

*Office of the Select Board
Town of Orange, New Hampshire
Select Board Minutes and Joint Meeting with the Budget Committee
January 12, 2021*

Present:

- *Select Board:* Dorothy Heinrichs, Chair; Tamara Fairbank (Budget Committee ex-officio), Aaron Allen, and Sandi Pierson (clerical)
- *Budget Committee:* David Stacy, Chair; Robert Proulx, Secretary; and Louis Shelzi
- *Others:* Scott Sanborn, Sharon Proulx, and Michelle Goffreda

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

Minutes:

- The minutes of December 22, 2020 were approved as submitted.
- The nonpublic minutes of December 22, 2020 were approved as submitted.

Property sale: Dorothy opened two sealed bids for the town-owned, land-locked 3.9 acres on Tuttle Hill. This was offered to all abutters contingent that they merge the land with their property and not retain it as a separate lot. The Select Board set the minimum bid at \$5,000. Ann Ackil submitted bid of \$5,200. Charles Baldwin submitted a bid of \$8,234. The sale was awarded to Charles Baldwin. The Board will proceed with preparing a deed and voluntary merger form for the pending sale.

Animal control contract: The Board signed the annual contract with the Upper Valley Humane Society at a cost of \$300, which is the same as last year.

Treasurer's report: The Board reviewed the December 2020 treasurer's report and Select Board reconciliation. All figures were on target and the Chair signed the report.

Correspondence: The Board signed a letter notifying an Elderly Exemption applicant of their decision of December 22.

Grant agreement: The Board re-signed the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Grant agreement to correct a date discrepancy. (Approved at an earlier meeting.) Dorothy stated that Mitigation Plan meeting participants should include Emergency Management Deputy Doug Weekes, Road Agent and Planning Board Chair Scott Sanborn, Planning Board Vice Chair Donald McFarlane, and Select Board members Dorothy and Aaron. Others are welcome to participate. Participation by Zoom will be available. The town must pay half the cost of the grant; this can be done by volunteer hours in kind.

Intent to Cut: The Board reviewed and signed an Intent to Cut for Ossipee Mountain Land Company, who was awarded a contract by the State to log 100 acres in Mount Cardigan State Forest. As required and calculated by the State, the logger posted a timber tax bond of \$3,659.70.

Treasurer Trish Weekes will place the money in an escrow account until the job is complete and timber taxes are paid. The log landing will be on New Colony Road in the small field just before the state forest entrance gate.

Town Clerk: The Board discussed with Town Clerk Michelle Goffreda the matter of getting a deputy town clerk. Michelle said there were two people that have expressed an interest. The Board also discussed with Michelle what an appropriate salary for the town clerk position should be in relation to the hours that are worked. No decision to change the stipend was made at this time.

Town meeting: The Board discussed if the Town House would be adequate for the business portion of town meeting on Wednesday, March 10 in regards to COVID-19 restrictions. A legal response was received from the Local Government Center about the question of possibly holding the business portion of town meeting out of town in a larger facility. Legal counsel advised that holding town meeting outside of town is permissible per RSA 39:1-b. The warrant must be posted at the place of the meeting and the Select Board shall arrange transportation, for those voters who need it, from the usual polling place to an out-of-town facility. No decision was made at this time to change the place of town meeting. It was agreed that voting on Article 1 (election of officers) will be held at the Orange Town House with the same safety measures in place as the elections of the past year.

Other:

- The Board received a letter from NH Forest and Lands Director Patrick D. Hackley in response to the Board's letter of dissent that the town was financially responsible for the fire response from three towns to a woodland fire in Mount Cardigan State Forest. Director Hackley attached a copy of RSA that authorizes the State to hold municipalities financially responsible for 50% of fire response on State lands for up to a quarter of one percent of the total value of their town. Dorothy said that for Orange, that would be up to \$90,800. Tamara recapped her email to Senator Guida and state legislatures in regards to the RSA, particularly that a large-scale fire in the state forest could financially overwhelm a town the size of Orange. The Board will continue to follow up on this.
- A notice was received from the State that they have deposited \$17,053.11 into the town's account for the 2020 Meals and Rooms Distribution revenue.
- The Board received a copy of *Mascoma River Watershed Culvert Report for the Town of Orange* from the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission. Scott Sanborn said he has a copy.
- The Board received a FEMA expenditure report for 2020 from Treasurer Trish Weekes.

Secretary's report:

- Sandi said that while raking leaves in the fall, she had seen a number of cigarette butts disposed of near the front steps of the Town House. She asked if the Board would consider designating the Town House as a tobacco-free property. The Board declined, saying it would be difficult to enforce.
- A mattress and box spring has been disposed of on the side of Burnt Hill Road. After discussion, Aaron said he would bring it to Lebanon landfill which will charge a nominal disposal fee.

Reports from other Boards and Committees: n/a

Public comment: n/a

Bills and vouchers were reviewed and signed.

***JOINT MEETING WITH THE BUDGET COMMITTEE
TO DRAFT THE PROPOSED 2021 BUDGET***

2021 Officers: Bob Proulx motioned for Dave Stacy to be Budget Committee Chair. Louis seconded. Motion passed unanimously in favor. Louis motioned for Bob Proulx to be Budget Committee Secretary. Dave Stacy seconded. Motion passed unanimously in favor.

Municipal operating budget:

The Select Board and Budget Committee voted unanimously on the following recommendations for 2021. (Note: these figures are subject to change at the public hearing on January 26.)

- Salaries: \$32,000. Increased due to the quote from Cohos Advisors to do the audit (MS-60) and MS-535 and possibly an increase in the Town Clerk stipend.
- Elections and Registrations: \$1,170. Decreased because this year there is only the election of town officers and town meeting.
- Financial Administration (registering deeds): \$100 (level funded).
- Revaluation of Property: \$3,000. Decreased because 2021 pick-ups will be included in the measure and list portion of the town-wide revaluation.
- Legal Expense: \$2,000. Decreased to reflect anticipation of legal expenditures.
- FICA: \$2,800. Increased to reflect possible increase of Town Clerk salary.
- Planning and Zoning: \$300 (level funded).
- General Government Buildings: \$8,000. Increased based on 2020 expenditures.
- Cemeteries: \$3,000 (level funded).
- Insurance: \$1,800. This is the actual quote from the Primex.
- Memberships: \$1,750 (level funded).
- Officer Expenses: \$7,500 (level funded).
- Police: \$0.00. The town is covered by the NH State Police at no cost.
- Ambulance: \$12,328. This is the quote from the Town of Canaan.
- Fire: \$14,909. This is the quote from the Town of Canaan.
- Building inspection: \$300.00. Decreased based on 2020 expenditures.
- Emergency Management: \$300 (level funded).
- Highway: \$110,000. Increased based on a spreadsheet of anticipated expenses for 2021 submitted by Road Agent Scott Sanborn.
- Solid waste: \$17,463. This is the quote from the Town of Canaan.
- Health agencies: \$3,900. Decreased based on 2020 expenditures.
- Direct Assistance (Welfare): \$3000 (level funded).

- Library (contribution to Canaan Library): \$4000 (level funded).
- Culture and Recreation: \$200 (level funded).
- Timber Harvest Monitor: \$1.00. This essentially keeps the line item open for possible expenditures, though they are not anticipated at this time.
- Conservation Commission: \$300. Decreased on the recommendation of Conservation Commission Chair Aaron Allen.
- Tax Anticipation Note: \$5,700: Increased based on 2020 expenditures.
- Buildings Capital Outlay: \$1,000.00 (level funded).

Total proposed 2021 budget: \$236,821.00

Capital Reserves:

After discussion, the Board and Committee voted to recommend funding the following capital reserves, which will be placed on the warrant:

- Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund: \$8,000
- Town House Capital Reserve Fund: \$5,000
- Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund: \$4,000
- Road Repair and Improvement Capital Reserve Fund: \$1,000

Total proposed 2020 capital reserve contributions: \$18,000.00

Anticipated revenue (offsets municipal budget):

- Land Use Change Taxes: \$2,000
- Yield taxes: \$3,000
- Interest and penalties on delinquent taxes: \$6,000
- Inventory penalties: \$1,500
- Business licenses, permits and fees: \$30
- Motor vehicle permit fees: \$60,000
- Building permits: \$100
- Other licenses, permits and fees: \$300
- Meals and Rooms Tax distribution: \$5,000
- Highway Block Grant: \$28,000
- State Forest reimbursement: \$3,000
- Statewide voter checklist: \$325
- Interest on investments: \$100
- Municipal fees: \$950
- Sale of municipal property: \$10,000

Total estimated revenues: \$120,305

BUDGET SUMMARY TO DATE

	2020	2021
Operating budget	\$228,086.00	\$236,821.00
Capital reserves	\$16,000.00	\$18,000.00
Total Appropriations	\$244,086.00	\$254,821.00
Less Estimated Revenues	\$119,450.00	\$120,305.00
Estimated amount to be raised by taxes	\$124,636.00	\$134,516.00

Salaries: A recommendation of salaries by an ad hoc committee is done every five years. The Board and Budget Committee agreed the following article will be included on the warrant: *To see if the Town will authorize the Moderator to appoint a committee of five Orange residents, two of whom may be officers or employees of the town (excluding members of the Select Board, Tax Collector, Treasurer, Town Clerk, and Select Board Secretary), to study the salaries of the Town officers and employees and report their findings and recommendations in the next annual Town Report, including a warrant article that they deem appropriate.*

Public Hearing on the 2021 budget is scheduled for January 26, 2021 at 7 p.m.

Meeting adjourned 8:10 PM.

Dorothy Behlen Heinrichs

Tamara Fairbank

Aaron Allen