

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

October 22, 2025

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, Chief Sanborn, Anna White-UVLSRPC

Call Meeting to Order

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

Public Comments: None made

Approval of Minutes

- *Motion made by Smith, seconded by Follensbee to accept the minutes of 10/08/2025 (as amended) Motion Passed 3/0*
- *Motion made by Follensbee, seconded by Taylor to accept the minutes of 10/15/2025 (as amended) Motion Passed 3/0*
- *Motion made by Follensbee, seconded by Taylor to accept the minutes of 10/17/2025 Motion Passed 3/0*

Reports

- Assessor Report** – The assessor is working to complete the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP) manual for the 2025 revaluation.
- Thriving Communities Program** – Anna White from the UVLSRPC discussed the Thriving Communities subaward with the Selectboard, again asking if there might be projects that the grant funds for engineering costs could be used for. These funds can also be used to update an asset management system. Taylor will address this with the Road Committee to see if they have any ideas for this grant.
- Selectboard attended meeting recap**
 - Parks & Playgrounds – Taylor attended the 10/15 meeting – the group worked their 2026 budget, discussed the possibility of RISD mowing the Community Field, and on-going bandstand repairs
 - Cemetery Commission – Smith attended the 10/11 meeting – the Commissioners discussed a Veterans' plaque, adding PVC pipe by Veterans' stones to mark and better hold flags, green burial policy, and voted to eliminate the position of Sexton.
 - Planning Board – Smith attended the 10/14 meeting – the group continued discussion on the Host conceptual lot line adjustments, and approved the Lot Line Merger.
 - Road Committee – Taylor attended the 10/9 meeting – the group discussed the 2026 Highway budget, and a possible warrant article for the grader shed.
 - Conservation Commission – Follensbee could not attend the meeting on 10/16, as he attended the UV Ambulance meeting. The Conservation Commissioners did discuss the High Bridge Road bridge and some options.

2026 Budget & Warrant Articles

A. Fire Department Budget

Fire Chief Sanborn presented the departments 2026 budget to the Selectboard. The total budget is up only \$710 over the 2025 budget. Most of the line items remained the same, with the following exceptions:

- Dispatch – up \$50 based on 2025 cost
- Utilities – decreased by \$1,000 based on usage for 2025
- Supplemental Insurance – decrease of \$1,140 based on the number of members being insured
- Dues & Subscriptions – increase of \$100
- Fuel – decrease of \$300 based on usage in 2025
- Equipment – increase of \$2,000 due to increased costs, and additional parts the new Rescue Truck will need before being put into use
- Training & Education – increase of \$1,000 due to the cost of an all-day training session

Fire Department Warrant Articles – There are no Warrant Articles for 2026

B. Administration, Cemetery & Parks & Playgrounds Budget

The Selectboard reviewed the 2026 administrative budget, with significant changes over 2025 as follows: (*Salary and Benefits will be reviewed at the 10/29 Selectboard Budget Work Session, along with the remaining department/Committees, etc.*)

- Executive – overall increase over 2025 is \$445 – Selectboard member Smith does not want his stipend – reduction of \$1,607, advertising increased \$2,000 as they may be 2 positions to be replaced in 2026.
- Voter Registration – because there will be 2 elections plus the annual meeting in 2026, this budget increased by \$3,148
- Assessing – increased \$1,400 based on an increase in hourly rates
- Legal – decreased by \$5,000 based on 2025 usage
- Cemeteries – an overall increase of \$2,840 primarily for an increase of \$2,500 to remove trees within the Cemeteries.
- Emergency Services – increased \$6,452 – Ambulance services increased by \$3 per population, and dispatch is estimated to increase 5% in July of 2026
- Waste Disposal – an estimated increase of \$1,700. The Household Hazardous waste collection will be in Piermont in 2026, and more residents take advantage of using a local location.
- Parks & Playgrounds – currently the increase is at \$1,000, however, we haven't received bids for mowing the Community Field or the rest of the Town properties. The \$1,000 increase is due to an increase of the cost for portable toilets and improvements.
- Library – this section has a decrease of 3,700 due to a new librarian at the Free Library starting at a lower hourly rate than the retired librarian. This also impacts the appropriation that is budgeted for the Social Library.

Administration Warrant Articles:

- **Capital Reserve Accounts funding** – Bob Palifka of the Budget Advisory Committee will work up funding needs to cover estimated future purchases
- **Appropriations to Non-Profit services related entities** – the total request for 2026 total \$19,456. This included a new provider Pemi-Baker requesting \$1,500
- **Paving the reclaimed section of Archertown Road between Norris Road and Newcomb Hollow Bridge** – the Road Agent is obtaining an estimate for this work, which will be paid using the Road Improvement Capital Reserve fund. This will be a 3-year non-lapsing WA
- **Reclaiming and Paving a section of Archertown Road between H Taylor and the Box Culvert** – the Road Agent is obtaining an estimate for this work, which will be paid using the Road Improvement Capital Reserve fund. This will be a 3-year non-lapsing WA
- **Reclaiming and Paving the paved section of Indian Pond Road** – the Road Agent is obtaining an estimate for this work, which will be paid using the Road Improvement Capital Reserve fund. This will be a 3-year non-lapsing WA
- **Replacing a section of guardrails on Archertown Road** – the Road Agent is obtaining an estimate for this work, which will be paid using the Road Improvement Capital Reserve fund. This will be a 3-year non-lapsing WA
- **Removal of the Small Garage on Route 25A** – the Selectboard will ask the voters to approve the removal of this small garage. We are requesting someone from NH DES to look over the site to make sure it won't create issues once removed.
- **Disabled Veterans' Tax Credit** – this is to adopt the newest allowance under RSA 72:35 to allow the Town to grant \$4,500 to disabled Veterans (this will now combine the \$4,000 Disabled Vet credit plus the \$500 general vet credit)
- **Highbridge Road Bridge** – the Conservation Commission will be putting together a Warrant Article to address potential use of this bridge
- **Changing the term length of Supervisors of the Checklist from 6-years to 3-years**

Old Business

- A. Municibid for Waste Oil Furnaces** – the waste oil furnace was sold for \$2,051 and the person that placed the winning bid will pick it up within the next few weeks.

New Business

- A. Set 2025 Tax Rate** – the tax rate for 2025 was set by the NH DRA at \$17.51 per \$1,000 of property assessed value. *Motion made by Smith, seconded by Taylor to set the 2025 tax rate at \$17.51 per assessed property value. Motion Passed 3/0*

This is a reduction of 49.7% from the 2024 tax rate

- B. Review of received "Notice of Intent to Cut Wood"** – none received

- C. Action Folder** – None

- D. Contract** – the Selectboard reviewed the 2025-2026 Cargill salt contract for 175 tons of salt at a rate of \$109 per ton. *Motion made by Taylor, seconded by Smith to accept the contract.*

E. Correspondence

- Letter from Peter Tse regarding the revaluation of his house, and questions on his abutting property that he's allowed someone to use. The letter will be sent to the assessor for review.
- Letter received from the Groff's confirming the work to be done on Mud Turtle Pond near his property. A copy will be given to the Road Agent

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 7:30 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh