

TOWN OF ALTON

**ADVANCED COPY SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE
ALTON BUDGET COMMITTEE
ALTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**ALTON BUDGET COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
(APPROVED 01/09/08)
December 4, 2007**

Present: Stephen Miller, Elizabeth Dominick, Richard MacDonald, Karen Painter, Peter Bolster (Alton Selectmen Representative), Russ Bailey, Business Administrator, Krista Argiropolis, Recorder, Members of the Public

Absent: Gregory Fuller, Jeffrey St. Cyr (School Board Representative),

I. CALL TO ORDER

S. Miller called the meeting to order at 6:35PM.

II. ROLL CALL

G. Fuller was absent.

Due to a JMA School Board meeting that was scheduled that same evening, there was not a representative of the School Board available for the meeting. Neither J. St. Cyr nor T. Noyes was available for the meeting.

K. Argiropolis, Recorder, was absent at the time of Roll Call but joined the meeting at approximately 8:30PM.

III. AGENDA

K. Painter motioned to approve the agenda and E. Dominick seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, PB, ED / absent – GF, JS)

IV. HOUSEKEEPING

S. Miller reminded the Committee that the JMA Budget Committee scheduled for 12/3/07 had been cancelled due to inclement weather. The meeting has been re-scheduled 12/5/07 at 6PM.

There was discussion about scheduling a future meeting of the Alton Budget Committee. S. Miller suggested a meeting for 12/12/07 or 12/18/07. It was decided that 12/18/07 would be an option but shouldn't be posted just yet, as it may not be needed.

V. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

K. Painter motioned to approve the minutes from November 27, 2007 and E. Dominick seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, PB, ED / absent – GF, JS)

K. Painter Motioned to approve the minutes from November 29, 2007 and P. Bolster seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, PB, ED / absent – GF, JS)

VI. OLD BUSINESS

S. Miller reported that he and R. Bailey had been comparing final numbers of the budget. He stated that he was off by \$500 in the area of benefit lines. He reported that the Alton Budget Committee's recommended operating budget, so far, is \$5,977,760 vs. the Alton Selectmen's recommended operating budget of \$5,984,308. This is an increase of just over 3% from the previous year but does not include CIP. S. Miller stated he would email the Committee members with the final numbers when he got them.

VII. SPECIAL WARRANT ARTICLES 2008

Police Cruiser \$30,100

There was discussion about the Police Cruiser. R. MacDonald asked if this was something that could be put off for another year. R. Bailey stated this was the first time that there had been a new cruiser purchased since he had come to Alton. He discussed the number of police officers and coverage. There is 24/7 coverage and no one is allowed to take their cruiser home with them, with the exception of the Chief, but he won't be allowed to take it home until he relocates to Alton. There was an open discussion about the cruiser and options that the police department might consider.

S. Miller motioned to recommend the Police Cruiser at \$30,100 and R. MacDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, PB, ED / absent – GF, JS)

Police Building Reserve \$70,000

R. Bailey stated that the building will be started next year. He spoke about the plans for the building. There was discussion about the building and the costs. Some of the options, such as modular buildings, were discussed.

S. Miller motioned to recommend the Police Building Reserve at \$30,000 and R. MacDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of four with one abstaining. (SM, RM, KP, ED / absent – GF, JS / abstain - PB)

Sidewalk Capital Reserve \$10,000

S. Miller motioned to recommend the Sidewalk Capital Reserve at \$10,000 and K. Painter seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, PB, ED / absent – GF, JS)

Landfill Closure Capital Reserve \$10,000

R. Bailey spoke about the monitoring wells and testing that is being done to make sure that water contamination isn't taking place. He stated that this is to maintain the monitoring. He spoke about the cost of monitoring the wells and what it would cost to put in another test well.

[Recorder's note: No formal motion was made.]

S. Miller called the vote and asked if the Committee recommended this Landfill Closure Capital Reserve at \$10,000 and the motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, PB, ED / absent – GF, JS)

Transfer Station Capital Reserve \$10,000

R. Bailey explained that this is for equipment for the Transfer Station, such as the compactor. He spoke about some of the recycling efforts that are being planned.

[Recorder's note: No formal motion was made.]

S. Miller called the vote and asked if the Committee recommended this Transfer Station Capital Reserve at \$10,000 and the motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, PB, ED / absent – GF, JS)

Transfer Station Improvement Capital Reserve \$50,000

K. Painter motioned to recommend Transfer Station Improvement Capital Reserve \$50,000 and E. Dominick seconded the motion. R. Bailey explained how this money would be used. There will be a fence put up, a burn will be done in the spring, and other projects. The total figure for this Transfer Station Improvement project is about one million dollars. This is only for site improvement and not for equipment.

There was discussion about the various capital reserve accounts. R. MacDonald noted that the previous Selectmen didn't seem to have a lot of capital reserve accounts. R. Bailey stated that the current Selectmen were working hard to keep the tax rate about the same. He discussed some of the planning that has been done for the Transfer Station and all of the buildings. He spoke about the Selectmen planning the budget to have a low impact on tax payers because of some of the other needs in the town, such as renovations to the school.

The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, PB, ED / absent – GF, JS)

Beach Capital Reserve \$25,000

P. Bolster spoke about the history of the Beach Capital Reserve. He stated they had come in asking for \$50,000 but the Selectmen has recommended \$25,000. This could be used for a recreational swim facility.

S. Miller felt that this should be zeroed out because it would be sitting in an account and wouldn't be enough to do anything they needed to do. E. Dominick asked what the consequences would be

of zeroing this out. R. Bailey stated that the Selectmen could possibly make another recommendation. R. Bailey reported that the Selectmen were planning on meeting about this warrant article to change the name and use of it to something more flexible. He stated they could write an article to change the purpose of this and present it in a town meeting.

S. Miller motioned to recommend \$0 (zero dollars) for the Beach Capital Reserve and R. MacDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of four. (SM, RM, KP, ED / absent – GF, JS / no - PB)

Building & Grounds Maintenance Equipment Capital Reserve \$12,000

R. MacDonald stated this should be zeroed out and felt that the department should be able to get six years out of the tractor they had. R. Bailey explained that this was for a sidewalk snow removal vehicle.

P. Bolster motioned to recommend \$12,000 for the Building & Grounds Maintenance Equipment and E. Dominick seconded the motion. R. MacDonald felt that this was for a new tractor, based on the presentation of the Building & Grounds Department budget for 2008. There was discussion about what this was really for. S. Miller motioned to table this vote and R. MacDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, ED, PB / absent – GF, JS)

Building & Grounds Truck Capital Reserve \$34,000

P. Bolster motioned to recommend the Building & Grounds Truck Capital Reserve at \$34,000 and E. Dominick seconded the motion. R. Bailey stated this was on the warrant last year but failed. He stated they needed a real truck for the Building & Grounds department and felt that two retired police cruisers were not optimal. The motion passed by a vote of four. (SM, PB, KP, ED / absent – GF, JS / no - RM)

Fire Department Ambulance Fund \$139,000

R. Bailey reported that this was set up so that it has to be brought up for vote each year. This has a zero net impact on the budget. K. Painter motioned to recommend \$139,000 for the Fire Department Ambulance Fund and P. Bolster seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, ED, PB / absent – GF, JS)

Fire Building Capital Reserve \$40,000

R. Bailey spoke about the plans to update the Fire Department's buildings. There was discussion about the East Alton Fire Department building. S. Miller motioned to recommend \$40,000 for the Fire Building Capital Reserve and R. MacDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, ED, PB / absent – GF, JS)

Rescue Truck Lease Payment \$50,421

P. Bolster motioned to recommend \$50,421 and K. Painter seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, ED, PB / absent – GF, JS)

Fire Car #1 Capital Reserve \$30,100

E. Dominick motioned to recommend \$30,100 for the Fire Car Capital Reserve and K. Painter seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, ED, PB / absent – GF, JS)

Highway Reconstruction Capital Reserve \$750,000

R. MacDonald felt this should be cut back to what it was last year. P. Bolster stated that the Selectmen had decided to reduce the amount of this capital reserve. R. Bailey spoke about what this will be used for; reclaiming roads, renovations of roads, correcting drainage issues, and other projects. He spoke about the impact that the floods had on the roads. He stated that they would never get ahead on their projects without this money and felt they would get their monies worth with \$750,000.

E. Dominick motioned to recommend the Highway Reconstruction Capital Reserve \$750,000 and K. Painter seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of four. (SM, PB, KP, ED / absent – GF, JS / no - RM)

Highway Truck \$172,000

S. Miller motioned to recommend the Highway Truck at \$172,000 and R. MacDonald seconded the motion. R. Bailey stated that this had failed last year when it came up for vote last year. S. Miller retracted his motion. He motioned to recommend the Highway Truck at \$125,000 and R. MacDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of four. (SM, RM, KP, ED / absent – GF, JS / no - PB)

Bridge Replacement \$10,000

S. Miller motioned to recommend \$10,000 for Bridge Replacement and E. Dominick seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, ED, PB / absent – GF, JS)

Highway Replacement Truck \$34,000

P. Bolster motioned to recommend \$34,000 for the Highway Replacement Truck and K. Painter seconded the motion. There was discussion about justification for the replacement truck. The motion failed by one “yes” vote and four “no” votes. (no - SM, RM, KP, ED, / absent – GF, JS / yes - PB)

Community Action Program \$8,558

E. Dominick motioned to recommend \$8,558 for Community Action Program and R. MacDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of four and one abstention. (SM, RM, ED, PB / absent – GF, JS / abstain - KP)

VNA Hospice \$12,124

R. MacDonald motioned to recommend \$12,124 for VNA Hospice and K. Painter seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, ED, PB / absent – GF, JS)

Youth Service Bureau \$22,653

R. Bailey reported the Selectmen had tabled this recommendation, pending more information to come. S. Miller motioned to not recommend \$22,653 for Youth Service Bureau based on feedback he had received about the organization. R. Bailey recommended that they should table this issue at this time, until they had the Selectmen’s recommendation. R. MacDonald spoke about a negative experience he had with the program. S. Miller retracted his motion and motioned to table the Budget Committee’s recommendation and R. MacDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, ED, PB / absent – GF, JS)

Community Health & Hospice \$5,100

K. Painter spoke about the administrative costs that were in the report that was given to the Committee. S. Miller motioned to approve \$5,100 for Community Health & Hospice and R. MacDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, ED, PB / absent – GF, JS)

American Red Cross \$2,264

S. Miller motioned to approve \$2,264 for the American Red Cross and P. Bolster seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, ED, PB / absent – GF, JS)

Alton Community Service \$10,000

R. MacDonald motioned to approve \$10,000 for Alton Community Service and E. Dominick seconded the motion. P. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, ED, PB / absent – GF, JS)

Medication Bridges \$424

S. Miller motioned to approve \$424 for Medication Bridges and R. MacDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, ED, PB / absent – GF, JS)

New Beginnings \$1,500

S. Miller motioned to approve \$1,500 for New Beginnings and R. MacDonald seconded the motion. R. MacDonald asked if there was a number of how many people this organization had helped. There was a discussion about the program. R. Bailey felt this was a very important program and was needed. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, ED, PB / absent – GF, JS)

Genesis \$7,500

S. Miller motioned to approve \$7,500 for Genesis and R. MacDonald seconded the motion. S. Miller reviewed the service report presented by Genesis. There was discussion about Genesis' services. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, ED, PB / absent – GF, JS)

Caregivers' Transportation \$2,000

S. Miller motioned to approve \$2,000 for Caregivers' Transportation and E. Dominick seconded the motion. This is 100% volunteer program. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, ED, PB / absent – GF, JS)

CASA \$500

S. Miller motioned to approve \$500 for CASA and P. Bolster seconded the motion. There was no second. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, ED, PB / absent – GF, JS)

Application Mountain Team Project

S. Miller recommended that Application Mt. Team Project should be tabled.

Benefits' Fund \$10,000

S. Miller motioned to approve Benefits' Fund at \$10,000 and R. MacDonald seconded the motion. R. Bailey explained that this was for benefit buy-outs in the case that some employees might retire. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, ED, PB / absent – GF, JS)

S. Miller asked if the Selectmen's Recommendations would be available. He asked R. Bailey if he would be available on 12/11/07.

E. Dominick motioned to adjourn and K. Painter seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, RM, KP, ED, PB / absent – GF, JS)

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Krista Argiropolis