

ALTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes
July 27, 2020
Approved – August 3, 2020

Vice-Chairman V. MacDonald convened the meeting at 6:01 PM and 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, Excused Absence
Virgil MacDonald, Vice Chairman
Philip V. Wittmann, Selectman
Paul LaRochelle, Selectman,
Bob Holt, Selectman
Elizabeth Dionne, Town Administrator

V. MacDonald 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 for instructions or telephone the Selectmen’s Office 603-875-2113 or 603-875-0229. There continues to be no Public Input at this time.

Agenda Approval

P. Wittmann requested to speak about the arsenic levels in the water under Old Business after the Water Department, EJ Prescott Contract. V. MacDonald requested to add under New Business #5 Water Department, Truck Purchase.

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

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

Announcements

None

Submission of Public Comments - Questions - Concerns

- Rand Hill Realty

A complaint was received submitted without a name which the Board has previously voted to not act or respond to anything submitted this way.

- Richard Shea

Please accept this email as a public comment for your next Board of Selectmen meeting.

*Richard Shea
84 Roberts Cove Rd
Alton NH*

7/27/20

I would like to ask that the Board of Selectmen consider posting the Town Employee Manual on our town website. Some time ago I requested a copy but was advised it could only be made available at a charge of \$.50 per page, a considerable cost given the size of the manual. I was afforded the opportunity to review the manual on site, which was somewhat helpful.

I expected the manual to be a typical “employee handbook”, but instead found it to contain detailed instructions on all manner of town operations. I understand an effort is underway to rewrite the document, separating it into an employee manual and an operations manual. This certainly makes sense.

Posting the manual on site would afford taxpayers the opportunity to understand how the town functions and might have the added benefit of encouraging suggestions for changes. I can't see any downside to doing so.

I'd also like to repeat a request I made back in May, asking if would it be possible to post the Board of Selectmen meeting recordings within a short time after the meetings. Unless I'm mistaken, the most recent posted recording is from June 15th, a full 5 weeks ago. I don't know what's involved, but for citizens following town government activities, a prompt posting would be helpful.

Thank you.

Richard Shea

V. MacDonald noted that the Personnel Manual is not posted online due to it containing personnel items within. P. Wittmann is not aware of what it takes to post things on the website. L. Dionne elaborated by informing the Board of the process and what J. Monaco does to post items on the website. The best that can be done is being done.

Appointments:

None

New Business:

1. Emergency Management - Portable Electronic Sign

R. Heath remotely joined the meeting. This is for the formal purchase through the Emergency Management Grant for the portable message board. It has been officially approved through the proper channels. The invoice (\$15,695) was provided and R. Heath is asking for the Board's final approval to move forward. Once the purchase is made it will be submitted for reimbursement using the EMT staff and meetings as the soft match for the grant portion. The grant will cover and will be short on the amount over 15K which will be paid out of the operating budget. The additional \$695 balance will be submitted under the CARES Act under GOFERR for COVID expenses.

P. LaRochelle made a motion to approve the Emergency Management Team invoice for the portable sign for the grant in the amount of \$15,695 and P. Wittmann seconded. Roll call vote:

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

2. Highway Department - Bid Specifications - Equipment Outfitting for 10-Wheel Dump Truck

K. Roberts, Highway Manger remotely joined the meeting. He has gone back through the numbers sent an accounting of the Capital Reserve Fund with 65K+ in the account. The 10-wheeler has been delivered to the equipment dealer with the dump body still five (5) months out. The trucks most likely will not be ready for the plowing season due to the dump bodies coming out of Canada, this is due to COVID. K. Roberts noted that everybody is having these same issues. It was suggested to put the plow directly on the frame. This bid request is to start the process in order to be prepared for the future. This was all compared to other industries. The quote was provided to show the Board where the numbers are and that there is enough money in the Capital Reserve.

V. MacDonald made a motion to allow K. Roberts to put the 10-wheeler equipment out to bid and B. Holt seconded. Roll call vote:

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

3. Highway Department - Winter Sand Bid Specifications

K. Roberts remained remotely in the meeting. This Winter Sand bid is done every few years which is for budgeting purposes. B. Holt questioned sieve testing which are generally provided by the vendors. In addition he questioned the three (3) year timeframe with an opt out if found elsewhere at a lesser amount. K. Roberts feels that this is a contract and not an option. Most of the time the price is lower by doing a three (3) year bid with an option to negotiate another additional two (2) years. B. Holt stressed the importance of the sieve testing.

B. Holt made a motion to approve the Winter Sand Bid Specifications for three (3) years and P. Wittmann seconded. Roll call vote:

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

4. Wentworth Pond - DES Notification

A Cyanobacteria alert report was provided to the Board for Wentworth Pond in Alton. This is on the Merrymeeting River right by the dam. V. MacDonald read the following excerpt from the report:

Surface blooms can rapidly change and accumulate in various locations around a waterbody. As a result, the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) has issued a cyanobacteria alert for those who use the waterbody for recreation. Please continue to monitor your individual shorelines for changing conditions and avoid contact. The alert is not based on a toxin evaluation and is intended as a precautionary measure for short term exposure.

Signage was discussed. This item is for informational purposes only.

5. Water Department Truck Purchase

C. Mitchell, Water Superintendent remotely joined the meeting. It was noted that this came before the Board back in October and was tabled. Currently she has found a great deal on a 2019 F-350 XL V-8 diesel with a V-Plow from Portsmouth Ford in the amount of \$46,591. The reason for the request is due to the extensive repairs that have been done to the current vehicle. A list of repairs was provided from the Highway Department. The condition of the truck was discussed. C. Mitchell is currently driving her personal vehicle to job sites. CDL testing was discussed for the current employees. C. Mitchell has not been submitting for anything for her personal vehicle until last week and that was for mileage. The Board was in agreement that she should not have to be using her own vehicle. Financing plans were spoken about but if the money is available why pay financing. L. Dionne noted that past practice for purchasing vehicles is they are purchased outright unless it is being leased. Currently there are not a lot of vehicles available. The available account balance is roughly 313K. The plow will be installed by Portsmouth Ford; standard price is across the board. The current vehicle (white) will still have a plow. The cab is standard. The money will come from the Water Department Revenue Fund.

P. LaRochelle made a motion to approve C. Mitchell, Water Superintendent to purchase the 2019 Ford F350 XL vehicle from Portsmouth Ford in the amount of \$46,591 funds from the Water Department Revenue Fund and B. Holt seconded. Roll call vote:

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

V. MacDonald questioned the sidewalk being fixed and is on the radar for this week.

Old Business:

1. Water Department - EJ Prescott Contract

C. Mitchell remained remotely in the meeting. Questions were raised by L. Dionne, Town Administrator and Attorney Sessler which have been satisfied. According to the vendor, the term can be changed from 90 days to 30 days by simply crossing it out on the contract. The insurance contract needed to include the Town of Alton not just the Water Department. The legal review was done and is satisfactory to move forward.

V. MacDonald made a motion to sign and approve the contract for EJ Prescott for the Water Department and P. LaRochelle seconded. Roll call vote:

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

Water Department - Arsenic Levels

C. Mitchell remained remotely in the meeting. P. Wittmann questioned the arsenic levels in the water. C. Mitchell explained that the requirement is to test every other year. The sample was for quarter 2, the well was still being worked on and should be tied up by the middle of next week. Shipping and vendors have been slowed down and hard to coordinate. When the well is turned back on it will be a requirement to test every quarter and non-compliance testing can be done to see its performance. The well is still under maintenance and currently has no power. V. MacDonald questioned the status of the well; wiring the panel with wires needing to be run to the well from the pump and startup testing. P. Wittmann questioned the possibilities of fines by the State; C. Mitchell responded it would be dependent on when the regulations are changed and in 2021 the standards will be lowered

for all municipalities for any public drinking water systems to meet the new guidelines. It is possible that new equipment may need to be added for arsenic with the new standard being .001; there have been numerous samples above that level. This should be investigated and might require extending the building. P. Wittmann referred to the State Constitution and suggested contacting the Town Attorney to look into the matter of the mandated regulation, being an unfunded mandate which may be unconstitutional to the State Constitution referring to Amendment 28A passed in 1984. L. Dionne to send the information to the Town Attorney for an opinion.

2. Special Events Application (previously approved 12/16/19) - Castleberry Fairs

L. Dionne spoke on behalf of the application which was approved months ago. This has been discussed with the EM Team at several meetings. The EM Team determined that they could proceed if Castleberry meets the criteria that is set by the State then EM Team would be okay with them proceeding. Normally there would be between 70 to 80 vendors and the proposal now is for approximately 48 vendors. The approval would need to include the EM Director doing a site visit with Castleberry to approve the modifications. The usage of the Community Center was brought forward for additional expenses for cleaning or another option is to not use the building at all. They should not interfere with the swim docks or Shibley's as the Bay area has been very busy this year. A suggestion was made to use across the street. L. Dionne suggested that this be rescheduled for the next meeting with Castleberry attending remotely to discuss the Board's concerns. The main issues are the Community Center usage, social distancing, inspections, etc. The Board needs to set the parameters and the EM Director will inspect and approve before it can happen. This will be rescheduled.

Selectmen Reports

B. Holt had nothing to report.

P. Wittmann reported that the Old Home Week/Weekend Committee will be meeting later in the week. It seems there will be a Water Bandstand concert on Friday night the 14th and there still is no clear information of the Fire BBQ. Car Show and Food Trucks are still being worked on and R. Sample is working with the businesses on the details of the Car Show.

V. MacDonald met with the Conservation Commission discussing Jesus Valley and Mt. Major parking. They, along with the Forest Society are working together with the people at the end of Jesus Valley for an extension of possibly 250' for parking; potentially this may need the help of the Highway Department. The Forest Society is working on the Mt. Major parking for an expansion. There is a timber cut application on that side of the mountain. Signage is helping.

Town Administrator Report by L. Dionne

Green Oaks Realty Development

The Board was informed that the Town won its suit against Green Oaks Realty Development.

Primex Letters - Worker' Compensation Insurance and Unemployment Compensation Program

The Board was informed that the Town's will be receiving two (2) checks from Primex for Premium Holidays.

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|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Worker' Compensation Insurance | \$29,809.88 |
| 2. Unemployment Compensation Program | \$ 1,191.35 |

Stantec Engineering -Site Access Agreement

Stantec Engineering has been hired by DOT in reference to groundwater sampling in the vicinity of the former East Alton Convenience Store. History must show for underground gasoline leakage; they want to take drinking water samples and need permission to access the property at the Transfer Station. The Site Access Agreement was provided, it needs to be signed and approved by the Board. There is no benefit to the Town however there is a need to see if contamination is traveling.

V. MacDonald made a motion to allow Stantec Engineering to test the water at the Transfer Station and authorize L. Dionne to sign the Site Access Agreement and P. LaRochelle seconded. Roll call vote:

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

Town Boat Launch Repairs

A memo was provided recommending where funds could come from for the repairs of the Town Boat Launch. The recommendation is to take the funds out of the Grounds and Maintenance budget Railroad Square Park, line #01-4194-759. This is a bottom line budget with costs being covered under the Patriotic Purposes budget, line #01-4583-802 (Fireworks) which has approximately \$14,000 and not used due to the Pandemic. One will cover the other due to it being a bottom line budget.

V. MacDonald made a motion to repair the Town Boat Launch with funds coming from the Grounds and Maintenance budget Railroad Square Park line #01-4194-759 and P. LaRochelle seconded. Roll call vote:

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

Approval of Minutes

July 20, 2020 - Regular

P. Wittmann made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Session, July 20, 2020 as presented and V. MacDonald seconded. Roll call vote:

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

July 20, 2020 - Non-Public

B. Holt made a motion to approve the previously sealed minutes of the Non-Public Session, July 20, 2020 and P. Wittmann seconded. Roll call vote:

B. Holt, yes P. LaRochelle, yes P. Wittmann, yes V. MacDonald, 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:

None

Adjournment

B. Holt made a motion to adjourn at 7:11 PM and P. LaRochelle seconded. Roll call vote:

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

Respectfully submitted,

Mary K. Jarvis

Mary K. Jarvis
Recording Secretary