

TOWN OF ORANGE, VERMONT
SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
April 27, 2026 – 6:00 p.m.
Orange Town Hall

Present:

Steve Simpson, John McNeil, Carmella Tucker, Sheila Stone, Tim Stone, Kristin Paya, Jim Wild, Eric Holmgren, Kevin Wilson, Diane Hallenbeck

1. Call to Order

Steve Simpson called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

2. Review of Meeting Rules and Standards

Carmella Tucker distributed copies of the Town of Orange Selectboard Rules of Procedure (2024) and a proposed revised version. Revisions will be discussed at a future meeting.

3. Agenda Adjustments / Approval

No changes were made to the agenda.

Motion: Kristin Paya

Second: Carmella Tucker

Vote: All in favor

4. Public Comment

Public comment guidelines from VLCT were read prior to discussion.

- Kevin Wilson raised concerns regarding discrepancies in the status of town audits. It was clarified that the 2022 audit is underway, while the 2024 audit has not yet begun.
 - Jim Wild asked about communication between the Selectboard and the road crew. The Selectboard advised that road concerns should be directed to the Town Clerk or the Road Foreman. He also raised concerns about work on Tucker Road; the Selectboard acknowledged substandard work and stated that corrective work is expected this year.
 - Tim Stone asked for an update on grader maintenance versus replacement and suggested repair over replacement. Carmella Tucker referred him to the updated budget for additional information. The Selectboard noted that the Road Foreman oversees operations and encouraged continued communication.
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5. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

- March 23, 2026 – Motion by Carmella Tucker, seconded by Steve Simpson. Kristin Paya abstained. Approved.
 - April 7, 2026 – Motion by Carmella Tucker, seconded by Kristin Paya. Approved.
 - April 13, 2026 – Motion by Steve Simpson, seconded by Carmella Tucker. Approved.
 - April 20, 2026 – Motion by Steve Simpson, seconded by Carmella Tucker. Approved.
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6. Warrants

Motion: Steve Simpson

Second: Carmella Tucker

Vote: Approved

7. Payroll

Payroll for April 18 and April 25 was reviewed.

Motion: Carmella Tucker

Second: Kristin Paya

Vote: Approved

8. Town Forest Discussion

AJ Follensbee, County Forester, emailed information regarding a potential grant to harvest ash trees and improve forest management to Selectboard Members.

- Grant funding may provide up to \$30,000 (expires November 30, 2026)
- Estimated Town cost: \$5,000–\$10,000
- Project completion deadline: September 30, 2026
- Stumpage revenue may help offset costs

Discussion included access from Beard Road, grant requirements, and project timing.

Steve Simpson requested that the Town Clerk share this information with Sheila Stone for The Recreation Committee.

Motion: Carmella Tucker

Second: Kristin Paya

Action: Allow AJ Follensbee to proceed with grant assistance; project approval contingent upon funding approval

Vote: Approved

9. Act 181 (Road Rule) Discussion

The Selectboard discussed Act 181 and potential legislative changes. The Board expressed opposition to the current form and reviewed a draft letter.

Motion: Carmella Tucker

Second: Kristin Paya

Action: Sign and submit the letter

Vote: Approved

10. Town Clerk Update

A new Town Clerk is expected to begin June 1, pending completion of a background check. Discussion included prior appointment processes.

11. Liquor License Applications – Lonestar Acres LLC

The Selectboard was informed of three pending liquor license applications for 148 Cyr Road:

- First Class Restaurant License
- Third Class Restaurant License
- Outside Consumption Permit

Martin Prevost (Department of Liquor and Lottery) has offered to attend a future meeting to provide additional information. The applicants have also expressed willingness to attend. This item will be placed on a future agenda.

12. MERP Project Update

Discussion noted ongoing coordination related to the MERP project and bidder walk-through.

13. Executive Session

Motion: Steve Simpson

Second: Carmella Tucker

Entered Executive Session at 7:22 p.m. pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(E). Approved.

Exited Executive Session at 7:47 p.m.

No action was taken.

14. Adjournment

Motion: Steve Simpson

Second: Kristin Paya

Meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m. Approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Diane Hallenbeck
Town Clerk