

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

October 2, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kevin Follensbee, Chase Kling, Larry Taylor

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, Rick Evans, NH Timber Appraiser, Tim & Lynn Cook

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am

Timber Tax Abatement request – Evans reviewed the work papers the forester used to determine what was paid to the Cook's for the timber, and explained the abatement process. The burden of proof falls on the property owners who have to prove the Selectboard calculated the tax incorrectly.

For the Selectboard, if the property owners do not accept their decision regarding the abatement (accept, amend or deny), they can file an appeal with the BTLA, and the Selectboard will have to defend its decision before the BTLA.

If the property owners feel the forester has not paid them the correct amount for the timber removed, they can also file a complaint with the forestry licensing board.

Reports reviewed by Evans included the worksheet of the forester where he explained how costs were calculated to determine how their payment from the forester were calculated. He also reviewed the rating sheet completed by the Selectboard Chair and explained how the rate used to calculate the tax was formed. Evans told the Cook's he's available if they need more information on either process.

Evans and the Cooks left the meeting at 9:45 am and 9:50 am respectively

Kling asked the other Selectboard members if they want to vote on the abatement now or wait until the regular Selectboard meeting on October 9th – they all agreed to vote on the tax abatement now. *Motion made by Follensbee, seconded by Taylor to deny the Timber Tax Abatement filed by Tim & Lynn Cook. Motion Passed 3/0.* Dobbins-Marsh will email the Cook's with the decision and remind them of the tax amount due, as originally billed.

Other

- The Selectboard received a resignation letter from Herb Austic resigning from the Road Committee which Kling read into the minutes.

First, I would like to thank the Selectboards of past and present for their confidence in asking me to be a member of the original road commission, and then committee. I would also like to thank the other committee members for their time and involvement! There is an enormous amount of experience compiled in those committee members. I feel that experience could have a great benefit to the town in many positive ways at no cost. That expertise for whatever reason has been grossly underutilized by the town. Because of that I will be resigning my position on the committee, effective immediately. Respectfully, Herb Austic

Motion made by Kling, seconded by Taylor to accept Austic's resignation from the Road Committee. Motion Passed 3/0

- Kling addressed the document/request prepared by the Road Committee for Road Agent Nutter. Kling felt it was handled poorly when Smith tried to hand the document to Nutter prior to a Selectboard meeting. He'd like to discuss further at the next Selectboard meeting (10/09)
- Planning Board work session – Kling asked the other Selectboard members if they wanted to attend the meeting tomorrow night (10/3) to speak with Town Council about any concerns they had. Nether Taylor or Follensbee felt the need to attend. Kling requested Dobbins-Marsh send his draft document of possible Selectboard responses to Town Council so he can discuss with her tomorrow night.
- Follensbee reported from Road Agent Nutter that AGT agreed to have McLeod install the correct spring and AGT would cover the costs. Kevin Knapp looked over the loader and felt it could still be operated for now, but the pins may still need to be replaced in the future. Sand Sifting will begin this week
- Phase I pavement repair – Nutter is having trouble reaching the R&D rep – Dobbins-Marsh asked if one of the Selectboard members should reach out to the company if Nutter can't get a response? Taylor said to have Nutter try once more, then he'll make a call.

Manifests, Payroll and Accounts Payable folders

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

Public Comments: none

Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 am

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh