

ALTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes

March 6, 2017

6:00 PM

1 Monument Square

Alton, NH 03809

Approved: March 27, 2017

Cydney Johnson 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 members and staff were present:

Cydney Johnson, Chairwoman
Lou LaCourse, Vice Chairman
Philip V. Wittmann, Selectman
Virgil MacDonald, Selectman
John Markland, Selectman
Elizabeth Dionne, Town Administrator

Approval of the Agenda

John Markland made a motion to approve the agenda and Virgil MacDonald seconded. Cydney Johnson requested amending the agenda adding Ambulance Billing under Old Business.

John Markland made a motion to approve the agenda as amended and Lou LaCourse seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Announcements:

- The next election will be held on March 14th, 2017 from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM in the lower level of St. Katharine Drexel Church, 40 Hidden Spring Road.
- Town road weight limits are in effect until further notice; exceptions are made on an individual basis by request through the Highway Department.
- Our thoughts and prayers go out to the O'Blenes' family who lost their family home this morning in a fire; we hope they are doing well.

Appointments:

Mike Donovan, Don Roberts Real Estate; Discussion Route 28 Property for Sale

Mike Donovan from Don Roberts Real Estate presented to the Board a property for sale located at 108 Suncook Valley Road, which has recently become available. It is comprised of 4.5 ac +/- known as Map 25 Lot 4, formerly owned by the Portigue family since 1943. This parcel abuts the existing Cemetery therefore; it may be of interest to the Town for future development. The property would need to be properly surveyed to rule out any misrepresentation of the total acreage.

Sylvia Leggett, Rumble Strips, Route 28 North Corridor

Sylvia Leggett approached the Board voicing that the grass roots efforts are continuing in the quest for removal of the rumble strips on the Route 28 North corridor. The DOT Commissioner by now should have received many more complaints than the two (2) that were discussed at the meeting on February 2nd she has also asked that copies go to Christopher Collins, Special Assistant to the Governor. The next step is a letter to the Editor to the following newspapers: Laconia Daily Sun, Union Leader, Concord Monitor and the Baysider. Sylvia Leggett read it into the record:

Petition to Remove NH Route 28 Rumble Strips in Alton

To the Editor:

Since the installation of the NH Route 28 rumble strips in Alton last May, there has been an on-going effort to get them removed. Back in a letter dated July 29, 2016, the NHDOT Commissioner acknowledged 'the concerns expressed by a significant number of Alton citizens who provided feedback including, constant noise from the rumble strips, loss of sleep, location of the strips on the edge line, the potential impact to vacation business and property values, and the lack of advance notice or the opportunity for public input in advance of the project. Given the level of negative feedback, the Department believes remedial action is warranted to address and rectify the situation.'

The following actions were taken: the rumble strips south of the Alton traffic circle were removed because they did not meet NHDOT guidelines and the edge line rumble stripes on the white line north of the circle were likewise removed.

In that same letter, the NHDOT Commissioner stated that the centerline rumble strips north of the traffic circle would remain. She then stated, 'we recognize the concern about passing zones and will consider eliminating/stripping out passing zones in areas of particular receptors and with the consensus from the community.'

Our Board of Selectmen met with the NHDOT Commissioner on September 19, 2016. The Board stated "we are not in favor of the rumble strips and ask that they be removed." In response, the NHDOT did a depth measurement study of the rumble strips and found them to just meet the specification criteria. They also did a brief study of passing zone maneuvers in passing zones because of the continued noise concern. Their data indicated to them that a very small percentage of the traffic was making passing maneuvers. The NHDOT Commissioner stated, 'while we can appreciate that any disturbance is frustrating, it seems the noise associated with passing is relatively infrequent, especially overnight.' Based on that information, it was stated that it is 'the Department's intent to maintain the centerline rumble strips along NH 28 north of the circle.'

Statistics presented by our Chief of Police, where 75% of the accidents along NH Route 28 north of the circle were caused by deer, do not support the need for these un-wanted rumble strips. The petition that will be circulated beginning on March 14th at St. Katherine Drexel Church when you come to vote will ask the NHDOT Commissioner to live up to her initial promise to recognize the concern about passing zones and to re-consider removing the centerline rumble strips from these zones.

Please sign this petition in support of removing the centerline rumble strips in the passing zones. The noise from these rumble strips is much more frequent and disturbing than the NHDOT will acknowledge. We need to pursue

the removal of these rumble strips before they result in any further damage to the quality of life, property values and the attractiveness of Alton as a preferred Lakes Region place to live and vacation.

*Sincerely,
Sylvia Leggett
Alton, NH*

Sylvia continued; we have been granted permission inside St. Katharine's on voting day to gather signatures on a Petition. We will probably be asking for removal of the centerline rumble strips in the passing zones. There are some people that want them completely removed but it is our belief that removal from passing zones is something that NH DOT Commissioner should be willing to compromise on if we continue to be the squeaky wheel. Sylvia thanked the Board for their continued support and challenged the Board to give pressure on NH DOT to take further remedial action. Virgil MacDonald voiced concerns that instead of removing the rumble strips that they will just take away the passing zones. Ms. Leggett was told by Mr. William Lambert who is in charge of the passing zones, that just painting double yellow lines will not keep people from passing. It might keep the majority of law abiding citizens from passing. At a minimum we will be asking for removal of the passing zones in our petition. There is five (5) miles of passing zones with each of those having people that are affected in each of them. Property values are also being affected which will eventually affect every citizen in Alton with taxation. She urged each Board member to sign the petition on election day at the polls.

Joan Blackwood, Alton Garden Club; Proposed Bandstand Project

Joan Blackwood along with Maria and William Colacrai were present to present a re-introduction of the Bandstand project which will need to be done at some point in time. Knowing that change is difficult and that there is sentimentality in Town to keep the Bandstand the way it. In speaking with the ADA she was told that the railings are not up to code but they can be changed out without concern the only thing they are interested in is how you actually access the structure; this cannot be altered but you can repair, if it is altered then you must install a ramp. Drawings were provided to the Board with a handicapped ramp on the left and another on the right side of the Bandstand and an estimate of approximately 20K to install a ramp, railings and a granite step for the front of the platform. There is a list of people on the committee and a fundraising project which would be a brick campaign with different options for presentation. Profile Bank is willing to handle financing, passing out applications etc. The different phases of the project were presented to the Board along with options for the top of the Bandstand which would cost about 1K. This can be a project for the future and she would like the Board to give it some thought then let her know how to proceed. Lou LaCourse questioned which of the designs Joan preferred. Joan responded that most of the committee members prefer the right side ramp however; she prefers the left side ramp as it is less costly with the connection being right to the building. This is all dependent on the likes of all. Concerns were voiced about kids using the ramp for skateboarding. Cydney Johnson questioned the sale of the bricks (amounts and costs) with Joan responding that they could be sold for \$100 for 300 bricks or \$50 for 600 bricks. The bricks would be placed in the front of the structure with us doing the installation. If someone

files a complaint with the US Department of Justice then you will be forced to immediately install a handicap ramp on the structure. Joan was thanked for her enthusiasm.

Public Input I *(limited to 3 minutes per person; subject matter - agenda items only)*

Loring Carr inquired if anyone has taken decibel reading as to how loud the rumble strips actually are. There are OSHA standards of what is a tolerable amount in a workplace knowing that 120 decibels is way above that standard. He suggested maybe bringing a tape recording of the rumble strip noise and playing it during a meeting with the involved parties while discussing them. He has no doubt that eliminating the rumble strips will kill someone however if you want to make things safe you would need to put a stop light at every intersection. There is a point when you have to risk people's lives versus the convenience of the people. He believes that legislature has to determine this and in his opinion we need to ask our legislature to set a standard that if there is a house within a certain mileage that there cannot be any rumble strip; this should be for the whole state. It is our quality of life versus the people versus safety is what it comes down to. We need to use our Representatives to voice these concerns and it should be done throughout the state.

New Business:

Annual Fireworks Contracts (2); Atlas PyroVision Entertainment Group, Inc.

Cydney Johnson made a motion to approve the Atlas Fireworks contract for \$12,750.00 for July 4th and \$6,750.00 for Old Home Week Fireworks Contract for a total amount of \$19,500.00 and Lou LaCourse seconded.

Discussion: Virgil MacDonald asked if this went out to bid. Lou responded that according to personnel manual section 9.3.15, allows the governing body to waive the need for bidding for specialized contracting work when you have a vendor that you are satisfied with and we are.

The vote on the table held with all in favor of the motion.

Approval and Appointment to Old Home Week Committee; Robert B. Regan

John Markland made a motion to approve the appointment of Robert B. Regan to the Old Home Week Committee and Phil Wittmann seconded with all in favor of the motion.

The committee is still looking for new members.

Approval of Videographer Pay Rate

Liz Dionne provided a staff report to the Board. With confusion in the past on the rate of pay for the videographer position, Liz's goal is to simplify it to a straight \$20.00 per hour. Part of the intent for this is to make it appealing enough to have people show an interest in performing the task. This is only necessary for the Deliberative Session. The current rate is \$40.04 for the first 2½ hours then \$16.73 for each hour thereafter.

John Markland made a motion to approve the Videographer Pay Rate as presented and Cydney Johnson seconded.

Discussion: Lou LaCourse stated that with the ten (10) different towns presented there is only one town that is paying more than we are. The average hourly rate is \$14.77 with his estimate at \$14.62. We are currently paying an average of \$16.40 1/2 which is more than any of the other towns. He feels that this doesn't make any sense to pay \$4.00 more an hour than anyone else and suggests that this get opened to anyone outside of town employees. Both the average pay and the median pay is \$14.62 per hour. Lou sees no reason to pay any more than \$16.50 per hour and recommends this as the rate of pay for the position.

Lou LaCourse amended the motion for the Videographer Pay Rate to be \$16.50 per hour and Virgil MacDonald seconded with all in favor of the amended motion.

Old Business:

Amendments to the Welfare Guidelines for Approval

It was noted that most of the changes to the guidelines were "housekeeping" items.

John Markland made a motion to approve the guidelines as written and Cydney Johnson seconded.

Discussion: Virgil MacDonald made a motion that we work on page 9 "i" which reads: *To participate in the Town Work Program subject to the terms and conditions contained in these Guidelines under Section 9.* He would like to see the Town work on initiating a Work Program. Liz Dionne mentioned the issues that could be presented and need to be taken into consideration such as supervision, liability, workers compensation. There is nothing in writing from the insurance company stating their stance on this issue. Virgil MacDonald stated there is no reason there should not be a Work Program. John Markland noted that the guidelines do have Section 10, Work Program. The only word being changed is the word "shall" to the word "may". Liz is unsure that she even wants Town employees subject to some folks having knowledge that she is not at liberty to discuss in public session. Lou LaCourse asked if there was a list of the limitations people have so that we could build a list of jobs that would fit under such limitations. Cydney Johnson understands the reasoning behind these concerns of people just coming in getting money and never having to work for it however, they might not have the ability of going to a doctor to obtain a note. The reason for changing the wording from "shall" to "may" is so we are not out of compliance by not using the Work Program; this way we are not mandated. We do need to take into consideration what the insurance company tells us. One claim is all it is going to take to wipe out five (5) years and is it really worth the liability and will we get a return on that investment. Cydney recommends that the Board approve the changes in the wording and then tackle the Work Program so that we can clean up the guidelines. Cydney asked Liz Dionne to contact our insurance company and other towns to come up with a Work Program. Liz Dionne stated that the State RSA does not mandate that there be a Work Program it is left up to the individual towns.

The motion on the table held. The vote was 2 approved, 1 abstention, Lou LaCourse and 1 opposed, Phil Wittmann. Note: John Markland was not in attendance for the vote.

Information will be put together for a Work Program to be brought back to the Board at a later date.

Ambulance Billing

Cydney Johnson handed out a written proposal for Ambulance Billing and read her proposal into the record as follows:

- Budget for 100% of ambulance wages through taxation
- Send a bill for services to every user's insurance
- Residents will not be subject to collections
- Adopt a policy submitted by Chief for non-residents
- 100% of money collected through insurance and donations is to go directly to revolving fund for the sole purpose of purchasing new ambulance equipment

It seems to Cydney that people are under the impression that the ambulance is currently funded through taxation. In reality we fund some of the wages through the Fire Department but the majority is taken from the revolving fund. Eventually it is likely that we will run out of money in that fund so this proposal would be a way to begin running the ambulance through taxation without it being a large hit to the budget. Lou LaCourse believes that the ambulance fund will be down to zero in about two (2) years. A lot of information that they are being given is cloudy. With costs being above the budget, we go to the ambulance fund and go to the Fire Departments budgets in order to obtain the money. The allowable charges are 47% of the actual charges and what we are collecting versus the actual charges is 37% for 2016, 63% of our charges we are not even getting. In 2016 there has been a major turn down of the money coming in from charges. A lot of this may be due to the current discussions as to people having to pay, not having to pay; it seems a lot of people are not even putting services through their insurance. Lou is in agreement with some of the presented proposal but not all of it. Lou wants the Chiefs policy clarified on non-residents. Cydney Johnson stated that the Chief wants to establish a hardship policy with a committee which would follow the Welfare Guidelines, to establish payment plans, following such then they would not be sent to collections. The only thing changing is that no residents from the Town of Alton would be sent to collections because in exchange we will now be raising wages through taxation. Virgil MacDonald stated that there are several Warrant Articles this year and the Chief is forcing the Ambulance to go broke instead of taking it out of the ambulance fund. You don't need to buy everything in one year. Lou stated there is money coming in to refill it but not enough with costs dating back twenty (20) years that are not the same as they are today, with more people, more costs, more runs. Respectfully speaking, Cydney Johnson stated that the Chief is putting the department back together; it has not been taken care of for years, we have seen it, we have toured the Department, we have seen the equipment and the failed inspections. We now have a chief that is planning and has presented a plan to move forward with a rotation of the equipment.

Lou LaCourse and Phil Wittmann would like to revisit what the chief's policy says about non-residents before making a final decision. Currently some of the wages are taken out of the Fire Department budget and some are taken from the ambulance budget. It would be a cleaner way to have a line item in each budget in order to follow for future planning.

Virgil MacDonald and Phil Wittmann agreed they would like to approve everything except adopting the policy for non-residents.

Virgil MacDonald made a motion to table the adopt policy as submitted by the Chief for non-residents until we have a chance to re-review. It was clarified that the motion is to adopt everything on the proposal submitted by Cydney Johnson except bullet 4; "the adopt policy line submitted by Chief for non-residents" and Lou LaCourse seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Town Administrator's Report and Updates by Liz Dionne

The Rock

Liz is looking for direction from the Board in regards to the plaque for the rock. The Board agreed that Liz to should narrow it down to three (3) choices then bring it back to them for a decision.

Liquor License Request; JP (Just Past) China LLC

A letter was received from the State Liquor Commission and a letter from JP China. The Liquor Commission letter is a request for a Retail Tobacco license and the letter from JP China is requesting to sell tobacco products and a Combination Liquor license, which Liz assumes, will be forth coming from the State. At this time, it would be approval for the tobacco license only. The store across the street has closed which has had an impact in the Bay area.

Lou LaCourse made a motion to approve the request for a Tobacco License for Just Past China, LLC and Cydney Johnson seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Selectmen's Committee Report

John Markland attended the Wolfeboro Chamber of Commerce meeting at JP China finding it very interesting and fascinating. Some Alton businesses participate with the Chamber. Wolfeboro has a Selectmen's Rep who attends the Chamber meetings to update them on what transpires during the Selectmen's meetings; they welcomed Alton to become a part of it if we so choose. In conversation at the meeting, Wolfeboro has Warrant Articles for similar items for the same projects that we are doing such as expanding their parking lot and upgrading their bathrooms to ADA compliance; John's thought was that possibly we could coordinate with Wolfeboro having the same projects for a lower bidding price for a cost savings for both towns. Also, there is a group of Selectmen from the north side of the lake that meet on a regular basis, we would be welcome to be a part of that group as well. Cydney Johnson

inquired; with them trying to get Alton involved would this then become the Wolfeboro/Alton Chamber. This was unknown. They are trying to expand and get Alton involved.

Virgil MacDonald met with the Planning Board who approved a dog training/grooming business and a hairstylist business at the Car Wash location (Blake Building) on Route 28.

Phil Wittmann met with the Parks and Recreation Commission. The Chairman suggested that they invite the Planning Board and Conservation Commission members to a workshop with them to discuss future expansion of the trail system and recreation facilities. Other topics of discussion were ADA compliance of Town buildings with concerns expressed for the need to hire an engineer to prepare the bid documents. Concerns were expressed about having an appointment with the Board of Selectmen. Liz Dionne confirmed that they would need to follow the normal scheduled appointment procedure for an appointment. The Commission discussed basketball, skating rink, summer programs, exercise programs, sidewalks, snow removal issues, Joan Blackwood's meeting regarding Monument Square, hiring lifeguards, summer band concerts and Cemetery Staff issues/resignation.

Lou LaCourse met with the Zoning Board. There were two (2) items for discussion. A special exemption for the dog grooming/training business was granted. The other request was for a variance to build a garage within the setbacks; this was cancelled pending changes, which will be back before them later. The Conservation Commission is meeting on Thursday.

Approval of Selectmen's Minutes:

February 22, 2017

Cydney Johnson had a correction on page 8 the line just above New Business should read: The Public Input was closed.

Cydney Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes of Public Session I, February 22, 2017 as amended and Virgil MacDonaald seconded. The vote was 3 approved; 1 abstention, Lou LaCourse

Cydney Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes of Non-Public Session I, February 6, 2017 opening #1 and John Markland seconded. The vote was 3 approved; 1 abstention, Lou LaCourse.

Approval of Consent Agenda

John Markland made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda dated March 6, 2017 and Lou LaCourse seconded with all in favor of the motion.

1. 2017-18 Notice of Intent to Excavate-needs original signatures-see Planning Memo

Jeddrey, John	Map 19 Lot 18	476 Roberts Cove Road	Operation 17-011-01-E
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2. 2016-2017 Gravel Tax

Jeddrey, John & Jason	Map 19 Lot 18	476 Roberts Cove Road	\$121.58
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3. 2016 Abatements

4 Tran Realty Trust	Map 40 Lot 1	34 Lionel Terrace	\$1,071.00
Howland & Rowinski Trusts	Map 59 Lot 6	58 Minge Cove Road	\$410.00

4. 2016-17 Timber Warrant \$3,743.85

Cornelissen Martin	Map 5 Lot 66	Operation 16-011-01-T	\$3,639.12
W & W Inglewood	Map 27 Lot 17	Operation 16-011-10-T	\$104.73

5. 2017 Veteran's Exemption

Mitchell Thomas	Map 67 Lot 18	23 Lady Slipper Lane	\$500.00
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6. 2017 Veteran's Exemption-100% Disabled

Mitchell Thomas	Map 67 Lot 18	23 Lady Slipper Lane	\$1,400.00
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Public Input II (limited to 5 minutes per person; subject matter ~ any Governmental/Town Business)

Loring Carr approached the Board voicing his concerns of the statement that Lou LaCourse brought forward earlier in the meeting for collection of only 37%. Lou clarified this; we are collecting 37% of the total charges, not the allowable charges. We have the total charges then beyond that we have what is allowable for insurance, Medicaid, etc. The allowable is actually 200K less than the total charges. Right off, we have lost 200K. The percentage we report is based on what is allowed, not what we want to charge. Again, it is 37% of the total charges. Loring Carr further stated that this is getting so convoluted; this is mind boggling too many people are saying things. This is an important thing for people to understand and suggested some sort of position paper to explain exactly what is happening so that people have a correct understanding of the situation. There are too many outside people adding comments,

muddying up the waters. Cydney Johnson stated that things have changed tremendously in the past twenty (20) years. Lou LaCourse is looking for more information on the subject. To clarify the total for 2016; total charges were \$452,686 the allowable charges were \$252,602 so you are down 200K. The total collected is 169K and we are patting ourselves on the back for this. Budgeted was 160K, we took in 169K so we are 9K ahead, not even close. Lou is actually gathering the numbers and building some charts so it will be crystal clear. Cydney Johnson stated that people don't understand that if we don't transport someone then we cannot bill for it, no car insurance, no health insurance no billings can be charged. Loring continued that a decision needs to be made whether we are going to fund this or whether we are not going to fund this.

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

None

Non-Public Session I:

Cydney Johnson made a motion to enter into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (c) and John Markland seconded. The Board was polled in the affirmative by roll call with all in favor of the motion.

Roll call vote:

John Markland, yes
Virgil MacDonald, yes
Philip V. Wittmann, yes
Lou LaCourse, yes
Cydney Johnson, yes

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:26PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary K. Jarvis

Mary K. Jarvis
Recording Secretary