

*Office of the Select Board
Town of Orange, New Hampshire
Minutes of March 9, 2021*

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

Others: Doug Weekes, Alex Smith, and Skip Smith.

Meeting opened at 10:30 a.m. Attendance taken by the secretary.

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

LCHIP Grant: The Board reviewed an email from Trish Weekes regarding the LCHIP grant application for structural improvements to the Town House. Doug and Trish Weekes applied last year for an LCHIP grant but the town was not chosen for funding; 32 out of 62 projects received funding. Trish wrote that LCHIP Executive Director Digit Taylor has expressed encouragement for the Orange application to be included for the next round of grants and strongly suggested having a Historical Structural Report completed. Senator Bob Guida, a member of the LCHIP board of directors, told Trish he is in support of Orange being awarded the grant. LCHIP suggests the town apply to the NH Preservation Alliance for a matching grant for the report. Doug stated that the LCHIP grant will not include an electrical upgrade. Trish wrote that if the Board concurs, she and Doug will reach out to NH Preservation Alliance to discuss a grant for the structural report. After discussion, the Board agreed the Weekes should proceed, and expressed appreciation for the time they have put into the grant application process.

Treasurer's report: The January 2021 Treasurer's report and Select Board reconciliation was reviewed. All figures were on target and the Chair signed the report.

NHEC Broadband effort: The Board reviewed email updates from Alasdair Dunlap Smith and Donald McFarlane regarding the NHEC broadband plans. Alasdair wrote that Canaan is exploring a fiber internet system from Consolidated Communications with a bond to pay for it to be voted on next year. Alasdair advised Canaan Town Administrator Mike Sampson that he believes it would be unlikely that Orange would put a bond on the warrant for the service. Canaan is also negotiating with "Hub66" to build a wireless mesh network. Alasdair wrote that a representative from NHEC said that most NHEC-metered households in Orange should have their fiber internet within two years and Eversource-metered households will follow. The eastern section of Orange (Brock Hill, River Road, Skyland, etc.) will be tied in with the Grafton plan.

Fire protection; The Board received a letter from a student from Boston requesting information for a school project about fire department coverage. The Board signed a letter to the student explaining that Orange does not have a fire department but that they will compile photos and information representing the coverage from Canaan and the surrounding mutual aid fire departments. Sandi to follow up and mail him a packet within a couple of weeks.

Other: n/a

Other Select Board business:

- Dorothy spoke about the volunteers needed for the upcoming Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Committee. Doug affirmed he would be on the committee.

Secretary's report:

- Sandi read a letter from Bob Terhune expressing his gratitude for dedicating the town report to his late wife Lorna. Wrote Bob, "Orange has always been a second home—now more than ever."
- Sandi said that \$14,000 has been offered for the purchase of the town-owned parcel at 200 Tuttle Hill Road. The Board tabled discussion on the offer and asked Sandi to compile a list of expenses and back taxes that the town has incurred and to see if the sales contract with realtor Vanessa Stone is still in effect. Regardless of the sale price, the town can only retain the cost of expenses and back taxes; the remainder is paid to the former owner.
- The 2021 Tax Anticipation Note documentation will be presented at the next meeting.

Reports from Boards and Committees: n/a

Public comment: n/a

Bills and vouchers were reviewed and signed.

Meeting adjourned 11:00 a.m.

Dorothy Behlen Heinrichs

Tamara Fairbank

Aaron Allen