

*Office of the Select Board  
Town of Orange, New Hampshire  
Minutes of January 14, 2020*

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

*Others:* Doug Weekes, Judith Lindahl, and Alex Smith

*Meeting opened at 6:00 PM. Attendance taken by the secretary.*

*Minutes:* The minutes of December 23, 2019 were unanimously approved.

*2020 Budget:* The Board reviewed and approved the schedule to develop the 2020 operating budget as submitted by Budget Committee Secretary Robert Proulx. The schedule is as follows:

- Tuesday, January 28, 6 p.m.: Joint meeting with the Budget Committee and Select Board. (Board will meet a 5 p.m. to conduct their business.)
- Tuesday, February 4, 6 p.m.: Budget Committee and Select Board will meet again if needed.
- Wednesday, February 12, 7 p.m.: Public hearing on the proposed budget.

*Auditor:* The Board reviewed the MS-60A, signed by the Chair (Auditor's schedule).

*Abatement application:* An abatement application was received from Andrew Wright for property at U.S. Route 4/Map 1, Lot 29. The application will be forwarded to Avitar.

*Treasury:*

- The Board reviewed the December 2019 treasurer's report and Select Board reconciliation. The figures were on target and the Chair signed the report.
- The Board discussed the lack of cash flow due to the unanticipated FEMA-related road work. They reviewed information and a spreadsheet emailed to them from Treasurer Trish Weekes regarding a FEMA Reimbursement Anticipation Note through Mascoma Savings Bank at an interest of 2%. After discussion, Aaron motioned to direct the treasurer to proceed the note. Tam seconded. Motion passed unanimously in favor.

*Humane Society:* After review, the Board approved the annual contract with the Upper Valley Humane Society at a cost of \$300 (same as 2019). Judith Lindahl said that people should be aware that the Humane Society is available to house pets in case of a town-wide emergency. Dorothy said they can add that to the discussion when they meet later in the year for a comprehensive review of the emergency responses to the July flood.

*Solar exemption warrant article:* Judith Lindahl revisited the Board's decision at the last meeting to place an article on the 2020 warrant asking the voters if they want to exempt the value of solar, wind, and outdoor wood furnaces from taxation. She felt that solar and wind articles

should be separate and to have solar this year and perhaps wind the following year. She recommended the Board not put forth an article to exempt wood burning. She submitted to the Board copies of RSAs that defined solar energy systems, applications for solar exemptions and related statutes, the definition of wind-powered systems, and statutes regarding their exemptions. She gave the Board information about Limited Electrical Energy Producers which is now incorporated into the statute defining solar systems. Judith recommended that the Board get an opinion from legal counsel that clarifies if the town passes a solar system energy exemption, can they vote to cap its value and to add a time limit to the exemption. After discussion, Dorothy motioned to ask Judith to follow up with a legal opinion, preferably from the Local Government Center. Tam seconded. Motion passed unanimously in favor.

*Other Select Board business:*

- The Board acknowledged that a current contract with Remacle is holding up the first round of FEMA reimbursement money from the State. After discussion, the Board directed Sandi to draft the contract and email it to them as soon as possible. The expiration of the contract is pending until they get the road agent's input.
- Gary would like to use the former Select Board office computer to do historical research on the internet. The Board concurred.

*Other:*

- A notice was received from the DRA that they have set the assessment ratio at 95.9% and the sales ratio at 96.7.
- The Board was in receipt of the municipal budget report ending December 31, 2019.
- The Board reviewed an opinion for the legal counsel at the Local Government Center regarding a Select Board member's ability to earn money from the town. The LGC stated that a Select Board member cannot be a full-time employee of the town, and that all services exceeding \$200 requires a bidding process.
- Drafting a purchasing policy was tabled until later in the year.
- The Board will meet at 10 a.m. instead of 6 p.m. on February 11<sup>th</sup> due to voting. Sandi to post the meeting changes of the above and January 28.

*Secretary's report:*

- The Board concurred that Sandi can be in the office Thursday instead of Friday in order to take part in a DRA webinar.
- Andrew Cushing, a former member of the NH Preservation Alliance will be visiting the office on Monday to review the LCHIP grant process. Even though he is no longer with the Alliance, Andrew said he would be glad to assist as needed. Doug Weekes will also be in attendance.

*Reports from other boards and committees:*

- Tam stated the Historical Commission will be meeting at the Town House on February 3 at 7 p.m.
- After discussion, Aaron and Dorothy (both members of the Conservation Commission) agreed that orders for copies of the Natural Resources Inventory should be placed by the end of February.

*Public comment: n/a*

*Bills and vouchers were reviewed and signed.*

*Nonpublic session:* At 7:15 p.m. the Board unanimously voted in favor of going into nonpublic session with Health Officer Doug Weekes pursuant to RSA 91-A:3-c regarding the tax-deeded property at 200 Tuttle Hill Road. Motion to come out of nonpublic session at 7:30 p.m.

*Meeting adjourned 7:30 p.m.*

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Dorothy Behlen Heinrichs

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Tamara Fairbank

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Aaron Allen