

*Office of the Select Board  
Town of Orange, New Hampshire  
Minutes of October 26, 2021*

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

*Others:* Sharon Proulx, Judith Lindahl

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

*Minutes:* The minutes of October 12, 2021 were approved as submitted.

*Property tax refund:* Tax Collector Sharon Proulx requested a tax refund of \$730.33 for property at 17 New Colony Road. The property was sold last year and the former owners had a prepayment of taxes for that amount. After reviewing documentation in regards, Aaron motioned to approved the tax refund. Tamara seconded. Motion passed unanimously in favor. The Board concurred the rebate will be processed before the tax warrant is generated.

*Beaver activity:* The Board continued their discussion on the beaver activity affecting a brook culvert on Burnt Hill. An abutter to the property reports there are a succession of four dams with the probability of eight beavers. To kill the beavers, Estate Wildlife Control (Scott Borthwick of Canaan) gave Sandi an estimate of \$80.00 set-up fee and \$80.00 per beaver. Relocating them would cost \$300 each. He added that it is too late to relocate them now because they would not be prepared to survive the winter; it would have to be done in the spring. Road Agent Scott Sanborn weighed in by email saying he had made a site visit and that the dam causing the water back-up is a smaller secondary dam (having no beaver lodge) and is not their primary dam. If the water is released from this secondary dam, he sees to problem over the winter. They can reassess the activity in the spring. Sharon Proulx recommended the installation of beaver dam pipe equipped with a beaver exclusion device. The Board agreed to the idea and discussed the different methods of keeping the water at the road crossing flowing at an appropriate level without disturbing the beaver activity further up the brook toward Orange Pond. Sandi noted that the secondary dam is on Wade Reed's property, a logging company in Rumney.

*Heath Officer:* The Chair signed a request for a background check on the town's health officer. This is a requirement of the State of NH.

*Building and Demolition permits:* The Board reviewed and approved the following:

- Demolition and Building permit applications to replace three wall and a floor: Todd Buckwold/1477 US Route 4/Map 1, Lot 29. Contingent on the Building Inspector's approval.
- Building permit application for a generator installation: George and Patricia White/293 Tuttle Hill Road/Map 4, Lot 14D. Building Inspector Doug Weekes has already reviewed and signed the permit.

*Treasurer:*

- The Board reviewed the September 2021 treasurer's report and Select Board reconciliation. All figures were on target and the Chair signed the report.
- By email, Trish Weekes reported that presently the interest being incurred by the town for the FEMA loan is accruing at over a \$1000 per month. She recommends the road agent file the paperwork for the federal government's 75% reimbursement as soon as possible. Sandi noted she has compiled all documentation from the Select Board's office that was requested by Scott.

*2021 Tax rate:* Sandi reported that all documentation from the town is complete to set the tax rate. The DRA reports they should have the school figures by the end of the month and the tax rate is scheduled to be finalized before the November 9 meeting when the Board plans on generating the tax warrant. It is now time for the Board to set the overlay amount (additional revenue for possible tax abatements). After reviewing what was appropriated in prior years, Aaron motioned to set the overlay at \$3,000.00. Tamara seconded. Motion passed unanimously in favor.

*Highway:* The Board reviewed the revised highway maintenance cost schedule as proposed by Richard Remacle. Scott Sanborn had emailed to say he felt the nominal increases were reasonable. After discussion, Aaron motioned to accept the cost schedule as proposed by Richard and to renew the highway maintenance contract until December 31, 2022. Tamara seconded. Motion passed unanimously in favor.

*Other:*

- The Board reviewed a copy of correspondence from former Rep. Charles Townsend about redistricting. For State representation, Orange is grouped with northern towns, including Groton, Rumney, and Thornton. Dorothy felt that it would be more rational to be grouped with towns of the Mascoma Valley since they are in direct proximity and share the same interests, such as schools and transportation. After discussion it was agreed that Dorothy will draft a letter for the Board to review.
- A memo was received from the Mascoma Valley Regional School District that their 2022 Deliberation Session is scheduled for February 5, 2022 at 9 a.m. at the Mascoma High School.
- A notice for Approval of Septic Operation was received from NH-DES: Alan Kharsyntiew/365 Tuttle Hill Road/Map 4, Lot 14F.
- An email was received from Scott Sanborn stating that FEMA paving is scheduled to begin later in the week.

*Secretary's report:*

- The publication Knowing the Territory is on the NHMA website as digital download only at a cost of \$90.00. Sandi will check to see why they have not received a complimentary hard copy that has traditionally been included with the town's membership.
- The State has hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes available at no cost to the town. They must be picked up in Concord. The Board concurred to decline the offer.

*Reports from Boards and Committees:*

- Judith Lindahl reported on the ad hoc Salary Study Committee. She said they have a group of fair-minded, proficient residents on the committee. Their goal is to bring before the voters a salary schedule that is both equitable to the officers and employees but with a reasonable tax impact. Judith would like to review the tax revenue between improved and unimproved properties. Sandi said that information is on the MS-1 (Valuation of the Town). Judith will review a copy. Judith said the Board should follow up whether or not the Dept. of Labor has given the town a waiver that allows payment of employees on the Select Board meeting schedule.

*Public comment: n/a*

*Bills and vouchers were reviewed and signed.*

*Meeting adjourned 6:55 p.m.*

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Dorothy Behlen Heinrichs

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Tamara Fairbank

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Aaron Allen