

Town of Orange  
New Hampshire  
2023 Annual Report

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OFFICERS



*Mount Cardigan as seen from the west  
Photo courtesy of Dorothy Heinrichs*

## TOWN OF ORANGE NEW HAMPSHIRE

*Cover photo  
Sunrise from just below the Cardigan summit  
Courtesy of Dorothy Heinrichs*



*With appreciation to those who serve our community,  
this town report is dedicated to*



*Evelyn Finn 1927-2023*

*Evelyn moved to Orange, NH with her husband William Scotland Jr. William predeceased her in 1987. Later she met and married William Finn Sr., who also preceded her in death.*

*Evelyn raised six children. She is survived by her children, William Scotland and his wife Anita of Franklin, MA, Robert Scotland and his wife Charlotte of Hardy, VA, Bruce Scotland and his wife Linda of Hamilton, OH, Judy (Scotland) Connelly and her husband Timothy of Orange, NH, Glenn Scotland and his wife Yvette of Sparta, NJ, and Keith Scotland and his wife Ann of Great Meadows, NJ. William Finn had two sons, William Finn Jr. and his wife Karen and his ex-wife Deryl Finn of Lebanon, NH and John Finn and Holly of VA.*

*Between both marriages, Evelyn had a total of 46 grandchildren and great-grandchildren.*

*Evelyn loved animals, especially all of her cats. She enjoyed playing cards with family and friends, especially Canasta and Cribbage.*



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*Notary services are available at the Select Board’s office at no charge to Orange residents and property owners.*

*The town report can be viewed in full color at [www.Orangenh.us](http://www.Orangenh.us)*



# *Officers of the Town of Orange*

## *BOARD OF SELECTMEN*

Tamara Fairbank, Chair '24  
Aaron Allen '26      Betsy Coble '25

*MODERATOR*                      *TOWN CLERK*  
Daniel Hazelton '24              Michelle Goffreda

*TREASURER*                      *ROAD AGENT*  
Trish Weekes                      Marcello Shelzi

*TAX COLLECTOR*                *DEEDING AGENT*  
Sharon Proulx                      Sharon Proulx

## *SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTATIVE*

Kathleen Stacy

## *SCHOOL BUDGET COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE*

Kathy Stacy

*WELFARE DIRECTOR*              *AUDITORS*  
Karen McFarlane                      Cohos Advisors

## *TRUSTEES OF TRUST FUNDS*

Pauline Emerson '26    Sandi Pierson '25    Karen McFarlane '24

## *HEALTH OFFICER and BUILDING INSPECTOR*

Douglas Weekes

## *PLANNING BOARD*

Scott Sanborn, Chair '25    Donald McFarlane, Vice Chair '26  
Tessa Johnson, secretary '24. Karen McFarlane '24  
Bruce Ells '25, Betsy Coble, Select Board ex officio

## *ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT*

Robert Kuhns, Chair    Alex Smith, Vice Chair  
Sally Jaeger    Anita Garland  
Aaron Allen, Select Board ex officio  
Alternates: Jana Mckay    Laurie Sanborn    Judy Connelly



*SUPERVISORS OF THE CHECKLIST*

Laurie Sanborn '28 Beth DiFrancesco '26 Donna Hazelton '24

*CEMETERY COMMISSION*

Tamara Fairbank '26 Anita Watson '25 Gully Dunlap '24

*FOREST FIRE WARDEN DEPUTY WARDENS*

Brent Stevens Bill Bellion James McAllister

*EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT*

Douglas Weekes Brent Stevens

*BUDGET COMMITTEE*

David Stacy, Chair '25 Robert Proulx, Clerk '26  
Louis Shelzi '24 Tamara Fairbank, Select Board ex officio

*CONSERVATION COMMISSION*

Aaron Allen, Chair David Stacy, Vice Chair  
Douglas Weekes Dorothy Heinrichs Jay Heinrichs  
Trish Weekes Sandi Pierson Tracy Hutchins Hilary Allen



*Cardigan Mountain Road from postcard circa 1922*

***State of New Hampshire***  
***Town of Orange***  
***Warrant for 2024 Annual Town Meeting***

To the inhabitants of the Town of Orange in the County of Grafton and State of New Hampshire qualified to vote in Town affairs:

**YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED** to meet at the Town House in said Orange on Tuesday, the 12<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2024 at eleven o'clock a.m. for the election of Town Officers as called for in Article 1. The polls will open at 11 a.m. and close at 7 p.m. for voting on Article 1.

**YOU ARE ALSO HEREBY NOTIFIED** that the business meeting will be held at the Town House at seven o'clock in the evening on Wednesday, the 13<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2024 to act upon Articles 2 through 11 in this warrant.

**ARTICLE 1:** *(by official ballot)* To elect the following town officers for the following terms:

1 Selectperson 3-year term, 1 Moderator 3-year term, 1 Town Clerk 1-year term, 1 Treasurer 1-year term, 1 Tax Collector 1-year term, 1 Deeding Agent 1-year term, 1 Road Agent 1-year term, 1 Budget Committee 3-year term, 1 Cemetery Trustee 3-year term, 1 Trustee of Trust Funds 3-year term, 1 Trustee of Trust Funds 2-year term 1 Trustee of Trust Funds 1-year term, 2 Planning Board Members 3-year terms, 1 Supervisor of the Checklist 6-year term, and any other officers as required by law.

**ARTICLE 2:** To see if the Town will vote to approve the amendment as proposed by the Planning Board that seek to: a) remove the Planning Board from the application procedure for most special exceptions or variances; b) clarify the application procedure to the Zoning Board of Adjustment, and c) make minor revisions to correct typographical and grammatical errors and inconsistencies in terms.

*Recommended by the Planning Board (5-1)*

*Recommended by the Select Board (3-0)*

**ARTICLE 3:** To see if the Town will authorize the Tax Collector to accept the prepayment of taxes pursuant to RSA 80:52-a. Taxpayers shall be allowed to prepay taxes no more than two years in advance of the due date of the taxes. No interest shall accrue to the taxpayer on any prepayment, nor shall any interest be paid to the taxpayer on any prepayment which is later subject to rebate or refund.

*Recommended by the Select Board (3-0)*

**ARTICLE 4:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate eight thousand dollars (\$8,000.00) to be paid into the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund.

*Recommended by the Select Board (3-0)*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-0)*

**ARTICLE 5:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) to be paid into the Town House Capital Reserve Fund.

*Recommended by the Select Board (3-0)*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-0)*

**ARTICLE 6:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate four thousand dollars (\$4,000.00) to be paid into the Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of revaluation of real estate. Revaluations of all real estate are required by law every five years.

*Recommended by the Select Board (3-0)*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-0)*

**ARTICLE 7:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000.00) to be paid into the Town Road Improvement and Repair Capital Reserve Fund..

*Recommended by the Select Board (3-0)*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-0)*

**ARTICLE 8:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) to be paid into the Cemetery Capital Reserve Fund.

*Recommended by the Select Board (3-0)*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-0)*

**ARTICLE 9:** If no one is elected at the Town Meeting, are you in favor of discontinuing the election of a town road agent with a term of one year and change to the Select Board hiring a contractor who would be a non-resident to perform the road agent duties? The contractor who, under the direction of the selectmen, shall have the same power and perform the same duties as a road agent elected by the town.

*Recommended by the Select Board (3-0)*

**ARTICLE 10:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee's recommended sum of \$339,145.00 with an additional \$84,000.00 to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance (for FEMA unreimbursed costs), **not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately**, for the ensuing year for the Town's general operations.

*Recommended by the Select Board (3-0)*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-0)*

**ARTICLE 11:** To hear the reports of agents, auditors, committees and officers and to transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

*GIVEN UNDER OUR HAND AND SEAL ON THE  
THIRTEENTH DAY OF FEBRUARY, IN THE YEAR OF OUR  
LORD, TWO THOUSAND AND TWENTY-FOUR.*

*Tamara Fairbank, Chair*

*Aaron Allen*

*Betsy Coble*

*Select Board, Town of Orange, NH*

## *Further information on Warrant Articles 2 and 10*

### Warrant Article 2 Planning Board Amendments

The proposed amendments are for the purpose of changing the procedure for an application to grant a Special Exception or Variance to provision(s) of the Zoning Ordinance. As presently written, the Zoning Ordinance requires application to the Planning Board, which then refers the applicant to the Zoning Board of Adjustment for application, hearing and decision.

Since the Planning Board has no authority to grant Special Exceptions or Waivers, this procedure results in a separate, superfluous application to an agency with no authority to act, which, in the opinion of the Planning Board, places an undue burden on applicants. The resulting procedure will result in a single application to the Zoning Board of Adjustment for such purposes. As there is currently no standard application form, one is included as part of the proposed amendments.

No change to the application procedure for an Accessory Dwelling Unit, for which the Planning Board is the designated agency, is proposed.

Re-lettering/re-numbering of Articles, Sections and paragraphs, as necessary, is also proposed, along with correction of a few minor typographical errors noted during the Planning Boards review of the Zoning Ordinance. The full text of the Draft Zoning Ordinance with the proposed amendments is available for review at the town website, [orangenh.us](http://orangenh.us) or at the town offices at 8 Town House Road.

Warrant Article 10: Budget & Use of Unassigned Fund Balance

With FEMA reimbursements now largely complete, and the FEMA Repayment Anticipation Note (FRAN) due April 4, 2024, the Select Board will refinance that note of \$151,945.43, as permitted by the 2020 Warrant Article 6. The Select Board and Budget Committee recommend a new, three-year note, first payment due 2025, and \$84,000.00 from the Unassigned Fund Balance applied to reduce the note principal, beginning in the first year. The Unassigned Fund Balance is held by the State of New Hampshire to be used by a local government to cover unusual circumstances. The Select Board deems the financial situation arising from financing unanticipated road repairs due to the extreme weather event of July 2019 to be such a worthy use.



*Brook at Tuttle Hill and Williams  
Photo courtesy of Trish Weekes*

**TOWN BUDGET PURPOSES OF  
APPROPRIATION**

	<b>Approp. <u>2023</u></b>	<b>Expended <u>2023</u></b>	<b>Approp. <u>2024</u></b>
<i><u>General Government</u></i>			
Officers' Salaries	\$39,000.00	\$36,767.24	\$39,000.00
Elections & Reg.	\$1,475.00	\$1,475.00	\$5,270.00
Financial Admin.	\$200.00	\$121.61	\$200.00
Property Reappraisal	\$5,000.00	\$7,759.45	\$9,000.00
Legal Expense	\$2,500.00	\$696.00	\$2,500.00
FICA Payments	\$3,500.00	\$2,994.75	\$3,500.00
Planning & Zoning	\$300.00	\$219.04	\$300.00
General Gov't. Bldgs.	\$9,500.00	\$9,777.03	\$9,500.00
Cemeteries	\$6,000.00	\$1,450.00	\$7,000.00
Insurance	\$2,716.00	\$2,547.30	\$3,200.00
Memberships	\$1,800.00	\$1,712.47	\$1,850.00
Officers' Expenses	\$7,500.00	\$6,531.52	\$7,500.00
<i><u>Public Safety</u></i>			
Canaan Ambulance	\$12,379.00	\$12,379.00	\$14,369.00
Canaan Fire Dept.	\$18,581.00	\$18,581.00	\$27,617.00
Building Inspection	\$500.00	\$575.00	\$1,000.00
Emergency Mgmt.	\$1,600.00	\$5,376.84	\$1,600.00
<i><u>Highway &amp; Streets</u></i>			
Highway	\$110,000.00	\$111,335.86	\$160,000.00
<i><u>Sanitation</u></i>			
Trash Collection	\$14,611.00	\$15,970.90	\$19,781.00
<i><u>Health</u></i>			
Health Agencies	\$3,900.00	\$3,462.00	\$3,762.00
<i><u>Welfare</u></i>			
Direct Assistance	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	\$3,000.00
<i><u>Culture &amp; Recreation</u></i>			
Parks & Recreation	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$900.00
Library	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00
Other Culture & Rec.	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<i><u>Conservation</u></i>			
Conservation	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$200.00

Timber Harvest Mon.	\$1.00	\$0.00	\$1.00
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**DEBT SERVICE**

Tax Anticipation Note	\$4,000.00	\$2,086.26	\$4,000.00
Interest on FEMA loan	\$22,426.00	\$20,998.35	\$9,095.00

**Capital Outlay**

Town House	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
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<b><u>Budget Totals</u></b>	<b>\$275,889.00</b>	<b>\$266,816.62</b>	<b>\$339,145.00</b>
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<b><u>Capital Reserves</u></b>	<b><u>2023 Balance</u></b>	<b><u>2024 Approp.</u></b>
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Revaluation	\$12,670.68	\$4,000.00
Town House	\$16,846.95	\$5,000.00
Cemetery	\$1,706.48	\$1000.00
Highway Equipment	\$27,971.43	\$8,000.00
Doc. Preservation	\$1,149.95	\$0.00
Legal Expense	\$4,522.99	\$0.00
Road Improv.	\$67,272.38	\$20,000.00
Land & Conservation	\$9,453.58	\$0.00
250 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary	\$43.62	\$0.00

***SOURCES OF REVENUE***

	<u>Estimated</u> <u>2023</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>2023</u>	<u>Estimated</u> <u>2024</u>
<b><u>Taxes</u></b>			
<b>Land Use Change Tax</b>	\$00	\$284.64	\$0.00
<b>Yield Tax</b>	\$3,500.00	\$5,371.57	\$5,000.00
<b><u>Interest &amp; Penalties</u></b>			
<b>Delinquent Taxes</b>	\$4,000.00	\$3,006.63	\$3,000.00
<b>Inventory Penalties</b>	\$1,500.00	\$2,370.00	\$2,300.00
<b>UCC</b>	\$30.00	\$105.00	\$100.00
<b>Motor Vehicles</b>	\$60,000.00	\$70,075.33	\$70,000.00
<b>Building Permits</b>	\$100.00	\$363.25	\$300.00
<b>Other Lic. &amp; Permits</b>	\$500.00	\$640.93	\$500.00



**From State**

<b>Unanticipated Rev.</b>	\$0.00	\$7,110.86	\$0.00
<b>Rooms &amp; Meals Tax</b>	\$20,000.00	\$25,895.64	\$20,000.00
<b>Highway Block Grant</b>	\$28,000.00	\$41,134.97	\$30,000.00
<b>Special Hwy. Grant</b>	\$0.00	\$8,183.92	\$0.00
<b>State/Fed. Forest</b>	\$4000.00	\$3,359.24	\$3,000.0
<b>ARPA Funds</b>	\$0.00	\$40,000.00	\$0.00
<b>FEMA</b>	\$0.00	\$00	\$0.00
<b>School refund</b>		\$00	

**Miscellaneous Revenues**

<b>Voter Checklist</b>	\$350.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Interest Investments</b>	\$0.00	\$79.23	\$50.00
<b>Sale of Town Property</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Municipal Fees</b>	\$900.00	\$1,008.00	\$1,000.00

**Total Estimated Revenue and Credits**            \$122,880.00    \$208,989.21    \$135,250.00

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
Recommended Operating Budget	\$275,889.00	\$339,145.00
Special Warrant Articles	\$63,507.00	\$38,000.00
Total Approp. Recommended	\$339,396.00	\$377,145.00
Less Estimated Revenue	\$186,387.00	\$135,250.00
Est. Amt. to be Raised by Taxes	\$153,009.00	\$241,895.00

**2024 BUDGET SUMMARY**

*Level funded 15 categories*

*Decreased 3 categories*

- Health Agencies                                    -\$138.00
- Culture & Recreation                                -\$200.00
- FEMA loan interest                                    -\$13,331.00

*Increased 11 categories:*

- Elections +\$3,795.00
- Revaluation +\$4,000.00
- Cemeteries +\$1,000.00
- Insurance +\$484.00
- Memberships +\$50.00
- Ambulance \$1,990.00
- Fire Protection. +\$9,036.00
- Building Inspection. +\$500.00
- Highways +\$50,000.00
- Solid Waste +\$5,170.00
- Parks & Recreation +\$900.00

*Decreased Capital Reserves -\$25,507.00*

<i>Appropriations</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>	<i>Change</i>
<i>Operating Budget</i>	<i>\$275,889.00</i>	<i>\$339,145.00</i>	<i>+\$63,256.00</i>
<i>Capital Reserve Funds</i>	<i>\$63,507.00</i>	<i>\$38,000.00</i>	<i>-\$25,507.00</i>
<i>Total Appropriations</i>	<i>\$339,396.00</i>	<i>\$377,145.00</i>	<i>+\$37,749.00 11% increase</i>



*Budget Committee members  
Louis Shelzi, Dave Stacy and Bob Proulx*

# ***TAX COLLECTOR'S FINANCIAL REPORT***

## ***Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2023***

### **DEBITS:**

<b>Uncollected Taxes Beg. of Year</b>	<b><u>2023</u></b>	<b><u>2022</u></b>
Property Taxes		\$51,036.98
Yield Taxes		
Land Use Change Taxes		
Property Tax Credit Balance	(\$119.31)	
<b>Taxes Committed This Fiscal Year</b>		
Property Taxes	\$870,871.71	
Land Use Change Tax	\$310.00	
Yield Taxes	\$5,371.57	\$93.60
Excavation Tax	\$0.00	
<b>Overpayment Refunds</b>		
Property Taxes		
Interest-Late Tax	\$44.69	\$1,376.70
<b><i>TOTAL DEBITS</i></b>	<b><i>\$876,478.68</i></b>	<b><i>\$52,507.28</i></b>

### **CREDITS**

<b>Remitted to Treasurer</b>	<b><u>2023</u></b>	<b><u>2022</u></b>
Property Taxes	\$841,383.08	\$39,166.47
Land Use Change Tax	\$284.64	
Yield Taxes	\$5,371.57	
Interest	\$22.69	\$1,013.70
Penalties	\$22.00	\$363.00
Converted to Liens (principal only)		\$11,534.83
<b>Abatements Made</b>		
Property Taxes	\$2,532.31	\$335.68
Land Use Change Tax	\$0.00	
Excavation Tax	\$0.00	\$93.60

<b>Uncollected Taxes - End of Year</b>	<b><u>2023</u></b>	<b><u>2022</u></b>
Property Taxes	\$26,837.03	
Land Use Change Taxes	\$25.36	
<b><i>TOTAL CREDITS</i></b>	<b>\$876,478.68</b>	<b>\$52,507.28</b>

<b><u>SUMMARY OF DEBITS:</u></b>	<b><u>2022</u></b>	<b><u>2021</u></b>	<b><u>2020+</u></b>
Unredeemed Lien Balance beg. of FY		\$7,459.51	\$7,785.10
Liens Executed FY	\$12,449.17	\$0.00	\$0.00
Interest & Costs Collected	\$109.20	\$0.00	\$1,476.04
<b><i>TOTAL DEBITS</i></b>	<b>\$12,558.37</b>	<b>\$7,459.51</b>	<b>\$9,261.14</b>

<b><u>SUMMARY OF CREDITS</u></b>	<b><u>2022</u></b>	<b><u>2021</u></b>	<b><u>2020+</u></b>
Redemptions	\$2,111.99	\$0.00	\$4,974.48
Interest & Costs Collected	\$109.20	\$0.00	\$1,476.04
Liens Deeded to Municipality	\$2,515.67	\$2,645.77	\$2,810.62
Unredeemed Liens End of FY	\$7,821.51	\$4,813.74	\$0.00
<b><i>TOTAL CREDITS</i></b>	<b>\$12,558.37</b>	<b>\$7,459.51</b>	<b>\$9,261.14</b>

*Sharon Lee Proulx,  
Tax Collector  
Town of Orange*

## *TREASURER'S REPORT 2023*

**CASH ON HAND 12/31/2022** **\$382,641.53**

**RECEIPTS**

Bank	79.24
Select Board	40,823.18
Tax Collector	894,684.52
Town Clerk	71,394.33
State of NH	85,684.63
Moose Plate Grant	10,000.00
LCHIP Grant	21,750.00
From Trust Funds to TH Restoration Account	27,443.00
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>\$1,151,858.90</b>

**EXPENSES**

Payment by order of Select Board	952,097.88
Liability for FICA	(12.39)
Liability to State from Town Clerk	(992.72)
Difference between Treasury and Select Board	446.93
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$951,539.70</b>

Transfer to Trust Funds	(\$63,507.49)
2022 Property tax deposited in 2023	\$21,889.94

**CASH ON HAND 12/31/2023** **\$541,343.18**

Principle Borrowed on Tax Anticipation Note	\$259,493.56
Tax Anticipation Note interest paid	(\$2,086.26)
FEMA note interest paid	(\$20,889.35)
R. Lee Logging escrow balance	\$1,285.07

**EXPLANATION OF DIFFERENCES** **\$446.93**

payroll underpayment December 2022	(36.90)
arithmetic error	0.54
refund QB change from Desktop	186.30
journal entry payroll correcting carryover 2021	(1,269.20)
bank service charge no voucher December 31	(27.67)
tax overpayment returned	700.00

## *FEMA Anticipation Note (FRAN) 2023 Update*

### ***Background Information***

6/12/2020	Original amount of FRAN	\$980,356.00
12/31/2022	Balance on FRAN	\$896,969.57
4/6/2023	Interest paid on prior 12 mos.	\$20,998.35
3/19/2024	Interest DUE for prior 12 mos.	\$8,732.62

### ***FEMA Payments in 2023***

2/23/2023	FEMA paid	\$501,584.85
11/6/2023	FEMA paid	\$743.70
11/9/2023	FEMA paid	\$242,695.59
Total payments received 2023		<b>\$745,024.14*</b>

*\*Includes \$27,285.20 reimbursement for some loan interest paid by the Town of Orange over the course of the FEMA reimbursement anticipation note. See narrative below.*

The above table summarizes this year's activity related to the Town's debt after road repairs and FEMA relief after the damaging July 2019 storm. All monies received from New Hampshire Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (NH FEMA) were applied to the note balance, which was reduced from \$896,969.57 (December 31, 2022) to the current amount of \$151,945.43. The refinancing will be a new, three-year note for \$67,945.43 which is the current amount of \$151,945.43 less the application of \$84,000.00 from the Unassigned Fund Balance. Any FEMA monies that may be received (due to final adjustments for administrative costs) will be applied to the loan principal.

Throughout the year, Orange Treasurer pursued relief for the interest payments that continued to accrue due to long delays in reimbursement from FEMA. October 25, 2023, Orange Treasury received notice that relief was awarded in the amount of \$27,285.20. In a further response, the next version of the FEMA Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide (Version 5) will include guidance to entities pertaining loan interest reimbursement eligibility.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Trish L. Weekes, Treasurer*  
*Tessa D. Johnson, Deputy Treasurer*

## *Orange Town House Restoration Committee*

Spring of 2023, work began on the Town House Restoration Project funded in part by a Moose Plate Grant (\$20,000 in 2022) and an LCHIP (Land and Community Heritage Investment Program) grant (\$43,501 in 2022).

Some \$21,050 was spent on the project during 2023. Inside, the structural renovations to shore up and reinforce the sagging roof/ceiling were completed. Most of the finishing work was done. On the outside, the chimney was dismantled to the roof line and rebuilt to simulate the original brickwork. Additionally, a deposit was made for replacing the roof and restoring it to its standing-seam original. This work will begin in 2024 as soon as weather permits. Other outside work to be completed as part of the project includes scraping and painting the wood siding, and repointing foundation masonry.

Given the significant account balance idling over the winter months, a six-month certificate of deposit was purchased October 18, 2023, for \$100,000, maturing April 18 and paying 4.4% interest.

Below is a summary of activity in the Town House Restoration Fund accounts in 2023.

### **Beginning balance**

<b>12/31/2022</b>	<b>\$960.00</b>
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### Deposits

Moose Plant Grant partial payment	\$10,000.00
Donation	50.00
ARPA funds allocated to TH work	26,290.70
Transfer from TH Trust Fund	27,443.00
LCHIP grant partial payment	21,750.00

Transfer from operating account	40,000.00
<b>TOTAL DEPOSITS</b>	<b>\$125,533.70</b>
<i><u>Expenditures</u></i>	
Cardigan Carpentry	6,400.00
RL Stone	5,400.00
Iron Horse Roofing	9,250.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>(\$21,050.00)</b>
<b>Ending Balance 12/31/2023</b>	<b>\$105,443.70</b>

*Respectfully submitted, Trish Weekes*



*Town House Restoration:  
Beam installation 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Town House to support the roof*



# *2023 REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE TRUST FUNDS*

## *COMMON TRUST FUNDS*

### *CEMETERIES*

	Dec. 31, 2022	2023 Int.	Dec. 31, 2023
Hannah M. French	\$1,154.56	\$60.43	\$1,214.99
Jennie M. French	\$1,496.53	\$78.30	\$1,574.83
Arthur Briggs	\$543.46	\$28.44	\$571.90
Clara Huse	\$501.92	\$26.27	\$528.19
Asa Hoyt	\$515.60	\$26.98	\$542.58
Henry Eastman	\$1,405.91	\$73.59	\$1,479.50
Abbie Fellows	\$1,582.79	\$82.82	\$1,665.61
Adoniram Ford	\$1,614.32	\$84.48	\$1,698.80
Charles Ford	\$1,680.10	\$87.92	\$1,768.02
Lyman Batchelder	\$513.43	\$26.87	\$540.30

### *ERNEST KILTON BARNARD MEMORIAL FUND*

Dec. 31, 2022: \$13,033.19; Interest: \$682.08; Balance Dec. 31, 2023: \$13,715.27

### *CAPITAL RESERVES*

- *Highway Equipment:* Dec. 31, 2022: \$18,925.74; deposit per vote at 2023 town meeting: \$8,000.00; interest: \$1,045.69; Dec. 31, 2023 balance: \$27,971.43
- *Town Road Improvement and Repair* Dec. 31, 2022: \$45,574.44; deposit per vote at 2023 town meeting: 15,000.00; interest: \$2,697.94; Dec. 31, 2023 balance: \$67,272.38
- *Revaluation:* Dec. 31, 2022: \$8,213.27; deposit per vote at 2023 town meeting: \$4,000.00; interest: \$457.41; Dec. 31, 2023 balance: \$12,670.68
- *Town House:* Dec. 31, 2022: \$33,509.50; deposit per vote at 2023 town meeting: \$10,000.00; withdrawal: \$27,443.00; interest: \$780.45; Dec. 31, 2023 balance: \$16,846.95

- *Town Document Preservation*: Dec. 31, 2022: \$1,092.77; interest: \$57.18; Dec. 31, 2023 balance: \$1,149.95
- *Land & Conservation*: Dec. 31, 2022: \$8,983.44; interest: \$470.14; Dec. 31, 2023 balance: \$9,453.58
- *Cemetery Monuments*: Dec. 31, 2022: \$1,621.61 interest: \$84.87; Dec. 31, 2023 balance: \$1,706.48
- *Legal Expense*: Dec. 31, 2022: \$4,298.07; interest: \$224.92; Dec. 31, 2023 balance: \$4,522.99
- *250<sup>th</sup> Orange Anniversary*: Dec. 31, 2022: \$41.44; interest: \$2.18; Dec. 31, 2023 balance: \$43.62
- *Bridge*: Dec. 31, 2022: \$0.00 deposit per vote at 2023 town meeting: 26,507.49; interest: \$182.90; Dec. 31, 2023 balance: \$26,690.39

***Cemeteries:***                    ***\$11,584.72***  
***Kilton Fund:***                    ***\$13,715.27***  
***Capital Reserves:***            ***\$168,328.45***  
***Grand Total:***                    ***\$193,628.44***

*Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Trustees of Trust Funds,  
Pauline Emerson, Karen McFarlane, Sandi Pierson*



*Presentation by Alaina Shelzi at the Historical Commission Time Capsule event  
Photo courtesy of Gullely Dunlap*

*ORANGE TOWN CLERK REPORT  
ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2023*

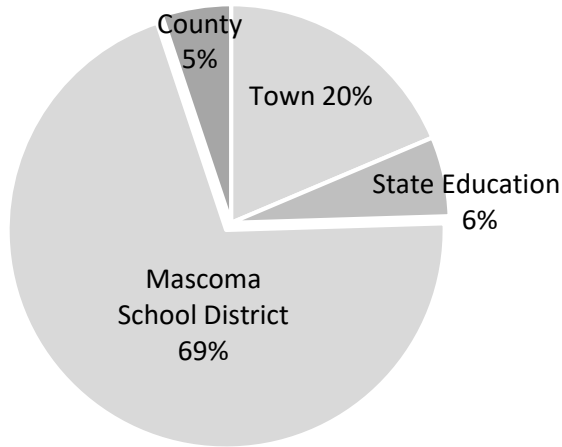
Automobile Registrations	\$70,020.30
Automobile Titles	\$128.00
Municipal Fees	\$1,010.00
Dog Licenses	\$206.00
UCC Fees	\$75.00
Vital Records	\$0.00
Voter List	\$0.000
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>\$71,439.30</i>

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Michelle Goffreda  
Orange Town Clerk*



*Historical Commission Time Capsule Event  
Photo courtesy of Gully Dunlap*

## *Your 2023 Tax Bill*



### *TAX RATES PER \$1000 OF VALUATION*

	Town	Mascoma School District	State Education	County	Total Tax Rate
2023	\$4.75	\$16.12	\$1.45	\$1.15	\$23.47
2022	\$4.14	\$15.64	\$1.14	\$1.31	\$22.23
2021	\$4.13	\$16.07	\$1.70	\$1.45	\$23.35
2020	\$3.38	\$18.03	\$1.85	\$1.55	\$24.81
2019	\$4.03	\$18.53	\$2.14	\$1.90	\$26.60
2018	\$3.80	\$18.05	\$2.16	\$1.86	\$25.87
2017	\$3.88	\$18.07	\$2.20	\$1.77	\$25.92
2016	\$3.71	\$17.16	\$2.15	\$1.73	\$24.75
2015	\$4.45	\$11.70	\$2.74	\$1.54	\$20.43
2014	\$3.07	\$15.02	\$2.54	\$2.00	\$22.63
2013	\$2.50	\$14.92	\$2.47	\$1.66	\$21.55
2012	\$4.10	\$11.59	\$2.46	\$1.62	\$19.77
2011	\$2.00	\$14.85	\$2.62	\$1.50	\$20.97
2010	\$2.21	\$13.33	\$2.49	\$1.49	\$19.52
2009	\$4.05	\$11.92	\$2.12	\$1.44	\$19.53

## 2023 PROPERTY TAXES DATA

Town Appropriations: \$339,396  
Less Revenue: (\$143,250)  
Less Fund Balance Bridge Work (\$26,507)  
Add Overlay Used: \$3,070  
Add War Service Credits: \$4,000  
Total Municipal Tax Effort: \$176,709

*\*Fund Balance amount is what the State of NH deposited into the Town's account in accordance with Senate Bill 401 for Bridge work.*

Net Local School Apportionment: \$906,321  
Less Education Grant: (\$254,004)  
Less Education Tax (from below): (\$52,571)  
Total School Tax Effort: \$599,746

Education Tax: \$52,571

County Tax: \$42,696

Total Taxes Assessed: \$871,722  
Less War Service Credits: (\$4,000)  
*Total Property Tax Commitment: \$867,722*



*Winter on Orange Pond  
Photo Courtesy of Dave Stacy*

## 2023 SUMMARY OF VALUATION

<u>LAND</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Valuation</u>
Current Use	8,788.51	\$604,683
Residential	866.05	\$12,613,700
Commercial	88.01	\$206,100
<b>Taxable total acreage</b>	<b>9,742.57</b>	<b>\$13,424,483</b>
Non-Taxable	5,577.48	\$3,835,200

*\*Town and State properties, including Mt. Cardigan State Forest*

<u>BUILDINGS</u>	<u>Valuation</u>
Residential	\$22,588,200
Mfg. Housing	\$933,700
Commercial buildings	\$423,400
<b>Total Taxable Buildings</b>	<b>\$23,945,300</b>
Non-Taxable building	\$163,000

*\*Non-Taxable Building is the Town House*

Utilities	\$945,200
Total valuation before exemptions	\$38,314,983
Less elderly exemption	\$125,500
<b>Net Valuation</b>	<b>\$38,189,483</b>

<u>CURRENT USE</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Valuation</u>
Farmland	166.62	\$53,426
Forest Land	7,745.70	\$521,869
Forest land Stewardship	772.09	\$27,210
Unproductive Land	42.40	\$819
Wetland	61.70	\$1,359
<b>Taxable total acreage</b>	<b>8,788.51</b>	<b>\$604,683</b>

### Other Current Use Statistics:

Receiving 20% recreation adjustment: 3,940.84 acres

Removed from CU in 2023: 1 acre

Total parcels in CU: 142

Total number of CU land owners: 99

## 2023 SCHEDULE OF TOWN PROPERTY

### Properties (assessed Values):

<u>Map</u>	<u>Lot</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Value</u>
1	34	Rt4	0.10	\$2,200
		<i>Possible site of 1804 municipal tool booth</i>		
3	3-3	Tug Mountain Rd	0.38	\$27,800
		<i>Common Cemetery</i>		
3	11	8 Town House Rd	2.27	\$202,900
		<i>Land + Building</i>		
3	56	Cardigan Mtn Rd	11.25	\$51,000
		<i>Williams Lot</i>		
3	100	Cardigan Mtn Rd	0.37	\$30,700
		<i>French Cemetery</i>		
3	100-1	Cardigan Mtn Rd	0.75	\$29,600
		<i>Church Cemetery</i>		
7	3	Firescrew Forest	8.9	\$8,000
		<i>North Flank of Firescrew Mtn</i>		
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$352,200</b>

### Highway Department:

	<u>Value</u>
2015 GMC3500D Truck	\$35,000
Fisher XV2 Minute Mount Plow	\$4,500
Fisher SteelCaster Sander	\$5,500
other equipment:	\$700
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$45,700</b>

### Other:

	<u>Value</u>
Town House, general contents	\$46,000
Historical Collection	\$5,042
Art Collection	\$7,385
Set of six display units	\$3,000
Gary Hamel 23 historical panels	\$7,500
Standby generator	\$3,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$72,427</b>

**Grand Total** **\$470,327**

## Category Payees 2023

### 4130 SALARIES

Aaron Allen	\$3,000.00
Alexandra Proctor	\$95.20
Betsy Coble	\$3,000.00
Catherine Souza	\$7,463.00
Cohos Advisors	\$4,000.00
David Stacy	\$160.00
Karen McFarlane	\$100.00
Loius Shelzi	\$160.00
Michelle Goffreda	\$3,144.00
Pauline Emerson	\$100.00
Robert Proulx	\$260.00
Sandi Pierson	\$5,507.04
Sharon Proulx	\$3,278.00
Tamara Fairbank	\$3,000.00
Tessa Johnson	\$500.00
Trish Weekes	\$3,000.00

### 4140 ELECTIONS

Aaron Allen	\$125.00
Anita Garland	\$125.00
Beth DiFrancesco	\$170.00
Betsy Coble	\$125.00
Daniel Hazelton	\$170.00
Donna Hazelton	\$125.00
Gary Hamel	\$125.00
Laurie Sanborn	\$170.00
Michelle Goffreda	\$125.00
Tamara Fairbank	\$125.00

### 4150 DEED

Gr County Registry of Deeds	\$61.61
Sandi Pierson	\$60.00



## *Category Payees 2023*

### 4152 REVALUATION

Avitar Associates of NE \$7,759.45

### 4153 LEGAL

Mitchel Municipal Group \$696.00

### 4152 FICA

FICA \$2,994.75

### 4191 PLANNING & ZONING

Catherine Souza \$122.58

Sandi Pierson \$96.46

### 4194 GENERAL GOVERNMENT BLDGS

Aaron Allen \$25.00

Anita Garland \$18.50

As you Wish Cleaning, LLC \$375.00

Brent Steves \$178.78

Canaan Hardware and Supply \$128.02

Consolidated Commuincations \$2,898.27

Inov8v Energy \$2,132.95

JBC Septic \$1,239.76

Lyell Smith \$141.10

NH Electric Co-op \$1,008.28

Poland Property Maintenance \$1,005.00

Robert Souza \$150.67

Town of Hanover \$475.00

### 4195 CEMETERY

Open Woods (Angus Gorman) \$600.00

Poland Property Maintenance \$850.00

## Category Payees 2023

### 4196 INSURANCE

Primex	\$2,547.30
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### 4197 MEMBERSHIPS

NH Association of Assessing Officials	\$20.00
NH Local Welfare Administration Association	\$30.00
NH Municipal Association	\$1,137.00
NH Preservation Alliance	\$50.00
NH Road Agents Association	\$30.00
Sharon Proulx	\$20.00
UV Lake Sunapee Regional Plan Commission	\$425.47

### 4199 OFFICERS EXPENSE

Catherine Souza	\$1,395.77
Gnomen Copy	\$606.24
Interware Development	\$1,047.00
Intuit Quickbooks	\$1,052.50
Laurie Sanborn	\$158.99
Mascoma Bank	\$34.71
Michelle Goffreda	\$151.75
Sandi Pierson	\$137.23
Sharon Proulx	\$535.69
Staples	\$391.75
Treasurer, State of New Hampshire	\$75.00
Trish Weekes	\$373.80
US Postal Service	\$551.80

### 4215 AMBULANCE

Town of Canaan, NH	\$12,379.00
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### 4220 FIRE

Town of Canaan, NH	\$18,581.00
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## *Category Payees 2023*

### 4240 BUILDING INSPECTOR

Doug Weekes \$575.00

### 4290 EMERGENCY MGMT

Canaan Dire Fighters Association \$85.00

Interstate Sign Products \$1,47.17

Mapping & Planning Solutions \$3,300.00

Motorola Solutions \$495.12

Ossipee Mountain Electronics \$24.55

### 4312 HIGHWAY

Aaron Allen \$349.98

Canaan Hardware and Supply \$638.51

Cardigan Mountain Land Surveys \$275.00

Granite State Glass \$343.17

Green Oak Realty \$14,067.73

Jakes Market & Deli \$910.46

Marcello Shelzi \$3,022.01

Pike Industries \$1,058.64

Richard Remacle Construction \$81,605.00

Scott Sanborn \$3,640.67

State of NH, Dept of Corrections \$687.00

Upper Valley Line-X \$4,737.69

### 4323 SOLID WASTE

Town of Canaan, NH \$13,611.00

Casella \$2,359.90

## *Category Payees 2023*

### 4415 HEALTH

Bridge House	\$250.00
Grafton Co. Senior Citizens Council	\$450.00
Public Health Council of Upper Valley	\$208.00
Tri-County Community Action Program	\$554.00
Upper Valley Humane Society	\$300.00
Visiting Nurse and Hospice of NH & VT	\$1,300.00
West Central Behavioral Health	\$400.00

### 4441 DIRECT ASSISTANCE

No expenditures

### 4550 LIBRARY

Canaan Town Library	\$4,000.00
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### 4589 CULTURE/RECREATION

No expenditures

### 4601 TIMBER

No expenditures

### 4619 CONSERVATION

No expenditures

### 4571 INTEREST-LONG TERM (FEMA)

Mascoma Bank	\$20,998.35
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### 4723 DEBT SERVICE (TAN)

Mascoma Bank	\$2,086.26
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### 4903 BUILDING CAPITAL OUTLAY

No expenditures

## Category Payees 2023

### OTHER: TOWN HOUSE RESTORATION

Cardigan Carpentry	\$6,400.00
R.L. Stone	\$5,400.00
Iron Horse Standing Seam Roofing	\$9,250.00

### OTHER PAYMENTS

Annual County Payment to Grafton County	\$42,696.00
Mascoma School District	\$620,835.26
TAN Payoff (Mascoma Bank)	\$259,493.56



*The Presidential Primary Election Crew  
and the State Trooper who dropped by!*



# *REPORTS*



*Fire Tower atop Mount Cardigan. New tower to be erected in spring of 2024.  
Photo courtesy of summitpost.org*





## *2023 REPORT OF THE SELECT BOARD*

In 2023, Orange began to see a return to a pre-pandemic way of life. Town Meeting returned to the Town House and the Orange Harvest Festival was again graciously hosted by Dewey Mathis and Samara Pietre with an excellent turnout!

Town House maintenance and renovations have been a focus this year. With the diligent efforts of the Town House Renovation Committee procuring funding with LCHIP grant and ARPA funds, several concerns began to be addressed. Essential work on the roof and second story is underway! Septic system and bathroom renovations are in the planning stages.

The New Hampshire Division of Forests and Lands initiated the replacement of the Cardigan Mt fire tower (circa 1924) in 2023 with the summer removal of the old structure. The new tower will be erected in 2024.

Large/Bulky Trash Disposal- Once again, September brought Orange residents an opportunity to clean out barns, sheds and property! It was well attended. Thanks to Aaron Allen for arranging this important event.

Emergency radios were put into use. Many thanks to Canaan Fire Department's Alton Hennessey for training on the use and operation of the radios.

The Town of Orange contracted with Avitar to update tax maps in 2023. This project will result in online access once initial updates are complete and periodic updates to maintain accurate maps going forward.

New Hampshire Electric Cooperative brought broadband to a section of Orange! This has provided those Orange residents with more options for connectivity and access to the internet. We look forward to future expansion of this service to all of Orange!

2019 Flood FEMA project(s) finally concluded and the last of the Federal reimbursement funds were received! Deepest appreciation to Scott Sanborn for his continued work to meet the requirements for reimbursement and to Trish Weekes for securing and tracking funds so diligently.

Catherine Souza joined us in April of 2023, as the new Secretary, and quickly learned the responsibilities with Sandi Pierson's helpful and insightful tutelage. Catherine has expanded the content of the town website OrangeNH.us to include Select Board & Committee meeting minutes going back many years, Veteran tax credit information and resources, such as resident assistance programs. The Board thanks Catherine for her flexibility, adaptability, and determination to keep us on track!

*Sincerely,  
Tamara Fairbank, Chair  
Aaron Allen  
Betsy Coble*



*Celebrating Sandi's retirement at her last Select Board meeting.*

*Thank you, Sandi, for your years of dedication and work for the Town of Orange!*

*Photo courtesy of Gulley Dunlap.*

## *2023 REPORT OF THE PLANNING BOARD*

The Orange Planning Board conducted 2023 business in its usual cooperative and harmonious fashion.

In March 2023, Donald McFarlane was re-elected, and Chris Hausfeld was elected to a vacant seat, both for three-year terms. Betsy Coble continued as the ex-officio member from the Selectboard. Scott Sanborn and Donald McFarlane continued as Chair and Vice-Chair respectively, and Tessa Johnson served as Secretary.

We had two subdivision applications submitted during the year. A minor two lot subdivision on Tuttle Hill Road, and a proposal for eight lots off Route 4 were both approved.

There was also a request made for a dimensional variance to the Orange Zoning Ordinance. Though the Planning Board does not decide such requests, the current zoning ordinance requires that an applicant first apply to the Planning Board, which then refers the application to the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) with a recommendation.

This application brought to light the rather convoluted process for a request to the ZBA. Therefore, the Planning Board has taken the initiative to place an article on the 2024 Warrant to see if the voters will approve an amendment to the Orange Zoning Ordinance which eliminates the redundant step of going through the Planning Board, and creates an application procedure directly to the ZBA, including the addition of an application form and checklist (neither of which presently exist). During the process of review of the Zoning Ordinance, the Planning Board noted a few minor inconsistencies in the use of terms, and these corrections are also included with the proposed amendments.

Looking to the future, the Planning Board continues to keep two major items on its agenda. First is discussion of whether an ordinance or Site Plan review process may be warranted for commercial solar installations. Second is a comprehensive

review of our Telecommunications ordinance. It has been more than twenty (20) years since the present ordinance was established, and we want to ensure that the requirements in the ordinance remain relevant to current technology.

Finally, upcoming in 2024, the Planning Board will begin the process of updating the Orange Master Plan. This was last done in 2014, and the statutory recommendation is that it be revised every 5 to 10 years. The current Master Plan is available at the town offices. The document tracks development and land use trends, demographic data, visions for the community held by its residents, and provides a guide for ongoing land use planning. An integral part of the process is a comprehensive Community Survey distributed to all households in town so that all may have the opportunity to participate and provide opinions. This is a significant undertaking and will keep us very busy in the coming months!

The Chair wishes to thank the members of the Planning Board for their commitment and thoughtful considerations to the planning issues that impact the Town of Orange. Thanks also, to our Board of Selectmen for their dedication to the town, and the town's attorneys for being available to provide insight and legal wisdom. We also thank the members of the public who have provided input at our meetings and public hearings over the years.

The Planning Board meets on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 7:00 PM. Those wishing to be heard formally by the board, whether to discuss a subdivision or boundary adjustment, or any topic of general interest related to planning and zoning may ask to be placed on a future agenda in person at a regular meeting of the Board, or by contacting Chair Scott Sanborn at 603-667-8237. Regulations and application forms are available at the town office, through the Planning Board Chair or Secretary, or on line at [www.orangenh.us](http://www.orangenh.us). The public is always encouraged to attend our meetings, and the Board is pleased to hear questions or comments whether on the agenda or not. It is recommended to check ahead, as meetings may occasionally be cancelled if there

is no business requiring the board's attention, or if we know there will not be quorum of members. As the Chair, I know I can speak on behalf the entire Board when I say that we look forward to continuing to serve the Town of Orange in the year 2024.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Scott Sanborn, Chair*



*Winter 2023 clean up in Church Cemetery  
Angus Gorman and Anita Garland  
Photos courtesy of Gulley Dunlap*

## *2023 REPORT OF THE ROAD AGENT*

2023 has been quite the year for the roads of Orange. I was honored to take the torch from Scott Sanborn, who retired from the position after 11 years of service to the town. Quite the big shoes to fill, of course, but with my experience working for the Vermont State Park Service, Burlington City Parks, and helping run the Mountain Operations team at Dartmouth Skiway, Scott saw me as the resident qualified to take over the role of Road Agent. While I had been gone from Orange for almost 8 years (returning in the midst of Covid in late 2020) I always saw myself as an Orange resident and was happy for the chance to take an active role in my town Government.

Immediately after my successful election to the position, we were met with a wet spring snowstorm and a brutal New England mud season (that honestly, never really subsided). According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, New Hampshire experienced the wettest year since records were started in 1895. Rainfall was near constant over the summer, with it often raining multiple times a week (and unfortunately, most weekends). With many roads in Orange being dirt, this posed a serious issue. The roads were often saturated with water with little opportunity to dry out, causing a protracted mud season. There were several incidents of heavy rainfall of 1-3 inches or more that caused washouts and the flooding of drainage ditches. The rain made grading difficult, as bringing the grader on muddy roads can often cause more harm than good. Crushed stone was used to mitigate the ruts and provide traction, and the roads were graded when there was enough of an opportunity to do so. Increased traffic by hikers to Cardigan Mountain State Park over the summer also saw increased wear on the backroads of Orange, Burnt Hill in particular. The fall and early winter saw this trend of rain continuing. Warm temps in November and December prevented the ground from freezing, leading to a “winter mud season”. The only silver lining from this was the fact that Orange was able to escape relatively unscathed from the cataclysmic flooding that

hit most of New England and many of the surrounding Upper Valley towns around this time. The most flood damage we received was to the dirt section of Cardigan Mountain Road that fortunately is the responsibility of the State of NH DOT.

There were many complaints this year in regard to road conditions. I appreciated and listened to all concerns from residents, and now it is also my duty as a public official in this report to directly respond to some of the complaints and concerns. I had multiple people email me about both muddy ruts and potholes, oftentimes saying something along the lines of “It has nothing to do with the recent weather”. To this, I refer to the reports from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric administration and the National Weather Service, showing most months had at least double the amount of rainfall of “normal” years. I understand that many of the problems with Orange’s roads have been ongoing for years due to Orange’s location and lack of comprehensive maintenance, but to say that increased precipitation was not partially responsible for road conditions is incorrect and shortsighted. Looking forward, we must expect that increased rainfall will be the norm if we hope to improve and maintain the roads in a meaningful and lasting way. The NH DOT has cited increasing precipitation and an increase in extreme weather events as one of the biggest threats municipalities face in regards to maintaining infrastructure.

The second thing I must address directly is in regard to our contractor. Orange does not have a full-time highway department. Unlike most of the surrounding towns, we have no construction equipment. We have me (a part time employee) and a contractor. All repairs and complaints were addressed as quickly as humanly possible, but oftentimes that was not instantaneously. Remacle Construction, our contractor, has many other jobs to attend to, and like most other contractors is suffering from a lack of staff and increased demand for services. Many times, when Remacle wasn’t immediately available I looked into getting another contractor for a one time job, only to be told that they were booking out into Spring/Summer of 2024. Remacle also does the work for Orange at a discounted rate.

When we switch to another contractor, we can expect to see a 15%-25% increase in costs.

Another factor in regard to road maintenance was inflation and rising costs. In the past few years, the price of everything has been increasing and that includes gravel, construction material, and equipment fuel. The town's current highway budget has not been increasing enough to match inflation and was barely able to cover basic maintenance of the roads in 2023. To bring the dirt roads up to a higher standard would require a complete resurfacing that would cost tens of thousands of dollars. I have been working with the Selectboard and the Budget Committee to come up with plans going forward on how to address this, as I have many concerns about the roads that must be dealt with in the next 2-5 years. The town stands at a juncture, either drastically increasing highway department funding and performing sweeping road improvements, or lower expectations for road conditions. My goal is to try and use my experience this year as well as the 11 years of knowledge from Scott Sanborn, to make sure that the town understands the state of the roads and what will be done going forward.

Unfortunately, I must announce that I will not seek reelection this year. I am currently looking at employment opportunities that would require me leaving Orange, and thus will not be eligible to be the road agent. I will be more than happy to help with the transfer of duties to the next road agent and will help in the interim time.

I would like to thank the residents who supported me through the trials and tribulations 2023 presented. Your positive responses to my road updates and your texts of thanks meant a lot to me and showed me the strength of the community the town of Orange is known for. I would like to thank the Selectboard for their help and support. Thanks to Richard Remacle, for his longtime service as contractor to the town and always offering his experienced advice. I would like to thank Scott Sanborn for his knowledge and a helping hand, and for managing to be in this position for 11 years prior to me. And lastly, I would like to



thank the Selectboard Secretary Catherine Souza, whose organization skills are unmatched and was able to always keep me informed and up to date on everything.

If you are reading this before the election of/ transfer of duties to the new road agent, I can be reached at 603-520-0750 and [Marcello.Shelzi@gmail.com](mailto:Marcello.Shelzi@gmail.com)

*Regards,  
Marcello Shelzi  
Road Agent*



*Gary Hamel and the shoemaker's lasts (molds) recently acquired  
Photo courtesy of Gully Dunlap*

## *2023 REPORT OF THE ORANGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION*

Planning for the future of the Orange Historical Commission's museum has been an exciting and productive task this past year. We started our year with a report on the Town House Restoration Project given by Doug and Trish Weekes. They outlined the different construction stages and the financial path toward completing the project. Presently, the upstairs of the Town House has a newly painted ceiling, the old stove has been removed, the ceiling is now about 2-3 inches higher due to the roof support work, and we are making plans on how to set up the museum. Painting still needs to be completed, but that will wait until spring.

The time capsule project was completed this past year with an afternoon celebration at the Town House. All items that were donated were on display prior to the sealing of the capsule. Dave Stacy, who built the cement capsule, shared his expertise with everyone present as they followed him downstairs to do the actual sealing. It will be opened in 2069 when Orange celebrates its 300th Anniversary.

The remainder of this report was written by Gary Hamel to summarize the research completed by Gary, Donna Makarewicz, and Gulley Dunlap during 2023.

Early New England photography became the theme of Gary and Donna's research in the first half of 2023. Canaan resident Edwin Allen was a photographer who published his work on post cards, and also depicted scenes in Orange in the late 1800's and early 1900's. This led our curiosity to Maine photographer, Chansonetta Stanley Emmons, and to Lewis Hine who documented working conditions in New England textile mills. And ultimately, we" found" daguerreotype artist, Gilbert Wood, whose parents lived in Orange for nearly 20 years. His grandfather was Nathan Waldo and his Great Uncle was Elisha Payne, our two founding fathers. Active between 1846 to 1850,

Gilbert is considered one of the first photographers in the state of New Hampshire. The Historical Commission's exhibit at last October's Harvest Festival was entitled, "Son of the Above, The Search for Gilbert Wood".

With repairs pending for the second floor of the Town House, we packed away our collections for safe keeping. In mid-summer, we received a generous gift that will allow us to acquire and build new display furniture. OHC members, Donna, Gulley, and Gary visited several NH town historical museums (Alstead, Plainfield, Meredith, Grafton and Canaan) for ideas and inspiration as we plan our renovated exhibition space.

Exploration of thrift shops, antique malls, and flea markets turned up a cobbler's toolbox and tools, a rare Allen post card of Orange, and a vintage book of Wood family genealogy for our collection. Other new acquisitions include two large spinning wheels, known as "great wheels". One is a gift from the Sibley family of Etna. Their home, built in the 1780's, was once owned by Gideon Tiffany, the doctor who attended small pox patients at the "Pest House" on Cardigan. Also acquired was a sizable collection of Cooper's tools which have been extensively researched and catalogued by Donna. Thanks to Donna, we have a set of photographs of the Orange potters, Isaac and Elijah Lowell's work and have obtained the reproduction rights to these photos.

Donna's other research this year has focused on Orange residents engaged in the Civil War, Luella Huse's speech on woman's rights, and other pottery made in our town. She is actively monitoring on-line auctions for items that relate to our 255-year history.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Sharon Proulx, Chair*

*2023 Harvest Festival  
 Hosted by Dewey Mathis and Samara Pietre  
 —300+ people on a windy & chilly day!—*



*Photos courtesy of Samara and Dewey*



*Photos courtesy of Samara and Dewey*



*Thank you Samara and Dewey for a wonderful event!*

## *2023 REPORT OF THE ORANGE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE*

This is the 31st year of awarding scholarships to students living in Orange who will be furthering their education after high school. Seniors graduating in 2024 should have received their applications which were mailed in February. The application must be completed and returned to the Scholarship Committee by May 1, 2024. High school seniors living in Orange and graduating from schools other than Mascoma Valley Regional High School should contact the committee.

We encourage juniors to complete their scholarship service requirements by August 1, 2024. We have this deadline so seniors can use these documented service hours on their college applications.

The scholarship recipient for 2023 was Asa Michetti. Asa is at the Maine Maritime Academy in Castine, Maine. He is planning to become a maritime engineer while also experiencing the world from a boat.



*Asa Michetti 2023  
Scholarship recipient*

Thank you to Melissa Ells and Kylie Rogers for helping with the scholarship table at the Harvest Festival in October. Thank you also to our residents for their generous donations to our Scholarship Fund.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Marilyn Johnson for the Scholarship Committee*

## *2023 REPORT OF THE ORANGE CEMETERY TRUSTEES*

Because of previous years restoration efforts in the towns 3 maintained cemeteries, we only had a few occasions for minor maintenance this year. This year the main focus was on clearing brush and trees on the periphery of the Church Cemetery. In early March, Angus Gorman removed several old birches and poplar trees . Angus used his tree climbing skills to be able to control how and where they would fall. He was assisted by Gulley Dunlap, Donna Makarewicz and Anita Garland. This was accomplished with deep snow cover, so fun was had by all. The wood was cut, stacked and brush removed after snow melt. The rest of the tree removal had to wait till later in the fall. This was done by Aaron Poland, the town's mowing and maintenance person. He cut the marked trees, chipped and hauled away the brush. We hope to continue this work in 2024.

In April Mr. Sweetland and 6 students from his civics class, along with two advisors, spent a morning at the Town House raking gravel and general spring clean up. Also participating was Asa Michetti, a recipient of one of our scholarships. Asa also helped, along with Gulley, Donna and Anita clean up the brush from the tree removal in March. Thanking Aaron Allen for the use of his trailer and hauling it all away.

In May, flags were placed on the Veterans graves. These flags are left until July 4th. We also place a flag on Elisha Paine's monument in Lebanon, near Rudsboro Rd. on Rte. 4. He was a veteran and also our town's founder. At this time will thank CES's 3rd grade class for the Memorial wreath that is placed at the flagpole. Much appreciated.

If by chance you had occasion to visit the Church Cemetery this summer, you would have seen a lovely display of sunflowers. We have John Powell, Tamara's grandson to thank for this



thoughtful display. So, stay tuned this year, if we are fortunate it may happen again. Thank you, John, for a great idea.

Always a bit of adventure in our gatherings. While removing some brush from the Town Common, Gulley's eyeglasses went flying off. We all know the trauma when that happens. After much frantic searching, they were located. "so, all's well that ends well"

In closing, we again want to thank Aaron Poland for keeping our cemeteries and town house in tiptop shape.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Orange Cemetery Trustees  
Anita Garland, Tamara Fairbank, and Gulley Dunlap  
Orange Cemetery Trustees*



*Work day with volunteer Mascoma students from  
John Sweetland's civics class. April 25, 2023  
Photo courtesy of John Sweetland*

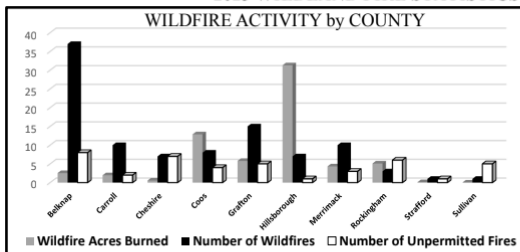
## *2023 REPORT OF THE FOREST FIRE WARDEN AND STATE FOREST RANGER*

This past year we observed wet weather in late spring and throughout the summer. This led to reduced wildfire activity throughout the state and allowed many of our state firefighting resources to respond to Nova Scotia and Quebec to assist our Canadian neighbors with their record wildfire season. We were also able team up with local fire departments and provide many wildfire trainings throughout the state.

This time of year, we see fires caused by the careless disposal of woodstove ashes. Before dumping your woodstove ashes, you should place them in a covered metal container until they are out cold. Many homes in New Hampshire are located in the wildland urban interface, which is the area where homes and flammable wildland fuels intermix. Every year New Hampshire sees fires which threaten or destroy structures, a constant reminder that wildfires burn more than just trees. Even with the lower wildfire threat in New Hampshire in 2023, properties within the Wildland Urban Interface were still impacted, with 8 structures threatened and 3 destroyed by wildfires. Homeowners should take measures to prevent a wildfire from spreading to their home. Precautions include keeping your roof and gutters clear of leaves and pine needles and maintaining adequate green space around your home free of flammable materials. Additional information and homeowner recommendations are available at [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org). Please help Smokey Bear, your local fire department, and the state's Forest Rangers by being fire wise and fire safe! We ask everyone to remember Smokey's message about personal responsibility and follow his ABC's: **Always Be Careful** with fire. If you start a fire, put it out when you are done.  
**“Remember, Only You Can Prevent Wildfires!”**

As we prepare for the 2024 fire season, please remember to contact your local Forest Fire Warden or Fire Department to determine if a fire permit is required before doing ANY outside burning. Under State law (RSA 227-L:17) a fire permit is required for all outside burning unless the ground is completely covered with snow. Fire permits are also available online in most towns and may be obtained by visiting [www.NHfirepermit.com](http://www.NHfirepermit.com). The burning of household waste is prohibited by the Air Resources Division of the Department of Environmental Services. You are encouraged to contact the local fire department for more information. Safe open burning requires your diligence and responsibility. Thank you for helping us to protect New Hampshire's forest resources. For more information, please contact the Division of Forests & Lands at (603) 271-2214, or online at [www.nh.gov/nhdfl/](http://www.nh.gov/nhdfl/). For up-to-date information, follow us on X and Instagram: @NHForestRangers

**2023 WILDLAND FIRE STATISTICS**



Year	Number of Wildfires	Wildfire Acres Burned	Number of Unpermitted Fires*
2023	99	64.5	42
2022	59	203	48
2021	66	86	96
2020	113	89	165
2019	15	23.5	92

\*Unpermitted fires which escape control are considered Wildfires.

Railroad operations & maintenance	Firearm & explosives use	Undetermined	Recreation & ceremony	Debris & open burning	Natural	Other causes	Power generation, transmission, distribution	Smoking	Arson	Misuse of fire by a minor	Equipment & vehicle use
0	0	22	3	80	4	4	10	1	2	0	4



*Under State law a fire permit is required for all outside burning unless the ground is completely covered with snow. The burning of household waste is prohibited by the Air Resources Division of the Department of Environmental Services.*

*CANAAN FIRE, RESCUE, AND AMBULANCE  
2023 REPORT FOR ORANGE*

*Ambulance calls: 20*

*Alarm activation: 1*

*Auto Accident: 4*

*Brush/grass fire: 2*

*Carbon Monoxide Investigation: 1*

*Dispatched & Canceled (wilderness rescue): 1*

*Electrical problem: 2*

*Propane leak: 1*

*Fire/rescue ambulance assist: 2*

*Resident Unlock: 1*

*Storm Assessment: 1*

*Trees or wires down: 4*



*Thank you Canaan Ambulance, Fire, and  
Rescue for always being there when we need  
you. You are appreciated!*

*2023 REPORTS OF THE HEALTH AGENCIES  
SUPPORTED BY THE TOWN OF ORANGE*

*VISITING NURSE & HOSPICE  
OF VERMONT AND NEW HAMPSHIRE*

Visiting Nurse & Hospice clients are of all ages, from all backgrounds, and at all stages in life. The one commonality is a desire to be cared for at home in case of illness and injury. By keeping residents out of emergency rooms and hospitals and reducing the need for relocation to nursing homes, our care offers significant savings in the town's emergency services and other medical expenses.

**In Orange, we continued to make homecare visits to residents last year. Services included home visits to residents with short-term medical or physical needs. This included over \$3,500.00 in unreimbursed care to Orange residents.**

*GRAFTON COUNTY SENIOR CITIZENS COUNCIL*

Grafton County Senior Citizens Council is a private nonprofit organization that provides programs and services to support the health and well being of our communities' older citizens. The Council's programs enable elderly individuals to remain independent in their own homes and communities for as long as possible.

**During FY 2023, 19 older residents of Orange were served by one or more of the Council's programs offered through the Mascoma Area Senior Center including home-delivered meals, transportation services, counseling, and assistance from outreach workers. Orange residents participated in 133 health, educational, or social activities. The cost to provide Council services for Orange residents in 2023 was \$5,783.76**

## *PUBLIC HEALTH COUNCIL OF THE UPPER VALLEY*

As one of the State of New Hampshire's thirteen regional health networks, Public Health Council of the Upper Valley has quickly become the largest and broadest coalitions of advocates on public health issues in the greater Upper Valley region. The PHC is a dynamic organization with the flexibility to forge solutions that respond to the needs of its grass root members with backing from governmental, philanthropic, and health care institutions. Through regular meetings and ongoing initiatives, the PHC empowers organizations, professionals, and citizens, who together make our communities healthier and better places.

**Over the past year, Public Health Council has supported a wide range of COVID-19 vaccine efforts, especially in our more rural communities and for vulnerable populations, has hosted free flu vaccine clinics, has provided support for the summer meals program for low-income children, and has created a program for childhood lead poisoning prevention.**

## *WEST CENTRAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH*

West Central Behavioral Health is the NH designated community mental health center for Orange, as well as Sullivan and Southern Grafton counties. Our mission is “to reduce the burden of mental illness and to improve the quality of life in our community. We commit ourselves to provide services that are safe, effective, client-centered, timely and efficient.”

Our clients suffer from a wide range of disorders and illnesses including psychosis, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and all forms of addiction. We also see patients with anxiety, depression, and other impairing but highly treatable conditions. We work with all ages in outpatient clinics, homes, nursing homes, jails, schools, and a residential supported living program,

and offer a broad variety of counseling, psychiatric services, case management and emergency consultations.

**Throughout the region, we assisted close to 2,000 individuals last year and provided over \$600,000.00 in charitable care, including mental health services to five residents of Orange.**

### *TRI-COUNTY CAP*

Tri-County CAP is a trusted private non-profit that has been serving the 3 most northern counties of New Hampshire for over 50 years. The Grafton County Community Contact Office of the Tri-County Community Action Program provides many essential services to low-income and elderly citizens of Orange and the surrounding New Hampshire towns:

- Weatherization
- (L.I.H.E.A.P.) Fuel Assistance
- New Hampshire Electric Discount Assistance
- Referrals and coordination with other agencies when citizens are in need
- Educational programs and speakers bureau on homelessness and poverty

**Last year, Tri-County CAP provided \$5,866.00 in direct services to twelve Orange residents through its fuel assistance and electric assistance programs.**

### *BRIDGE HOUSE SHELTER AND VETERANS ADVOCACY*

Bridge House in Plymouth prioritizes services to veterans and veteran families. Services include housing, food security, and health and medical assistance in Grafton County.

## WISE

WISE is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, stalking, and human trafficking in the Upper Valley. For over 50 years, WISE has been an ever-present member of our shared community. As the only provider of survivor-centered advocacy in the Upper Valley, WISE is an integral piece of the “safety net” of services provided to all residents. This year, the Select Board has added WISE to its list of seven agencies to support.

*(Health agency compilation courtesy of Bob Proulx)*



*Helicopter over Cardigan for Fire Tower work  
Photo courtesy of Trish Weekes*



# *CANAAN PUBLIC LIBRARY*

## *2023 REPORT FOR THE TOWN OF ORANGE*

In 2023, the library continues to offer our full compliment of hours, and has seen an increase in patron visits. We also continue to offer Library Take Our programs during our open hours. Programming for adults and children continues to be offered in a variety of ways: virtually, outdoors, and when appropriate, in local spaces where social distancing is possible. We continue to monitor the pandemic with an eye toward balancing the safety of our community and providing the services that are needed.

### *COLLECTION*

Adult Books	18,158	Adult Audios	678
Juvenile Books	9,020	Total Audios	763
Total Books	27,228	Music CDs	289
Juvenile Videos	265	Museum Passes	8
Adult Videos	934	Magazines	326
Total Videos	1,199	Artifacts	2,674
Juvenile Audios	86		

### *CIRCULATION TOTAL:*

2019: 34,192	2020: 15,810	2021: 22,857
2022: 28,305	2023: 28,301	

Includes all items checked out of library, plus downloaded audio, ebooks, streaming video, database usage, and Interlibrary Loans.

### *REGISTERED BORROWERS*

As of December 31, 2023: 3,725.

Registered Borrowers from Orange: 177 (4.75% of card holders).

### *LIBRARY PROGRAMS*

Summer Reading Program, Meetinghouse Readings, Knitting Club, NH Humanities Council Events, Story Times, Tech Help Nights, Book Clubs, and more. This year we hosted a total of 72

programs: 45 for children and 27 for adults. Total number of attendees was 1,302: 754 children and 548 adults.

WHAT IS OFFERED AT THE CANAAN LIBRARY:

Audio Books	Adult Book Group
Book Sales	Children's Book Group
Children's Craft Programs	Children's Story Hour
Chrome Books	DVDS
Downloadable Audio Books	Downloadable eBooks
Faxing	Free Cable Internet Access
Friends of the Library	Genealogy Assistance
Genealogy Database	Handicap Accessibility
Inter-Library Loan	Kill-A-Watt Meters
Knitting Needles	Large Print Materials
LEGO club	Library Website
Local Artist Exhibits	Meetinghouse Readings
Museum Passes	Online Card Catalog
Digital New York Times	Photocopying
Puzzles and Board Games	Reference Assistance
Rubber Stamps	School Class Visits
Story Hour	Streaming Video
Tax Materials	Tech Help Nights
Volunteer Opportunities	Wifi Hotspots
Wireless Internet	
1000 Books before Kindergarten	
Programming (author visits, speakers, etc.)	
Summer Reading Program (Adult & Children)	
Community Group Meeting Space	

Library Hours: Monday 1-8 pm, Tuesday 1-8 pm, Wednesday 1-8 pm, Thursday 1-5 pm, Friday 9-12 pm, and Saturday 9-1 pm.

Find the Library Online at:  
[www.facebook.com/CanaanTownLibraryNH](https://www.facebook.com/CanaanTownLibraryNH)  
[www.librarything.com/home/Canaanlibrary](http://www.librarything.com/home/Canaanlibrary)  
[www.canaanlibrary.org](http://www.canaanlibrary.org)

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Amy Thurber, Canaan Librarian*

*TOWN OF ORANGE, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
TOWN MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 14, 2023*

*Officers present:*

Moderator Dan Hazelton; Selectboard members Betsy Coble, Tamara Fairbank, and Aaron Allen; Selectboard Secretary Sandi Pierson; Treasurer Trish Weekes; Building Inspector Doug Weekes; Budget Committee member Dave Stacy; School Board Representative Kathy Stacy; Planning Board members Donald McFarlane and Hilary Allen, Cemetery Trustee Anita Garland; Supervisors of the Checklist Donna Hazelton, Beth DiFrancesco, and Laurie Sanborn; Town Clerk Michelle Goffreda.

Others present: Gary Hamel, Guy DiFrancesco, Dave Johnson, Marilyn Johnson, Seth Johnson, Dewey Matthis, Sally Jaeger, Kip Riley, Chris Hausfeld, Amy Hausfeld, Renee Van Orden, Dan Thompson, Tina Buckwold, Walter Buckwold, Todd Buckwold, Dorothy Heinrichs, Jay Heinrichs, Cameron McFarlane.

At 7:00 pm, Moderator Dan Hazelton calls the meeting to order. To commence the meeting, Dave Stacy leads the room in reciting the pledge of allegiance.

Dan thanks everyone who came out during Tuesday's snowstorm to run the town election. He reviews some rules of the town meeting and describes how the deliberation will proceed.

Dan summarizes the results of the town election (Article 1):

ARTICLE 1: (by official ballot) To elect the following town officers for the following terms: 1 Selectperson (3-year term), 1 Town Clerk (1-year term), 1 Treasurer (1-year term), 1 Tax Collector (1-year term), 1 Deeding Agent (1-year term), 1 Road Agent (1-year term), 1 Budget Committee member (3-year

term), 1 Cemetery Trustee (3-year term), 1 Trustee of Trust Funds (3-year term), 2 Planning Board Members (3-year terms), and any other officers as required by law.

The officers elected were Selectperson Aaron Allen, Town Clerk Michelle Goffreda, Treasurer Trish Weekes, Tax Collector & Deeding Agent Sharon Proulx, Road Agent Marcello Shelzi, Budget Committee member Bob Proulx, Cemetery Trustee Tamara Fairbank, Trustee of Trust Funds Pauline Emerson, and Planning Board members Donald McFarlane and Chris Hausfeld.

Dan comments that there were no contested races except for road agent, to which Marcello Shelzi was elected as a write-in candidate. As expected, all uncontested candidates were elected. Dan proceeds to article 2.

ARTICLE 2: To see if the Town will authorize the Tax Collector to accept the prepayment of taxes pursuant to RSA 80:52-a. Taxpayers shall be allowed to prepay taxes no more than two years in advance of the due date of the taxes. No interest shall accrue to the taxpayer on any prepayment, nor shall any interest be paid to the taxpayer on any prepayment which is later subject to rebate or refund.

*Recommended by the Selectboard (3-0)*

Moved by Chris Hausfeld; seconded by Judith Lindahl.

Chris Hausfeld asks: "If taxes are paid a year in advance, where does that tax money get held? Is it going to the general fund? Is it put in a separate account? How does it count?"

Sandi Pierson answers that she believes it goes into the general fund.

Chris asks if this ever creates an issue where the general fund in the following year is insufficient to cover that year's expenses. Tamara Fairbank answers that the effect is too minimal to ever have caused any issue.

Dan rereads Article 2 and takes a voice vote. By voice vote, article 2 is passed.

ARTICLE 3: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate eight thousand dollars (\$8,000.00) to be paid in be paid into the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve.

*Recommended by the Selectboard (3-0)*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-0)*

Moved by Dorothy Heinrichs, seconded by Sandi Pierson.

There is no further discussion on the article. Article 3 passes by voice vote.

ARTICLE 4: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) to be paid into the Town House Capital Reserve Fund.

*Recommended by the Selectboard (3-0)*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-0)*

Moved by Donald McFarlane, seconded by Kathy Stacy.

There is no discussion on the article. Article 4 passes by voice vote.

Dan proceeds to read Article 5.

ARTICLE 5: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate four thousand dollars (\$4,000.00) to be paid into the Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of revaluation of real estate. Revaluations of all real estate are required by law every five years.

*Recommended by the Selectboard (3-0)*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-0)*

Moved by Dave Stacy, seconded by Judith Lindahl.

There is no further discussion on the article. Article 5 passes by voice vote.

ARTICLE 6: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000.00) to be paid into the Town Road Improvement and Repair Capital Reserve Fund.  
*Recommended by the Selectboard (3-0)*  
*Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-0)*

Moved by Dorothy Heinrichs; Seconded by Dave Stacy.

No discussion is made on the article. Article 6 passes by voice vote.

ARTICLE 7: To see if the Town will vote to establish a new Capital Reserve Fund as authorized by RSA 35:1-1 which will be called the Bridge Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of the maintenance, construction, and/or reconstruction of municipally-owned bridges, and to raise and appropriate \$26,507.49 to be placed in this fund to be under the custody of the Trustees of the Trust Funds, and to designate the Selectboard as agents to expend. The funds deposited into this Capital Reserve Fund shall come from the one-time bridge payment of \$26,507.49 received from the State of New Hampshire in accordance with Senate Bill 401 and not raised by taxation.  
*Recommended by the Selectboard (3-0)*

Judith Lindahl moves. Laurie Sanborn seconds.

Judith Lindahl moves. Laurie Sanborn seconds.

Kathy Stacy asks if the money for the Capital Reserve fund was received in 2022, or if it will be received in 2023. Aaron and Trish answer that it was received in 2022.

Kathy expresses that she feels the article is confusingly worded. Given this, as well as research on what other towns are doing with the corresponding fund, she proposes to amend the wording of the article so that it reads:

"ARTICLE 7: To see if the town will vote to establish a new capital reserve fund as authorized by RSA 35:1-1, and will be called the Bridge Capital Reserve Fund, which will be under the custody of the Trustees of the Trust Funds, and to designate the Selectboard as agents to expend funds. The funds deposited in the Bridge Capital Reserve Fund shall come from a one-time payment of \$26,507.49 received from the state of New Hampshire in accordance with Senate Bill 401, no amount to be raised by additional taxation."

Donald McFarlane seconds Kathy's article as amended.

Trish Weekes asks Kathy to clarify that she has removed the clause which says, "for the purpose of the maintenance, construction, and or reconstruction of municipally owned bridges." Kathy explains that this clause is redundant as it is self-explanatory in the Senate Bill.

Sandi voices her perspective as a Trustee of the Trust Funds that it would be most sensible to include language that states simply what this capital reserve is for, to ensure that it will be understood clearly by future town officers. She adds that the article as originally written was approved by the town's attorney.

Dorothy points out another notable change with Kathy's proposal – "not raised by *additional* taxation." She questions if this small change in wording would imply that the town would not be able to add money into this fund in the future. Dorothy suggests keeping in the original phrase "to raise and appropriate", however Kathy argues that the phrase would not be necessary to include in our warrant article, since the warrant article references the text of House Bill 401, which determines

the amount in the fund granted to the town based on population and physical surface area.

Donald McFarlane expresses support for Kathy's term "additional taxation" because it clarifies that we are not intending to fund this at any point with municipal taxation. Kathy agrees and adds that the original wording of "one-time bridge payment" would limit what can go in the fund in the future. Chris Hausfeld comments that this is an important point, since although we are not funding it with property taxes, perhaps in the future the fund could be increased by an additional state tax. Chris suggests just adding the word "initial" so it reads "the initial funds deposited..." in order to more explicitly leave open this possibility. Sandi expresses support for this idea. Kathy agrees and adds the word "initial" to her amended article.

Trish Weekes comments that it is very restrictive to limit the purpose of the fund solely for maintaining bridges, and that it would make more sense to designate the money towards maintaining our highways more generally.

Aaron Allen responds that we have six bridges in total, including a bridge on Brock Hill Road which was assessed and is expected to cost \$1.1 million to replace. Laurie Sanborn affirms that the warrant article specifically designates the funds for the purpose of bridge construction and maintenance, and reiterates Sandi's earlier point that, as people come and go in different town offices, it's important to have this purpose spelled out in the text of the warrant article.

Donald says that although the fund is intended for bridges, he is actually not aware of any language in Senate bill that requires these funds to be used specifically for bridge reconstruction.

Renee offers an interpretation of the warrant article as really doing two different things: firstly, establishing the Capital Reserve Fund; then secondly, taking the money that we've already received into the general fund, and moving that into the capital reserve fund.



Kathy gives more explanation about the history of Senate Bill 401 and elaborates some details that were not included in the originally-worded Article 7. She says she does not necessarily object to writing in more details, but did feel it was important to state that this is a one-time bridge payment and that there is no additional tax money going into it.

Anita Garland asks to clarify that the fund was not raised directly by our town, but passed down from the state; Donald confirms this.

Beth DiFrancesco says that she appreciates the research that Kathy has done, however in reality, most people will not spend so much time researching the details of the senate bill. Although we do not need to include all the minutiae, the basic fact that it is for construction and maintenance of bridges is important enough that it would not make sense to omit it from the article.

Donald proposes to Kathy that she should specify the year of the bill as 2022 SB 401, in order to address people's concerns. It could indeed be difficult for town officers in the future to reference this particular bill otherwise, since the bill numbers are not uniquely assigned and an unrelated bill in a different year could also be called "SB 401". Kathy agrees to add in the year 2022 to her amended article.

Sandi cautions against editing the wording of the warrant article on the grounds that the language in the article came directly from the correspondence with the DOT and that the town attorney approved it exactly as it was written. She adds that each year, the board gets a list of bridge conditions and there is always a red-listed bridge by the Ells' house. Currently we are a candidate for a million-dollar grant to repair the bridge, of which we would pay just 20%. The road agent suggested to keep the fund open specifically in light of this.

Dan rereads Kathy's amended article. A voice vote is taken; the amendment does not pass. The discussion reverts back to Article 7 as originally stated.

Donald McFarlane makes a motion to amend the text of the article in a small way: “I would leave the article as the article is written except for the final clause where it currently reads ‘the state of New Hampshire in accordance with SB 401 and not raised by taxation’ and amend it to say ‘the state of New Hampshire in accordance with 2022 Senate Bill 401 and not to be raised by *additional* taxation.’”

Chris Hausfeld seconds this. He questions whether to also amend the phrase “to raise and appropriate” as per earlier discussion. Donald agrees with Chris’s reservations but feels that the phrase should be left alone in order to keep the changes simple and minimal.

Donna Hazelton suggests adding back the key word “initial” as Chris had suggested earlier. Donald agrees with the idea and adds “initial” to the amended article.

Finally, Dan rereads the article as amended: “To see if the town will vote to establish a new Capital Reserve Fund as authorized by RSA 35:1-1 which will be called the Bridge Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of the maintenance, construction, and/or reconstruction of municipally-owned bridges, and to raise and appropriate \$26,507.49 to be placed in this fund to be under the custody of the Trustees of the Trust Funds, and to designate the Selectboard as agents to expend. The initial funds deposited into this Capital Reserve Fund shall come from the one-time bridge payment of \$26,507.49 received from the State of New Hampshire in accordance with 2022 Senate Bill 401 and not raised by additional taxation.”

There being no further discussion, a voice vote is taken. Dan declares that Article 7 passes as amended. Judith points out that we had just passed Donald’s amendment, not the amended article itself, and still need to take a vote on the actual warrant article.

With another voice vote, Article 7 is passed.

Dan reads Article 8.

ARTICLE 8: To see if the town will vote to re-adopt the previously adopted RSA 72:28, II - Optional Veterans' Tax Credit, by readopting the \$200 credit to include eligible active-duty veterans, as specified in the state legislature's 2022 amendment to RSA 72:28, and modifying, the previously adopted RSA 72:28-b - All Veterans' Tax Credit, by readopting the \$200 credit to include eligible active-duty veterans, specified in the state legislature' s 2022 amendment to RSA 72:28-b. If readopted and approved, this article shall take effect for the 2023 property tax year.

*Recommended by the Selectboard (3-0)*

Moved by Renee Van Orden; seconded by Kathy Stacy.

Kathy Stacy asks whether the intent of Article 8 is to limit the veterans' tax credit to only active-duty veterans. Dan answers that it does not limit eligibility, but rather expands it to include active-duty.

Kathy reads a list of all categories of veterans who would qualify for the All-Veterans' tax credit according to the relevant RSA. She puts forth a motion to amend Article 8 to state which veterans are eligible for the credit, as well as raise the amount to \$500. Her proposed amendment reads:

“To see if the town of Orange will vote to re-adopt the provisions of RSA 72:28-b, the All Veterans' Tax Credit. If adopted, the credit will be available to any resident of the state who is a veteran as defined in RSA 21:50 and served not less than 90 days on active service in the Armed Forces of the United States, and continues to serve or was honorably discharged, or an officer who continues to serve or was honorably separated from service, or the spouse or surviving spouse of such a resident, providing that training for active duty or the state of active duty by a member of the National Guard or reserve shall be included as service under this paragraph, provided however that the person is not

eligible for and is not receiving credit under RSA 72:28 or RSA 72:35.”

Dave Stacy seconds the amended article.

Dan opens the floor for discussion.

Amy Hausfeld asks for clarification on the inclusion of all the categories of veterans in the text of the article. Kathy says that that was the intent of the RSA 72:28, but the way it's written in our town report, it seems to suggest that it's only for those on active duty. Secondly, she argues, we need to increase the amount to \$500 given that inflation since the \$200 credit was instituted has largely depleted its value.

Dorothy Heinrichs asks Kathy if she has an estimate of what the cost to the town would be. Kathy answers that there are about 10 people identified to be town veterans, and when we talked about raising the veterans tax credit a few years ago, only about six people were eligible, which would put the cost at less than \$2,000.

Donald asks: “What is the current circumstance around standard veterans’ tax credit and the optional veterans’ tax credit of this town? What are the currently well-adopted amounts being paid?”

Sandi Pierson answers that currently it's \$200 and that the current total for the veterans’ tax credit is \$2,900. Donald points out that 2900 is not divisible by 200. Sandi adds that the credit amount is \$700 for fully disabled veterans. Just one person in town had applied for this credit, and it was approved.

Beth DiFrancesco says that there is nothing in Article 8 which excludes all other veterans besides active-duty from eligibility, and that the article is only stating that they will now be included.

Chris Hausfeld gives a quick calculation that, if there was one person that had the \$700 credit out of \$2900, then there are currently 12 households in total receiving the credit. If the credit

were raised to \$500, that means the total could be about 10 grand, or likely more, since it does not take into account all the additional people that would now become eligible as a result of the warrant article.

Kathy responds that the calculation overestimates the total impact, since the increase in amount would not apply to fully disabled veterans as per the RSA.

Dewey Matthis asks Sandi to confirm that the relevant RSA itself includes active-duty veterans, such that the article as amended would simply bring the town's verbiage in accordance with the definitions in the RSA. Sandi hesitates to speak on the definitions spelled out in the RSA as she herself does not process the veteran applications, and so cannot speak with certainty on the issue.

Dan reads aloud a brief explanation of the warrant article, as written out in the 2023 Town Report: "The Town adopted the All Veterans Tax Credit in 2020. In 2022, Governor Sununu signed HB 1667 into law which expanded the eligibility to include individuals who have not yet been discharged from service in the armed forces. If the All Veterans' tax credit is not readopted, the Standard Veterans' Tax Credit (\$50) will be in place for April 1, 2023 tax year."

Renee Van Orden explains further that if the town does not adopt the warrant article at all, then the amount of the tax credit would revert to only \$50 by state law. She expresses support for increasing the amount, though believes the wording as written is not excluding anyone. She discusses the distinction between RSA 72:28 II and RSA 72:28-b, and adds that many town assessors initially found the changes in the law last year to be confusing. In response to someone's question from earlier regarding who is eligible for the veterans' tax credits, Renee gives a list of the various tax credits on the DRA web site: The All-Veterans' Tax Credit; Tax credit for service-connected children with disability; Tax credit for surviving spouse, but it

does not extend to children; Tax credit for combat service, if adopted by the town, though it currently is not.

Dan asks if there is further discussion. Kathy says that she did research with our neighboring communities, and that her amended article has almost the exact same wording as the corresponding articles in neighboring towns, and her personal contribution was just to change the amount from \$200 to \$500.

Donald makes the suggestion that since Kathy is trying to amend two aspects of the article at once, it might make sense to vote on each of them separately. However Dan responds we are either going to vote down an amendment or we're going to accept it; we cannot amend an article and then amend it over again

Dan rereads the amended article before taking a vote on it. By voice vote, the amendment to Article 8 does not pass, so the discussion reverts back to the original Article 8.

Dan rereads Article 8 as originally stated. There being no further discussion, a voice vote is taken and Article 8 is passed

ARTICLE 9: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee's recommended sum of \$275,889.00, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, for the ensuing year for the Town's general operations.

*Recommended by the Selectboard (3-0)*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-0)*

Moved by Chris Hausfeld; seconded by Donald McFarlane.

There is no further discussion on the article. Article 9 passes by voice vote.

Finally, Dan reads Article 10.

ARTICLE 10: To hear the reports of agents, auditors, committees and officers and to transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

Dan Hazelton thanks Dorothy Heinrichs for filling in for him as moderator last fall when he was out of town on the date of the primary election. He speaks a heartfelt tribute in memory of Dick Jaeger, who served as an original school board member and as the town's moderator for 13 years. Dan recalls memories of Dick's excitement over the serving as the town's representative to the newly-created school district, "a big adventure," in his own words. He reminisces over the way Dick used to lead the town meetings as moderator in a style that induced respectfulness and good humor in all those who participated.

The Selectboard presents a painting by Gary Hamel as a gift for Scott Sanborn to honor all his years of service as road agent, notably during Hurricane Irene in 2011 and during the unprecedented flooding which washed out the roads in 2019. Since he is unable to be present at the meeting - incidentally, dealing with the aftermath of yesterday's storm - Laurie Sanborn accepts it in his stead.

A painting is also presented to thank Sandi Pierson for all her service in the office of the Selectboard for the past 13 years, as she will be retiring at the end of April. Tamara says some words of appreciation for Sandi and says assuredly that at her last Selectboard meeting they will absolutely be doing something special to celebrate.

There being no other business to conduct, Dan concludes the meeting.

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Michelle Goffreda  
Town Clerk of Orange, NH.*

## *VITAL STATISTICS 2023*

### Births:

Catherine Maria LeChance, born January 20, 2023 Lebanon NH.  
Parents: Jeremey and Lucy LeChance

Sabrina Rose Garcia, born September 15, 2023 at Lebanon, NH.  
Parents: Tyler and Nicole Garcia

### Marriages:

William Crookshanks of Orange, NH and Maranda Bashaw of Orange, NH married on December 31, 2023 in Orange, NH

### Deaths:

Evelyn E Finn died on July 30, 2023 at Orange, NH.  
Parents: Charles Fisher and Emma Higgs



*Orange Time Capsule placed by Dave Stacy.  
It will be opened in 2069 when Orange celebrates the 300th Anniversary  
Photo courtesy of Gully Dunlap*