

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

March 26, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kevin Follensbee, Charles Smith, Jr., Larry Taylor

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, Road agent Ted Nutter, Jim Hansen

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 Smith to accept the minutes of 03/12/2025 (as amended)

Motion Passed 3/0

Motion made by Smith, seconded by Taylor to accept the minutes of 03/19/2025 (work session)

Motion Passed 3/0

Reports

- A. **Assessor** – Brendon McGahan submitted his report to the Selectboard. He worked on correcting a line adjustment that went back to 2023. The inventory forms are coming in and he will begin visiting properties after April 15th regarding changes made in these forms. He will also make changes to properties coming out of current use, generating LUCT invoices to these property owners.
- B. **Highway Department** – Road Agent Nutter reported Western Star trucks have been repaired and are back in service. The repairs completed were under warranty. The department has been working to unclog culverts (15 to date), and thanked the fire department for the use of their equipment with this work. Nutter met with Blaktop to review the issues on Phase II – the Blaktop rep will bring his supervisor out so they can decide the best course of action to repair the wide crack in the pavement – they may need to do borings to determine why this occurred. Nutter also contacted R&D regarding the pavement on Phase I – as there will not be a top coat added this year, Nutter wants to discuss the best course of action to preserve the road. Smith asked when R&D will show up to work on Phase I? (Nutter wasn't sure). When Blaktop is on Phase II, can they also do borings on Phase I? Follensbee agreed Nutter can ask about that, but Blaktop may not want to work on another company's project. Smith also requested the AT Road Phase I & II punch list be added to the agenda to review. This summer Nutter plans to ditch Archertown Road, complete grading of gravel roads, and replace several culverts.
Nutter asked the Selectboard about removing the waste oil furnace from the garage. With the propane furnace, the waste oil furnace isn't used as much and takes up a lot of space in the garage. Also, the maintenance is just under \$400 per year. The furnace could be sold on Municibid. *Motion made by Follensbee, seconded by Taylor to sell the waste oil furnace at the highway garage. Motion Passed 3/0*

C. Selectboard attended meeting recap

- Smith – Cemetery Commission – the commissioners reviewed the mowing contract and made a few minor changes. They discussed selling the tandem axel trailer and 2- old John Deere mowers. They also discussed selling the new mower, however, the Selectboard had previously agreed to hold off on the sale and reassess after the 2025 mowing season. There are some trees on the common that need to be taken down as they are close to the cemetery. Dobbins-Marsh will contact Bill Wilson, Tree Warden regarding the trees, and David Smith regarding the items to be posted for sale (need photos, descriptions and estimated sale price)
- Smith – Planning Board – they are working on adjusting the fee structure for various applications. The PB also discussed the 5G cell tower and handed out an article addressing the pro and cons of this. UVLSRPC advised the group of webinars coming up in April and felt new members should attend.
- Taylor – Road Committee – the committee elected new officers and Nutter requested the committee help work on the sand pit reclamation. Anna White from UVLSRPC is still looking into grants for culverts replacement.
- Taylor – Parks & Playgrounds – The committee discussed requests to use the common, the Rivendell Community Field lease fee and the swim program. The committee discussed a possible fee to charge Piermont and Orford residents for their children to take swimming lessons, but the Selectboard felt this wasn't appropriate.
- Follensbee – Conservation Commission – the committee reorganized and will meet on 3/31 for other business
- Follensbee – Archertown Road Jacobs Brook bridge project – the NEPA permit was denied and returned to the engineering firm for additional information. The bidding is still on schedule for August 2025 with construction to be completed in 2026.

Old Business

A. Bandstand Bids – no bids were received. Jim Hansen is working with a construction company and should have some cost information soon

B. Update of Outstanding Projects

- **Mousley Brook FEMA project** – The Selectboard discussed removing the culvert replacement from FEMA. Nutter said a lot of water has run thru the culvert and it seems to holding up well. If the Town removes the culvert project from FEMA, it may not qualify for replacement by FEMA if another disaster is declared. *Motion made by Taylor, seconded by Smith to withdraw the culvert replacement from FEMA. Motion Passed 3/0* The Town will notify FEMA of this decision.
- **Indian Pond Dual Culverts project** – The Town received notice from the Wetland Bureau of 9 items missing or incomplete from the Wetland application. Smith shared his research on each item, and after a lengthy discussion, the Selectboard agreed they can submit information to close out items #2, 7 and 8. We will request a contract from Right Angle Engineering to complete the remaining items and to reflect a fixed cost for the work.

- **Archertown Road/Jacobs Brook project** - The Selectboard agreed with Nutter to remove a few blocks off the bridge to lighten the weight on the bridge. The RFQ document will be sent to pre-qualified engineering companies for the Construction Phase of this project. Once the information is received back, the Selectboard will review and select the top 3 firms to ask for a cost analysis for this part of the project.
- C. High Bridge Road bridge** –Follensbee reported he Conservation Commission would like to work with the Selectboard on this project to possibly make this bridge a walking bridge. The amended Warrant Article at Town Meeting included the use of ATV's on the bridge, but currently in Orford, ATV's are not allowed on town roads. To allow that would require an ordinance to be passed at a special meeting or annual meeting to allow registered ATV's on town roads. Currently Archertown Road to 46 High Bridge road is maintained as it's a class V road. However, if the remainder of High Bridge road is considered seasonal and isn't maintained in the winter – does that allow it to be reclassified as a Class VI road. Follensbee will address further with the Conservation Commission.
- If the Town wants to “hold” state funding for this bridge, it needs to complete a document stating we are still interested in participating in the bridge project. By returning this document, it holds the funding for the Town, but doesn't mean we have to replace the bridge. The Board agreed to submit the document to the NHDOT.

New Business

- A. Review of received “Notice of Intent to Cut Wood”** – there were none submitted
- B. Action Folder**
- **Appointment of Deputy Treasurer** – *Motion made by Taylor, seconded by Smith to appoint Nancy Murphy as the Deputy Treasurer per RSA 41:29-a. Motion Passed 3/0*
- C. Signature Folder**
- **Wilderness Technical Services (IT)** – the Selectboard signed the IT contract between the Town and Wilderness Technical Services.
 - **MS-232** – The Selectboard signed the MS-232 which reports the appropriations approved at the March 2025 annual meeting to the NH DRA.
 - **Raffle Request** – the Selectboard signed the request to hold raffles by the Orford Masonic Association
 - **Veterans' Tax Credit** – *Motion made by Follensbee, seconded by Taylor to approve the Veterans' Tax Credit for Herbert Hodgeman. Motion Passed 3/0*
- D. Correspondence**
- **Letter from the NH Dept of Safety** regarding proposed changes to the State Fire Code rules
 - **Orford Inn Property** – an email was received from Ann Green stating the UV Land Trust is implementing the Right of First Refusal. More information to come.

- **Photos of 709 Route 10** – Tim Cole submitted photos of the condition on this property. Smith asked what can be done to help clean up the property. He will research the RSA's regarding on unregistered cars.
- **HB297** – the Sec of State sent information on this pending bill and for Towns to contact their representative to support or not.
- **NHMA Alert** regarding HB 456 and other pending bills

E. Other

- Smith said he's signed up with the NHMA and is scheduled to attend the April 24th meeting for new Selectboard members.
- Smith requested information from the NH Health Officer. Follensbee said a job description would be good to have in case someone wanted to take on the role. Smith will put something together.

Manifests, Payroll and Accounts Payable folders

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

Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:53 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh