

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

May 14, 2025

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, Chief Sanborn, Chief Bachus, Terry Martin

PARKS & PLAYGROUND MEMBERS: JJ Hebb, Robb Day, Lawrence Hibbard

HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERS: Vanessa DeSimone, Ann Green, Paula Graves

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 04/23/2025

Motion Passed 3/0

Reports

- A. **Fire Department** – Chief Sanborn reported the department responded to 13 calls in April (7 medical, 2 motor vehicle crashes, 1 odor investigation, 1 alarm, 1 mutual aid and 1 brush fire). Four members of the department members attended a 1-day training, and two members attended a 2-day training. Another member will attend a training the weekend of 05/17. Sanborn discussed the challenges of obtaining bids for the Rescue Truck. Venders are cautious about providing bids due to tariffs – they don't want to overestimate, or under estimate. Sanborn is working on a rating document to help with the process. Smith asked about the grant Sanborn is working. Sanborn said one won't be accepted until the end of June 2025, and the 2nd grant application can't be submitted until June 20th

Right to Know request update (filed for information from the fire department) – currently Sanborn is working on pulling three more years of reports and redacting confidential information. The IT contractor has pulled emails to and from the firechief@orfordnh.us account – there were 3,389 emails that have been sent to Town Council to review and redact confidential information. Council requested an additional 90 days to complete their review. Smith asked if the email search can be narrowed? A request was made to the requester to narrow her search, but because the request was for multiple topics, she wanted to see all emails from 1/1/2024 to present. The Admin Asst will work on a RTK policy and request form so future requests are specific to one topic.

- B. **Police Department** – Chief Bachus reported the department responded to 172 calls for service in April (46 motor vehicle stops as part of the patrol safety program) The remaining 126 stops included 55 motor vehicle stops resulting in 12 summonses, 3 animal complaints, 3 agency assists, 2 motor vehicle crashes, criminal mischief investigations, a family offence, disorderly conduct and various other non-criminal incidents. Bachus continues to read through and review the new police policy, procedure

and document updates, as well as creating a job description for an animal control position. After the speed cart is charged, it will be back in service.

C. Selectboard attended meeting recap

- Follensbee attended the monthly phone conference call for the Archertown Road Jacobs Brook bridge project. The NEPA permit has been completed and signed. The Wetland permit has been submitted. The date for advertising for bids is on track for late August 2025, and the RFQ for Construction Engineers are due May 28th
- Taylor attended the Road Committee meeting on May 8th – the group asked about the Warrant Article providing funding for the grader cover. Dobbins-Marsh will check on the last date these funds can be used.
- Smith attended the Cemetery Commission meeting on 05/10. The group discussed head stone repairs at the Dame Hill cemetery and Veteran burial sites. Smith was asked to post a request on ListServ asking for information that has knowledge of Veterans burial sites.
- Smith attended the Planning Board meeting on 05/13 – the Board discussed a lot merger, discussed revised application fees, and had a brief discussion on the 5G Cell Tower.

Old Business

- A. Academy Building** – Martin reviewed where the Orford School Board stood on the Notice of Termination of Conditional Right for Reconveyance of the Orford Academy Building, and the request for the Orford Selectboard to do the same. The purpose is to release the Academy Building to Rivendell. It's believed this action will attract more interested parties in wanting to lease or purchase the building. (If the building is sold, all proceeds come to the Town of Orford). Concern was expressed about the lack of a subdivision – Martin said it is a very costly process and who would be responsible for this? After a lengthy discussion, the Selectboard requested Martin present a memo of understanding that the Selectboard can have Town Council review.
- B. Bandstand Reconstruction Estimates** – Hebb reviewed two new estimates for repairing the bandstand – one from Herb Austic and one from Tristan Gray. After discussion with the Selectboard, Hebb agreed a member from Parks & Playgrounds would contact Gray to ask for an estimate to use crushed stone as a base (vs. a cement pad). P&P will then review and make a recommendation to the Selectboard on the contractor to hire. Green of the Bandstand Committee requested the roof of the bandstand be reused, which is currently the plan.
- C. Update of Outstanding Projects**
- Archertown Bridge at Jacobs Brook – discussed above under “Selectboard attended meetings”
 - Indian Pond Culvert project – the required additional data for the Wetland Permit application was submitted to the Wetland Bureau on 05/09/2025, and receipt of this information was confirmed.

New Business

- A. Heritage Center Oil Tank replacement/Heritage Donor Trust** – DeSimone reviewed the 3 estimates the Historical Society received to remove the old oil tank,

and install a new tank. The lowest estimate was for \$3,800 which the Selectboard accepted. The discussion continued as to who is responsible to pay for the oil tank. Unfortunately, the rental agreement between the Town of Orford and Historical Society did not address who would be responsible for major repairs/building system replacements. The Selectboard agreed to use funds from the Town Building CRF to cover the cost. (The funds in the Heritage Center CRF state to follow the lease and would only apply to expense the Town of Orford is responsible for). *Motion made by Smith, seconded by Taylor to use funds from the Town Building CRF to pay for the cost for the oil tank at the Heritage Center in the amount \$3,800. Motion Passed 3/0* The rental agreement will be revised and reviewed by both entities and Town Council.

- B. July 2025 Tax Warrant** – the Selectboard reviewed the Tax Warrant for the July 2025 tax bills. These taxes are calculated using the 2024 tax rate and assessed valuation of Orford property. (the December 2025 tax bills will be calculated using the revaluated property values and the tax rate that will be set in November 2025) *Motion made by Taylor, seconded by Smith to accept the July 2025 tax warrant. Motion Passed 3/0*

C. Review of received “Notice of Intent to Cut Wood” – none received

D. Review of received “Notice of Intent to Excavate”

- Property Owner: Stacey Thomson, Map & lot #008-093-024E

E. Action Folder

- Timber Tax Rating Worksheet was completed for timber cuts at four locations
 1. Map & Lot #001-093-1,2,3,5
 2. Map & Lot #008-089-039
 3. Map & Lot #008-091-054
 4. Map & Lot #008-095-001

F. Signature Folder

- The Eversource Pole Attachment Application was approved and signed by Kevin Follensbee, Selectboard Chair
- Request to use the Playground Pavilion by the Orford Free Library on 06/28 and 07/20 was approved and signed by the Selectboard
- Request to use the Common by the Orford Volunteer Fire Department, Inc on 07/28-08/03/25 was approved and signed by the Selectboard
- Request to use the Softball Field at the Community Field by the Women’s League Softball Sliders on Tuesdays & Thursdays from 06/17-08/21/2025 was approved and signed by the Selectboard

G. Correspondence

- The 2024 Equalization Ratio report was received. The Selectboard will ask our assessor to review and report to the Board at their next meeting.
- Information was received from NH GFOA regarding possible grants for Land & Water Conservation funds – Follensbee will discuss at the Conservation Commission meeting on 05/15/25
- NH DOT submitted a report of proposed driveway permits
- NH DES submitted approval for two septic system installations

H. Other

- Dobbins-Marsh asked for authority to negotiate the Propane & Oil fuel price per gallon and to sign the contract for the Town. *Motion made by Follensbee, seconded by Taylor to authorize Dobbins-Marsh to negotiate the best fuel pricing and sign the contract. Motion Passed 3/0*
- The Road Committee asked if Tim Chase could be added as an additional insured to the Town's insurance policy as contracted help but operating town equipment. Primex said should hire Chase as a part-time employee. This would provide clear coverage for possible injuries to Chase and liability for him and the Town. Dobbins-Marsh will contact the Road Agent so he can discuss with Tim.

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 8:10 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh