

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

November 26, 2025

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, Bob Palifka, Bill Paxton

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

Public Comments

Approval of Minutes

- *Motion made by Follensbee, seconded by Smith to accept the minutes of 11/10/2025 (as amended) Motion Passed 3/0*
- *Motion made by Follensbee, seconded by Smith to accept the minutes of 11/12/2025 (as amended) Motion Passed 3/0*

Reports

- Assessor Report** – The report from the assessor informed the Selectboard that the USPAP manual was complete. A copy will be sent to the Dept of Revenue for review. They will inform the assessor of anything that should be added. A copy is also in the Selectboard office. This completes the Re-evaluation process for 2025.
- Budget Advisory Committee** – Bob Palifka said the review of the operating budget looked good and could remain as is. He made some changes to the funding of the Capital Reserve accounts, specifically for the loader, which is scheduled to be replaced in 2027. The Re-evaluation CR funding was also increased to meet an estimate cost of \$70,000 for the 2030 re-evaluation costs.
- Selectboard attended meeting recap**
 - Road Committee – Taylor attended their meeting on 11/13. The group discussed the grader shed and types of gravel they felt the highway department should be using. Road Agent Nutter suggested turning the brook back (between 657 Archertown Road and Indian Pond Road intersection) to where it was previously. The Selectboard feel this may create a bigger issue, and the better option would be to add rip rap instead. Either option may require a Wetland Permit. Nutter also rejected the suggestion of adding gravel to the sections of road that were reclaimed this fall as he feels it's best to let the road settle over the winter, which allows issues to be identified to be repaired prior to paving.
 - Planning Board – Follensbee attended their 11/18 meeting where the group discussed the Cell Tower ordinance and that the FCC can override the ordinance if they can prove there is a need for a tower.
 - Parks & Playgrounds – Taylor attended their 11/19 meeting – the group added Christmas lights to the bandstand, and discussed the possible need for a Capital

Reserve account for dock replacements and repairs at the beaches. The funds would come from swim lesson fees paid to Orford from non-residents. This will need additional conversation.

- Conservation Commission – Follensbee attended their 11/20 meeting where they discussed the 2025 hikes and future hikes in 2026, including a torch run along the Appalachian Trail to celebrate its 150th anniversary. High Bridge Road bridge was addressed, as the group wants to possibly repair the stone buttresses in a way not to create a “change” which would make this a Class V road again. Their goal is to make the bridge secure for non-vehicle traffic.
- Follensbee attended the NHMA annual conference and attended 6 classes. One class focused on construction off a Class VI road. Senate Bill 281, effective July 1, 2026, will remove the requirement for governing body approval to construct a building off a Class VI road. Instead, a landowner must sign a waiver acknowledging the municipality is not liable for road maintenance or services, provide proof of the lot's insurability, and record the waiver at the registry of deeds before a building permit is issued.

Old Business

A. Update of Outstanding Projects

- Archertown Bridge over Jacobs Brook Bridge – Follensbee had a brief discussion with the loan rep at Mascoma Bank regarding a Line of Credit for this project. The amount of the loan will be for the full construction cost, but interest is only charged on the funds that are used. A Warrant Article will be needed to be voted on at the annual meeting in March 2026, in addition to a Public Hearing to be held sometime in January 2026. The contractor should be approved shortly – it's still at the State level.
- Grader Cover – the Road Committee submitted an estimate of \$46,500 to construct the cover, and a Warrant Article will be presented to the voters at the March 2026 annual meeting.
- High Bridge Road bridge – Conservation Commission is still working on this issue

B. Other

- The final invoice from the contractor hired to maintain the Cemeteries was received, however, it did not reflect the dates that fall cleanup was completed at each cemetery. Dobbins-Marsh will request this information from the contractor and will re-submit the invoice to the Selectboard for approval.
- The Orford Cares group asked to extend their time at the recycling center for food collections/donations to include 11/29 and 12/6. The Selectboard approved.

New Business

A. Review Cemetery Maintenance Position applications – one application was received for the Cemetery Maintenance Employee. The Selectboard will have the Cemetery Commission review and discuss first, then make a recommendation to the Selectboard on the next step.

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

C. Action Folder – the Timber Tax rating sheet was completed by the Selectboard, which is used to generate the invoice for Wood Cut for Map & Lot #008-089-039

D. Correspondence

- Letter from Mascoma Bank regarding the Line of Credit for the Archertown Road over Jacobs Brook bridge project.
- Letter from Town Council regarding the process to follow regarding obtaining the Line of Credit for the above-mentioned project.
- The Town of Fairlee sent a letter regarding the increased cost for the 2026 fireworks display. The cost increased from \$12,000 to \$20,000 and Fairlee is asking for donations from any interested parties to help offset the cost. Smith will send the information out on various ListServ's
- Approval for Construction of a septic system at 475 Route 10 was received from the NHDES
- An email was received from the Journal Opinion asking for information on what the Town is planning for the USA's 250th celebration. An email will be sent to the parade committee to see what they have planned.

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 11:30 am. A roll call vote of member's present was taken with a decision in the affirmative

The Board resumed the regular meeting at 11:50 am. A motion was made by Follensbee, seconded by Taylor to seal the minutes of the nonpublic session. Motion Approved 3/0

Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 11:53 am

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh