

**TOWN OF ALTON
BUDGET COMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETING
January 4, 2022, at 6:00 PM
Alton Town Hall**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Reuben Parker, Chair of Budget Committee
LeAnn LaPlante
Jake Bemis

OTHER PRESENT

Ryan Heath
Laura Parker
Virgil MacDonald, Board of Selectmen

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Parker called the meeting to order at 6:00PM. Roll call taken for members present.

Review of Agenda

The committee reviewed the agenda. Chair Parker noted there are no draft minutes for review and approval for the December 2 or 16 meetings so this was removed from the agenda.

Chair Parker made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Mr. Bemis seconded the motion. Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

Final Review of School Budget

Chair Parker stated there is a school board meeting tonight so the answers to the questions asked at the last meeting, were submitted via a letter.

Chair Parker noted the total impact of the combined ACS and high school bottom line increase is \$135,000. The joint budget committee meeting reviewing the high school budget adjustment of \$5,000 is going to be voted on at the school board meeting tonight and it would affect the overall total by \$2500. It was noted there is a significant increase for the special education fund and Chair Parker stated he will follow up on this with Mr. Broderick.

Chair Parker stated they won't vote on this budget until after the public hearing

Review of Warrant Articles

Chair Parker explains the committee will vote on the articles after the public hearing. He stated articles 10 and 11 are the budget items while the remaining articles are the capital reserve funds and articles for some of the community requests. The committee reviewed and discussed the warrant articles.

Chair Parker noted there are line items in Department Budgets for some of these items. Mr. Heath explained there are lines specific to retirements, resignations, benefit buyouts, with accrued time, sick leave being paid out at the end of the year. He stated they had a couple of retirements earlier on when this was established and really, it hit the bank hard because people have been here 20 to 25 years and accrue 1000 hours of sick time.

The committee reviewed the Capital Improvement Planning spreadsheet. Chair Parker explained the CIP summarizes the needs of the departments then calculate the needs in order to determine the amount that needs to be funded to the capital reserve funds. Mr. MacDonald stated this helps to keep the tax rate level and without spikes.

Chair Parker explained articles 12 and 13 are for creating capital reserve funds for the purchases of vehicles that will be used in the assessing and building departments. He stated article 16 is for paying off the fire truck; there is no impact on the tax rate as it will come from existing funds. It was noted the article 37 is a new one. Mr. MacDonald explained it was brought forward by the Conservation Commission; they are trying to fix runoff from Mill Pond by the fire station and clean up contaminated water; he stated the fund needs to be started so they can begin applying for grants from the State of NH.

Review and Approval Default Town Budget

The committee reviewed and discussed the default budget. Ms. Parker stated the default is exactly the same as last year with the exception of contracts or items which have a required increase. Mr. Heath explained the default budget is lower than the proposed budget as it doesn't include one time purchases and other items such as warrant articles where payments or interest are lowered.

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of Minutes

- **December 2, 2021 – Tabled.**
- **December 16, 2021 – Tabled.**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Riel

Jennifer Riel, Recording Secretary