

Town of Orange
Selectboard Organizational Meeting Minutes

March 9, 2026
Orange Town Complex
6:01 PM

In Attendance: Steve Simpson, Kristin Paya, Carmella Tucker, Diane Hallenbeck, John McNeil, Lee Cattaneo, Kevin Wilson, Benjamin Shaw, Sheila Stone, Tim Stone, Ginny Raboin, Philo Raboin, Michael Raboin Jr., Lisa Allard, Scott Edwards, Dustin Comstock, Emily Ruff, Eric Homgren, Matt Wadsworth, Mike Concessi

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at **6:01 PM** by **Diane Hallenbeck**.

2. Reorganization of the Selectboard

Motion by **Carmella**, second by **Kristin**, to select **Steve Simpson as Chair**.

Motion by **Carmella**, second by **Steve**, to appoint **Kristin as Vice Chair**.

Vote: All in favor.

3. Approve Agenda

Motion by **Kristin**, second by **Steve**, to approve the agenda.

Vote: All in favor.

4. Approve Prior Meeting Minutes

February 23, 2026

Motion by **Steve**, second by **Kristin**, to approve the minutes.

No corrections.

Vote: All in favor.

February 26, 2026

Motion by **Kristin**, second by **Steve**, to approve the minutes.

No corrections.

Vote: All in favor.

5. Town Clerk / Treasurer

Motion by Carmella, second by Kristin, to appoint Diane Hallenbeck as Town Clerk and Treasurer.

Vote: All in favor.

6. Road Commissioner

Discussion occurred regarding the Road Commissioner position. Letters of interest were received from **Ben Shaw** and **Eric Holmgren**. **Kevin Wilson**, the prior Road Commissioner, also expressed interest in being reappointed. Discussion included:

- Whether the town should continue to appoint a Road Commissioner
- The role and responsibilities of the position
- The need for a formal job description
- Whether the position should remain volunteer or paid

Public comment was heard from several residents regarding qualifications, responsibilities, and the appointment process.

A motion by **Carmella** to appoint **Ben Shaw** was soon **withdrawn** following discussion.

Motion by **Carmella**, second by **Steve**, to **table the appointment until the March 23 meeting** in order to review applications and clarify the role.

Vote: All in favor.

7. Road Foreman

Motion by **Carmella**, second by **Kristin**, to appoint **Matt Wadsworth** as Road Foreman.

Vote: All in favor.

8. Animal Control Officer

Motion by **Kristin**, second by **Carmella**, to appoint **Michele Boyer** as Animal Control Officer under the same contract terms.

Vote: All in favor.

9. Emergency Preparedness Director / Civil Defense Director

Motion by **Kristin**, second by **Steve**, to appoint **Eric Holmgren**.

Discussion included the town emergency management plan, shelter locations, hazard preparedness planning and updating the website with more recent information.

Vote: All in favor.

10. Health Officer

Tina Otis currently holds the position.

Term expires **April 30, 2027**.

11. Delinquent Tax Collector

Motion by **Kristin**, second by **Carmella**, to appoint **John McNeil** as Delinquent Tax Collector.

Vote: All in favor.

12. Tree Warden

Current Tree Warden: **George Wildes**.

Discussion included responsibilities related to town forests, town property, and rights-of-way.

Motion by **Carmella** to **table the appointment** pending discussion with George Wildes.

If he declines, **Dustin Comstock expressed interest** in the position.

13. Green Up Day Coordinator

Motion by **Carmella**, second by **Kristin**, to appoint **Janis Blais**.

Vote: All in favor.

14. Energy Coordinator

Motion by **Carmella**, second by **Steve**, to appoint **Don Douglas**.

Vote: All in favor.

15. Regional & District Representatives

Motion by **Carmella** to appoint Lee Cattaneo, as previously serving.

Vote: All in favor.

- Transportation Advisory Committee Representative
- Regional Planning Commission Representative
- Solid Waste Management District Representative

16. Committees

Grants Committee

Members:

- Lee Cattaneo
- Emily Ruff
- Steve Simpson
- Diane Hallenbeck
- Lee Youngman

Motion by **Kristin**, second by **Carmella**, to approve the appointments.

Vote: All in favor.

Recreation Committee

Members:

- Sheila Stone
- Eric Holmgren
- Janis Blais
- Ginny Raboin
- Philo Raboin
- Kevin Wilson
- Betsy Bancroft
- Michael Raboin Jr.
- David Gomo
- Emily Ruff
- Davis McCarthy

Motion by **Carmella**, second by **Kristin**, to approve the appointments.

Vote: All in favor.

17. Finance Committee Discussion

Discussion occurred regarding the creation of a Finance Committee to assist with budget development.

Topics discussed included:

- Whether the committee would be advisory
- Open Meeting Law requirements
- The need for an ordinance defining authority and responsibilities
- Alternatives such as a working group to assist with budget preparation

Several residents offered to assist with budget work.

The Selectboard agreed that volunteers could assist with the budgeting process rather than creating a formal committee at this time.

Individuals assisting with the budget process:

- Carmella Tucker
- Janice Blaise
- Lisa Allard
- Mike Concessi

The Board discussed scheduling budget meetings and releasing the proposed budget **10 days prior to the vote**, with a goal of **May 1**.

18. Review Request from Eric Holmgren

Carmella read a letter from **Eric Holmgren dated March 4** requesting clarification regarding payroll and financial entries.

Discussion included:

- Payroll accrual entries
- Manual journal entries
- Documentation for adjustments
- Review of employee leave time records

Carmella stated she will **review the requested documentation and follow up.**

19. Audit Discussion

Discussion occurred regarding town audits.

Topics included:

- Completion of the **2024 audit**
- Status of **2022 and 2023 audits**
- Sequencing of audit work
- Financial record cleanup and reconciliation

Emails from **Darlene Kelly of NEMRC** were read summarizing issues with prior bookkeeping, reconciliation delays, and misposted entries.

20. Additional Discussion

Town Planning Gathering:

A planning gathering is scheduled for this **Wednesday**, Lee is encouraging residents to attend.

21. Public Comment - Resident **Tim Stone** suggested the town could save money by purchasing mowing equipment and having the road crew mow town properties.

Community Event - Easter Egg Hunt scheduled for **April 4.**

22. Warrants / Payroll

Payroll and warrants were reviewed.

Discussion included:

- Payroll processing procedures
 - Time clock use and audit considerations
 - Pay dates including **02/28 and 03/07**
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Executive Session (Personnel Matter – 1 V.S.A. § 313)

Motion by Kristin, second by Steve, to enter Executive Session under 1 V.S.A. § 313 to discuss a personnel matter at 8:04 PM.

Vote: All in favor.

The Board exited Executive Session at 8:54 PM. No action was taken.

Adjourn

Motion by Carmella, second by Steve, to adjourn the meeting at 8:54 PM.

Vote: All in favor

Next Scheduled Meeting March 23, 2026