

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

November 12, 2025

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

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

Call Meeting to Order

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

Public Comments: None

Approval of Minutes

- *Motion made by Follensbee, seconded by Taylor to accept the minutes of 10/22/2025 (as amended) Motion Passed 3/0*
- *Motion made by Follensbee, seconded by Taylor to accept the minutes of 10/29/2025 Motion Passed 3/0*

Reports

- A. **Fire Department** – Chief Sanborn’s report reflected the department responded to 32 calls in October – 18 medical, 2 motor vehicle accidents, 1 illegal burn, 5 fire alarms, 1 CO alarm, 1 welfare check, 2 for trees/wires down and 2 mutual aid (1 to Thetford 1 to Piermont). The transfer case for Engine 3 has been rebuilt. Preventative maintenance on the Engine and the Tanker are still pending. Construction of the new Fire Truck has started. The light package is 12-16 weeks out from the end of October. To date there is no completion date set. Chief was asked about the process around an illegal burn – Sanborn said there are events that the Fire Department can handle themselves, but larger issues are passed off to the Fire Marshall to investigate. While the burn ban has been lifted, burn permits are still required.
- B. **Police Department** – Chief Bachus’ report reflected the department responded to 102 calls for service in October – 1 arrest, burglary call, 2 criminal mischief calls, 2 trespass calls, 4 suspicious activities, 1 shot fired, 3 alarms, 4 motor vehicle collisions, 1 warrant completion and numerous other non-criminal or public assistant calls. Of the 31-motor vehicle stops, 13 summonses were issued. Bachus is working on six investigatory cases, with three involving juveniles. One case is a joint investigation with the NH Dept. of Natural and Cultural sources Forest Rangers.
- The new Animal Control Officer position is progressing. Bachus is working with Piermont to obtain the necessary equipment, paperwork and other items so the Officer is ready to go when needed. Bachus plans to work with her starting mid-December for her first calls. The Patrick Leahy bulletproof Vest partnership Grant program was announced and will close mid-December. Bachus is in the process of completing the grant application that will reimburse 50% of the cost.

C. Selectboard attended meeting recap

- Budget Advisory – Follensbee attended the 11/5 re-organization meeting – Bob Palifka was elected as the Chair. The group met with the Selectboard on 11/10 for a first discussion of the budget and warrant articles.
- Cemetery Commission – Smith attended the 11/8 meeting. The group is looking to purchase an illuminated pole for the East Cemetery (moving the current pole to the Dame Hill Cemetery). They have scheduled a logger to remove a tree on the outside edge of the East Cemetery. They will need the landowner's permission and proof of insurance from the logger before the work can start. The Commissioners discussed a foot stone found under a tree stump they removed at the West Cemetery.

Old Business

A. Update of Outstanding Projects

- Archertown Bridge at Jacobs Brook – due to the timing of payment vs reimbursement from the State, the Town will need to look at obtaining a short-term Construction Note. This will require a Public Hearing prior to the Annual Meeting. A Warrant Article will be created to vote on, requiring a 3/5 majority vote.

New Business

A. Review of received “Notice of Intent to Cut Wood” - none

B. Town Mowing bids – the Town received one bid for the Community Field Mowing and one bid for the Town Properties mowing.

- Community Field – bid from Chris Gendron, Echo Mountain Property Maintenance for \$18,500 (2026), \$19,425 (2027) and 20,396 (2028)
- Town Properties - bid from Chris Gendron, Echo Mountain Property Maintenance for \$21,700 (2026), \$22,785 (2027) and \$23,924 (2028) plus \$650 for brush hogging for each year

Motion made by Follensbee, seconded by Taylor to accept the bids from Chris Gendron for mowing the Community Field and Town Properties at the rates listed above. Motion Passed 3/0

C. Budget vs Actual Review – the Selectboard reviewed the report

D. Action Folder

- Orford Cares request to use the Transfer Station on 11/15 and 11/22 for donations and collection of food items to use at the Tuesday Market. The Selectboard approved the request.
- Stewardship Report for Mt. Cube Farm was reviewed, approved and signed.
Motion made by Follensbee, seconded by Smith to accept the updated Stewardship Report for Simon Thomson, Mt. Cube Farm. Motion Passed 3/0
- Bandstand Repairs
 1. Real Hazen Contract for labor – *Motion made by Follensbee, seconded by Smith to accept the contract between Real Hazen and the Town of Orford for labor and materials for the bandstand repairs in the amount of \$12,275. Motion Passed 3/0*

2. M. Wright Excavation – *Motion made by Follensbee, seconded by Taylor to accept the invoice from M. Wright Excavation for work on the bandstand pilings in the amount of \$1,560. Motion Passed 3/0*

E. Contracts – Morton Salt for salt – *Motion made by Follensbee, seconded by Smith to accept the contract from Morton Salt for 100 tons at \$83.28 per ton. Motion Passed 3/0*

F. Correspondence

- Vt Generator – both the Town Office and Highway Garage generators have been inspected and in good working order.
- Letter to Peter Tse – Follensbee wrote a response to an email received from Peter Tse regarding the valuation of his property. The Board approved the letter for Follensbee to sign.

G. Other

- the Treasurer is asking if there is a way to move his computer to another location in the building as he needs to complete work for year end and would like the ability to access it when needed. Follensbee will ask the Planning Board their thoughts on moving their filing cabinet into the Niles Room, allowing the Treasurer to use that storage closed for his equipment.
- Smith mentioned that the section on Archertown Road what was reclaimed needs some grading. The same for the section on Townshed Road. Follensbee will mention to the Road Agent
- Cemetery Hourly employee – Smith asked if there is an option to hire a Full-Time employee that could handle the Cemetery Mowing for 8 months, and do other work for the Town the remaining 4 months. This might help find more applicants for the position, and he's had a few people mention this to him. Dobbins-Marsh will work up the costs at various hourly rates to hire an full-time employee.

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 7:25 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh