

Town of Alton
Budget Committee Meeting
May 10, 2012
Meeting Minutes
Approved September 13, 2012

Call to Order - 6:00 pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:

K. Ingoldsby, Member
M. DeCoff, Selectmen's Representative
B. Howard, Member
K. Argiropolis, School Board Representative
J. Markland, Vice Chairman
A. McLeod, Chairman

Approval of Meeting Minutes

M. DeCoff motioned to approve minutes of April 10, 2012, seconded by J. Markland, passed all in favor.

New Business

Appointment of new budget committee member - The Board received responses from the following residents: Mr. Fuller, Mr. Daniels and Mr. Dube.

Each of the candidates was given an opportunity to address the Board with their reasons for applying and the board was provided an opportunity to ask questions of the candidates.

Mr. Keith Dube – I am looking for appointment to the empty seat on the Budget Committee. In trying to find a way to further serve my community and help out with the children of this community I fell short in the school board elections. I did end up talking to a lot of people and quite a few votes came in for me so I believe people had believed in a lot of what I had to say. I feel this might be the next best step for me to try to get involved. As we have seen many times in the newspaper, people asking for townspeople to get further involved in their community rather than just write letters and to go out and actually do it.

M. DeCoff noted that he was happy to see that there were three people interested.

K. Argiropolis asked: What is your experience with budget management?

Mr. Dube responded: My own personal business, household and that is about it.

K. Argiropolis asked: And with your business you have how many employees?

Mr. Dube responded: Right now I have three.

K. Argiropolis asked: And are they long-term employees?

Mr. Dube responded: Yes. One I have had for eight years.

K. Argiropolis asked: How long have you been in business?

Mr. Dube responded: 14

A. McLeod asked: Has your business always been in Alton or have you moved?

Mr. Dube responded: It has always been in Alton.

A. McLeod asked: As a member of the budget committee where do you think the budget committee should be going? Not so much in specifics, I am looking for a general feeling from you. There are hard times out there as you all know, there's needs that this town has. Do you feel there are significant places we should be looking at? Should we be cutting things, should we be growing things? What do you think?

Mr. Dube responded: I think we should be looking into areas that we can bring business into this town. Particularly industry, not just small business but bring in something that does not hurt the tax draw but contributes to it. That seems to be one thing that is lacking in this town, is just industry in general, manufacturing or anything like that. I know we don't have an area for that but it would be nice to see that created.

A. McLeod noted we are a long-term rural town, I know the selectmen have been considering a committee of this sort. K. Argiropolis stated there is one that is starting next week, a Development Committee and she has expressed interest for the school being involved.

B. Howard asked: Do you have any contracts with the town with your business?

Mr. Dube responded: I subcontract with the School District for snow plowing. I have been doing it for 13 years.

A. McLeod asked: How would you handle that, as a voting member of the Board?

Mr. Dube responded: If there is anything in conflict I would have to step down automatically.

B. Howard asked: Do you consider that a conflict if we were reviewing the school budget?

Mr. Dube responded: I don't know. I don't know how to answer that one.

B. Howard stated you would be in a position where you would be voting for a bottom line budget and out of that budget you get paid. Do you consider that a conflict?

Mr. Dube responded: particularly with the snow plowing yes it would be. The overall budget I would consider that would be my job to still go over the school board budget. That would be one line item that if it approached I wouldn't have much say in it at that point.

K. Ingolsby disagreed stating since the plowing goes out to bid and it is under sealed competitive bid I don't think you have any control over that process. You put down what they will have to spend and you don't have any control over who wins the bid except what you put in as a private citizen.

Discussion on conflicts with people with contracts with the town and who are serving on town boards.

Mr. Greg Fuller – I was on the Budget Committee for 15-16 years. I was a member, Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary for a while. I have no perceived or any kind of conflicts, I have nobody that works for the Town. When I was on the Budget Committee and my ex-wife was a Selectmen, anytime the Selectmen's budget or pay came up I would always ask the Committee if I could discuss it and if they thought I should vote on it. If they said no, then it was no. I'm a stickler for the laws and rules. I can be honest, fair.

A. McLeod stated he finds it interesting that instead of abstaining or recusing that you put it up to the Committee to make the decision about whether you would speak. That is interesting.

Mr. Fuller responded: I would have, I was happy not to. But if you look back I usually voted against their raises because I didn't think the way the Selectmen were doing it was the correct way to do it. So I would always ask and if even one person said no, back then there were 11 members, 9 plus 2. If anyone of them said no, I said fine.

Mr. Fuller stated I didn't put my name on ballot this past time because work was in the middle of a big project and we were probably working between 70 and 90 hours a week. That ended at the end of March.

K. Argiropolis asked: What is your point of view your, your vision for the Budget Committee? You have a lot of history here. What is your vision for the history for this Committee?

Mr. Fuller responded: The Budget Committee has strict guidelines, by law, what they can and can't do. So that is my view. They are the overseers of the School Budget and the Town budget. They don't try to micro manage. Their job is to look at the whole picture. They don't get involved with zoning or anything like that. It is just the budget, the money items in the budget. RSA 32 and 40 or something.

J. Markland motioned to nominate K. Dube as the new Budget Committee member, with discussion.

B. Howard asked if we would review R. Daniels first?

Mr. Daniels was not in attendance at the time and arrived as A. McLeod was about to read his letter of interest.

A. McLeod asked Mr. Daniels to provide a quick synopsis of why he wants to be here.

Mr. R. Daniels – To assist the other Budget Committee members in coming up with a good fiscal budget and hopefully help out the Town in that respect.

B. Howard asked: You have Monday's checked off are Tuesday's and Thursday's going to be a problem.

Mr. Daniels responded: No. Are there certain days that you do meet?

M. DeCoff responded once we get into the budget cycle in the fall it is usually Tuesday's and Thursday's. It is going to be up to the Board to decide. K. Argiropolis stated Tuesday's are going to be a problem for the school because that is part of why we missed meetings last year.

Discussion on how meetings came to be scheduled for Tuesdays and Thursdays.

M. DeCoff asked Mr. Daniels: How long have you been a resident of Alton?

Mr. Daniels responded: 15-20 years

M. DeCoff asked: How long have you been following budgets for Alton?

Mr. Daniels responded: Not a long time. I've recently started watching some of the budget meetings to see how it goes.

A. McLeod asked: Where do you see the Budget Committee, what is the Budget Committee to do in your mind?

Mr. Daniels responded: You have to follow what the budgetary laws are in the State of NH. I'm not sure if Alton has a policy for the Budget Committee or rules and regulations. That is something I would need to take a look at. Certain procedures for us to follow and we are going to have to follow those. I assume that basically what we are primarily going to be looking over each department's budget and determining if it is a sound budget and whether the budget

makes sense in terms of expenditures. I would look at details as to why they would come up with certain figures and offer my opinion in terms of whether it seems reasonable or not.

J. Markland re-asserted his motion, seconded by K. Ingoldsby.
Discussion on how voting will be determined and the candidates.

Vote taken: All in favor of electing Mr. Dube: 3 in favor, 3 opposed, motion failed

Motion by M. DeCoff to elect G. Fuller, seconded by B. Howard, passed 4 in favor (M. DeCoff, B. Howard, A. McLeod, K. Argiropolis) 1 opposed (J. Markland), 1 abstained (K. Ingoldsby)

Motion by K. Argiropolis for brief recess for swearing in of G. Fuller, seconded by K. Ingoldsby, passed all in favor

Recess called at 6:35 pm

Meeting called back to order at 6:40 pm

Approval of Agenda

A. McLeod motioned to approve agenda as presented, seconded by K. Argiropolis

B. Howard requested to add Item D to new business – Conflict of Interest - as it applies to Board members.

M. DeCoff noted that everyone has signed the Conflict of Interest Ordinance requirement when they were sworn in.
Agenda approved, passed all in favor.

Expenditure Reports

School District Expenditures was moved before Town Expenditures at the request of School Board member T. Noyes who had public input.

School District Expenditures – The Expenditure Report is dated April 4th. The School Board has not met yet to review the May expenditure report. The Report presented is the most recent available. A review and discussion of school budget expenditures with input from School Board member T. Noyes seated in the audience. (Note: her comments were not audible to recorder).

Public Input

T. Noyes - I just want to make sure that the comments made by Mr. Miller at the last meeting are discussed tonight. I have been approached by some community members that saw the comments on TV and they were concerned about those comments. They were inaccurate and I think it is important that they are corrected this evening.

K. Argiropolis stated she has a report from the Business Manager. There were two questions that came up out of that night's meeting. One of them was there was a comment made by Mr. Miller stating that money had been taken from, transferred, a budget item transfer had been done from New Furniture to fund a Retirement Bonus. I posed this question to our Business Manager because I couldn't find where that was in previous minutes. She responded to say we have never, and this is from K. Oblenes at SAU 72, she said we have never, as far back as she could see in our computerized system year 2000, transferred money from New Furniture to Retirement Bonus. As for the Retirement Bonus we require teachers to inform us while we are in budget season, October, if they are planning on retiring the following year.

B. Howard stated she is not sure if he said that actually happened or if he used that as an example about how the monies could be moved around.

K. Argiropolis responded he said that actually happened because I said has that really been done and he said "oh yeah." It is in the verbatim minutes and it reads out that way where he says it. I just wanted to correct it for the record.

K. Argiropolis had an answer for B. Howard's previously asked question on the article in the paper and the extra form that needed to be filled out by the Business Office and it was in the Baysider. The question was the article in the Baysider read other items noted by the auditor included being over the threshold of \$5,000.00 in the fiscal 2009-2010 year in Special Education and Title 1 funding and therefore, being required separate federal compliance audit on those funds and the unreserved, undesignated fund balance as of June 30, 2010 being \$1,071,086.00. K. Argiropolis posed the question to K. Oblenes to clarify why this is needed. K. Oblenes responded to K. Argiropolis that the question or clarity that B. Howard had from a Baysider article has to do with our federal grant spending. If a District spends more than \$500,000.00 in one fiscal year, then the District is required to have an additional audit or a single audit performed on just our grants. The 2010 single audit, which is what the Baysider was referencing, spoke about the required cluster that needed to be audited. A total of \$300,000.00 needed to be audited, which

happened to consist of our largest grants, Special Education, IDEA and Title 1. We are in compliance because we have the single audit completed. There was never an issue with the amount of grant money we spent on Special Ed costs.

Public input closed

Town Anticipated Revenue Report and Expense and Encumbrances Report.

Request was made by K. Ingoldsby to receive reports sooner for better review and he would like to table the reports until the next meeting.

K. Ingoldsby motioned to table the minutes until the next meeting, seconded by M. DeCoff, passed all in favor.

Reports/Items of Interest

Selectmen's Report – Budget cycle, M. DeCoff asked, how are you going to want to see the Town budget come in this year, increase, level funded, how are you going to want the Selectmen to approach that? Discussion on how it was done in the past and on various ideas on how to go about addressing budget items for the coming year. Examples of items cut were addressed.

School District - K. Argiropolis announced that a Superintendent, William Lander, has been hired from the Fremont School District and will work part time, for 32 hours a week, 48 weeks a year. Salary was budgeted for \$75,000.00 and the new Superintendent's salary will be \$85,000.00. K. Argiropolis spoke with the Business Manager and that with the retirements and other items this year there will be no problem funding this. No funding will be coming from any student programs. It is a salaried position. There will be no health insurance, buy out of insurance to be discussed at a later date, no retirement and no profit sharing. It was noted by G. Fuller that the NH State Retirement considers 32 hours as full time. The Mr. Lander is a professor at Plymouth State and has an extensive background and experience. This is a 2-year contract. The candidate currently lives in Ossipee and used to live in Alton. The vote by the School Board was unanimous

Conflict of Interest - B. Howard asked A. McLeod about the technology contract with the town and noted that K. Argiropolis works for A. McLeod, when it comes to voting on the budget for the town, are you going to abstain? A. McLeod responded for the town no, from any line item discussions about technology I would certainly abstain or recuse. B. Howard continued, even though the Technology line item is part of the bottom line budget for the town and you are directly benefiting from that A. McLeod asked how am I directly benefiting from that? B. Howard responded you are getting a salary for that, you are getting a check from the Town of Alton. A. McLeod responded when I work. I charge hourly, I have a contract. I would have to consider how that would be affected. I don't see myself not voting because the technology got cut. No, I am not going to step out of the way. I'm voting for the town. B. Howard stated she just wanted it publicly on record. A. McLeod noted he has been doing the technology for the town for five years.

Discussion on recusing or abstention from voting and conflict of interest.

Public Input

None seen or heard

Public Input closed

Follow up items

A. McLeod went to a Local Government training session. One class was interactive from home via computer. M. DeCoff noted they put out a budget book each year and it is available for purchase. There is a September training session and the Town covers the cost.

Letter from Genesis - there is an open house on May 14th at Plymouth State Ice Arena 4:00 pm -6:00 pm, and May 15th Taylor Community Woodside Building in Laconia, 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm. The event is Opening Minds With Listening Ears.

Town of New Durham will be hosting a Board Committee and Commissioner Training Session by the Local Government Center, Thursday May 17th 6:30 – 8:30 at the Fire Station Community Room in New Durham.

Next Meeting Date(s)

Discussion on date for next meeting.

Next meeting will be held Thursday September 13th, at 6:00 pm

Discussion on JMA Budget Committee representatives. Three are required. Two representatives, plus one alternate

Motion by M. DeCoff to put K. Ingoldsby and A. McLeod on the JMA with G. Fuller as alternate, seconded by B. Howard, passed all in favor.

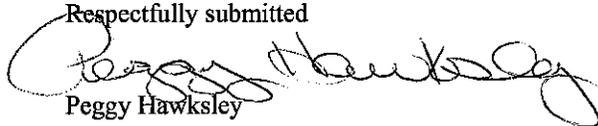
Discussion on JMA representation and role of the JMA and recommendations made by the representatives.

Motion by K. Argiropolis to adjourn, seconded by A. McLeod, passed all in favor.

Adjourned 7:20pm

Approved September 13, 2012

Respectfully submitted



Peggy Hawksley