

TOWN OF ORANGE
SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
April 8, 2024, 6:00pm
Orange Town Hall

Present: Steve Simpson, Chair, Kevin Wilson, Wayne Symonds
Ginny Raboin, Town Clerk

Guests: John McNeil, Rod Coronado, Tim Stone, Tony Lajeunesse, Jim Wild, Eric Holmgren,
David Gomo, Gary Eggleston, Thomas Wilde, Gail Wilde, Ernest Wilson, Shelia Stone

1. Call the meeting to order: Chair Simpson called the meeting to order at 5:54pm.
2. Executive Session: On a motion by Simpson, seconded by Wilson, the board voted unanimously to go into executive session to discuss the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee per 1 V.S.A. § 313(3). On a motion by Symonds, seconded by Wilson the board voted unanimously to come out of executive session at 6:32pm.
3. Review/approve Selectboard minutes 3/25/2024: On a motion by Simpson, seconded by Symonds the board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of 3/25/24.
4. Review/approve Selectboard minutes 3/29/2024: On a motion by Wilson, seconded by Symonds the board voted unanimously to approve the minute of 3/29/24.
5. Approve the Agenda: Wilson requested the Road Commissioner agenda item be moved to the end. No other changes made.
6. Cemetery Commission Policy Change: Rod Coronado presented the amended policy change indicating the plot sales should be recorded separately and the funds should be deposited to the perpetual care fund. The policy change indicates a committee would be established with Selectboard members, Town Treasurer and Cemetery Commission to oversee and facilitate. On a motion by Symonds, seconded by Wilson, the board voted unanimously to approve the policy changes.
7. Payroll Warrants/Accounts Payable: After reviewing the warrants Symonds made a motion to approve the payroll warrants, seconded by Wilson, and unanimously approved. After reviewing the Accounts Payable Symonds made a motion to approve the Accounts Payable in the amount of \$17,737.09, seconded by Wilson, unanimously approved.

8. Town Clerk Report: The Clerk provided the final plans of the Gazebo project for review. The Gazebo work is estimated to commence on April 16, 2024, raising estimated on May 22, 2024, with completion estimated to be June 5, 2024. The Clerk reminded residents of the Budget Forum 4/10 and the school Vote 4/13. Residents commented on not receiving information regarding the vote. The Clerk shared the Road Crew now has blue tooth headsets for use.
9. Public Comments: Gary Eggleston commented on the Road Foreman and Commissioner job descriptions. Symonds stated he had reached to VLCT for a template for the job descriptions, reworded them and shared with the board and clerk for review. Simpson advised a separate meeting would be needed to address the job descriptions and policies. Jim Wild asked the board if the job descriptions would be available prior to the meeting for the public to review. There was discussion regarding the descriptions being public record. Symonds advised drafts are not necessary to discuss with the public. Eggleston asked if a third road crew member was being considered, Stone encouraged the board to have the town lawyer review any job descriptions, Simpson stated he first went to VLCT for review. Holmgren advised there is a petition before the board and suggested the board consider having a meeting and vote prior and suggested the board look at the budget if considering a paid Road Commissioner Role. Jim Wild mentioned having a report from the Road Crew as to what progress is being made and what roads they are working on would be helpful. Stone mentioned when she was Road Commissioner the Foreman provided the Clerk at the time with a report that could be relayed as needed. Wilson listed Roads they crew had recently worked on. Tim Stone reported the “Welcome to Orange” sign is missing.
10. Information on Reservoir Road Fire Hydrant: Simpson advised the Hydrant owned by Barre City at the Water Treatment Plan was completed prior to the flooding, the flood destroyed the work. Barre City is working to complete the project in June. Barre City will maintain and plow the hydrant. Simpson advised the remaining dry hydrants in town need to be located and maintained. Simpson asked residents to take a photo and send it to Simpson or the Town Clerks Office. Simpson would like to create an inventory and maintenance plan on the dry hydrants.
11. Appointed positions by Selectboard: Simpson advised Tina Otis was previously appointed this document needed to be completed for the State of Vermont. The board reviewed and signed the Health Officer appointment document for Tina Otis. Simpson stated a Deputy Health Officer position needs to be filled, he stated Emily Ruff showed interest. Holmgren reported the Deputy Health Officer position was created when the previous Health Officer wasn’t able to fulfill their role. Since then, the previous Selectboard dissolved the position. Holmgren indicated if the Deputy role is being filled, he would like to be considered for the position. Holmgren advised that Emily Ruff has a conflict due to having rental properties in town. Symonds recommended reaching out to Tina Otis to see if she felt she needed the support of a Deputy Health Officer prior to making a decision. Wilson added if Holmgren is at the meeting and wanting the role he recommended the board appoint Holmgren. Wilson added issues brought to Emily Ruff previously when she was acting as Health Officer were not resolved. Wilson made a motion to appoint Holmgren as Deputy Health Officer, no second, motion failed. Symonds made a motion to table the appointment until discussed with Tina

Otis, seconded by Simpson, the board voted to table the appointment, Wilson voted no.

Animal Control Officer: Still Vacant, the board will reach out to Washington's ACO to see if they are willing to work with Orange as well. The clerk will post on Front Porch Forum for interest.

Recreation Committee Members: Symonds made a motion to allow the Chair to appoint Recreation Committee members as he sees fit, seconded by Wilson, voted unanimously. Simpson appointed the following members: Lee Youngman, Janis Blais, Emily Ruff, Dirk Anderson, Rod Coronado, Kevin Wilson, Betzy Bancroft, Kristin Paya. Previously appointed members: Mike Raboin Jr., Eric Holmgren, Adele Blaisdell.

12. Approve Selectboard Rules of Procedure Policy: Tabled to next meeting.

13. Review Conflicts of Interest and Ethical Conduct Policy: Tabled to next meeting.

14. Road Commissioner: Wilson spoke to address a comment made about the assault on the Town Employee. The comment indicated there was an investigation done by Orange County Sheriff's department with no assault findings. Wilson verified with OCSD who reports that whoever stated there was an investigation was misinformed. Wilson asked for a public apology, Symonds stated he apologized at the last meeting and offered a public apology stating he mis-spoke.

15. Other Business: Gary Eggleston commented previously when a resident volunteered for a position and was a popular choice, he never heard of a board turning the person down for the role. Symonds clarified his position was not to just say no, but to talk to the Current Health Officer to see if she wanted a Deputy. Eggleston asked how long Emily Ruff is in Florida, Simpson stated it should be a non-question. Holmgren explained again why the Deputy Health Officer role was removed by the previous board. Gomo stated with the conflict-of-interest Emily Ruff has with the appointment she should not be considered. Wild asked the board if there is a policy that positions that are elected or appointed should be background checked. Symonds stated the Legislature is reviewing policy around the elected/appointed officials and would like to see what changes are made. Tim Stone reports concerns about nonresidents voting in town. Stone stating there were nonresidents voting at the Town Meeting. Simpson recommended reaching out to Secretary of States office with concerns. Wilson reports during a BCA meeting last year that voters added/removed in error.

16. Adjournment: Symonds made a motion to adjourn at 8:02pm, seconded by Wilson, unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,



Ginny Raboin