

ALTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes
January 4, 2021
(Approved – January 11, 2021)

Chairman R. Wentworth convened the meeting at 6:00 PM and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and a Moment of Silence. The following staff members were present:

Reuben Wentworth, Chairman
Virgil MacDonald, Vice Chairman
Philip V. Wittmann, Selectman
Paul LaRochelle, Selectman
Bob Holt, Selectman
Elizabeth Dionne, Town Administrator

R. Wentworth announced the following:

Until Further Notice: To keep our members and staff safe, and to comply with RSA 91-A, the State of Emergency, and Governor’s Orders, restrictions on public gatherings, The Town of Alton is moving from "in-person" meetings to "remote audio participation meetings". To remotely attend the meeting (audio only) visit our website: www.alton.nh.gov for telephone access and remote access instructions listed under News and Announcements on the home page or telephone the Selectmen’s Office 603-875-2113 or 603-875-0229 between 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM for the Dial-in Code and Meeting ID for each Selectmen’s Meeting.

Agenda Approval

V. MacDonald made a motion to approve the agenda as presented and P. Wittmann seconded.

B. Holt requested to amend the agenda adding Budget Committee Meetings under New Business #1 and P. LaRochelle seconded. Roll call vote:

B. Holt, yes	P. LaRochelle, yes	P. Wittmann, yes
V. MacDonald, yes	R. Wentworth, yes	

Announcements

None

Submission of Public Comments - Questions - Concerns

None

Appointments

- James and Allison Brown - Subdivide Map 9 Lot 35, Moore Farm Lane

V. MacDonald excused himself from the Board.

James and Allison Brown remotely joined the meeting. All the communications were provided to the Board. J. Brown stated they are trying to subdivide a five (5) acre lot off of the existing lot from the family lot on a pre-existing private road. There are some complex circumstances. They were asked to go to the Board of Selectmen for a waiver on the requirements of placing asphalt on this private roadway. Asphalt would not look appropriate at this location everything else is dirt and would be an additional cost. The road has been inspected by the Highway Manager, Police Chief and Fire Chief; each have approved the road as it is today. They are willing to sign off that they have no intention of the Town ever taking this roadway over in the future and if ever considered then it would have to be brought up to Town Standards. This would be noted on the Plat Plan. Sooner or later there may be an issue/concern when years from now someone new may move onto the property thence wanting the road to be taken over by the Town. R. Wentworth wants the Town to be protected from a liability standpoint. There will

be a restriction within the deed and/or plot plan. P. LaRochelle questioned the length of the roadway. Board members were in agreement to setting conditions. K. Roberts, Highway Manager agrees with and recommends this matter to move forward. L. Dionne had no comments other than informing the Chair that the Town Planner is available for discussion. J. Call, Town Planner remotely joined the meeting for input. The Planner review was provided to the Board which showed the facts on the matter. P. LaRochelle questioned the forthcoming workshops for updating the regulations; they will begin this week.

R. Wentworth made a motion to approve the request of James and Allison Brown to not lay asphalt on the subdivision Map 9 Lot 35, Moore Farm Road and P. LaRochelle seconded. Roll call vote:

B. Holt, yes P. LaRochelle, yes P. Wittmann, yes R. Wentworth, yes

At 6:21 PM, V. MacDonald re-joined the meeting.

Old Business:

1. Shibley’s at the Pier - Lease Agreement

An updated copy of the proposed lease agreement and Warrant Article was provided to the Board. L. Dionne stated that the first payment amount was included. The yearly increase would be no less than 2% or no more than 5% based on the NE CPI. The lease has been provided to Mr. Shibley for his review; he is in agreement. D. Shibley remotely joined the meeting and agrees to the lease as written.

R. Wentworth made a motion to approve the proposed lease agreement to be presented to the voters as written at Town Meeting and V. MacDonald seconded.

Discussion: B. Holt questioned Section 3 Use of the Premises under 3.1 “lakeside deck and lakeside dock” which was clarified.

The motion on the table was called. Roll call vote.

B. Holt, yes P. LaRochelle, yes P. Wittmann, yes
 V. MacDonald, yes R. Wentworth, yes

2. Warrant Articles - Fund Balance Recommendations

A list of the recommended Articles for using Fund Balance was provided to the Board for the various Articles as follows:

- D - Fire Department Equipment Capital Reserve \$150,000
- J - Rock and Asphalt Capital Reserve \$30,000
- P - Retaining Wall Capital Reserve \$75,000
- Q - Police Detail Revolving Fund \$25,000
- R - Traffic Safety Devices \$100,650
- S - Police Department Radios \$75,000
- T - 2021 Emergency Management \$40,000
- X - Water Main Expense Interest \$523
- Total \$496,173

Additional possibilities would be the Non-Profit Organizations which was not the recommendation of the Board and should be kept separate. V. MacDonald feels that the rights of the people are being taken away by funding from Fund Balance specifically referencing the boat. A debate on the boat transpired amongst the Board members.

V. MacDonald made a motion to approve the Warrant Articles (listed above) as recommended by the Town Administrator and Finance Manager using Fund Balance and P. LaRochelle seconded.

Further Discussion: V. MacDonald questioned the Water Main Expense which was clarified that it is being done per DRA disallowance. This is a housekeeping issue. P. LaRochelle stated this is just to approve the use of fund balance not approval for purchasing. B. Holt asked about the Rock and Asphalt Crushing; explained. Year to year a decision can be made on how much to use from Fund Balance, if at all.

The motion on the table was called. Roll call vote:

B. Holt, yes P. LaRochelle, yes P. Wittmann, yes
V. MacDonald, yes R. Wentworth, yes

New Business

Budget Committee Meetings

B. Holt had questions on the Budget Committee’s Public Hearings and how will this be done. The dates are January 13th with a snow date of January 14th, this will be a ZOOM meeting. In addition, he asked when the information packets will be available to the public. L. Dionne informed him that the information will be posted on the website. This would be up to the Chairman of the Budget Committee.

Selectmen Reports

B. Holt had nothing to report.

P. LaRochelle had nothing to report.

P. Wittmann had nothing to report.

V. MacDonald had nothing to report.

R. Wentworth had nothing to report. He welcomed 2021 with hopes that the residents and taxpayers stay supportive of the Town and its employees.

Town Administrator Report

COVID Testing - Employees

L. Dionne sent an email out to the Board earlier today regarding COVID Testing for employees. The reason for the email was to let the Board know that she would not be sending emails out to them when an employee tests positive for COVID. This will be handled under TA Report over the next few weeks seeing if this works; this may change. We have had another positive test for an employee.

2% Reduction to the Budgets

A list of recommended 2% cuts from the various departments was provided to the Board. R. Wentworth read the various reduction recommendations. B. Holt finds it interesting with the reduction in the wages, he has the Default Budget in his hands and feels that if that worked then they should be able to make the cuts work. There would be less of a cut with the 2% cut opposed to a Default Budget. The difference is roughly \$100,000. The 2% cut represents a reduction of \$209,454. The Town will have to work with whatever the voters give the Town to work with. B. Holt feels that the Default Budget will be the way the people vote. R. Wentworth agrees stating that it would be due to the indecisiveness of the Board. B. Holt feels that with the 2% reduction the Board is sending the right message. The various cuts resulted in a \$65,504 reduction which would result in a \$135,000 shortage of the requested 2%. The amount of \$65,504 is what the Departments came up with, the Board was asked how they want to proceed. This has to be presented to the Budget Committee tomorrow night. If the Default Budget comes into play the wage increase is only COLA, no merit. There are consequences to going to a Default Budget. R. Wentworth wants the three (3) members who voted for the reduction in the Operating Budget to come up with the additional \$134,500 cuts so he can bring it to the Budget Committee. Options for the lease for the grader/loader were discussed. K. Roberts joined the meeting to discuss. R. Wentworth wants to know where the \$200,000 cuts

are coming from. B. Holt stated it would come from the same place the Default Budget is coming from. R. Wentworth will not go to the Budget Committee to represent the Selectmen without a list of the recommended cuts by line items of the Departments. P. Wittmann feels it is the responsibility of the Department Heads to make those decisions. L. Dionne noted that the Department budgets came in very lean. A somewhat heated debate on who is responsible to make the cuts to the budgets transpired. R. Wentworth asked if the Board was still requesting a 2% budget reduction; P. Wittmann agrees. B. Holt stated he will go before the Budget Committee explaining what the majority of the Board has decided. B. Holt, as BOS Alternate will have to represent the Selectmen at the Budget Committee meeting because the Board members will not give him the reductions line by line from the Departments.

Approval of Minutes

December 21, 2020 - Regular

P. LaRochelle made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting, December 21, 2020 as presented and P. Wittmann seconded. Roll call vote:

B. Holt, yes	P. LaRochelle, yes	P. Wittmann, yes
V. MacDonald, abstain	R. Wentworth, yes	

December 21, 2020 - Non-Public

R. Wentworth made a motion to approve the minutes of the Non-Public Meeting, December 21, 2020 as presented not divulging #2 & #3 and P. LaRochelle seconded. Roll call vote:

B. Holt, yes	P. LaRochelle, yes	P. Wittmann, yes
V. MacDonald, abstain	R. Wentworth, yes	

Consent Agenda Approval

None

Discretionary Action on Requests for Appointments (No discussion, majority vote required to allow/not allow appointment)

None

Non-Public Session:

R. Wentworth moved at 7:17pm to enter into nonpublic under RSA 91-A:3,II,a. Motion seconded by V. MacDonald. Roll call vote:

P. Wittmann - yes	V. MacDonald - yes	P. LaRochelle - yes
R. Wentworth - yes	R. Holt - yes	<u>Roll call vote carried unanimously</u>

R. Wentworth moved at 7:46pm to exit nonpublic session. V. MacDonald seconded. Roll call vote:

P. Wittmann - yes	V. MacDonald - yes	P. LaRochelle - yes
R. Wentworth - yes	R. Holt - yes	<u>Roll call vote carried unanimously</u>

R. Wentworth moved to “not divulge” the minutes because divulgence of the information likely would affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this board, or render the proposed action of the board ineffective. V. MacDonald seconded. Roll call vote:

P. Wittmann - yes	V. MacDonald - yes	P. LaRochelle - yes
R. Wentworth - yes	R. Holt - yes	<u>Roll call vote carried unanimously</u>

Adjournment

V. MacDonald moved at 7:46pm to adjourn. P. Wittmann seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary K. Jarvis

Mary K. Jarvis
Recording Secretary