

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

October 30, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kevin Follensbee, Chase Kling, Larry Taylor

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, David Smith

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm

2025 Proposed Operating Budget

Cemetery Commission – David Smith addressed the Cemetery budget, specifically the salary line item for 2025. With the passing of Kurt Gendron, the Cemetery's long-term employee, the Commission isn't sure what to budget for. Should the budget be based on an hourly rate, with the employee using the Cemetery mower, or contract out the mowing/trimming work? The Commission will need to work on a scope of work to be posted on the Town's webpage, and a help wanted ad (or bid for contracting services) should be posted as soon as possible to allow the Commission to have a ball park idea of the cost for maintenance of the Cemeteries. Kling said he's discussed the work with several people that work on Cemetery maintenance, as having this experience is important. If the Commission decides to contract out the work, the Commission may decide to sell the new mower, and if we hire an employee, the Commission will need to purchase a small trailer to move the mower from Cemetery to Cemetery. A place holder of \$35,000 will be added to the budget for now.

Smith also mentioned a tree that should be taken down as it's leaning on the Cemetery fence on the east side of the West Cemetery. The Selectboard said the Tree Warden should take a look at it first.

The last item Smith asked the Selectboard was if a photo of Kurt could be on the cover of the annual report. After some discussion, it was agreed to add the photo to the Cemetery Commission's annual report which is included within the Town's annual report.

Remainder of the Operating Budget – The Selectboard reviewed the entire operating budget for 2025, with discussion on the following line items:

- Tax Collector Fees- the Tax Collector asked if she could receive her fee payment as a wage vs a 1099 payment. Is this is allowed? Dobbins-Marsh will research further.
- Legal Expenses – the Selectboard agreed to leave the budget for 2025 the same as it was for 2024 (Legal \$20,000, Right to Know \$10,000 and Flood Plain expenses \$500)
- Engineering & Surveying Services – the Selectboard agreed to lower this line item to \$5,000 (2024 was set at \$8,000)
- Planning Board legal expenses – the Planning Board requested \$4,000 but there may be a need for more funds here because of several upcoming work. Dobbins-Marsh will check with the Planning Board to get their opinion on this.
- Several contracts are renewing and will require estimates from other contractors for 2025. These include Waste Disposal, and Landfill Closure Engineering Fee.
- The Selectboard agreed to leave the salary increase for 2025 at 2.5% and the percentage employees pay for benefits at 11% of the monthly cost.

2025 Proposed Warrant Articles

The Selectboard reviewed each warrant article as follows:

#3 – Capital Reserve funding – Bob Palifka will work on his projected funding spreadsheet and those amounts will be used to update this warrant article

#4 – Charitable Organization Appropriations – information is still needed from the Visiting Nurse Alliance and Bridge House

#5 – Funding for the 2025 revaluation – currently the estimate is \$38,000 and the Town will need to place this service out to bid.

#6 & #7– moving funds from the sale of the Highway Truck and the Cemetery mower into the respective CRF accounts

#8 – Top Coat of Phase I on Archertown Road – the estimate of \$115,000 will be paid from the Road Improvement CRF

#9 – Paving Archertown Road from Newcomb Hollow Bridge to the Norris Road – the estimate of \$100,000 will be paid from the Road Improvement CRF to cover the cost to reclaim, add gravel and pave. The road agent is also obtaining an estimate to dig up the road, remove old material, add new material and pave.

#10 – High Bridge Road – the Selectboard want to ask voters if they want the bridge replaced or not

#11 – Fire Rescue Truck replacement – the vehicle will take 24 – 26 months to build, and the estimate of \$240,000 will be paid from the Fire Truck CFR

#12 – amending the WW II Monument CRF to a Donor Trust Fund

There was a warrant article to replace the loader, but the Road Agent agreed to remove the request.

Intent to Cut – none received

Other:

- The Selectboard worked on the Timber Tax Assessment Worksheets for two Timber operations
- Road Committee meeting minutes – there appears to be a typo of the ending time of the meeting, also the committee is looking to meet on a non-schedule date. Dobbins-Marsh will notify Charlie Smith for both concerns
- Selectboard coverage for the General Election – The Selectboard will provide coverage for the Election, with at least two members on site during voting between 7:00 am and 7:00 pm

Correspondence

- NH Tax Rates by Town was received that reflect tax rates reported as of October 25, 2024 by Town
- Charlie Smith email regarding amendments to a Petitioned Warrant Article, specifically the petitioned warrant article regarding the Road Commission. Once it's approved it becomes a legal document, and can't be altered unless there is a legal issue, which would invalidate the warrant article.
- The Selectboard reviewed the letter to Lyme regarding the Lyme-Orford perambulation work for 2025.

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.

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh