

TOWN OF ORANGE
SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
March 11, 2024, 6p.m.

Present: Kevin Wilson, Steve Simpson, Wayne Symonds
Town Clerk: Ginny Raboin, Assistant Town Clerk: Diane Waters

Guests: Michael Raboin Jr., Don Williams, Ernest Wilson, John McNeil, Bryan White, Amy White, Kristin Paya, Kaysie Breer, Sarah Field, Dustin Comstock, Angela Eastman, Larry Eastman, Colet Contois, Josh Woodworth, Thomas Stacy, Gary Eggleston, Carmella Tucker, John Barnes, Sheila Stone, Time Stone, Ben Shaw, Jim Wild, Aaron & Adele Blaisdell

1. Call the meeting to order: The Town Clerk called the meeting to order at 6pm.
2. Approve the Agenda: Kevin Wilson made a motion to approve the agenda as written, seconded by Wayne Symonds with discussion. After discussion Wayne Symonds amended the motion to the following revisions/additions: To Discuss board meeting expectations, discuss draft minutes, discuss the status of the budget passed. Steve Simpson suggested discussion regarding the assault on the Town Employee was not appropriate, Kevin Wilson indicated it was important to discuss to protect all employees and create a policy to protect employees. Symonds restated the motion to amend the original motion with additions, seconded by Simpsons, the board voted unanimously to approve the agenda with the additions.
3. Public Comments: Larry Eastman stated it is the Town's responsibility to take security and safety measures to safeguard its employees. Sue Childs stated it is up to the selectboard to appoint a Clerk/Treasurer and encouraged the board to select a candidate. Gary Eggleston stated these appointments or contracts are for a period of one year. The current appointment is in effect until next year. Eric Holmgren reported the Selectboard at the time and took the legal advice from the attorney. The attorney reported to the board at the time that it is a one-year appointment, they did have concern the appointment did not run from March to March and encouraged the previous board to appoint the current clerk for a March-to-March term. There was concern that the appointment certificate was completed with a term to March, Holmgren reported that was a clerical error, there was not an appointment certificate completed and filed with the Orange County Court house for the last 6 years. Shelia Stone added the courthouse should have approved minutes from the 12/28/23 meeting that will support the one-year appointment. After more discussion from the town Larry Eastman encouraged standardized operating procedures with annual reviews. Angela Eastman supported creating a policy and procedures committee. Michael Raboin Jr. commented that he believed the Clerk/Treasurer position

should be elected, not appointed sharing that he wants to be part of the solution and encouraged everyone to be civil. After more discussion Carmella Tucker advised if Ginny is the one, we should reappoint March to March, Holmgren indicated it wouldn't cancel but reappoint for a one-year term. Brief discussion regarding the School Vote April 8th being the same night as the selectboard meeting.

4. The Town Clerk will open the meeting and ask the board to nominate the following offices: Ginny Raboin, Town Clerk opened the meeting and asked for nominations for Chair of the Selectboard. Wayn Symonds nominated Steve Simpson as chair, seconded by Steve Simpson. Discussion followed this nomination as Holmgren explained traditionally the board members did not vote for themselves as a conflict of interest. Instead, the board rotates with the senior person on the board becoming the Chair. Wayne Symonds stated the election of new selectboard members was a wake-up call and while he understood what happened previously those traditions need to be broken. Steve has the experience and that is why he supported Steve Simpson as chair. Steve Simpson listed his experience and indicated he wanted in the minutes "I like Mike's shirt by the way" my goal is to guide the town. Kevin Wilson addressed concerns of Steve Simpson and Wayne Symonds breaching the open meeting law as Wilson overheard a discussion before the meeting started. On a motion by Symonds, seconded by Simpson a majority voted was for Steve Simpson as Selectboard Chair. Wilson did not vote for chair and did not nominate himself. On a motion by Symonds, seconded by Steve Simpson Wilson was nominated and voted unanimously as Vice Chair.
Road Commissioner: Wayne Symonds made a motion to table the appointment of Road Commissioner until the board can further discuss. Simpson seconded and opened up for discussion. There was concern from the community if a road commissioner was appointed later would that adversely affect the roads. Symonds indicated that his motion would make the position vacant and any issue with the roads would need to come to the board to decide on. Holmgren reported it is an unpaid position and encouraged the board to keep Wilson on as Road Commissioner supporting a Selectboard member as Road Commissioner who helps expeditiously and encouraged the board to ask Wilson to step down in the future if needed. Holmgren continued to share that if tabled until later, the selectboard cannot act on complaints without a special warned meeting. Symonds shared liability concerns for the town, Wilson reported he carries his own insurance. Townspeople commented on Wilson's work ethic and willingness to take the role seriously, follow up on road concerns and step in to work to resolve concerns for the residents. Comstock indicated concerns for the Rd. Foreman not having a Grader Certification. Dane Deberville reported it is difficult to fill roles with qualified individuals and if you have someone who is fulfilling the role, why would you change it? Symonds made a motion to table the Road Commissioner appointment until the board has time to discuss and research seconded by Simpson. Wilson stated his appointment was in

effect until March 28th, 2024. The board voted unanimously to table the discussion until the next meeting on March 25th, 2024.

Road Foreman: Symonds made a motion to reappoint John Barnes until the first meeting after Town Meeting seconded by Simpson. After discussion including the residents, the board voted unanimously not to approve the motion for John Barnes as Road Foreman. On a motion by Wilson to table the appointment of the Road Foreman until the next meeting seconded by Simpson and opened to discussion. After discussion Chair Simpson called for a vote, the board voted unanimously to table the Road Foreman appointment until the next meeting with the understanding that John Barnes will continue in the role. Further discussion regarding the remaining appointments. Chair Simpson suggested the remaining positions are posted on the website and Front Porch Forum. With a motion by Wayne Symonds to table the rest of the appointments with the exception of the Town Clerk. Symonds amended his motion to include electing an animal control officer. After discussion, Symonds withdrew his motion. Carmella Tucker stated she preferred to have the Animal Control officer role appointed as she does not want the job and will not be available to carry out the duties. Simpson suggested adding Animal Control as a position that is posted. Symonds made a motion to appoint John McNeil as Delinquent Tax Collector until the organization meeting after Town Meeting in March, seconded by Simpson with no discussion the board voted unanimously to appoint John McNeil as Delinquent Tax Collector.

Symonds made a motion to table remaining town officials until the next meeting when we will receive a list of candidates from the posting seconded by Wilson, the board voted unanimously.

Symonds mad a motion to appoint Ginny Raboin as Town Clerk extending the appointment until the first organizational meeting after Town Meeting 2025, Wilson seconded with no further discussion the board voted unanimously.

5. Discuss Assault on Town Employee: Wilson explained the incident explained the incident with him after Town Meeting was in connection with the incident within the Town Clerks office and a restraining order is necessary to protect the employees. Wilson explained the situation very quickly escalated. After discussion involving the residents, the board stated they would like to put policies in place with none existing to protect employees of the town. Addition at Selectboard request to include the assault was alleged and reviewed by the Sheriff's department.
6. Road Report: Wilson reported working closely with the road crew to maintain and repair roads. Wilson reports being mis informed regarding the pits being open and has since found a pit open and is utilizing material from that pit. Dustin Comstock noted for the

minutes that the Road Commissioner specifically asked the Road Foreman what pits were open for obtaining material and the Road Commissioner was given mis information. Ben Shaw made a statement to defend Kevin, Kevin asked for something and was not provided with accurate information which made Kevin look terrible. Holmgren advised there was a study done on the roads with a 5-year improvement plan the new board may consider and utilize.

7. Discuss/Consider approving warrants-payroll and accounts payable: After reviewing the warrants and accounts payable Symonds made a motion to accept seconded by Simpson the board voted unanimously to approve. Wilson made a motion for a Selectboard member to come into the office and approve/approve the payroll warrant weekly seconded by Simpson, unanimously voted.
8. Board Meeting: Symonds and Simpson outlined expectations for the Selectboard Meetings going forward keeping order and following a timeline. General discussion including the intention for zoom links added to Agenda, recordings, all meetings to be held at the Town Hall.
9. Draft Minutes: Going forward the current board will have an Agenda item to approve the minutes from the previous meeting at the next meeting. Once approved they will be updated and uploaded to the website.
10. Budget: General discussion regarding the budget and asked the Clerk to add in the amended budget amounts to the budget. Discussion regarding the Cemetery Commission budget and no amount listed for salaries or mowing, this will become a future Agenda item for the board to review. There was discussion about the extra \$38000 and where to put it. Jim Wild mentioned that from what he understood from town meeting, that extra was added from the floor to go to road surface materials. There was a few minutes of discussion and Wayne said he remembered it being similar to that but would need to go back to the town meeting minutes to see how that was worded.
11. Other Business: Jim Wild recommended the town to consider getting cell phones for selectboard to have for using when doing town business. This way if a disgruntled town citizen has an organization spam call them to harass them, the selectboard member can get a new number and not have their personal phone affected. Jim stated he believed Larry Eastman commented that for government use the town could probably get FirstNet which has better coverage than Verizon or AT&T. Wayne also brought up if a FOIA was brought to the town, if a selectboard member was using their private phone for town business, that could be confiscated for the search. Having a separate town phone would help avoid this.

12. Adjourn: On a motion by Wilson seconded by Symonds the board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:31p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ginny Raboin', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ginny Raboin
Town Clerk