

ALTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes
October 14, 2025, 2025
(Approved - October 28, 2025)

Chairman N. Buonopane convened the meeting at 6:00 PM.

N. Buonopane led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and a Moment of Silence. The following staff members were present:

The following staff members were present:

N. Buonopane, Chairman
Paul LaRochelle, Vice-Chairman
Andrew Morse, Selectman
Richard Shea, Selectman
Drew Carter, Selectmen
Ryan Heath, Town Administrator

Agenda Approval

N. Buonopane would like to add Engine 4 Repairs as #2 under New Business and Remove Old Business #2 Continued Discussion of Fire Department Restructuring and replace it with Green Oaks Blasting Permit Update.

N. Buonopane made a motion to approve the agenda as amended and A. Morse seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Announcements

- The Public Participation Policy applies to all Selectmen meetings. A copy of it is on the back of each agenda, posted outside this meeting room, and on our website.
- Please be advised that the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's Office will operate with **limited hours on Wednesday, October 29, 2025, and Thursday, October 30, 2025**, due to the majority of staff attending the New Hampshire City & Town Clerk Association's 100th Annual Fall Conference.

Adjusted Office Hours:

- **Wednesday, October 29:** Open from 7:00 AM to 12:00 Noon
- **Thursday, October 30:** Open from 12:00 Noon to 5:00 PM

We kindly ask for your patience during this time of reduced staffing. The decision to offer limited hours was made to minimize disruption while allowing staff to attend this required annual training, in accordance with RSA 31:8.

We appreciate your understanding and encourage residents to plan accordingly.

Public Input I *(limited to 3 minutes per person on agenda items only)*

None

Appointments

None

New Business

1. **Fire Department - Alton Firemen's Association Donation - Emergency Plug Devices**

J. Reinert, Fire Chief, approached the table. The Alton Firemen's Association purchased two plugs that are used for electric vehicles. These render the vehicles inoperable in the event that there is an emergency involving the vehicle. They would like to donate them to the Fire Department. D. Carter would like to clarify that the memo dated 10-1-2025 says that they are \$960.00 each so two would be \$1,920.00 not \$1,960.00 as the letter states.

N. Buonopane made a motion to accept the donation valued at \$1,920.00 for the purchasing of the emergency plug devices from the Alton Firemen's Association and D. Carter seconded with all in favor of the motion.

2. Engine 4 Emergency Repairs

J. Reinert remained at the table. He stated that last Thursday afternoon they were responding to an incident, and the engine went into limp mode. They were able to get it back to the station and checked the code. They brought it to a Cummins dealer. They replaced that piece which cost \$4,838.28. While they were replacing that part, they did notice that there was a crack in the flex-exhaust pipe. They believe that this contributed to the original problem. Through E1, the flex pipe piece is about \$1,000.00. It is an OEM part specifically designed for the way that the truck is made. It will be about a \$6,000.00 repair total that they were not expecting. He would like to know if the Board would be in favor of using a CRF Fund. It currently has approximately \$1,000,000.00 in it. D. Shea asked if there is any funding currently available in the current operating budget. J. Reinert stated that they are possibly right up against the bottom line right now. N. Buonopane asked how bad the flex pipe was. J. Reinert stated that he has not seen it because it hasn't been fixed. The code part of the problem has already been repaired. R. Heath stated that the Fire Department has a healthy Equipment Capital Reserve.

N. Buonopane made a motion to approve the Fire Chief to be able to expend up to \$6,000.00 out of the Capital Reserve Fund to make the necessary repairs to Engine 4 and R. Shea seconded with all in favor of the motion.

3. Dental Insurance Coverage

L. Parker, Finance Manager, approached the table. She stated that it is open enrollment. Our new brokers, who are Melcher & Prescott, helped us shop around and gave us quotes. They did some benchmarks for us. She highlighted the difference between what we currently offer our employees and what we could offer them with another company. She is suggesting that they go back to the Standard. R. Shea asked if she knew if there were difference in the values of the New England States. L. Parker stated that she would find out. D. Carter stated that he is fine with the Dental but as far as approving any additional costs at this time is not wise. L. Parker stated that the cost of the dental is the same as, the short-term disability is exactly the same benefit, the only thing that increased is the life. If the Board wants to keep it where it is, she can do that. R. Shea stated that he agreed with Selectman Carter given the current budget situation. N. Buonopane asked the Board if they would like to approve the dental and table the rest. They agreed.

N. Buonopane made a motion to approve the dental plan with the Town Administrator as the person who signs the contract for it and P. LaRochelle seconded with all in favor of the motion.

4. Budget Presentations

R. Heath stated that he would like to go over some of the smaller budgets tonight to get those out of the way.

Assessing 4193

N. Buonopane made a motion to approve the Assessing Budget (4193) for \$176,386.00 as presented and A. Morse seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Audio/Visual 4199

P. LaRochelle made a motion to approve the Audio/Visual Budget (4199) for \$2,000.00 as presented and R. Shea seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Budget Committee 4131

D. Carter made a motion to approve the Budget Committee Budget (4131) for \$3,201.00 as presented and R. Shea seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Conservation Commission 4613

N. Buonopane made a motion to approve the Conservation Commission Budget (4163) for \$24,060.00 as presented and P. LaRochelle seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Emergency Management 4290

P. LaRochelle made a motion to approve the Emergency Management Budget (4290) for \$11,003.00 as presented and A. Morse seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Gilman Museum 4575

N. Buonopane made a motion to approve the Gilman Museum Budget (4575) for \$8,444.00 as presented and R. Shea seconded with all in favor of the motion.

HHW Program 4326

N. Buonopane made a motion to approve the HHW Program Budget (4326) for \$27,568.00 as presented and A. Morse seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Interest/Short Term 4723

A. Morse made a motion to approve the Interest/Short Term Budget (4723) for \$1.00 as presented and N. Buonopane seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Patriotic Purposes 4583

D. Carter stated that he would like to eliminate the fireworks for the Old Home Week.

D. Carter made a motion to approve the Patriotic Purposes Budget (4583) for \$23,690.00 as amended and N. Buonopane seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Street Lighting 4316

N. Buonopane made a motion to approve the Street Lighting Budget (4316) for \$33,500.00 as presented and D. Carter seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Welfare 4442

N. Buonopane made a motion to approve the Welfare Budget (4442) for \$35,158.00 as presented and A. Morse seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Old Business

1. Fire Department - Request For Federal Equipment

J. Reinert, Fire Chief approached the table. He asked the Board if there were any questions or comments about the Fire Department acquiring a vehicle from the Federal Surplus Fund. R. Heath stated that this was a miscommunication between him and the Chief. Selectman Carter asked if the Ford F150 was part of the request. He confirmed that it was not. He was later corrected on that. He wants to make sure that the Board knows that they were not misled. In the meantime, the Board has had the opportunity to look at the vehicle at the Fire Department. J. Reinert stated that they acquired a 2016 Ford F150. It is on loan to the Town until we no longer need it or utilize it. It would be utilized as a secondary forestry vehicle. It can also be used for training or errands. D. Carter stated that he is struggling with the whole thing. Discussion ensued about the various uses of the vehicle. D. Carter asked if this will be done on the listed \$300.00 anticipated fuel usage. J. Reinert stated that was an error and it should be \$3,000.00.

N. Buonopane made a motion to accept the request for Federal equipment for the Fire Department in the form of a 2016 Ford F150 and A. Morse seconded with 4 in favor and 1 against the motion.

2. Green Oaks Blasting Update

J. Reinert remained at the table. He stated that on September 24 the Fire Department issued a blasting permit for Green Oaks. They had a scheduled blast around 1:15 pm. There were several calls for EMS/Fire around town. At an address on Coffin Brook Road there was a call for possible debris from the blast. He determined that the debris came from the blasting. From that point on he was in contact with an investigative team from MSHA. The investigator came by and was in contact with the State Police. He is still waiting for the final report from MSHA. Currently, because of the government shutdown, the final report is not available. The State Police are also investigating, and he is waiting for their report. He has suspended any blasting until this is resolved. Discussion ensued.

3. Downing's Landing

R. Heath stated that the Executive Director of Fish and Game reached out and scheduled a meeting here at Town Hall. Himself, the Public Works Director, Chairman, and Vice-Chairman attended the meeting. The position that the State has taken from the beginning is their grant criteria that they used the funding for would not allow them to remove the port-a-johns or the location if it downgrades the ADA requirements. The Town offered to provide an alternative with permanent restroom facilities that are not that far across the street. Because of the grade of the parking lot, it is not feasible for access across the road. There is already a crosswalk project in motion for the flashing cross walk and the requirement from DOT to move the crosswalk and it raised the possibility of the ramp would be ADA accessible to the parking lot. The other idea that was discussed was being open in the wintertime. The grant was for summer recreation. They cannot draw anything for winter maintenance. The Town stated they would provide a winter maintenance agreement. They stated that if we provide a plan in writing they would run it up the flagpole and check with DOJ about compliance. He will be working on a plan with the Public Works Director to send to them.

4. Police Department - Prosecutor's Contract Proposal

T. MacDougall, Police Chief, and B. Tolio, Lieutenant, approached the table. Attorney Estee has been with the Town for approximately 13 years. He requested an increase of approximately \$8,500.00. It is related to the extra work he needs to do to review camera footage.

It is the consensus of the Board to put the contract increase into the upcoming budget process.

Town Administrator Report

R. Heath stated that with Blueberry Lane upgrades complete, residents have taken it upon themselves to dock their boats at the ramp blocking use and access. There are lawn chairs, a boat rack down there now. He is planning on he would like permanent signage put up stating that it needs to remain open and available for access.

R. Heath stated that because the Welcome to Alton sign was such a success, people would like to know if they can do the same for a sign in the Bay.

R. Heath stated that he would like to suggest that the Board choose February 3, 2026, as the day for the Deliberative. It is the consensus of the Board to choose that date.

R. Heath stated that the first meeting in November is scheduled for November 11, which is Veteran's Day and Town Hall will be closed. He asked the Board if they would like to reschedule it to November 12. It is the consensus of the Board to move the November 11 meeting to November 12.

R. Heath stated that due to time constraints, he wanted the Board to know that he signed for the Special Events Permit for "Little Pumpkins in the Square" from the Alton Business Association.

R. Heath stated that he was looking for support from the Board to do a Warrant Article for the replacement of the roof of Town Hall. He would like to have a metal roof installed.

Selectmen Reports/Questions

D. Carter stated that he had a Conservation Meeting last week. The water testing is done.

R. Shea stated that the Milfoil Committee had it's last meeting of the year. There was some additional Milfoil that was not expected. Zoning Amendments will be meeting tomorrow night. He is concerned with the number of color photos in the Selectmen's packets. He would like to know if they can do black and white.

A. Morse stated that the CIP Committee had a couple of meetings. They did a good job.

P. LaRochelle stated that he had a contractor evaluate the Water Bandstand. He would like to find out what it would cost for repair. He asked if there were any updates on the elevator. R. Heath stated that they are still waiting for the part to come in for the final issue.

N. Buonopane stated that had nothing to report.

Approval of Minutes

September 23, 2025 - Public Session

R. Shea made a motion to approve the minutes of September 23, 2025, Public Session and D. Carter seconded with all in favor of the motion.

September 25, 2025 - Public Session

P. LaRochelle made a motion to approve the minutes of September 25, 2025, Public Session and A. Morse seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Consent Agenda Approval

P. LaRochelle made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda for October 14, 2025, as presented and D. Carter seconded with all in favor of the motion.

1. Milfoil Committee

Nadine Martin, 3-year Term, Expires 3/2028

Gary Martin, 3-year Term, Expires 3/2028

2. Alton Business Association

Special Event Application, Little Pumpkins in the Square, October 10, 2025

Special Event Application, Festival of Trees & Gingerbread House Decorating Contest, December 6 and 7, 2025

Special Event Application, Alton Bay Winter Carnival 2026, February 15, 2026

3. Building Department

Resignation, Katherine Bowden, Effective October 21, 2025

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

None

Public Input II (limited to 5 minutes per person on any Governmental/Town Business)

D. Richardson approached the table. She wanted to make the Board aware of how much the Swap Shop was a success. She also stated that the new sign looks good. She is concerned with the Fire Department. It appears that our Fire Department is doing mutual aid with New Durham and is doing more.

Non-Public Session

None

Adjournment

A. Morse made a motion to adjourn at 8:24 pm and D. Carter seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stacy L. Bailey
Recording Secretary

ALTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Nick Buonopane III, Chairman

Paul LaRochelle, Vice-Chairman

Andrew Morse, Selectman

Richard Shea, Selectman

Drew Carter, Selectman