify. There is also the Niles Foundation and Byrne Foundation that they will approach. The group discussed a fund-raising effort and where the money would be deposited. Would it be the Bandstand account or a Town account? As the funds will need to be spent in 2024, having the Town manage the funds is not the best option, but the Town Treasurer will be asked for her opinion on this.
- One another topic, McCormack asked if the Town would allow the Bandstand Committee to put up a tent near the Bandstand for bands to play under. They would like to leave it up for the summer. Day said he feels this may create issues with maintaining the Common, and most likely will cause the grass under the tent to be damaged. He suggesting putting up the tent prior to each event.
- B. **Parade Committee** – Ann Green discussed the most recent parade committee discussion – Fairlee, Vt. will not be having a parade, so the parade will need to be in Orford only if held. Bradford, VT made an offer to Fairlee/Orford to hold their parade in Bradford. In addition, Fairlee will not be having it's annual July 4th BBQ, and Bradford said their fairgrounds could be use for this event as well.

Concerns with traffic and detours were discussed, as well as the parade route if the parade was held in Orford. Chief Bachus submitted his concerns based on increased traffic due to the Lyme-Thetford bridge being closed, and Interstate I-91 between Bradford and Fairlee being closed. He feels Orford is not equipped, nor has the appropriate infrastructure to have the parade solely in Orford. It could pose an increased liability and unnecessary risk to the Town. The Parade Committee will meet again, and will make sure Chief Bachus can be there as they need to decide soon.

- C. **Assessor** – Todd Haywood submitted his report to the Selectboard. Changes received on the inventory forms are being reviewed and updated in Avitar. He completed an abatement from Antique Barn Company for 2023. *Motion made by Kling, seconded by Follensbee to revise the assessed value for the antique Barn Company from \$552,200 to \$440,000. Motion Passed 3/0*
- D. **Highway Department** – Road Agent Nutter addressed several items with the Selectboard. The new 6-Wheeler is at Viking and should be completed within 6 weeks, then it will be taken back to ATG to have the rear end locking device added. Following this, the new F-550 will go to Viking to have the plow package installed. The tow hitch is scheduled to be installed on the Ford Explorer tomorrow. The current 6-Wheeler is not being used unless absolutely necessary – it was agreed not to sell until the new 6-Wheeler has arrived.

The hole on the Quinttown Bridge (over Jacobs Brook) will be patched, and the crew will look at the guardrails at the same time. Most of the roads have been graded, with Mousley Brook road, the Boat Landing and part of Baker Road to be completed this week. Two turn-arounds need to have some work done on them – one on Marsh Road and one on Baker Road. Nutter asked about the triangle where Huckins Hill road intersects Route 25A – it would make plowing much easier if it can be removed. Kling said that would be a question for the NH DOT. Nutter was given a name at the State to contact. The road weight postings were removed as of April 23rd.

Starting May 6th, the Highway crew will start working 4 10-hour days. How will that impact Phase II of the Archertown Road project? If there are issues, who will be contacted? Nutter said he will not be available on Fridays. At the last mtg with the Engineer it was discussed having Nutter there more so Jon Armstrong (Project Manager) could be there less. If the Selectboard doesn't want to overlap Nutter and Armstrong, Armstrong should plan to be there on Fridays. The contractor, Nutter and the engineer are planning to meet on Thursday of each week to review progress and discuss any issues that may arise. Nutter will check on the project daily Monday thru Thursday.

Nutter discussed coverage for the time Hadlock will be off work. Because Hadlock will still be compensated using paid time off, adding another full-time employee will impact the Highway budget, and once Hadlock comes back to work, the recently hired employee will need to be let go. Further discussion will be needed around this issue.

Indian Pond – wetland mats were put down over the dual culverts just beyond the beach entry – this will stabilize the road until the culverts can be replaced. By using these mats, the road becomes a one-lane road, and signs have been posted to notify on-coming traffic. Nutter thanked Connecticut Valley Trucking for trucking and installing the mats.

Future work includes reviewing Class VI road conditions as residents that abuts these roads are required to maintain them (Kling and Nutter will work on this), and the punch list for Phase I. Prior to the 2025 annual meeting, several warrant articles will be discussed, including one to grind old pavement, concrete and ledge in the sand pit to make a usable product for the roads, and paving for several roads in town.

E. Selectboard attended meeting recap

- Cemetery Commission – Kling could not make the April meeting due to a prior commitment, but reported Kurt Gendron is back at work, and the Commission hired a part-time, temp employee to help as needed.
- Road Committee – Taylor attended the April road committee meeting – they discussed ongoing concerns with the Archertown Road project, and highway projects in general. The committee is still addressing the use the Highway Block grants – maybe in the future these funds can be allocated to a specific road project.
- Parks & Playgrounds – Follensbee attended their April meeting – the committee discussed Green-up day, the bandstand issue, maintenance of the Common and adding mulch around the base of trees.
- Upper Valley Ambulance - Taylor attended their April meeting and was voted onto their board as a general member. After purchasing a new ambulance, the Board agreed to keep the old ambulance to use as a transfer truck M-F.
- Archertown Road Jacobs Brook bridge - Follensbee attended an online meeting with the DuBois & King engineer and the NHDOT rep. The rep from D&K is taking over for Megan Ooms after she left for another position, however, Dan Conger has worked with Ooms and seemed to be on top of the project. The design is still in the final stage, and all feel the timeline will still be met. One major hurdle was the possibility of moving electrical poles, but Eversource has agreed to shut down the power in this area when setting or removing the bridge (generators will be installed to provide power to the abutters). Follensbee will take over obtaining easements from the abutters – he will reach out to John Adams to discuss the process.

Old Business

- A. Review Purchasing Policy** – Kling asked if all Board members had read the purchasing policy (they had). The Selectboard discussed briefly prior to opening the paving bids.
- B. Archertown Road Phase II** – The Selectboard opened the following bids for the paving of the base and top coats of Phase II of the Archertown Road project.
- Pike Industries \$129,105.00
 - R&D Paving \$128,006.75
 - Blaktop \$116,737.25
 - Springfield Paving \$131,196.25

The Selectboard will meet with Erin Darrow, Project Engineer on Monday April 29th at 9:30 to review all bids for this project and accept one bid for site work, gravel and paving.

- C. Orford Academy Building** – As the Old Academy Building can no longer be used, Rivendell would like the ownership entity to be defined without further comment. That is, either the Town owns it, or the School District does. If Orford wants to take ownership Rivendell would most likely be quick to grant ownership. However, before the Town can make this decision, the property would need to be subdivided which would be virtually impossible, therefore, the Town could not take ownership until Rivendell no longer has a school on this piece of property. In addition, the Selectboard would need to hold Public Hearings and then entertain a Warrant Article for the voters to approve at Town Meeting before ownership could be transferred to Orford. At this time, no further action is being entertained.
- D. Update of Outstanding Projects**
- Heritage Center Exterior painting bid – The Selectboard reviewed the bid specs for exterior painting of the Heritage Center. The Selectboard agreed to post the legal notice for bids.
 - Broadband Project – Follensbee requested the Selectboard appoint John Adams as the Orford representative for the Broadband Project in Orford. All Selectboard members agreed to this request. Dobbins-Marsh will notify Adams of this appointment and request he provide updates to the Selectboard.
- E. Policies – Review or Adoption - “Town Officials Code of Conduct”** policy – the Board will review at a future meeting

New Business

- A. Review of received “Notice of Intent to Cut Wood”** – none received
- B. Action Folder** – Martin Murphy is requesting a meeting with a Selectboard member to discuss what he needs to meet code for a food service license. Kling said he would meet with Murphy.
- C. Signature Folder**
- Request to use the Common for the Saturday Open Air Market – the Selectboard signed the approval
 - Yield Tax for Lucille Andrews was reviewed and signed by the Selectboard
 - Yield Tax for George Tullar, Jr. was reviewed and signed by the Selectboard
- D. Correspondence**
- Document from Vegetation Control Service was sent to the Town as they have been contracted by NH Electric Coop to apply herbicides to selected areas in Orford and other Towns. At this time there is no timeline available as to when they will be in Orford – NH Electric will notify the Town when we’re added to the schedule
 - Shawn Garran requested, via email, that all department heads present a written monthly report (vs reporting verbally), and to have that report available upon request by the public.
- E. Contracts** – none Received
- F. Complaints** – none received
- G. Other** - none

Manifests, Payroll and Accounts Payable folders

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

Adjourn

Motion made by Kling, seconded by Taylor to adjourn the meeting. Motion Passed 3/0

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh