

*Office of the Select Board
Town of Orange, New Hampshire
Minutes of April 13, 2021*

Present: Dorothy Heinrichs, Chair; Tamara Fairbank, Aaron Allen, and Sandi Pierson (clerical).

Others: Doug and Trish Weekes.

Meeting opened at 6 p.m. Attendance taken by the secretary.

Minutes: The minutes of March 23, 2021 were unanimously approved as submitted.

Razor Hill Excavation: The Board signed an abatement to the tax collector for \$100.62 for Razor Hill's excavation tax as voted on at the March 23 meeting.

Yield Taxes: The Board signed a yield tax warrant for \$1,982.09: Gunns/New Colony Road/Map 3, Lot 47.

Current Use: The Board reviewed, approved, and signed an application for Current Use for Charles Baldwin IV/104 Tuttle Hill Road/Map 1, Lot 20. The application was deemed complete including the grading report and current use map. Sandi will mail it to the Registry of Deeds for recordation.

Highway: The Board reviewed an email from Road Agent Scott Sanborn.

- Scott recommends putting the old town truck out to bid. He feels the minimum bid for the 2008 Ford 350 should be \$5,000.00 and be sold "as is" with no warranties or guarantees expressed or implied. Given the condition, he did not feel it was worth the higher Kelly Blue Book's value. After discussion, the Board concurred with Scott's recommendation.
- Scott gave an update on the FEMA reimbursement status subsequent to his discussion with FEMA State reps Paul Hatch and Vanessa Urango. Scott explained which projects are "obligated" and noted that some of the smaller projects will be reimbursed at the projected cost instead of the actual, which will benefit the town's 25% cost responsibility. Scott gave an overview of the various job completion statuses. He will speak to Richard Remacle to get a clear idea on the tasks he can realistically complete this year. For reimbursement, Scott will need proof of payments. He feels copies of the vouchers signed by the Board will suffice.
- Treasurer Trish Weekes reported to the Board that the interest to date on the FEMA Road Anticipation Note is \$4,773.00 and is expected to be \$6,235.00 when the note is due on June 12. She explained that the town can roll over the principal but not the interest. After discussion it was agreed to ask Scott to meet with the Board on Monday evening at 6 p.m. to further discuss the FEMA reimbursement process, including a clarification of what it means that projects are "obligated". Sandi will prepare copies of the 2019, 2020, and 2021 FEMA road repair vouchers with corresponding invoices for Scott as a pdf as well as hard copies.

Legal Counsel: The Board revisited the discussion on the town's legal representation, specifically that typical legal tasks that were previously handled straightforwardly have become lengthy and complex since the local law firm of Gardner, Fulton and Waugh was absorbed by the multi-state Drummond Woodsum. Dorothy recapped her conversation with Walter Mitchell of Mitchell Municipal Group, P.A., a legal firm based in Laconia that represents over 50 towns. She also reiterated her conversations with municipal personnel from neighboring towns that use Mitchell Municipal Group. They all told her they were very satisfied with Mitchell's legal representation. After reviewing the fee agreement from Mitchell Municipal Group, Tamara motioned to contract with them as the town's legal representation and to sign the fee agreement. Aaron seconded. Motion passed unanimously in favor. Dorothy will contact both Drummond Woodsum and Mitchell Municipal Group with the Board's decision.

Other:

- The DRA set the equalization rate at 101.6% for appraisal and 105.9% as the sales ratio.

Other Select Board business:

- Dorothy spoke about a request from Mike St. Laurent of LOCO Sports LLC, to have a segment of a 100-mile relay road race come through town on Saturday, August 14th. The route through Orange would be Brock Hill Road (from East Grafton) to Burnt Hill Road to Cardigan Mountain Road and down to Canaan. The race will consist of 150 teams which will be in groups of 30 with the support of about 30 vans per hour. Dorothy said she expressed safety concerns of such an event given the local traffic on a Saturday, especially the cars going to Mount Cardigan State Park, the access to the latter basically being close to a one-lane road. Dorothy said she checked with the State Police regarding the Select Board's authority but the RSAs she was directed to basically covered car and motorcycle racing. She emailed Brent Stevens and asked if he would relay her concerns to Mr. St. Laurent. Scott Sanborn weighed in by email, agreeing with Dorothy's safety concerns, and suggested perhaps they could use Route 4, Cross Road, and Tuttle Hill as an alternative route instead of Brock Hill, Burnt Hill, and the upper, narrow sections of Cardigan Mountain Road.
- Dorothy recapped the first zoom meeting of the Hazardous Mitigation Update Committee. The attendees were Judith Lindahl, Donald McFarlane, Doug Weekes, Scott Sanborn, Dorothy Heinrichs, and Aaron Allen. The town's share of the cost of the update will be reimbursed by FEMA @ \$25 per hour by the participants. She stressed the importance of the participants keeping detailed track of their in-kind volunteer hours on the time sheet provided by consultant June Gardeau. Dorothy will work with Sandi in gathering pertinent photographs, reviewing the Inventory Forms to get an accurate population count, and emailing pertinent DRA-MS forms to Ms. Gardeau.

Secretary's report:

- The Board concurred that Sandi should proceed with the 2021 informational directory mailing.

Reports from Boards and Committees: n/a

Public comment:n/a

Bills and vouchers were reviewed and signed.

Bob Ells

The Board spoke of their appreciation and their friendships with Bob Ells, who died on April 6. Dorothy spoke about his decades of service to the town, including as road agent, selectman, and planning board member, all of which Bob performed with integrity, common sense, and courteousness. A moment of silence was held for Bob for each of us to remember our time spent with him. The Board offers the family their deepest sympathies.

Meeting adjourned 7:00 p.m.

Dorothy Behlen Heinrichs

Tamara Fairbank

Aaron Allen