

*Office of the Select Board
Town of Orange, New Hampshire
Select Board Minutes of March 5, 2024*

Present: Tamara Fairbank, chair, Betsy Coble, Aaron Allen, Catherine Souza (clerical)

Others: Gulley Dunlap, Anita Garland , Dan Hazelton, Judith Lindahl, Glenn Miller, Marcello Shelzi, Kathy Stacy, Dave Stacy, Doug Weekes

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Minutes:

Aaron Allen motioned to approve the minutes of the public meeting of February 20, 2024, seconded by Betsy Coble. Motion passed 3/0/0.

Betsy Coble motioned to approve the minutes of the non-public meeting of February 20, 2024, seconded by Aaron Allen. Motion passed 3/0/0.

Town Voting and Meeting Prep & Update:

Ballot is ready to go. Set up plans are in place.

Expected vacancy in Town Clerk position: Dan contacted the Secretary of State office. If no one runs for Town Clerk, the Select Board has the power to appoint a resident as Town Clerk (RSA 669:65). The Select Board has the discretion to hire an outside person to be an Assistant Town Clerk. The Assistant can do as much of the town clerk work as needed. The resident Town Clerk will then fulfill only the official duties. The Secretary of State office recommended that the Town contact the Town Clerk's association for candidates who are available for the Assistant position.

Building Inspector and situation:

Building Inspector, Doug Weekes, presented an issue with the property for sale at 127 New Colony Road. There is an interested potential buyer but due to the property makeup and the zoning setback requirements, a variance would be needed to establish a new dwelling on the property. The interested party cannot submit the variance because he does not own the property.

Aaron Allen as the property owner would need to submit the variance request to the ZBA. Doug suggested the full process be outlined for the interested buyer. In the absence of a ZBA chair, Tamara Fairbank will contact the ZBA members to begin the process.

Other:

Last Select Board meeting for Tamara Fairbank:

The March 6, 2024 meeting is the last one for Tamara Fairbank as she is not seeking reelection. Tamara has served on the Select Board for six years. Gulley and Anita presented Tamara with flowers as a thank you for her service. Tamara thanks the town for all for the support!

Action Item list review:

- Action Items Completed:
 - none

- Action Items open:
 - Change locks and combinations: Exterior doors, SB office, TC office (in progress)
 - Disposal of old safe in Town Clerk's office (pushed to summer 2024)
 - ARPA Grafton Co funds: Septic project. Secure bids. (in progress)
 - ARPA Grafton Co funds: Bathroom renovation. Secure bids (in progress)
 - Select Board review of nonpublic minutes (in progress)
 - Final decision on Historical Commission reorganization: Society or Heritage Commission
 - Town Warming Center Policy

- Action Items New:
 - none

Secretary's Report:

- Secretary's Report
 - Scott Sanborn completed the Boundary and Annexation Survey (BAS).
 - The Valley News requested the Town Warrant and the Town voting results. I have shared the warrant and I will share the results.
 - A resident has requested an abatement due to a disagreement on valuations. Catherine to forward to Avitar for review.
 - Update on NH Broadband Service: The internet connection is installed. The phone service is to be installed on March 18, 2024. The new Select Board will sign the letter to residents at the March 19, 2024 meeting. Catherine to send out a town wide email and include the letter with the 2024 Orange sheet.
 - Avitar has completed the updated tax maps. The last update was 2011. A set will be mailed to the Select Board office for final review. Aaron Allen volunteered to review the maps. Catherine to contact Scott Sanborn for his review.

Reports from Boards and Committees:

- *Cemetery trustees:* none
- *Road Agent report:*
 - *Email from Feb 24:*
 - First off, as winter comes to an end, just an update on plowing protocol. In March we often get small storms (and the random big one) so I just wanted to pass on the following information on plowing. For small storms, roughly around 1 inch or less, we typically do not plow. Plowing that little snow is inefficient, and can cause damage to both the town plow and to the dirt roads in town. This is especially important during spring storms where the dirt roads have begun to soften up. We did not plow the storm this past Thursday/Friday and by lunchtime the majority of it had melted in the sun. We may put down sand if needed but understand that there could be a small amount of snow on the roads. Most other municipalities have a "trigger depth" on record that they must meet before they plow side roads. At the end of the day, it is up to my discretion on when to plow. I typically try to follow NH DOT regulations on plowing when applicable.
 - Secondly, I had a resident ask why salt was not applied during a previous storm. Orange does not use road salt on our roads for three reasons, as follows:
 - 1. Salt is bad for water quality and the environment. Here in Orange we are spoiled with some of the best well water in the world. We also have many healthy

ivers, streams, and swamps. The EPA has admitted road salt can contaminate drinking water and kill wildlife.

- 2. Salt is expensive. The NH DOT spends a small fortune on salt every year. It is not within our budget to use salt.
- 3. Road salt damages vehicles and the roads. Salt helps rust through vehicle frames, and has been shown to cause pot holes and cracks in paved roads.
- We do not use road salt, and instead use sand. The DOT does salt Cardigan Mountain Road up until the New Colony/Peaslee Road intersection, as that falls under their jurisdiction.
- Thirdly, with warm weather approaching I will be posting the roads this week. The Load limit is 6 tons, though I strongly discourage bringing anything heavy (like a truck with a trailer) on the roads during this time, as we are projected to have another rough mud season. As always, fuel delivery vehicles are exempt from the load limit.
- Remale has begun to spread gravel but is hampered by the rain and the conditions of the roads.
- Marcello to send email communication about the upcoming weekend storm. Most likely there will be no plowing due to the status of the roads.
- Mail delivery – residents are not getting their mail even when there are no foreseeable reasons as to why. Marcello will go to the Post Office and represent residents and himself!
- *Historical Commission:* none
- *Planning Board:* none
- *Conservation Commission:* none

Public comment:

Kathy Stacy brought up mail delivery. Beginning in February, the mail service at their home was stopped with the reason being cited as both lack of snow removal and trees in the way of the mailbox. The Stacy's do not own the property where the mailbox resides (across the street from their property). Kathy's request is for the Town to take immediate action to adhere to specifications for maintaining Class V roads. Not just for insuring mail deliveries but for safety and proper routine maintenance. Kathy left a copy of the details with Catherine.

Bills and vouchers were reviewed and signed.

Next Select Board meeting date confirmation: Tuesday March 19, 2024 at 6pm.

Meeting adjourned at 6:50pm.

Tamara Fairbank, Chair

Aaron Allen

Betsy Coble

Select Board
Town of Orange, NH