

Town of Alton
Budget Committee Meeting
October 18, 2012
Minutes
Approved October 25, 2012

Call to Order 6:00 pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Marc DeCoff, Selectmen's Representative

Barbara Howard, Member

John Markland, Vice Chair

Andy McLeod, Chairman

Greg Fuller, Member

Krista Argiropolis, School Board Representative

Karl Ingoldsby, Member

Approval of Agenda

It was recommended to amend the agenda as follows: Public Input will be added after Roll Call, followed by Approval of Agenda and then followed by Approval of Minutes. M. DeCoff motioned to accept the Agenda as amended, seconded by G. Fuller and passed all in favor.

Public Input I

Alton resident Ruth Messier addressed the Budget Committee and provided some advice on how the Committee should conduct themselves and to familiarize themselves with RSA Chapter 32. Ms. Messier felt that J. Markland's request to meet with the Town Department Heads was out of order and would potentially incur misunderstandings between Committee members and the general public. The Budget Committee thanked Ms. Messier for her advice and concerns and have incorporated these into the Communication Protocol and Procedures section.

Public Input I closed

Meeting Minutes

There was a discussion on the streamlining of the minutes. A. McLeod stated it was previously agreed that the minutes would be streamlined and that the tapes are available for anyone to view. A. McLeod is also looking at the possibility of uploading the tapes to You Tube. There would be no cost associated with uploading the tapes.

K. Argiropolis motioned to approve the minutes of September 13, 2012, seconded by M. DeCoff.

Discussion: On the first sentence on Page 2, add a period to the end. Under Public Input II replace Mr. S. Miller with Mr. Steve Miller. Also under Public Input II, add II to Public Input Closed.

The motion passed in favor with 4 in favor and 3 abstentions (K. Argiropolis, K. Ingoldsby, J. Markland).

New Business

A. Communication Protocol and Procedures

B. Howard initiated a discussion with regard to J. Markland's request to meet with all the Department Heads and her concern that he was acting as an individual member.

J. Markland explained his position and said he believes the issue was the memo that was distributed by R. Bailey. J. Markland informed the Committee that he has not met with any Department Heads and it was his intention to bring this to the Committees attention.

There was a discussion on how the Committee should act and as individual representatives. A Committee member is allowed to ask questions, but as a citizen, not as a Budget Committee member. Intent should be transparent in the decision-making and there is the possibility of a misconception.

K. Argiropolis motioned to go through the usual budget process with the Department Heads with the Budget Committee, talk to them and if there are questions afterward and if people want to go on a site visit that we discuss that as a Budget Committee and move forward with that afterward per Mr. Markland's request. Whoever goes reports back to the Budget Committee and inform them of what their findings are. If someone wants to go on a site visit it will be discussed. Seconded by J. Markland.

Discussion: If there are questions after the process and a Budget Committee member wants to go and conduct a site visit, the discussion will be held at a Budget Committee meeting to ensure transparency. G. Fuller requested to receive copies of RSA 32 and RSA 40.12 for the next meeting for review.

K. Argiropolis restated motion, for Budget Committee to proceed with the hearing of the budget as they have in the past and then if there are questions after or if anyone wants to go on a site visit, that they bring it up here in a meeting and we go forward from there. Seconded by K. Ingoldsby, and passed all in favor.

A. McLeod motioned to re-open Public Input I, seconded by M. DeCoff, and passed all in favor.

Ms. Messier advised the Committee that if you have a quorum of Budget Committee members in the same location not to say the words Budget Committee. This would mean that the Committee was acting illegally.

Public Input I Re-Closed

Communication Protocol and Procedures was placed on hold to allow R. Bailey to present the Budget Committee with the 2013 budget books.

R. Bailey noted that two sections, Insurance and Benefits, are not included in the books and that they should be complete in the next two weeks because the Town is waiting for the rates.

The first meeting with the Departments will be held Tuesday October 23, 2012.

K. Argiropolis motioned that on the 23rd to move the Planning Department to the 25th of October, seconded by M. DeCoff.

Discussion: R. Bailey will need to check with Department Heads for availability.

Motion amended by K. Argiropolis to add pending availability, M. DeCoff seconded, passed all in favor.

Motion by K. Argiropolis to condense the November 1st and November 8th meeting into a meeting on November 1st covering Tax, Solid Waste, Cemetery and Parks and Recreation Buildings and Grounds pending availability, seconded by M. DeCoff and passed all in favor.

K. Argiropolis motioned to approve the schedule as submitted until we see if there is a need for further changes, seconded by M. DeCoff and passed all in favor.

Planning will move from the 23rd to the 25th, moving the Cemetery and Parks and Recreation up to November 1st. November 8th will be shown as an open meeting. All in favor.

Resumption of discussion on Communication Protocol and Procedures

K. Argiropolis motioned that the videos from the Budget Committee meetings go on You Tube pending volunteer availability or community service availability from a high school student so there is no cost impact, seconded by B. Howard.

Discussion: A. McLeod noted there is no cost to put the videos on You Tube but if an employee does it there is the cost associated in the time that it takes.

Motion passed with all in favor.

Motion by K. Argiropolis that the E-mails that went out recently that everyone was CC'd on, that those are submitted directly into the minutes.

Motion was not seconded.

There was a discussion on a series of E-Mails that B. Howard sent to A. McLeod requesting an emergency meeting and an E-Mail that B. Howard sent to Attorney Sessler. No copies were forwarded to other members of the Committee. The only person who can go to the attorney is the Chair, if the Chair is not available then the Vice Chair or the person who has been most active in the issue involved. Discussion on the E-Mails involving the School survey will be tabled until the next meeting.

A. McLeod motioned that the contact of the attorney should be done through the Chair or Vice Chair or the person directly related to the situation. There was no second to the motion.

There was a discussion on whether the only two allowed to contact the attorney are the Chair or Vice Chair.

B. Review Town Expense and Revenue Reports

There was a review and discussion on various lines items of the Town Expense and Revenue Report.

C. Review School Expense Reports

The School Board will provide an Expense Report for next week and will provide the actual number on the unencumbered funds prior to any expenses out of the unencumbered funds for the end of the year.

Old Business

K. Argiropolis provided an update on the follow up item on the Special Education budget line item that required additional paperwork. It was an accounting practice, no money was moved and no line items transferred. Kathy O'Blenes had reported that there is a different criteria for accounting that she had to do.

Public Input II

None seen or heard

Public Input II closed

Next Meeting Date: October 23, 2012, 6:20pm

All in favor

A schedule of the upcoming meetings was distributed to the Committee members.

A. McLeod motioned for the start of the meeting to be held at 6:20 pm, seconded by J. Markland, passed all in favor.

A. McLeod motioned to adjourn, seconded by M. DeCoff, and passed all in favor.

Adjourned 8:10pm

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Hawksley

Secretary

Approved October 25, 2012