

**Town of Alton  
Alton Budget Committee  
APPROVED  
Meeting Minutes  
January 15, 2009**

Members Present: Steve Miller, Chair  
Greg Fuller  
Terri Noyes, School Board Representative  
Steve McMahon, Selectmen's Representative

Members Absent: Karen Painter  
Elizabeth Dominick  
Richard MacDonald

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

S. Miller called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

**II. ROLL CALL**

**III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

S. McMahon motioned to approve the agenda and T. Noyes seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, SMC, GF, TN / Absent – KP, ED, RM)

**V. MEETING DATE**

S. Miller reported that there would be a budget committee tomorrow on January 16, 2009, if needed. He stated that if there was anything left to do after tonight that they would complete it tomorrow.

**VI. MEETING FORMAT**

S. Miller stated that if it met with the approval of the committee that they would review the budget by each department. The committee agreed by consensus.

**VII. MEETING MINUTES**

There were no meeting minutes for approval.

## **VIII. PUBLIC INPUT #1**

There was no public input.

## **IX. WARRANT ARTICLES**

S. Miller stated that there were some Warrant articles that had not been approved because the final numbers were not available.

S. Miller read Warrant article IV. There was discussion about the public forums that were held on January 14, 2009 to discuss the Twombly property. S. Miller asked K. Holt to speak about some of the questions that were asked by the members of the public at the two forums. K. Holt spoke about questions about the property, barn, student safety while crossing the street, tax impact, access from Route 28 and some other items of interest that were discussed at the forums.

S. Miller asked why there was only one assessment done on the property. K. Holt reported that they only needed one assessment and that it was assessed at \$415,000.00. S. Miller asked for a copy of the assessment and K. O'Blenes offered to email the assessment to S. Miller before tomorrow night's meeting.

G. Fuller asked why a bond was not considered for the purchase of the property. K. Holt stated that the Board had discussed their options and felt that by making one purchase that they would save money in the long run because there would not be legal fees, amortization, etc. that comes with having a bond.

There was discussion about the purchase and sales agreement that the Board has with the Twombly estate.

S. Miller motioned to recommend Warrant article IV and T. Noyes seconded the motion. S. Miller spoke about the increase of property values that will come when the economy turns around and felt that this has to be done because the property values will not be going down in town. S. McMahon stated that it was a tough year but that it was important that this property was available for the school in the middle of town. The motion passed by a vote of three with one "no" vote. (SM, TN, SMc / no – GF)

S. Miller read Warrant article V into the minutes. T. Noyes noted that the total of this Warrant article was less than what was requested last year. This can only be used in an emergency or it can be held in a trust that can saved and put towards renovations of the building. There is nothing in the fund at this time; it has a zero balance. S. Miller asked what needed to be done within the next twelve months that the Board knew about and K. Holt noted that this was an emergency fund. She spoke about the situation with the septic tank failure and the roof failing last year. She stated that this money could be applied towards renovations if it was not used like it was used last year. She spoke about an energy audit that was recently done by the Jordan Institute and spoke about the old boilers, electrical system, etc. that the company found. There was discussion about the issues with the roof and K. Holt noted that something needed to be done in the next two to three years.

S. Miller stated he felt that the amount should be something between \$50,000.00 to \$100,000.00 and spoke about other accounts that were listed in the past and felt that certain things just should

be fixed. G. Fuller stated he agreed with S. Miller. S. Miller asked if the board would consider \$100,000.00.

~~T. Noyes motioned to accept Warrant article V and S. McMahon seconded the motion. The motion failed with two yes votes and two no votes. (Yes – TN, SMc / No – GF, SM).~~

[Recorder's Note: This recorder noted to the Committee that they had passed Warrant article V at the December 22, 2008 meeting and referred to the meeting minutes. A strike through has been added to the above motion because Warrant article V was approved prior to this meeting.]

S. Miller read Warrant VI into the minutes. There was discussion about the special education services, which is mandated by Federal law. There was discussion about the management of the Warrant article and the Special Education Department budget of the school's FY 2010 budget. S. Miller motioned to accept Warrant article VI as written. T. Noyes seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, SMc, GF, TN)

S. Miller noted that Warrant article VII had been amended and read the amended article into the minutes. K. Holt stated that she recommended that the board make this a special warrant article and that the committee wait before making a recommendation because they are looking at changing the amount of money to be requested. There was discussion about how a special Warrant article is managed.

There was discussion about the budgeted amount of oil, which was figured at \$5.15/gal during the summer when the budget was drafted. S. Miller motioned to table Warrant Article VII until January 20, 2009, after the school board's vote and T. Noyes seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, SMc, GF, TN)

S. Miller read Warrant article VIII in to the meeting minutes. T. Noyes motioned to approve Warrant article VIII and S. Miller seconded the motion. There was discussion about when the money was returned to the school district. K. O'Blenes has explained that this is a restricted budget line of end of year funds that cannot be touched. The money is returned to the town once the year is over and the school can only hold money for one year. [Recorder's note: the original motion was not acted on but repeated after the discussion, above.] S. Miller motioned to accept Warrant article VIII as written and S. McMahon seconded the motion. The motion passed with three yes votes and one no vote. (Yes – SM, SMc, TN / No – GF)

S. Miller read Warrant article IX into the meeting minutes. T. Noyes motioned to approve Warrant article IX as written and S. Miller seconded the motion. There was discussion about the general maintenance Warrant article. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, SMc, TN, GF)

There was a brief break.

## **X. PUBLIC INPUT #2**

There was no public input.

S. Miller stated that he would like to speak as a citizen. T. Noyes stated that he was the chairman of the committee. S. Miller noted that people commented as a citizen at the deliberative session and asked T. Noyes if she felt it was not appropriate, which she confirmed that she did not agree it was appropriate. S. Miller stated he would table his comments at this time.

## **XI. BUDGET REVIEW**

S. Miller read the amounts of the 2008-2009 Budget, Proposed Budget 2009-2010, Dollar Change, Percent Change, Budget Committee Recommendations for 2009-2010 and the Difference between the Proposed Budget for 2009-2010 and the Budget Committee's Recommendations.

- Budget 2007-2008: \$12,336,737.00
- Actual 2007-2008: \$11,798,761.00
- Budget 2009-2009: \$12,957,319.00
- Proposed Budget 2009-2010: \$13,379,169.00

The 2009-2010 budget is \$421,850.00 more than the 2008-2009 budget, for an increase of 3.26%.

S. Miller reviewed the proposed budget of 2009-2010, reading the proposed budget amount, the committee's recommendations and the increase or decrease of each proposed budget from the previous budget year.

## **XII. PUBLIC INPUT #3**

S. Miller stated that he had a personal observation as a citizen of Alton with one son who has graduated PMHS and another who has gone through the system. He stated he did not represent the Alton Budget Committee. He stated he was disappointed that the budget has a 7.44% increase before the Warrant articles were figured into the budget. He spoke about budgeting for what was absolutely necessary and the difficult economic times that he felt the town was faced with now. He reported on some of the area schools' budgets such as Gilford which had a flat (zero) increase, Interlakes at a 1% increase and Governor Wentworth School District, which had a 4.6% increase. He stated he was disappointed in the Committee for recommending taking \$3,951,00 out of the proposed budget.

Maureen Smith, School Board member, stated she felt that S. Miller was out of line with his comments and disagreed with his comments. T. Noyes stated she felt that the Committee and School Board had spent many hours reviewing the budget and felt that it was a tight budget. She stated she felt that S. Miller was "grandstanding". There was discussion about the comments made by S. Miller and his speaking as a citizen while being chairman of the Board.

Krista Argiropolis asked for clarification for the actual district assessment, if it as 7.44% or if it was 3.26%, from the worksheet that was handed out at the start of the meeting. S. Miller reviewed the total of the Alton School District 2009-2010 budget appropriations. T. Noyes stated that the actual district assessment was a 3.26% increase from the previous year's budget.

### **XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

S. McMahon motioned to adjourn and T. Noyes seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, SMc, GF, TN)

The meeting adjourned at 8:56 PM.

S. Miller noted that the default budget was not reviewed and will be reviewed at the next meeting which will be held on January 20, 2009 at 7:00 PM. The Alton School Board will be meeting that same evening, but at 6:00 PM to review/approve changes to the budget.

Respectfully Submitted,

Krista Argiropolis  
Recorder