

Budget Committee Public Hearing
APPROVED Minutes (approved 3/27/2019)
January 9, 2019 at 6:30 pm
Alton Town Hall, 1 Monument Square, Alton, NH

1. Call to order at 6:40 pm

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call:

Roger Nelson, Chairman
Greg Fuller, Member
David Hershey, Member
Pat O'Brien, Member
Karen Kharitonov, School Board Representative
Reuben Wentworth, Selectmen Representative

Other Present:

Liz Dionne, Town Administrator
Troy Neff, Town Finance Administrator

Absent:

Beth Varney, Member

4. Approval of Agenda

MOTION by R. Nelson to approve the Agenda as presented. Second by D. Hershey. No discussion. Motion passes with all in favor.

5. Approval of Minutes

a. December 13, 2018. MOTION by R. Nelson to approve the Minutes of December 13, 2018 as presented. Second by R. Wentworth. No discussion. Motion passes with all in favor.

b. January 3, 2019. MOTION by R. Nelson to approve the Minutes of January 3, 2019 as presented. Second by R. Wentworth. No discussion. Motion passes 5-0-1 (David Hershey).

6. New Business.

a. Additional Warrant Articles (if necessary). None to present.

7. Old Business.

School Operating Budget and School Warrant Articles.

ARTICLE II:

Shall the Alton School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling Four Million, Two Hundred Seventy One Thousand, Eight Hundred Thirty One DOLLARS AND 45 CENTS (\$4,271,831.45) (Fiscal Note: The amount of \$4,271,831.45 is the net appropriation for the Prospect Mountain High School operating budget which is included in the gross budget amount listed above and recommended by the Joint Maintenance Agreement (JMA) Budget Committee.) Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be FIFTEEN MILLION, THREE HUNDRED NINETY-TWO THOUSAND, SIX HUNDRED SEVEN DOLLARS AND NO CENTS (\$15,392,607) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Alton School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. (*This warrant article does not include appropriations in ANY other warrant articles.*) (The Alton School Board recommends \$15,458,832 by a vote of 5-0. The Alton Budget Committee recommends \$15,458,832 by a vote of 6-0.)

ARTICLE III:

To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of EIGHTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$85,000) to be added to the existing Window Replacement Fund Expendable Trust created 3-8-05 under RSA 198:20-c for the purpose of replacing windows at Alton Central School. (The Alton School Board recommends \$85,000 by a vote of 5-0. The Alton Budget Committee recommends \$85,000 by a vote of 6-1.)

ARTICLE IV:

To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of FIFTEEN THOUSAND DOLLARS AND NO CENTS (\$15,000) to be added to the Prospect Mountain High School Athletic Field Capital Reserve Fund previously established, said sum representing Fifty percent (50%) of the total appropriation of THIRTY THOUSAND DOLLARS AND NO CENTS (\$30,000). And further that this appropriation shall be contingent upon both Alton (50%) and Barnstead (50%) School Districts adopting the article and appropriating and transferring their respective sum of money. (JMA Board recommends by a vote of 5-0. The Alton School Board recommends \$15,000 by a vote of 5-0. The Alton Budget Committee Does recommend \$15,000 by a vote of 6-0.)

Public Input on School Budget and Warrant Articles.

Loring Carr. Question on line 1100. \$52110 (health insurance) feels this is over budgeted and would Budget Committee would consider adjusting? K. Kharitonov stated often fluxuation can change when an employee makes changes to personal/family insurance plan. D. Hershey asked where the surplus goes if under-budged gets returned where?

Loring Carr asked for line 1100 56410-05 – books went from 10,000 to 15000. K. Kharitonov noted classroom requests from k-8 and also summer reading program. Based on specific requests made by teachers. Page 19 of 34, line 2320-51130, \$60,000. Are raises being given to those who do not have contracts? Comparing the default budget . Bringing up to the school board. Line 2600 5735, page 21. money for doors. Line 3640 to 32000. Interior doors and other equipment. K. Kharitonov stated additional doors that needed to be replaced.

Jeffrey Clay, Alton, NH.

Feels Budget Committee not following the law on meeting procedures. Does not like the setup of superintendent and principal set up for ACS. Suggests reducing positions in administration to reduce the budget.

Public input closed at 7:10

Town Operating Budget and Town Warrant Articles

Article 6: Benefit Pay Expendable Trust Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000 to be added to the Benefit Pay Expendable Trust Fund, previously established in 2001. Said funds are recommended by leave employment with the Town of Alton, in accordance with the Town Personnel Policy. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (4-0) and the Budget Committee (6-0). (Majority vote required)

Article 7: Operating Budget

Shall the Town raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$7,940,176.00? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$7,931,766.00, which is the

same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Board of Selectmen or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. This article does not include special or individual articles addressed. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (0-4) and the Budget Committee (4-2). (Majority vote required)

Article 8: Fire Department Equipment Capital Reserve

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 to be added to the Fire Equipment Capital Reserve Fund as previously established in 1973. Recommended by the Selectmen (3-1) and by the Budget Committee (5-0-1) (Majority vote required) (CIP recommended)

Article 9: Grounds and Maintenance Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to establish a Grounds and Maintenance Vehicle and Equipment Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of purchasing vehicles for the Grounds and Maintenance Department and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$22,500 to be placed in this fund. Further, to name the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend from said fund. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (4-0) and the Budget Committee (6-0). (Majority vote required) (CIP recommended)

Article 10: Highway Department Equipment Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$180,000 to be added to the Highway Department Equipment Capital Reserve Fund as previously established in 1981. Recommended by the Selectmen (3-1) and the Budget Committee (6-0). (Majority vote required) (CIP recommended)

Article 11: Bridge Construction Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 to be added to the Bridge Construction Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 1995. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-1) and the Budget Committee (6-0). (Majority vote required) (CIP recommended)

Article 12: Highway Building Improvements/Repairs Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 to be added to the Highway Building Improvements/Repairs Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 2014. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-1) and the Budget Committee (6-0). (Majority vote required) (CIP recommended)

Article 13: Rock and Asphalt Crushing Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000 to be added to the Rock and Asphalt Crushing Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 2017. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (4-0) and the Budget Committee (6-0). (Majority vote required)

Rationale: This capital reserve fund was established to use rocks, gravel, recycled materials during road reconstruction and Town projects, and reuse on town roads and town properties resulting in a cost savings of approximately 40% rather than purchasing new material.

Article 14: Highway Sand Shed Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 to be added to the Highway Sand Shed Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 2003. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-1) and the Budget Committee (6-0). (Majority vote required) (CIP recommended)

Article 15: Milfoil Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$29,000 to be added to the Milfoil Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 2010. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-1) and the Budget Committee (6-0). (Majority vote required)

Article 16: LiveScan Fingerprinting System

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 for the purpose of purchasing a LiveScan fingerprinting system and three years of service and warranty for the Police Department. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-1) and the Budget Committee (6-0). (Majority vote required)

Article 17: Landfill Closure Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$6,000 to be added to the Landfill Closure Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 1994. These funds are being used to deal with the contamination at the landfill and to meet the state regulatory requirements. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-1) and the Budget Committee (6-0). (Majority vote required)

Rationale: This fund is required by the Department of Environmental Services to fund unexpected expenses such as new contamination, testing, additional monitoring wells, removal of monitoring wells, the Annual Report for Groundwater Management required by the Department of Environmental Services.

12-11-18: There is a new DES project manager and a possibility that once he reviews all of the data (comes up to speed) he may want an additional monitoring well installed on the property (former Dahl property). The detected arsenic concentration exceeds the Ambient Groundwater Quality Standard (AGQS) at both downgradient monitoring wells (MW-203 and MW-204). There is a possibility DES will be alright with the data because we don't see any other exceedances of the AGQS.

Article 18: Town Hall Building Improvements Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$14,000 to be added to the Town Hall Building Improvements Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 2011. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-1) and the Budget Committee (6-0). (Majority vote required) (CIP recommended)

Article 20: Water Bandstand Maintenance and Repair Capital Reserve

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000) to be added to the Water Bandstand Maintenance and Repair Capital Reserve Fund previously established in 2014. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-1) and the Budget Committee (6-0). (Majority vote required)

Article 21: Alton Community Services Nonprofit

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 for the purpose of supporting the Alton Community Services which provides a food pantry and assistance programs for fuel, prescriptions, utilities and housing in close coordination with the Alton Welfare Department. This is a special warrant article. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-0-1) and the Budget Committee (3-2-1). (Majority vote required)

Article 22: American Red Cross Nonprofit

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,000 for the purpose of supporting the American Red Cross which provides disaster relief, shelters, basic household necessities and counseling. This is a special warrant article. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-1) and Not Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-3). (Majority vote required)

Article 23: CAP Nonprofit

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 for the purpose of supporting the Community Action Program which provides supplemental food, fuel, utility, transportation, meals on wheels, weatherization assistance and Women, Infants & Children food assistance program (WIC). This is a special warrant article. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (4-0) and the Budget Committee (4-2). (Majority vote required)

Article 24: Caregivers of Southern Carroll County and Vicinity Nonprofit

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,000 for the purpose of supporting Caregivers of Southern Carroll County & Vicinity, Inc. (includes Alton) which provides free transportation to handicapped, elderly and other residents needing assistance with all these services provided by volunteers. This is a special warrant article. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (4-0) and Not Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-3). (Majority vote required)

Article 25: CASA Nonprofit

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$500 for the purpose of supporting CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) which provides advocacy for abused and neglected children. This is a special warrant article. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-1) and the Budget Committee (4-2). (Majority vote required)

Article 26: Central NH VNA & Hospice Nonprofit

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$12,000 for the purpose of supporting the Central New Hampshire VNA & Hospice which is a non-profit agency that provides health care, hospice care and maternal child health services. This is a special warrant article. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-1) and the Budget Committee (4-2). (Majority vote required)

Article 27: Child & Family Services Nonprofit

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,500 for the purpose of supporting Child and Family Services of NH. This is a special warrant article. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-1) and Not Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-3). (Majority vote required)

Article 28: Lakes Region Mental Health Nonprofit

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$15,750 for the purpose of supporting Lakes Region Mental Health Center which provides mental health care to area residents, services for children, elders, along with other emergency services. This is a special warrant article. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-1) and Not Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-3). (Majority vote required)

Article 29: L.I.F.E. Ministries Nonprofit

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum \$3,000 for the purpose of supporting L.I.F.E. Ministries, Inc. which is a not-for-profit charity that provides food and staples to Alton residents. This is a special warrant article. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (2-1-1) and Not Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-2-1). (Majority vote required)

Article 30: New Beginnings Nonprofit

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,575 for the purpose of supporting New Beginnings which provides 24-hour crisis support for domestic/sexual assault victims, operates a shelter and provides counseling. This is a special warrant article. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-1) and the Budget Committee (4-2). (Majority vote required)

Article 35: Jones Field Recreation Area

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00) to upgrade and expand safety netting and fencing at the Jones Field Recreation Area. (Majority vote required) **This is a petition article.** Not recommended by the Budget Committee (6-0)

Article 33: Increase Veterans Property Tax Credit

To see if the Town will vote pursuant to RSA 72:28 I, to increase the Veterans Property Tax credit from \$500 annually to \$750. No taxpayer funds are requested for this article. (Majority vote required) **This is a petition article.** Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-2)

Article 32: Highway Road Construction

We, the undersigned voters ask that the Town of Alton vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$950,000.00 to be added to the Highway Construction Capital Reserve Fund as previously established in 1998. Said amount is partially offset by revenues from the Highway Block Grant Fund estimated to be \$198,000.00. This is an annual appropriation that provides for the reconstruction of existing roadways. Not recommended by the Budget Committee (3-2-1). (Majority vote is required) **This is a petition article.**

8. Public input on Town Warrant Articles and Budget.

Jeffrey Clay, Alton, NH

1. Town budget – water department. Highway dept does not pay for water. R. Wentworth explained. Water Department and Highway Department work together and do not charge for use of equipment and water not charged. Mr. Clay would encourage the Budget Committee to review several areas of the budget for reconsideration.

2. Non-profit and petition articles – opposed to all warrant articles.

3. Feels that a Warrant Article for maintenance is wrong.

Loring Carr, Alton, NH.

Corrected a comment on his time spent speaking. This is a special public hearing not a regular meeting. Expressed his opinion on several areas of the 2019 budget.

1. Asked for next year to separate salaries and not lump them all together. .

2. Discussion on breakdown of figures on merit raises.

3. Feels department head salaries should be listed and available to public.

4. Feels school did an excellent job on default budget. Feels the Budget Committee did not do a good job breaking down the default budget.

Ken Roberts, Highway Department.

Thanks for the budget committee for the increases. Expressed opinion on Highway Department budget on what has been cut and overspending vs underspending.

Scott Simonds, Landfill Department

Part time help cut cola.

Ryan Heath, Alton Police Department

1. Consider line 032 holiday pay. Does not match the increase in the pay. Short \$3300
Fuel cost reduced \$2000. Forcing cars to be stationary.

Loring Carr, Alton, NH

Agree with Reuben Wentworth. Budget made for no maintenance. Asked if salary will change for the Highway Dept head taking on an additional department.

Jeffrey Clay, Alton, NH

Asked the Budget Committee to not listen to Highway Department requests.

Nancy Morse, Alton, NH

Want to make public aware of the non-profits and what they support and the benefits.

Ann Nichols, non-Alton resident. Dir of Public Relations for Lakes Region Mental Health Center.
Explaining what their services provide. Includes 24 towns (including all of Belknap county).

Loring Carr, Alton, NH

Asked if the Budget Committee is going to finalize votes tonight. Roger Nelson informed these are finalized tonight.

Public input closed at 8:30

9. Other Business.

R. Nelson as if any Budget Committee wish to reconsider any items tonight by any department.

MOTION by R. Wentworth asked Budget Committee to consider the recommended Selectmen budget of \$8,181,850. Second by G. Fuller. Discussion. R. Wentworth feels he would not be doing due diligence as a Selectmen if he did not present this as a motion. 2 yes, 4 no. Motion fails.

10. Adjournment. MOTION by R. Nelson to adjourn at 8:32 pm seconded by D. Hershey with all in favor. No discussion. Motion passes 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn Schaeffner, Recording Secretary