

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

January 22, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kevin Follensbee, Chase Kling, Larry Taylor

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, JJ Hebb, Robb Day, Lawrence Hibbard, Ann Green, Road Agent Ted Nutter, Terry Martin

Call Meeting to Order

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

Public Comments: Terry Martin asked about the process for the Selectboard to sign over the right of first refusal for the old Academy building. Kling reminded him the public comments portion of the meeting are for comments only and the Board just listens to what being said. Martin asked to be added onto an agenda to discuss this topic with the Board. He also commented that Rivendell is paying too much to lease the Community Fields and would to address that as well. Dobbins-Marsh will add these topics to a future meeting date.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Follensbee, seconded by Taylor to accept the minutes of 01/08/2025

Motion Passed 3/0

Reports

- A. **Parks & Playgrounds** – JJ Hebb discussed the estimate for work needed on the Community Field. Last year the contractor couldn't do the maintenance due to illness, so this season there is extra deferred maintenance to do. The estimate for work from April – July is \$20,490, and the fall work from August – October is at \$11,150. These expenses are paid from the Town of Orford's Town Properties Capital Reserve Fund, and are included in the costs used to calculate Rivendell's annual lease. Hebb said the work is needed to make the fields safe for the spring and fall sports programs that take place on the fields, and this work is scheduled by Parks & Playgrounds (not Rivendell).
- B. **Bandstand Committee** – Ann Green discussed the needed bandstand repairs and conversations members of the Bandstand Committee had with Jarret Olsen. Olsen met with these committee members to review the project and offered to complete the work at no cost. Hebb said she's reached out to Olsen by phone and email several times with no response from him. Green is requesting the Selectboard try to contact Olsen to see if they can get a response. The Committee needs an estimate for materials, and labor (even if the labor is donated). To date they have raised over \$25,000 towards the project, and if Olsen can't do the work, the project will need to put out to bid. Taylor said he'd meet with Olsen to see where he stands on this project.
- C. **Highway Department** – Road Agent Nutter reported on the Highway department activity. The crew is doing lots of plowing, sanding, ditch cleaning and making sure culverts are cleared. All the work done this summer is really paying off now as the roads are holding up well. Nutter is still waiting for the rear-end repair kit for the 6-Wheel truck

to arrive, but the truck is still operational. ATG came to Orford to look over the 10-Wheel truck as it would not start and they found several wires that ran under the passenger seat melted together, which they repaired – all this was under warranty and no cost to the Town. With this temporary fix, the 10-Wheeler can be used.

The Indian Pond culvert project estimate was received being adjusted to \$172,725 – this included some costs that can be eliminated or reduced (guardrails and on-site observations). The Board and Nutter agreed the project should be done for the original warrant article amount of \$130,000, and using Nutter as the project manager keep the project on budget. A new invoice was received for another \$9,800 for engineering services that the Board needs to carefully review before it's paid. Do we have an approval date for the wetland application? The RFP states the project is to be completed by the end of June 2025 – if we don't have the permit approved by then the work will be done in the fall of 2025.

D. Selectboard attended meeting recap

- Conservation Commission – Follensbee attended their 1/16/25 meeting – the hiking events have been very successful. They are requesting a new member be appointed to the Commission (See the Action Folder below)
- Archertown Road Jacobs Brook Bridge monthly call-in – Follensbee reported the Right of Way documents will be completed by the end of the week, and the engineer is working on the NEPA permits. Follensbee discussed the High Bridge Road bridge with the NH DOT rep. If the Town votes to not move forward with this project, the state funds allocated to that project can be applied to another one. DOT also said if the Town chooses to move forward, the construction year will most likely be 2029-2030

If this bridge is not maintained the road may be changed to a Class VI status, and if abutters object they can petition the Superior Court to keep it a Class V road.

- Road Committee – Taylor attended their 1/9/2025 meeting where they discussed the condition of Phase I of the Archertown Road, concerns on the Indian Pond Culvert project and if the Wetland Permit was needed if the culvert is considered grandfathered.
- Parks & Playgrounds – Taylor attended the 01/15/25 meeting. They reviewed the Property Use request forms, and asked about insurance coverage if someone is injured when at one of the lakes.

Old Business

A. Update of Outstanding Projects

- a) Mousley Brook Culvert FEMA project – the feed back from FEMA is to request a detailed cost analysis of the plan to add a bridge. If the Town stays with the category of "Improved Project" the max FEMA will pay is \$522,173 – any expense above this will be 100% the Town's responsibility (no cost sharing). The options for the Town are to write an RFP and send to various engineering firms for project costs, stay with the Improved Project, or remove from FEMA and install a Bailey bridge. Dobbins-Marsh will work on the RFP to obtain estimates.

- B. Cemetery Maintenance Contract for 2025** – the Selectboard discussed the contract and addressed concerns if the budget fails will the Town be locked in. Follensbee asked if the contract stated it's contingent on the 2025 budget passing – it is not currently, but will be added prior to the Selectboard signing.
- C. 01/28/2025 Budget Public Hearing** – The Selectboard discussed what would be needed for the meeting. Print outs of the operating budget and warrant articles will be provided. Kling will layout the basic ground rules of the meeting and will act as the meeting moderator. Department heads will be invited to attend the meeting as well.

New Business

A. Review of received “Notice of Intent to Cut Wood”

Property Owner: William Wilson, Map & Lot #008-095-001, Logger: William Wilson

B. Budget vs Actual Review – the budget can't be imported into this report until after it's passed at the annual meeting. The Board will receive this report starting in April 2025.

C. Action Folder - Appointment to the Conservation Commission – *Motion made by Follensbee, seconded by Taylor to appoint Chris Gothberg to the Conversation Commission for a three- year term. Motion Passed 3/0*

D. Correspondence

- Assessors Report – The BTLA case was resolved following the meeting with the Selectboard on December 18, 2024. There are no additional abatement applications pending for the 2024 tax year. Land Use Change Taxes will be processed prior to April 1, 2025. Also, he is still waiting for the NH DRA to finalize the 2024 equalization ratio study.
- The Historical Society is exploring a new heating system due to a possible leak in the current oil tank.
- Notice was received from the NH DES that the Indian Pond Culvert project wetland application was received on January 21, 2025
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E. Contracts - none

F. Complaints - none

G. Other – Kling provided a print out of the 2024 Selectboard report for the other members to review and comment on.

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 Follensbee, seconded by Taylor to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II(a) for personnel matters at 8:05 pm. A roll call vote of member's present was taken with a decision in the affirmative

The Board resumed the regular meeting at 8:23 pm. A motion was made by Taylor, seconded by Follensbee to seal the minutes of the nonpublic session. Motion Approved 3/0

Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh