

*Office of the Select Board
Town of Orange, New Hampshire
Select Board Minutes of October 17, 2023*

Present: Tamara Fairbank, chair; Aaron, Allen, Betsy Coble, Catherine Souza (clerical)
Others: Kathy Stacy, Dave Stacy

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 October 3, 2023. Betsy Coble seconded. Motion passed 2/0/1. (Tamara was absent for the October 3rd meeting)

Town House Restoration Account request:

The roof work for the Town House is unlikely to be done this year due to staffing difficulties with the roofer. The roofer's backlog takes the Town House job into spring of 2024. The Town Treasurer, Trish Weekes, requested the Select Board's approval to purchase a 6-month preferred rate CD of 4.5%. The funds of \$100,000 are to come from the Town House Restoration checking account.

- Motion made by Aaron Allen, seconded by Betsy Coble. Motion passed 3/0/0. The Select Board signed the letter for Trish to present to Mascoma Bank.

Pistol Permit Application:

An Orange resident has made an application for a Resident Pistol/Revolver license.

- The Select Board chair, Tamara Fairbank, signed a letter requesting a background check.

Other Select Board business and action items:

Other:

- Mascoma Valley Ecumenical Council Thanksgiving Ingathering:
 - The Select Board reviewed the letter and the recipient information form. The letter and form were sent to the Welfare Director.
- Any other business: None
- Action Items Completed:
 - Status on action related to the Mascoma Security Incident
- Action Items open:
 - Change locks and combinations: Exterior doors, SB office, TC office
 - Disposal of old safe in Town Clerk's office
 - ARPA Grafton Co funds: Septic project. Secure bids
 - ARPA Grafton Co funds: Bathroom renovation. Secure bids
 - Select Board to review next steps on ZBA terms for 2024 Town meeting
 - Town Wide email to residents about winter snow and expectation of removal

- Action Items New:
 - Contact NH Electric about next steps for internet and phone service.
 - Quantify amount of nonpublic sealed minutes to be reviewed
 - Seek advice from Legal team at NH Municipal Association on next steps (deed related)
 - Schedule a nonpublic session with resident and Select Board (deed related)
 - Question: Why the Historical Commission funds are separate from the Town funds

Secretary's report:

- Catherine presented options for changing internet and phone service from Consolidated Communications to NH Electric. The intent is to improve internet speed & reduce issues due to Consolidated's line structure. After a discussion, the Select Board asked Catherine to pursue the next steps with NH Electric.
 - ACTION: Catherine contact NH Electric about next steps for internet and phone service.
- A new House Bill 321 was adopted to address the practical action required for maintenance of nonpublic minutes. A procedure has been issued stating Meeting minutes that were kept from the public that are not reviewed by the public body or agency on or before October 3, 2023 shall be subject to public disclosure without further action of the public body. House Bill 321 requires an obligation of the Select Board to review all previously sealed nonpublic meeting minutes and complete the review process within 10 years of October 3, 2023. The new law does not require the release of sealed nonpublic minutes if divulgence would cause harm to reputation, or render the proposed action discussed ineffective, or pertain to thwarting a terrorist attack. Failure to review the sealed nonpublic minutes during the review period will automatically result in the public release of those minutes, regardless of the potential harm resulting from that release.
 - ACTION: Catherine to quantify amount of nonpublic sealed minutes to be reviewed. Select Board will then prepare a review schedule.
- Catherine represented the preliminary tax rate. Motion made by Tamara Fairbank to accept the Preliminary tax rate of \$23.47 per \$1000 of valuation. Second by Betsy Coble. Motion passed 3/0/0. Catherine to submit the form with DRA.
- Catherine presented the next steps per NH RSA's for the Select Board once a property has gone to deed.
 - ACTION: Catherine to seek advice from Legal team at NH Municipal Association on next steps
 - ACTION: Catherine to schedule a non-public session with impacted resident and Select Board

Reports from Boards and Committees:

- *Cemetery trustees:* Next meeting is November 13 at 6pm.
- *Road Agent (Marcello Shelzi):*
 - Aaron reported for Marcello.
 - Thank you to whomever graded Burnt Hill and Brock Hill
 - Further mitigation work to commence on Burnt Hill and Brock Hill. Work to be completed by Marcello Shelzi and Aaron Allen.
 - Marcello to report at next meeting on mitigation work for Peaslee Rd since contractors are not available until spring of 2024.
- *Planning Board:* none
- *Conservation Commission:* none

Public comment:

- From Kathy Stacy
 - Kathy suggested an official town sanctioned Parks & Recreation committee be formed. Committee could manage the town festivals, use of town property & handle fundraising.
 - The Select Board suggested Kathy do some due diligence to assess the interest of the town residents for the committee and willingness to participate in such a committee.
 - Kathy asked why the Historical Commission funds are separate from the Town funds.
 - ACTION: The Select Board will review and respond at a future meeting.

Bills and vouchers were reviewed and signed.

Next Select Board meeting date confirmation: November 7, 2023 at 6pm.

Meeting adjourned at 6:59pm

Tamara Fairbank, Chair

Aaron Allen

Betsy Coble