

**Town of Orange
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
February 23, 2026
Orange Town Complex**

Attendance: Steve Simpson, Kevin Wilson, Kristin Paya, John McNeil, Diane Hallenbeck, Sheila Stone, Tim Stone, Eric Holmgren, Dustin Comstock, Scott Edwards, Lisa Allard

Call to Order:

Steve called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

Agenda Adjustment:

Motion by Kevin to add the opening of mowing bids to the agenda prior to warrants. Second by Steve. All in favor.

Approval of Minutes

February 9, 2026:

Motion by Kevin to approve. Second by Steve. All in favor.

Note: Small garage improvements could possibly be covered under MERP grant.

February 12 & February 19, 2026:

Motion by Kristin to approve with corrections. Second by Kevin.

Correction for February 12: Attendance was missing. Present were Steve, Kevin, and Diane; Kristin attended via Zoom.

February 19 minutes approved as written.

All in favor.

Mowing Bids

One bid received from Stone's Trucking in the amount of \$19,500 per year.

Steve recommended not approving the bid as it was beyond the scope of what was requested, exceeded budget capacity, and did not meet insurance requirements.

Motion by Steve to reject the bid. Second by Kristin. All in favor.

Diane will notify bidder.

Warrants

Kevin reviewed warrants prior to the meeting.

Discussion held regarding salt shortage. Comstock advised obtaining salt from New York.

Motion by Kevin to approve warrants. Second by Steve. All in favor.

Payroll

Payroll dated 02/17/2026 and 02/23/2026.

Motion by Kevin to approve. Second by Steve. All in favor.

Public Discussion / Questions

Dustin:

Asked why delinquent tax amounts are no longer listed. Board stated this practice stopped in 2018. Largest delinquent amount is approximately \$30,000 and could reference the rest with that figure.

Eric:

Questioned why delinquent taxes are not budgeted for and referenced advice from Sullivan & Powers

recommending budgeting for delinquent taxes. Noted grants not being mentioned in report. Other budget questions.

Road Commissioner Report

Kevin reported:

- Frost heave signs were placed in an area of concern; signs were removed by and unknown party a couple of days later.
 - Road crew placed material at the location today.
 - Several mailboxes were damaged.
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Town Clerk Report

Diane reported:

- Learning and organizing grants; applying for one this week with road foreman.
 - Preparing for Town Meeting. Met with JP's and David Childs.
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Public Comment

Tim:

Asked about work on Reservoir Road and whether shim work was worthwhile. Board noted it held up well and may consider additional work. Tim stated it was good value for the cost.

Sheila:

Asked about the mowing bid.

7:00 PM – Pre-Town Budget Meeting

Resident expressed concern that the town overspends each year.

Discussion held regarding school funding, noting that two-thirds of collected taxes go to the school regardless of payment status.

Eric:

Continued discussion regarding delinquent tax budgeting and questioned other budget figures he felt were unclear. He expressed concern that the town may be overtaxed.

Kristin reviewed and read an applicable statute to the group.

IT Services:

It was clarified that new line item: IT expenses - were previously paid through the Lister budget, as the Lister had assisted with staff training, and is now listed under IT. Training for Bill and Diane is included. NEMRC was moved to a cloud-based system, which is also listed in this line item.

Resident asked whether voters approve such changes. Discussion held regarding budget approval process. If budget is voted down, a new budget must be prepared. Budget may be adjusted after passage unless it is a separate article. Board policy allows expenditures up to \$5,000 without voter approval.

Adjournment

Motion by Kevin to adjourn. Second by Steve.

All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.