

ALTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
Minutes  
February 8, 2021  
(Approved – February 22, 2021)

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Chairman R. Wentworth convened the meeting at 6:00 PM.

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](http://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.

R. Wentworth 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  
Laura Parker, Finance Manager

**Agenda Approval**

R. Wentworth informed the Board that there would be amendments to the agenda. Under Old Business, Discipline, Grievance, Complaint & Appeal Policy will be tabled until the next meeting. P. LaRochelle requested under New Business, add Bay Hill Road Signage Discussion. B. Holt requested to add under Old Business, Default Budget.

V. MacDonald made a motion to approve the agenda as amended and P. Wittmann seconded. Roll call vote:

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

**Announcements**

- Town Offices will be closed on Monday, February 15, 2021 in observance of President's Day.

**Submission of Public Comments - Questions - Concerns**

Robert Wright - Follow-up email

Another email was received from Robert Wright which contained all of the paperwork that was not accessible previously. This contained the same information as previously submitted. P. Wittmann voiced concerns about the Town Administrator contacting the Attorney General's Office. R. Wentworth feels that this was done in earnest without anybody supporting either side of this issue. Other members voiced concerns of even getting involved with this, it is not a Town issue it is a State issue. The same opportunity is offered to Mr. Howard and was recommended that he submit his rebuttal in writing. At that point this should be a dismissed item, there are several Town's involved. Any person can request a copy of the email but this will not be read into the record. The Board was in agreement and offered that anybody who wants a copy of Mr. Wright's follow up email that was submitted to the Board of Selectmen should request it through the Selectmen's Office by contacting either of the Secretaries in that office.

**Appointments**

**Brad Jones - High Point Drive Acceptance**

Brad Jones remotely joined the meeting to discuss the acceptance of High Point Drive as a Town Road. All submissions are complete and signed off by those involved. R. Wentworth had concerns from Section 6.13 and 6.16 from the Highway Policies. The Town Attorney signed off on January 20, 2021 that everything is all set. This has all gone through the Planning Board and approved. The easement was questioned and explained by Mr. Jones. P. LaRochelle asked if there were any objections by the abutters; there was none received and those would be voiced during the Public Hearing that would be scheduled. The biggest concern was is there a public need for the road to be accepted. None of the Departments answered this question. B. Jones was asked how the community would benefit from the road being accepted. B. Jones responded that they have a 20,000 gallon fire cistern. Back in 2007 the requirements were relaxed in regards to the cistern but it was decided to put one in place. The Town has used this cistern in the past, the Fire Department has locks and keys to it and are privy to it to use for accessibility any place in Town. There is Conservation land that surrounds the property. He feels that the residents contribute a significant amount to the tax base of the Town and they deserve to have the road maintained by the Town. V. MacDonald voiced, if the Town is requiring that a road be built to Town specifications then it should be accepted as a Town road. There is no easement to the Conservation property but there is access without issue to the property.

P. LaRochelle made a motion to set up a Public Hearing for the acceptance of High Point Drive as a Class V Town Road under the Town of Alton Highway Policies and B. Holt seconded. Roll call vote:

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

A date will be set up for the Public Hearing and Mr. Jones and abutters will be notified of the date.

**Jane Davis - Continuation Un-merger Request - Echo Point Road, Map 40 Lot 44**

L. Dionne informed the Board that the official survey came into the Town and the Assessor reviewed and provided a memo. J. Davis remotely joined the meeting. The memo from R. Jutton was referenced and is recommending that this be taken and unmerge the lot back to two (2) lots; they both meet the requirements for restoration. P. LaRochelle noted that both lots have adequate frontage, square footage and separate septic systems. They share a well which is not uncommon; there are no violations.

V. MacDonald made a motion to allow the Davis' to unmerge. R. Wentworth requested that the approval read differently.

R. Wentworth made a motion to unmerge Map 40 Lot 44 Request to Restore Involuntarily Merged Lots and V. MacDonald seconded.

Further Discussion: R. Jutton voiced that this is a prime candidate situation for a request to unmerge properties; it is the best that he has ever seen.

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**

1. **Highway Department - 2000 Mack Truck, Auction Request**

K. Roberts, Highway Manager remotely joined the meeting. He informed the Board that the new 10-Wheeler has arrived therefore he would like to put the 2000 Mack truck out for bid online on the Municipal Auction site. The plow, sander and wing will go with it due to their condition.

V. MacDonald made a motion to allow K. Roberts to place the 2000 Mack truck #RD690P online at the Municipal bid site with a minimum bid of \$6,000 which will include the head plow, sander and wing and P. LaRochelle seconded. Roll call vote:

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

2. Water Bandstand Usage - August 7, 2021, 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM

P. LaRochelle noted that when the Bandstand is used that it is recommended that a donation be made which would be placed into the Water Bandstand escrow account. L. Dionne noted that the donation should specifically show it is a donation for that purpose. The contingency plan needs to be turned in thirty (30) days prior to the event because CDC Guidelines may change between now and the event. This request is for a wedding.

V. MacDonald made a motion to allow the usage of the Water Bandstand for a wedding on August 7, 2021 from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM following all CDC Guidelines and sending all of the proper paperwork to the EM Team along with the required insurance rider to the Town, thirty (30) days prior to the event and P. Wittmann seconded. Roll call vote:

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

3. Bay Hill Road Signage Discussion

P. LaRochelle informed the Board that signage on Bay Hill Road has been briefly discussed in the past. Again, there has been a serious accident during a snow storm. It is down the roadway in the same location (2/3 of the way around the corner) which is where almost every accident happens. Once you are on the roadway you are committed. V. MacDonald voiced that the 8% grade signs should be moved. P. LaRochelle suggested that there should be seasonal signs (October to May) use alternate route or close the road during the winter months. This usage is being directed/driven by GPS. R. Wentworth suggested that signage be placed during the winter months for local traffic only at the ends of the road. Enforcement was mentioned and the Police Chief and Highway Manager need to be consulted; they should be asked for recommendations from them. V. MacDonald again, feels that the slope signs should be moved to each end of the roadway. R. Wentworth would like the IT Director, J. Monaco to contact Google to ask that they remove from GPS that this road is the shortest route. This will be referred to Police, Fire and Highway along with J. Monaco contacting Google.

Old Business:

1. Discipline, Grievance, Complaint & Appeal Policy

TABLED

2. Default Budget

B. Holt would like for clarification from the Town Administrator and Town Attorney on the Default Budget. We have all heard the complaint from Mr. Carr at the Deliberative Session in reference to contracts. He met with L. Parker and was given the NHMA edition of the 2020, Basic Laws of Budgeting. He referred to page 132 stating it spells it out about contracts and multi-year contracts and gave examples of contracts approved by the Selectmen or by Warrant Article. R. Wentworth recommends that all documents should be sent to the Town Attorney for a legal opinion and recommendation. B. Holt wants clear clarification on the Default Budget issue. The Board was in agreement with sending the documents to the Town Attorney.

## Selectmen Reports

B. Holt referenced the emails from the Milfoil Committee noting that recommendations should be forth coming soon from the Committee.

P. LaRochelle had nothing to report. He informed the Board that the ice runway is plowed and prepared and is currently open (daytime only) for the helicopter pad. Approval was given today from the State. It has been cleared 2600 feet and will just need maintaining with the projected storms.

P. Wittmann had nothing to report.

V. MacDonald had nothing to report.

R. Wentworth was going to report on the Default Budget however it was addressed by B. Holt. In addition, he disagrees with the Route 11 No Parking signs that Mr. Carr brought forward at the Deliberative Session; he would like for the signs to remain the same. There are certain areas that could be addressed to possibly allow some off street parking.

## Town Administrator Report by L. Dionne

### Mr. Wright/Ray Howard Issue

L. Dionne commented on the Mr. Wright/Ray Howard issue, she informed the Board that she is not taking any sides one way or the other on this issue. When this was received she immediately forwarded it to the Town Attorney for his opinion.

### Fire Truck

J. Beaudoin, Fire Chief remotely joined the meeting. He informed the Board that P. O'Brien was also in attendance. P. O'Brien, the Town Mechanic and another Fire Department employee took the road trip to inspect the Fire Truck; it was everything that they expected and they were very happy with the apparatus. Particulars of the vehicle were mentioned. The original \$15,000 that was thought to be needed for outfitting will probably be around \$8,800 which will be for radios and lettering.

### President's Day Holiday

The next meeting would be falling on President's Day; the Town Hall is closed. The Board was asked whether they would like to cancel the meeting or reschedule. The decision was to cancel the meeting. The next meeting will be February 22<sup>nd</sup>.

### Coalition Communities - Education Tax (State Portion)

Many emails have been forwarded to the Board regarding the State portion of the Education Tax. There are proposed changes in Concord with the Legislature. This will increase every Municipalities state tax portion significantly. There is a proposal with the Legislature. Portsmouth is the leader for the coalition communities representing the donor Town's. They want to hire a lobbyist and share the expenses for the donor Town's; at this time the cost is unknown. The Board recommends that the people contact the State Representatives and keep the public informed. It was suggested to place this information on Social Media and the Town's Website for exposure. There has been no input from our State Representatives; L. Dionne offered to contact them.

### Downed Trees - Merrymeeting River

There are eight (8) trees that have fell into the Merrymeeting River. They have all fallen from Town property. DES was contacted as well as Stoney Ridge Environmental. You may go into the water to remove the trees but you cannot use any equipment and you cannot disturb the banking. You must be very careful and can do it without a permit. If anything more is done then a permit will be necessary. The Highway Department can remove the trees

only if they have fallen from Town Property and they interfere with navigation. Sometimes they are good and can be helpful to the habitat. It was recommended that the Conservation Commission check out the situation. L. Dionne will contact K. Roberts and look to R. Wilder for their recommendations. The Town will only be responsible for the ones that fell from Town Property This will need to wait until warmer weather.

**Approval of Minutes**

January 20, 2021 - Regular

P. Wittmann made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting, January 20, 2021 as presented and B. Holt seconded. Roll call vote:

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

January 25, 2021 - Regular

V. MacDonald made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting, January 25, 2021 as presented and P. LaRochelle seconded. Roll call vote:

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

January 25, 2021 - Non-Public

R. Wentworth made a motion to approve the minutes of the Non-Public Meeting, January 25, 2021 as presented divulging none and P. LaRochelle seconded. Roll call vote:

B. Holt, yes	P. LaRochelle, yes	P. Wittmann, yes
V. MacDonald, no	R. Wentworth, yes	

**Consent Agenda Approval**

V. MacDonald made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda #1 only, Tax Abatements and hold off on item #2 until after Non-Public Session.

R. Wentworth informed that you cannot just say Tax Abatements because a lot are credits and certifications.

R. Wentworth made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda #1 only Assessing Department recommendations as submitted on February 8, 2021 and V. MacDonald seconded. Roll call vote:

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

**1. Assessing Department:**

**Veteran's Credit**

Paul Hamilton, Jr.; 1349 Mount Major Highway; Map 17 Lot 10-2; \$750

**NHDRA Equalization Certification**

Town of Alton; 2020 Equalization Ratio Study Certification Form (Pink Sheet)

**Veteran's Credit**

Luther Hyslop; 35 Ehlen Way; Map 8 Lot 52-1; \$750

James McCardle; 336 Avery Hill Road; Map 69 Lot 34; \$750

**2020 Abatement**

Hanson Rev. Trust; 88 Minge Cove Road; Map 59 Lot 22; \$54.96

Note #2 will be taken up after Non-Public Session.

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

**Justin Cooper - Request to Un-merge, Avery Hill Road, Map 10 Lot 6**

B. Holt made a motion to approve the appointment request for Justin Cooper to un-merger Avery Hill Road, Map 10 Lot 6 for no more than 10 minutes and P. LaRochelle seconded. Roll call vote:

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

**Raymond Howard, Jr. - Rebuttal Regarding State Government**

R. Wentworth is requesting that Mr. Howard’s rebuttal be put in writing so that it can be read into the record which would be the same as was done for Mr. Wright. This is not a Town issue but he should be given the same opportunity. These will become part of the record.

V. MacDonald made a motion to allow Mr. Howard to submit a written rebuttal and deny an in person appointment and P. LaRochelle seconded.

Further Discussion: P. Wittmann noted that this is a State issue. B. Holt stated that we currently don’t take any public input. Both parties were given the same opportunities. There are no decisions to be made, we listened and either commented or did not comment.

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

B. Holt, no                      P. LaRochelle, yes                      P. Wittmann, yes  
V. MacDonald, yes              R. Wentworth, yes

**Non-Public Session**

R. Wentworth moved at 7:44pm to enter into nonpublic session under RSA 91-A:3,II,b,c. V. MacDonald seconded. Roll call vote:

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

V. MacDonald moved at 8:30pm to exit nonpublic session. P. Wittmann seconded. Roll call vote:

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

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                      Roll call vote carried unanimously

**Consent Agenda continuation:** V. MacDonald moved to approve item #2. P. Wittmann seconded. Motion carried.

2. **Heidke Caregiver position:**  
**Conditional Hire:** Carol Ann Diveny, \$12.77/hr., effective 02/09/21

**Adjournment**

P. LaRochelle moved at 8:32pm to adjourn. P. Wittmann seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

*Mary K. Jarvis*

Mary K. Jarvis  
Recording Secretary