

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

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

Others: Danny Hazelton, Jen Congdon, Steve Hackman, Amy Tirpaeck, Chris Hausfeld, Doug Weekes, Skip Smith, Scott Sanborn, Brent Stevens, Michael Skuhersky, and Michelle Gofredda.

Meeting opened on the front lawn at 6:00 p.m. Attendance taken by the secretary.

Minutes: The minutes of June 23, 2020 were unanimously approved as submitted.

Cardigan State Forest: the Board received a bond calculation from DRA Timber Appraiser Rick Evans for a logging operation scheduled for a portion of Mount Cardigan State Forest on the Class 6 section of New Colony Road.

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

Inventory forms: The Board signed a form to the DRA requesting 300 PA-28 inventory forms for 2021. There is no cost.

Intent to Cut: The Board reviewed and signed an Intent to Cut for John Morse/Map 6, Lot 6/ New Colony Road. The land is at the Groton town line and access will be via the Sculptured Rocks Road in Groton. Logger is Jeff Snitkin d/b/a Full Circle Forestry LLC.

Upcoming voting: Moderator Danny Hazelton briefed the Select Board on tentative plans for the elections of September 7 and November 3 in regards to the pandemic. He hopes the weather in September will allow for outside voting. For inside voting, the whole meeting room floor will be utilized to allow social distancing and an additional voting booth should be attained. Personal protection equipment will be available and plexi-shield barriers will be available for the election officials. Absentee voting is encouraged. Danny asked Town Clerk Michelle Gofredda to request additional absentee ballots. Scott Sanborn said his wife, Supervisor Laurie Sanborn, has been participating in online election instruction and would like to have input on the election procedures. Danny concurred. Danny said that the voting regulations for New Hampshire in light of COVID 19 still have to be finalized, so presently all the plans are tentative. It was agreed that a plexi-shield can be installed in the town clerk's office. The Board agreed they will have a town-wide mailing to inform the townspeople of the voting protocol.

7/11/2019 flood response: There was a general discussion on the town's response to the unforeseen flash flood of July 11, 2019. The Board's intent was to review what went right, what could be improved, and strategies for future emergencies of any nature. Dorothy recapped the immediate response including volunteers who kept the town house open.

- Emergency Management Director Brent Stevens said as soon as he realized there was a critical situation, he called it in to Hanover Dispatch. He said there was good communication with Road Agent Scott Sanborn with cell phones. Dispatch notified the NHDOT immediately. Chris Hausfeld asked if the cell tower being accessed was not functioning, what alternative would there be. Brent said he has a two-way radio for direct contact with dispatch and the area emergency services. After discussion, the Board agreed that they should acquire a two-way radio for the road agent and one for the Town House. Brent will check with NHEM Field Representative Paul Hatch to see if there are any available from NH Emergency Management.
- Tam said it was both surprising and fortunate that the power grid did not go down. Many people have generators, a number do not.
- It was agreed the community effort immediately following the flood was great. Numerous residents came out with whatever equipment they had and began the task of helping to open up roads. Scott suggested having a phone tree of people willing and able to help in an emergency. Brent and Scott will follow up.
- Recurrent town-wide emails kept people informed directly following the flood. Information from the volunteer website, Orangenh.us, was also valuable. Sandi will check the town-wide emailing list against the residency list and see if there are people not getting emails. She will send residents not on the town-wide mailing list a letter asking if they would like to be on the listserv, with the option of it being only for emergency notifications. Having phone numbers are an option for those not having email.
- Dorothy asked what would happen if Scott was out of town when the flood hit. Brent stated that Canaan would have stepped in.
- Doug asked when the road reconstruction was to begin. Scott said it would begin in a couple of weeks. Answering a question from Dorothy, Scott said that most projects will be complete by the end of the year. There may be a few “odds and ends” that will be done in 2021.
- The fire pond that was filled in with gravel at the Hennig residence was discussed. Scott said he can give referrals for contractors to have it reclaimed but that it is not part of the town’s FEMA projects; it does not compromise any town roads. Brent said he will speak to Paul Hatch to see if there are any funds available for reclamation.

Orange Basin: Jen Congdon and Steve Hackman expressed concern about the overuse and misuse by nonresidents of Orange Basin of which pedestrian access is on their property. Problems include large crowds, excessive noise, firecrackers, littering, and large campfires. They have made every effort to keep access to the Basin open for the townspeople to visit and enjoy, but the recent usage by crowds of nonresidents has become extremely problematic. People publicizing the site on social media, the sign recently erected by the State identifying the Basin, and the State creating formal parking spots across the road at the mill site has exacerbated the situation. Steve said he was told that the parking spots at the privately-owned mill site is allowable by deeded rights. After discussion, it was agreed that Aaron will speak to NHDOT about removing the sign. Scott will review the deed to the mill site across the road (privately owned) to see if there is a deeded right to public parking. Danny Hazelton expressed appreciation to Steve and Jen for allowing the townspeople to visit the Basin during their ownership of the access.

Town-deeded property: The Board and Health Officer Doug Weekes revisited the situation of the two abandoned vehicles on the tax-deeded town property at 200 Tuttle Hill Road. The vehicles cannot be disposed of because auto salvage dealers will not take them without titles. The town is ready to clean up the property and sell it. Sandi said she is an acquaintance of the former owner of the property and, if the Board would like, she will ask her if she would like them towed to her current residence in Grafton. The Board approved the idea. If the former owner does not respond or refuses ownership, the Board concurred that the vehicles can be towed to the highway department storage area on Cardigan Mountain Road and Doug Weekes will begin the process with the State to acquire the legal paperwork that will enable the town to dispose of the two vehicles.

After discussion, Aaron motioned to approve the proposal from Hammond Grinding and Recycling, Inc. to demolish, remove, and clean up the house and property at a cost of \$9,500.00. Tam seconded. Motion passed unanimously in favor.

Residential trash: Doug said that there is some progress on the trash clean-up at a Peaslee Road residence. Doug will offer the resident a box of trash bags to continue the clean-up.

Town House restoration: Doug Weekes stated that the town was awarded a \$48,000 LCHIP matching grant for the structural reinforcement work needed on the town house. (\$24,000 from LCHIP and the matching \$24,000 from donations, other grants, town funds, etc.) LCHIP will be sending out a representative to meet with him and Aaron to review the project. The Board thanked Doug and Trish Weekes for working on the grant process.

Demolition: Doug, speaking as Building Inspector, said he visited the barn demolition site at 110 Cardigan Mountain Road. Because the home is presently vacant, he asked the contractors to pile any leftover debris to the back of the house and not in the front yard. Brent said that due to the contents of the debris, he could not issue them a burn permit for disposal. Doug told the contractors that they should have attained a demolition permit from the town before proceeding. This led to a discussion about the building regulation recommendations that Doug had previously submitted to the Board. Dorothy asked that they be put on the next Select Board agenda.

Secretary's report: n/a

Reports from Boards and Committees: n/a

Public comment: n/a

Bills and vouchers were reviewed and signed.

Meeting adjourned 7:30 p.m.

Dorothy Behlen Heinrichs

Tamara Fairbank

Aaron Allen