

ALTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes
June 29, 2020
Approved – July 6, 2020

Chairman R. Wentworth convened the meeting at 6:00 PM and L. Parker, Finance Officer 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:

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. There continues to be no Public Input at this time. If you wish to have something read into the record, please call the Selectmen's Office at 603-875-2113 or 603-875-0229 or email the Selectmen at selectmen@alton.nh.gov, or mail a letter to the Board of Selectmen at PO Box 659, Alton, NH 03809. Your comments, questions or concerns will be read at the next available meeting and answered at that meeting or the next available meeting.

Agenda Approval

R. Wentworth added under New Business #3 Depot Street Upgrade. V. MacDonald added under Old Business #4 (a) Linwood Drive. P. Wittmann requested a memo be added for Old Home week, he was informed it will be an agenda item for next meeting; he was fine with that response.

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 Friday, July 3rd in honor of Independence Day.
- The fireworks display scheduled for the July 4th holiday have been cancelled due to the Pandemic.

Submission of Public Comments - Questions - Concerns

- Dustin Fortier - Stockbridge Corner Road Complaint

R. Wentworth read the submitted complaint received June 23, 2020 by Dustin Fortier to the Board of Selectmen and Law Enforcement into the record as follows:

Since I have lived here since 2012, the amount of traffic is absolutely staggering. I live at the corner of the fork where Valley Rd. splits with Stockbridge Corner Road. The speed limit is 30mph, but most people will do 50-60 thinking they're on a highway still. GPS sends anyone from the seacoast going to Concord or vice versa, down this road from Tash Road in New Durham. Not only does anyone working to and from these locations fly on this road, but the amount of commercial trucks like tractor trailers is ridiculous. If you ever ask yourselves why the asphalt always needs to be repaired on the shoulder of the shrinking road, look at the size and weight of these commercial trucks that travel down this small rural road on a daily basis. Not only is their speed aggravating, but the amount of times I'm woken up early in the morning by the obnoxious noise of Jake (exhaust) brakes is absolutely unnecessary. There should at least be signage like "no thru trucks" or "no exhaust brakes in a neighborhood". I can't say it's much fun trying to pull out of this driveway with the high volume of traffic on this road especially when they fly around the corner. I have two young kids who are always in the car with me, and who which I always have to constantly tell them "whatever you do, don't go near the road"! Also plowing is an absolute nightmare when I have to sit and wait for a mile of

traffic before I can plow my mailbox. More policing this road would help too. Very seldom do I see cops on this end of Stockbridge.

R. Wentworth understands the concerns, unfortunately with received money from the State you cannot restrict truck limitations. As far as the exhaust brakes, signage could be added. Basically every Town road that leads into another Town has the same issue. We can ask the Police Department to patrol the area heavily and suggested that trucks proceed to the traffic circle. There isn't much that can be done except possible signage for the brakes and placing the radar trailer at the location. R. Wentworth asked if the Board wanted to investigate signage for the brakes. Discussion ensued which included the possibility of an Ordinance specific to brakes. The consensus of the Board was to send this to the Police Department for further policing action.

Appointments:

None

New Business:

1. Combination Beverage/Wine/Tobacco License - Jessica McGee & Arielle Wolfe, 404 Main Street

R. Wentworth noted that this is at the location of the former Busy Corner Store.

P. LaRochelle made a motion to approve the Combination Beverage/Wine/Tobacco License for Jessica McGee & Arielle Wolfe, 404 Main Street and V. MacDonald seconded. Roll call vote:

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

2. 2021 COLA and Merit Recommendation

L. Parker, Finance Officer was invited to the table to discuss the 2021 COLA and Merit recommendations. R. Wentworth noted that no COLA was issued last year however to keep up with wages it is recommended that this be given so that we don't fall below average pay scales. The recommendation is for 2% COLA and 2% Merit. The Board needs to approve the proposal with departments needing the information for budgeting purposes. P. Wittmann feels that a 3.5% Merit is sufficient and should be based on that. B. Holt has no problem with COLA and would like for the Board not to consider Merit this year but possibly next year and mentioned the consideration of bonuses which is not compounded over the year and only paid out once. V. MacDonald explained the reasoning for changing from the Step Program opposed to Merit to keep up with current wages. R. Wentworth noted and compared wages to his business and mentioned the support that has been offered and stepped up by the Town employees especially during the pandemic along with its stressfulness. He and other members are in support of the employees and would go no more than 5% combined Merit and COLA.

P. Wittmann made a motion to approve 1.6% COLA and 3% Merit.

L. Dionne and L. Parker were consulted and thanked the Board for the consideration.

P. Wittmann made a motion to approve 1.6% COLA and up to 3% Merit and P. LaRochelle seconded. Roll call vote:

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

3. Depot Street Upgrade

K. Roberts, Highway Manager remotely joined the meeting. R. Wentworth, P. LaRochelle and K. Roberts met earlier tonight on Depot Street. The Board was provided information from the electric company who want to remove two (2) poles that run down the railroad bed and upgrade within the Town ROW. At the same time K. Roberts would like to straighten the road that enters the Fiore property fixing the box culvert that is failing and straighten out the curve on Depot Street. He recommends that the other members take a look at the subject matter. K. Roberts feels that with the wall (which is currently collapsing into the ditch line) now would be the time to address and remedy the issue. This has nothing to do with the previously proposed issue. B. Holt inquired about the classification of the road with K. Roberts stating it is considered Class V. V. MacDonald, B. Holt and P.

Wittmann need to meet individually with K. Roberts. The Board's decision was to have an onsite visit at 5:30 PM just before the Regular Meeting on July 6, 2020.

Old Business:

1. Assessing Department - Website Conversion Update

Robb Jutton, Tax Assessor joined the meeting remotely. The spreadsheets have been presented to J. Monaco to post on the website. He was unsure if they had been posted yet. J. Monaco indicated they have not been uploaded yet. The Board would like to see them prior to posting. J. Monaco indicated it would be a week to a week and a half which was agreeable with R. Jutton and the Board. R. Jutton anticipates the Avitar website should be up and running by September of 2021, possibly earlier. Once reviewed he will be noticed.

2. Town Boat Launch

K. Roberts remotely joined the meeting. A breakdown was provided for repairing the Town Boat Launch. It was the belief that only 3 slabs were needed opposed to 5 slabs. R. Wentworth asked where the money would be coming from. L. Dionne would need to look at funding possibilities. B. Holt stated that the quote does not include the installation asking if this has been addressed; it has not. DES would need to be consulted for placement using the excavator. K. Roberts was asked and will speak to Winni Marine for the setting of 3 slabs and stone, they do not have a diver so we would need someone to level the stone. The stone is already in the Town's possession at the pit. K. Roberts will get costs for installation and L. Dionne and L. Parker will look at the funding potential.

3. Highway Department - Liberty International Trade In Value

K. Roberts remained on the line. The costs for the trade-in value were provided to the Board; 10K with the sander and plow and 4K without. Currently another mechanic potentially is interested in the vehicle. The sander could be utilized for the next 10-wheeler vehicle, the plow could be parted out or kept for a spare. The truck would go out by sealed bid if the choice is to sell outright according to Town policy. There is an option to place on Muncibid and worth looking into.

V. MacDonald made a motion to allow K. Roberts to place the vehicle out for sealed bid and/or place the vehicle on Muncibid, part it out, etc. to get the most for the Town and P. Wittmann seconded. Roll call vote:

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

K. Roberts is allowed to keep the sander and plow for the incoming vehicle.

4. Highway Department - Line Painting and Crack Sealing Update

K. Roberts remained on the line. R. Wentworth advised that the line painting by Industrial Traffic is scheduled to begin after July 1st (weather permitting) with 48-hour notice and the Seal Coating by Connecticut Sealcoating will be in mid to late August (weather permitting). R. Wentworth mentioned the crosswalk at the Village Store that was recently redone and asked that "No Parking" be placed within the large area. K. Roberts stated it would be an added cost and might over expend that line item. In addition, he was questioned if white line areas could be established/defined in the Ginny Park and Insurance Company location; R. Wentworth will meet during the week to view the area with K. Roberts. B. Holt questioned the plans for road line painting; K. Roberts stated they do approximately 95K feet per year with certain places being done every other year. There is not enough money to do all. He suggested looking at Bay Hill Road for yellow line painting for safety.

4-a. Linwood Drive

K. Roberts remained on the line. V. MacDonald inquired about a culvert for a driveway just past Linwood Drive. K. Roberts explained that there was a water issue at that location which was troublesome all winter which caused major icing. No culvert was added just drainage was cleaned up by placing gravel to divert the water to the ditch lines. A bit of hard pack was placed in the driveway to divert the water. The water runs through the woods down the driveway out to the roadway. K. Roberts reiterated that there is no driveway culvert under the road; there is a cross culvert on the other side of the road. In addition, B. Holt had received a call from a concerned resident about the same issue as it is private property. K. Roberts explained that during the winter the Highway

Department was called to the location for a severe icing problem on Stockbridge Corner Road due to the water runoff; a truck and a man were sent there, every day for this issue which is costly and created a safety issue. The work was actually done on the Town ROW and not on private property.

5. Rumble Strip Update

K. Roberts remained on the line and stated he had a conversation with Michael Dugas from the State of NH-DOT. The installation of rumble strips along Route 28N will start 50' before and 50' after the aprons and/or flared openings along the edge of the pavement for all businesses and all intersections and openings along the roadway.

6. Harmony Park

K. Roberts remained on the line to discuss the expenditure of \$1,353.82 explaining that this was for the change order for Harmony Park to place the fabric and rip-rap in front of the wall which was outside of the radius of the original permit. The amount of prints was questioned and is unknown why and assumed that is what DES requires. This amount comes out of the remaining 24K. This was for the Wetlands Permit change order. B. Holt still feels there are problems with the accounting for this project. If there are still questions it should be taken up with the Finance Officer. L. Parker stated that B. Holt wanted just the two (2) Warrant Articles that were approved for the project not the Capital Reserve monies that were approved previously. Confusion was voiced. L. Parker offered to get the information to him then he can sit with her for explanation. This can be brought back to the Board if necessary.

Selectmen Reports

B. Holt requested from K. Roberts a timeframe for GMI to complete the work at Harmony Park and feels that the Board should have a definite answer by next week. R. Wentworth stated in defense to the contractor if a cease and desist was put against me I would not sit around waiting and drop everything. Demanding this is pushing it a bit. K. Roberts will call and try to get a window. This is not the contractor's fault the Town put them in this position.

P. LaRochelle had nothing to report.

P. Wittmann reported on the Old Home Week Committee meeting who met discussing having an Old Home Week Day on August 16th. Ideas were discussed and suggested to have a small carnival (not recommended today at EMT meeting) have a car show with live music and food trailers around Town at various locations rather than the BBQ in order for maintaining social distancing. The Fire Department indicated that they will not be doing the Chicken BBQ this year. This is subject to change as the committee has not been spoken to since the earlier meeting today.

V. MacDonald had nothing to report.

R. Wentworth reported on today's EMT meeting. The plan is to open Town Hall on Wednesday, July 1st at 8:00 AM. Hopefully there will be a door greeter after tonight. Tax bills are coming due and the first and last of the month are always busier in the Clerk's Office. This will be monitored with hopes of everything going smoothly with a greeter. We do not want to see things regress and want to take things cautiously. The second floor will be off limits. As far as elected officials, all are requested to use the back stairway and do not sit and socialize with the employees. Currently a greeter has not been hired.

Town Administrator Report by L. Dionne

Assessing Department Abatements - Map 21 Lot 5-5, Map 21 Lot 5-4 & 5-3 and Map 18 Lot 39-8

L. Dionne reported that there are three (3) Abatement requests which were provided to the Board. R. Jutton, Tax Assessor joined the meeting remotely for explanation. The recommendation is for denial and are for the three (3) most valuable properties within Town. An extensive amount of research has been done on the concept of adequacy. The replacement cost of the properties far exceeds the value. The properties have been placed with a range and are difficult to appraise as there is no such thing as a "comp" they doesn't exist in the area. The information was provided to the Board for review. The recommendation is to deny the abatement requests and R. Jutton feels that this will be appealed to either BTLA (involves just Assessor) or Belknap County Superior Court (involves Legal Counsel). R. Jutton is confident and feels that the property assessments are proportional and fair, there cannot be a certainty either way; there is no guarantee. An appeal will not be filed until they receive the abatement denial and will have until September 1st to appeal.

R. Wentworth made a motion to deny the Abatement request for Map 21, Lot 5-5, Map 21, Lot 5-4 & 5-3 and Map 18, Lot 39-8 and B. Holt seconded. Roll call vote:
B. Holt, yes P. LaRochelle, yes P. Wittmann, yes
V. MacDonald, yes R. Wentworth, yes

17 Winni Avenue - Seasonal Water Bill

This item was discussed at the last meeting and is being brought forward due to extenuating circumstances. R. Wentworth has an issue with the two (2) \$50 charges for Turn Off Charge 10/3/19 and Turn On Charge 6/4/19. V. MacDonald agrees these were from last year.

V. MacDonald made a motion to abate the Water Charge of \$410 for the 2020 season but continue with the two (2) \$50 charges for Turn Off Charge 10/3/19 and Turn On Charge 6/4/19 and P. LaRochelle seconded. Roll call vote:

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

New Employee Manual

The Board was informed that the new Employee Manual is estimated to be approximately 6 to 8 weeks out for the first draft. In the draft it will show both the old and new sections. A meeting will be held with the Department Heads. V. MacDonald feels that all employees should be involved.

Approval of Minutes

June 15, 2020 - Regular

V. MacDonald made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Session, June 15, 2020 as presented and P. Wittmann seconded. Roll call vote:

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

June 22, 2020 - Regular

V. MacDonald made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Session, June 22, 2020 as presented and B. Holt seconded. Roll call vote:

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

June 22, 2020 - Non-Public

V. MacDonald made a motion to approve the minutes of the Non-Public Session, June 22, 2020 releasing all and P. Wittmann seconded. Roll call vote:

B. Holt, yes P. LaRochelle, yes P. Wittmann, yes
V. MacDonald, yes 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 7:43pm 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	<u>Roll call vote carried unanimously</u>

R. Wentworth moved at 8:20pm 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” items #1 and 2 in 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>

R. Wentworth moved to write-off all unpaid ambulance bills from January 1, 2010 through May 31, 2019. 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 8:24pm to adjourn. P. LaRochelle seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary K. Jarvis

Mary K. Jarvis
Recording Secretary