

ALTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Meeting Minutes

Public Session I

October 26, 2015

6:00 PM

1 Monument Square

Alton, NH 03809

Approved: November 9, 2015

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
Marc DeCoff, Selectman
E. Russell Bailey, Town Administrator

Cydney Johnson welcomed Marc DeCoff as the replacement member to the Board of Selectman due to the recent retirement of former Selectman R. Loring Carr.

Approval of the Agenda

Marc DeCoff made a motion to approve the agenda as presented and Phil Wittmann seconded with all in favor of the motion.

**Public Hearing
Places Mill Road**

The meeting was turned over to Ken Roberts, Highway Agent to present an overview of the work to be done for the rebuilding of Places Mill Road which includes the following:

- Tree Cutting and Removal (note: trees belong to the homeowners)
- Slope Work and Bituminous Curbing
- Rock Removal
- Dirt Work and Ditch Lines
- Shoulder Work
- Grinding and Paving Roadway (finish coat the following year)
- Blended 4' Driveway Aprons and 20' Road Aprons (Perkins & Leavitt Roads)
- Preventive Erosion Measures
- Guardrails
- Drainage/Catch Basins/Under Drains

Residents voiced concerns of sight distances at Leavitt Road, the town's prioritization of the work being done (scheduled second on the list), large rocks and placement of the rocks, speed limit and signage issues were amongst the topics of discussion.

Cydney Johnson noted: Two (2) letters were received from residents that were not in attendance; the concerns were addressed. Ken Roberts explained the process of setting of speed limits.

Ken Roberts offered to be available downstairs in the Heidke Room to answer any specific questions/concerns that the residents would like answered.

The Public Hearing Closed at 6:25 PM.

E. Russell Bailey requested approval of the tree cutting bid for Places Mill Road conditional on funding at the March Town Meeting.

Marc DeCoff made a motion to approve the tree cutting bid on Places Mill Road conditional upon March funding and Phil Wittmann seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Appointments:

Raymond Howard Jr., 311 Stockbridge Corner Road approached the Board in regards to an incident that took place on his road which involved the Police Department on August 24, 2015 at 3:30 PM at 314 Dudley Road. A prepared statement was read and suggestions were made.

Announcements:

- Halloween hours are scheduled from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM on Saturday, October 31st.

Selectmen's Committee Reports

Virgil MacDonald reported that the Budget Committee met with the Cemetery and Water Departments and the Planning Board had also met. He stated that both Board's reviewed minutes.

Lou LaCourse reported that the Conservation Commission met and is continuing to inspect conservation lands and that the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) would be meeting next week.

Town Administrator's Report and Updates

A request from the Alton Rotary Club was received this week; they want to purchase folding tables to be used at the Pearson Road Senior/Community Center and for other

Rotary functions; they will allow others to use them and would like approval from the Board to store them in the basement at the Center.

A question was posed regarding the amount of room the tables would take up at the center and if there was room in the basement to store the items. There was also discussion about the tables being available for town usage.

Marc DeCoff made a motion to approve the storage of the twenty one (21) 8' tables in the basement of the Pearson Road Senior/Community Center as long as they are made available for town usage and Virgil MacDonald seconded with all in favor of the motion.

The Zoning Amendment Committee (ZAC) is conducting a survey. Based on a memo from Ken McWilliams notices will be posted in the newspapers and they would like for it to be posted on Social Media; it is already available on the Town Hall website for residents to complete. Parks and Recreation and the Police Department have Social Media pages however the town does not.

It was the consensus of the Board that a notice be posted on the Parks and Recreation Facebook page which will state that a survey is available on the town's website.

The Recreation Commission has requested tree work to be done at Jones Field. The Highway Department looked at this and is estimating that it will be a minimum of four (4) days of work. The work is more extensive than originally projected. Ken Roberts will return later in the meeting to discuss the matter so we will hold on this issue until he returns.

Public Input I

Barbara Howard approached the Board for clarification purposes posing a question in reference to the Budget Workshops inquiring if they are open to the public; stating that there really isn't any public input. It was her opinion that the public is being shut out.

Approval of Selectmen's Minutes

September 14, 2015

Cydney Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes of Public Session I, September 14, 2015 as presented and Lou LaCourse seconded. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

Lou LaCourse made a motion to approve the minutes of Non Public Session I, September 14, 2015 opening #1b & 1c and Cydney Johnson seconded. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

Lou LaCourse made a motion to approve the minutes of Public Session II, September 14, 2015 as written and Phil Wittmann seconded. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

Lou LaCourse made a motion to approve the minutes of Non Public Session II, September 14, 2015 opening #1 & 3 and Cydney Johnson seconded. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

Lou LaCourse made a motion to approve the minutes of Public Session III, September 14, 2015 as written and Phil Wittmann seconded. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

September 29, 2015

Lou LaCourse made a motion to approve the minutes of Budget Workshop Session I, September 29, 2015 as written and Cydney Johnson seconded. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

Lou LaCourse made a motion to approve the minutes of Non Public Budget Workshop Session, September 29, 2015 opening #1, 2, 3, 5, 6 & 7 and Cydney Johnson seconded. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

Lou LaCourse made a motion to approve the minutes of Budget Workshop Session II, September 29, 2015 as written and Cydney Johnson seconded. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

September 30, 2015

Lou LaCourse made a motion to approve the minutes of Budget Workshop Session I, September 30, 2015 as written and Cydney Johnson seconded. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

Lou LaCourse made a motion to approve the minutes of Non Public Budget Workshop Session, September 30, 2015 opening none and Cydney Johnson seconded. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

Lou LaCourse made a motion to approve the minutes of Budget Workshop Session II, September 30, 2015 as written and Cydney Johnson seconded. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

October 1, 2015

Cydney Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes of Budget Workshop Session I, October 1, 2015 and Lou LaCourse seconded. The vote was 3 approved, 0 opposed, 2 abstentions, Marc DeCoff and Lou LaCourse.

October 6, 2015

Cydney Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes of Budget Workshop Session I, October 6, 2015 as written and Phil Wittmann seconded. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

Lou LaCourse made a motion to approve the minutes of Non Public Budget Workshop Session, October 6, 2015 opening #1 (only item) and Cydney Johnson seconded. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

Lou LaCourse made a motion to approve the minutes of Budget Workshop Session II, October 6, 2015 as written and Cydney Johnson seconded. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

October 8, 2015

Lou LaCourse made a motion to approve the minutes of Budget Workshop Session I, October 8, 2015 as amended (*2b 2nd sentence add Board after the word The*) and Cydney Johnson seconded as amended. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

October 14, 2015

Lou LaCourse made a motion to approve the minutes of Budget Workshop Session I, October 14, 2015 as written and Cydney Johnson seconded. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

Cydney Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes of Non Public Budget Workshop Session, October 14, 2015 opening #5 and Lou LaCourse seconded. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

Lou LaCourse made a motion to approve the minutes of Budget Workshop Session II, October 14, 2015 as written and Cydney Johnson seconded. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

October 19, 2015

Lou LaCourse made a motion to approve the minutes of Budget Workshop Session I, October 19, 2015 as written and Cydney Johnson seconded. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

Lou LaCourse made a motion to approve the minutes of Non Public Budget Workshop Session, October 19, 2015 as written opening #3, 4 & 5 and Cydney Johnson seconded. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

Lou LaCourse made a motion to approve the minutes of Budget Workshop Session II, October 19, 2015 as written and Cydney Johnson seconded. The vote was 4 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, Marc DeCoff.

Old Business:

2015 Project Status Update

Highway Reconstruction: All the work for highway reconstruction is done but the paving of the shoulders on Bay Hill Road. The binder coat is finished or close to being finished on Chestnut Cove Road.

Pearson Road Senior/Community Center: The contractor will be beginning to do the work at the Center. There will be a small change order due to the opening being larger than projected in order to fit the curtain; the opening is another 5' wider. We are still waiting to hear on the pricing but don't expect that it will be too much. There were no bids received for the accordion door installation therefore Ken McWilliams is talking with the folks that made the door to see if where that might lead. The final work is the floor and molding; Alton Flooring is already approved for the flooring and there are volunteers from different groups to install the molding.

Sidewalks: The sidewalks in the Bay area will be put off until spring time. The contractor has been notified (on board for spring) and the Alton Garden Club has been spoken to letting them know that when the sidewalks are torn out that the water lines and island areas will be addressed at that time.

Roberts Cove Beach: There is a minor erosion problem at the Roberts Cove Beach which Ken Roberts is looking at a drainage solution. The erosion is on the left side looking towards the water. We will be working on a lease agreement with the Robert's family for a 30x70 foot space which will improve parking.

2016 Budget, Warrant Articles & Election Dates

A very rough draft of the Warrant Articles was provided to the Board. In particular there are two (2) new items Article #11 and Article #27. Number 11 was previously approved by the Board; its language is to see if the people want to set a revolving account for Police details, the wording is based on DRA requirements. The other Articles are standard each year. Number 27 is a rough write up; it is for a five (5) year lease approval for a front end loader and grader for the Highway Department. This still needs to be reviewed by DRA to be sure that the language is correct. Approval would need to be obtained each year with a majority vote or this would need to be treated like a bond issue which would need to get a 60% vote so that there would not be a need to get further approval. It is currently written as a majority vote Warrant Article.

Article #41 was briefly discussed as a rough draft in reference to the Cemetery Trustees. They have asked that the Town put an Article forward to discontinue the

Cemetery Trustees. The Article would read that it is recommended by the Cemetery Trustees as well as the Board of Selectmen.

At a later Board meeting, the Board of Selectmen need to make a final decision/vote on all the Warrant Articles.

There needs to be an official vote to set the date for the Deliberative Session; the school has been asked to reserve the school for February 3, 2016.

Lou LaCourse made a motion to set the Deliberative Session for February 3, 2016 and Virgil MacDonald seconded with all in favor of the motion.

A copy of the Election schedule was provided to the Board for the upcoming elections with timelines for signing up for candidacy. For informational purposes it was noted that Petition Articles are due by January 12th, January 20th to 29th is the filing period for positions for town and school offices and Tuesday March 8th is Election day. Other dates were not discussed.

E. Russell Bailey is still trying to get additional numbers for health insurance. Initial quotes were received and the 55K that is showing is not all insurance costs, it includes FICA, Medicare and Retirement costs, roughly 45K is the health insurance cost. Our history with Liability and Workers Compensation insurance plays a factor in our rates. We have been in contact with another company to get a quote. We were hit with another 23K on Worker's Comp due to our history; there were three (3) large on the job accidents with the history following you for five (5) years. Currently we are looking at approximately 3%; there will be some adjustments once the interviews are finished for the two (2) vacancies. There may be some reductions made based on the salaries of who is chosen. This has been provided to the Budget Committee at their last meeting. These are not final numbers. The health insurance has increased by 14%.

2015 Tax Rate

There is a draft of the 2015 tax rate from DRA; if we don't use any fund balance the increase would be 1/2 of 1% or 2 tenths of a cent. DRA needs to be notified of the amount of money that the Board is going to use from surplus. Currently there is \$2.3 million dollars in the fund balance account. The numbers provided to the Board did not factor in the school which is going up almost 10%. The tax rate cannot be set and the tax bills cannot go out until the rate is set. If we wait for a later meeting to set the rate the concern is, on December 15th the county bill needs to be paid which is \$2.1 million dollars and it cannot be late.

Marc DeCoff made a motion to use 200K from surplus. At this time Lou LaCourse questioned using more of the surplus money which has been used previously and can be used in several ways. Russ explained that he has not seen the surplus lower than \$1.7/\$1.8 since he has been with the town. We are right in the middle of what is recommended by DRA.

Virgil MacDonald made a motion to use 500K of surplus to offset the tax rate and Marc DeCoff seconded

Further discussion transpired on the amount of money in surplus. E. Russell Bailey commented about the benefits of having the cash flow, how we will be close to making the school payments, delaying payments and that we have not had to borrow any money in 13 years.

The previous motion stood (500K of surplus money to be used to offset the tax rate). The motion was approved with all in favor of the motion.

Ken Roberts, Highway Agent was asked to approach the Board to discuss the scope of the work to be done at Jones Field. There are approximately 200 trees that are 4" or better that need to be taken down. The work should have been done years ago noting that it can be done but it will be time consuming and will tie up the highway crew for roughly four (4) days. It was Ken Roberts understanding that a second phase would be a walkway which lead to a question for the Board of whether they wanted his crew to take the next step by bringing in the excavator to stump and put in a base grade to prepare for the eventual walkway. Most of the trees that will be taken down will be chipped and taken away; the stumps will be taken to the stump dump on Rines Road. The four (4) days is just for the tree removal. It is possible that we may have to wait for the ground to freeze. There was mention of cord wood brought forward; it was explained that the liability is too great for anyone to come onto town property.

Marc DeCoff made a motion to allow the Highway Department to cut the trees and go back and stump and level with a base path for a walkway with a minimum of a sidewalk width at Jones Field and Phil Wittmann seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Virgil MacDonald questioned the paving on Bay Hill Road to the gutters. Ken Roberts responded that the work is not complete; he is waiting on the paving company and he will be monitoring it very closely.

New Business:

Land Use Items as recommended by the Tax Assessor

Marc DeCoff made a motion to approve the 2015 Current Use Penalty Abatement for Map 58 Lot 5 for \$9,590.00 and Cydney Johnson seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Marc DeCoff made a motion to approve the 2015 Administrative Abatement for Map 9 Lot 14-68 for \$771.37 and Lou LaCourse seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Marc DeCoff made a motion to approve the 2014 Timber Tax Abatement for Map 19 Lots 56 & 58 for \$334.80 and Lou LaCourse seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Public Input II

Raymond Howard approached the Board voicing concerns of confusion and deception regarding the Warrant Article for the lease for the Highway Department equipment opposed to the Police cruisers lease.

Non-Public Session:

Cydney Johnson made a motion to enter into non-public session pursuant to RSA91-A:3, II (a) personnel (c) character/reputation and (e) claims/litigation and Lou LaCourse seconded. The Board was polled in the affirmative with all in favor of the motion.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary K. Jarvis
Recording Secretary