

*Office of the Select Board
Town of Orange, New Hampshire
Minutes of September 8, 2020*

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

Others: Judith Lindahl and Doug Weekes.

Meeting opened on the front lawn at 10 a.m. Attendance taken by the secretary.

Minutes: The minutes of August 25, 2020 were approved. Dorothy abstained because she did not attend the meeting.

Tax collector's deed: The Board was in receipt of the tax collector's deed for the 3.9-acre, landlocked property on Tuttle Hill which has been designated "Owner Unknown." Legal counsel advised that even though it is Owner Unknown property, the required 90-day repurchase option should still be executed before the property is sold. The Board signed the repurchase option agreement.

Liens on delinquent taxes: The Board was in receipt of the tax collector's lien execution report for 2020.

Propane heater replacement: The Board reviewed three quotes to replace the defective Rinnai heater in the Select Board's office and to replace a vent pipe on the second unit. Amerigas of White River Junction, VT (the town's current propane provider) gave a quote of \$2,023.95. Martin's Mechanical of Enfield gave a quote of \$3,174.00. Inov8v Energy of Canaan gave a quote of \$1,853.15, a discounted cost contingent on the town switching to their company for propane deliveries. Inov8v Energy quoted a cost of propane fuel 13 cents cheaper per gallon than Amerigas and would lock that price in for one year. Judith Lindahl suggested the town should explore joining a "fuel club" which negotiates propane fees between companies. After discussion the Board unanimously agreed to award the job to Inov8v Energy and to have them be the town's propane provider. Sandi will set an appointment with Inov8v Energy to replace the heater and Aaron will meet them at the Town House to determine the tank placement. Sandi will notify the other vendors of the Board's decision. The Board requested that Inov8v Energy check the second heater for any venting issues.

MS-434: The Board reviewed a preliminary draft of the MS-434 (Revised Revenues Estimated). This form updates revenues received by the town which will offset the 2020 municipal tax rate. The form is still pending DRA approval.

Tax deferment: The Board discussed tax deferment applications that may be received by the town. It was noted that it is at the Select Board's discretion to determine the criterion of an applicant's hardship that allows the deferment of paying property taxes. After discussion, the Board agreed that financial hardship should be to some extent in line with the qualifications of an

elderly exemption and/or the applicant should meet with the Board in nonpublic session to discuss their reason of hardship for a deferment. Sandi will draft a cover letter to applicants for the Board to review.

Town Clerk's office:

- The Board discussed compensation for those assisting with the Town Clerk's training. Because the annual training was not available from the State due to the pandemic, Dorothy asked Sandi to check to see if compensation for training would fall under the CARES act (federal funds designated to towns for COVID-19-related expenses).
- The Board would like Skip Smith to install a mail slot drop in the Town Clerk's office door so that she can receive important and time-sensitive correspondence in a timely manner and securely, especially relating to absentee balloting. Sandi to follow up.
- The Select Board Chair will have a key to the Town Clerk's office in the event it is necessary to access it when Michelle is not available.
- Dorothy stated that in an email from Michelle, she recommended raising the MA fee from \$2.00 to \$3.00 per vehicle registration, which is allowed by the State. This could provide additional funding for training expenses. The Board tabled action on the idea.

Other:

- Dorothy said that she received a notice from FEMA that the stream clean-up paperwork was not in order for flood-related work and should not proceed. She stated that the Homeland Security Commission advised waiting "until the next disaster" to do the work, a concept that Dorothy strongly disagreed and contacted our State representatives in regards. With the assistant of Jen Harper and Kevin Maes, the issue was satisfactorily resolved.

Notes of Appreciation: The Board expressed appreciation for Brent Stevens for all he has done to make voting a safe process in respects to COVID-19. Brent picked up and delivered all of the personal protection equipment for the election officials, including a last minute trip to Concord to get essential PPE items mistakenly left out by FEMA. The Board thanked all of the election officials for their diligence and commitment in making this year's voting a safe and straightforward process for all residents.

Secretary's report:

- Michelle and Dana Rose, family members affiliated with the Williams Foundation, encouraged the town to apply for a grant toward the Town House Improvement LCHIP matching grant. Doug Weekes will follow up.

Other Select Board Business: n/a

Reports from Boards and Committees:

- Health Officer Doug Weekes said he is waiting for Scott Sanborn to mark out the 200 Tuttle Hill roadside boundaries before brush and small tree removal.

Public comment:

- Judith Lindalh asked that the results of primary voting be sent to the Valley News after the count has been finalized so the results can be in the following day's paper. Dorothy to follow up with the Moderator. Judith would also like to know if any ballots were disqualified and, if so, the reason.

Bills and vouchers were reviewed and signed.

Meeting adjourned 10:55 a.m.

Dorothy Behlen Heinrichs

Tamara Fairbank

Aaron Allen