

Town of Alton Budget Committee
APPROVED MINUTES
November 16, 2017 @ 6:30 PM
Alton Town Hall
1 Monument Square, Alton, NH 03809

1. Call to order at 6:30 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Present:

Roger Nelson, Chairman
Greg Fuller, Member
David Hershey, Member
Andrew Levasseur, Member
Terrence O'Rourke, Member
Peter Leavitt, School Representative
Ruben Wentworth, Selectmen Representative

Others:

Liz Dione, Town Administrator

4. Approval of Agenda

MOTION by Terrence O'Rourke to the Agenda as presented. Second by Andrew Levasseur. No discussion. Motion passes with all in favor.

5. Approval of Minutes

September 21, 2017 Minutes

MOTION by Roger Nelson to approve the Minutes of September 21, 2017 as presented. Second by Terrence O'Rourke. No discussion. Motion passes with 4 in favor, Peter Leavitt Abstain

October 19, 2017 Minutes

1. Amend to show Peter Leavitt as absent not present.

MOTION by Roger Nelson to approve the Minutes of October 19, 2017 as amended. Second by David Hershey. No discussion. Motion passes with 4 in favor, Peter Leavitt Abstain.

6. Old Business - None.

Roger Nelson announced to the public present that during Public Session any public input is to be directed to what is represented on the Agenda.

7. New Business

Review of Town/School Department Budgets to include:

- a. Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Lisa Noyes
- b. Elections, Lisa Noyes
- c. Water Department, Lou LaCourse, Brian Dubise and Courtney Mitchell
- d. Alton Central School (if necessary)
- e. Gilman Museum, Liz Dione
- f. Welfare, Liz Dione
- g. Interest Short Term, Liz Dione

A. Town Clerk/Tax Collector (4132) Lisa Noyes began by saying she tries to keep things level funded. A few items have gone up. Elections went up clear across the board. This year one election and next year three elections.

Roger Nelson - Line 110 - Meetings Conferences average was \$376 for the past 5 years why go to \$1030?

Lisa Noyes she has not been going overnight to conferences because of combining the Department. Was rooming with someone else from New Durham and they have retired and would like to keep the option open if available to go.

David Hershey, Line 133 asked about postage \$11,000 average.

Lisa Noyes from combining the offices. Semi annual tax billing. Was previously under the tax collector.

Roger Nelson, Line 181 printing and signs. 2016 spent over \$1000.

Lisa Noyes stated this was the envelopes from printing the envelopes for tax bills. Again was under tax collector historically

Roger Nelson, Line 201 new equipment

Lisa Noyes stated there is a printer (not copier) in the office printing reports, tax bills, Statements. Would like this included for emergency if printer fails. Cannot run the office without a printer. Current printer is over 10 years old and want to be prepared if this printer fails. Will need immediately.

Liz Dione noted this is not one of the two copiers they have access to in the building. Other new machine was for folding (assessing department).

Lisa Noyes stated this printer is connected to 5 computers in the office.

David Hershey suggested this move under IT in the past.

Roger Nelson commented on Line 020 Overtime spike in 2012 and 2014 and 2016 mild.

Lisa Noyes stated they strived not to use it. The spike years are election years.

Roger Nelson commented he will be looking at this a little stronger next year.

B. Elections (4140)

Roger Nelson noted 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018 consistent with each year seems to be in line and \$3000 for each year.

Lisa Noyes stated the State of NH encouraged poll workers to be present and trained and there from 7 am - 7 pm. Not a requirement by have to have the money there.

Roger Nelson noted the 5 year average has been \$745. \$2200 is still \$1100 than what you did in 2016. He would like to see this come down just a little bit.

Lisa Noyes noted they do pay the assistant supervisor because they are there all day long. They have to pay the 2 students for the Deliberative Session, Recording Secretary for the Deliberative Minutes. It is probably for the poll workers for the 3 elections. Most poll workers volunteer their time.

Roger Nelson Line 131 Office Supplies, average is \$226 and listed is \$230. Line 181 asked about printing of signs.

Lisa Noyes it is for the town ballot (printing and coding of the ballot). State and Federal elections the State pays for but the town has to pay for the coding the memory card for the machine.

C. Water Department (4331)

Roger Nelson asked about Line 11 - Full Time Employee

Courtney Mitchell noted combined the three lines of the full time, part time and superintendent to come up with the total. Noted they are looking for a superintendent.

Roger Nelson asked there will be three full time employees for Alton.

Courtney Mitchell noted it is not very safe to have one employee go out by themselves working on a project.

Roger Nelson doesn't feel the department need three employees doing that job.

Lou LaCourse noted it used to be a third person doing the job.

Roger Nelson said that it has been working pretty well with 2 employees in the past 2-3 years.

Courtney Mitchell noted the Superintendent will not dig. Not in job description.

David Hershey not following the logic for adding the superintendent.

Courtney Mitchell noted when she came on board there was a Superintendent. There is no longer one and that was the licensed operation. Now for \$10,000 a year you have a licensed operator.

Lou LaCourse stated that currently have a contract Superintendent and work is being done under her license. Falling behind without this third person.

Roger Nelson noted being on the Budget Committee for 4 years, up until about a year and half ago when the Superintendent left you had 2 workers.

Lou LaCourse said there was the Superintendent, 1 full time and 1 part time.

Courtney Mitchell added that work was not getting done with just the two.

Ruben Wentworth noted this also went back to management with the Superintendent.

Lou LaCourse noted they are trying to plan for the worse case.

General discussion on the Superintendent position job description and "getting in the hole to dig" to work along with the other employees. And use of words "working superintendent", "assistant superintendent" to train for future years

Courtney Mitchell added that there needs to be someone with a license. If she walked today the town of Alton would be without water. You need someone to carry the license and one to do the work. If someone is out then what?

Ruben Wentworth added that this has happened and they were going to use Fire students, or the Highway Department in a good relationship.

Lou LaCourse said this was discussed with the Selectmen earlier this year and what they heard was there was going to be an issue if they used the help from the Highway Department, town equipment and employees.

Ruben Wentworth said this is the first he has heard of this.

Courtney Mitchell added the Water Department operates on the funds they get from the water users. The Fire Department and the Public Works Department is based on anyone that lives in the town of Alton that pays taxes. Isn't that double dipping? Making the tax payers that are not on the Watershed pay for that equipment and time.

David Hershey added she is making that assumption and it has not been decided yet that the Highway Department wouldn't bill back the Water Department for services rendered.

Ruben Wentworth gave examples of plowing in the winter when the Water truck go out to plow, asked if they charge the town of Alton?

Courtney Mitchell noted they only plow the hydrants. If they plowed any other street Ken Roberts would pay that person.

Ruben Wentworth stated that's what he was stating a mutual agreement. One hand washes the other. Courtney Mitchell stated that is exactly what they are trying to get out of.

Ruben Wentworth stated it is the same with the School, the town plows the school as well. It works, one department helps the other, especially when they are in need. Just like the Highway Department used to be able to go to the Fire Department when there was a fire call. To help each other out. One small community.

Courtney Mitchell said it seems to be a pick and choose when they are a separate entity.

Lou LaCourse said for example when they were discussing replacing the main down at the Bay they were not hearing that the departments help each other.

Ruben Wentworth doesn't understand why not. They are all employees of the town of Alton. The Water Commissioners should come to the Selectmen and state there is trouble in a situation and he, as a Selectmen, would listen.

Courtney Mitchell stated there was not enough qualified people to lay that amount of main line material without proper oversight.

Brian Dubise stated this still all boils down to Management. Managing your department, your crew, equipment, when project need help reaching out to the other departments. This is why we are saying the Superintendent's job is not a nil position. It is an active position in the day to day activities. Roger Nelson stated he is not going to get into it whether or not you need one all he is going on is numbers. In 2012, Line 011 and 015 combined full time and part time was \$88,000. 2013 it was \$91,000, 2014 was \$96,000, 2015 \$107,000, 2016 was \$100,000. 5 year average was \$107,000. Now you are looking for \$164,000. Something needs to give. A 60% increase in the two lines is a little strong.

David Hershey asked if they 100% is used from the water revenue?

Lou LaCourse stated none comes from taxes.

David Hershey asked if they are collecting more revenue than they have in expense?

Lou LaCourse stated that historically, in the last few years, no. Last year they collected \$17,000 extra revenue and this year they will have a little more than that.

David Hershey asked projecting you get approved for the extra wage expense are you going to be able to cover the expense.

Lou LaCourse stated yes.

David Hershey stated then, why do we care what they put for numbers?

Roger Nelson stated every tax payer pays for the water. Town of Alton public buildings get charged through town taxes.

General discussion about town fire hydrants.

Roger Nelson share he understands what they are trying to present.

Courtney Mitchell stated they are not asking for tax payers money, they are asking for moneys that they collect in their own budget line.

Discussion on getting their excessive money returned to capital reserve fund.

Liz Dione reminded the Water Department reminded the Water Department they have to make a motion to have the money returned to them.

D. Alton central school - finished last night (11/15/2017)

E. Gilman museum

Roger Nelson Line 186 Museum Maintenance - spent nothing and now want \$500. Why continue to fund this?

Liz Dione added since she has been here there are needs to the property, on the structure, and on the grounds. In 2016 some work has begun to fix some things.

Ruben Wentworth stated from a presentation to the Selection were shocked at the items that needed to be done for the museum building and property. This property has been neglected over the years.

Andrew Levasseur asked who uses this building? Is it open to the public?

Liz Dione said that someone in the town hall can bring in anyone wants to go in to view the items

David Hershey asked why can't the town maintenance department. Create a renovation plan

Liz Dione discussion on the need for a bucket list. There is a Trust involved and she has met with them to make sure things are being done properly.

Roger Nelson asked about Line 201 new equipment?

Liz Dione stated things that need to be updated. Display cases, lighting, inside and outside of the building.

F. Welfare (4442)

Liz Dione stated this budget is slightly less than last year's budget.

Roger Nelson Line 110.

Liz Dione added there is more attention going to the meetings. There are 2 people at the town hall that stay up to date on new laws and training sessions.

Roger Nelson Line 801 general assistance. \$36000

Liz Dione stated this is level funded. Town is required to provide welfare assistance to those who qualify. Cannot deny the clients funds. Better to have enough than not enough.

G. Interest Short Term (4723)

Nothing to discuss.

Roger Nelson as if the CIP committee is required to meet with Budget committee?

Liz Dione there is a recommendation that will be presented to the Selectmen. Noted there is a workshop with committee and selectmen. Budget committee will be invited to this meeting.

8. Public input. None.

9. Other Business.

Next meeting November 29 and 30.

10. Adjourn at 7:30 pm

MOTION by Roger Nelson to adjourn. Second by Andrew Levasseur. Motion passes with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn Schaeffner, Recording Secretary