

Town of Alton

Budget Committee Meeting
Minutes

APPROVED

November 2, 2006

Present: Stephen Miller; William Curtin; Elizabeth Dominick; Laurie Boyce;
Pete Shibley (Alton Selectmen Rep. – alternate for Steven McMahon);
E. Russell Bailey, Town Administrator;
Krista Argiropolis (Secretary)
Members of the Public

Absent: Virgil MacDonald; Terri Noyes (ACS Board Rep.)

I. Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm.

II. Roll Call

Ms. Noyes was noted absent. Mr. McMahon was unable to attend, but had sent Mr. Shibley as his alternate.

III. Receipt Of Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Boyce motioned to accept the minutes of 10/31/06, as written. Mr. Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of five, with one abstaining. (SM, WC, ED, LB, VM, / abstain - PS / absent – TN, VM)

V. Old Business

There was no old business.

VI. Cemetery – Mark Divito, Shirley Lane

Ms. Lane presented the proposed budget for the Cemetery (4195). The Committee reviewed and discussed the proposed budget by each line item. Ms. Lane explained that the Cemetery was run on trust funds. It was expected there would be 546 new lots available for sale soon. Alton averages 30-35 burials in the Cemetery each year. There are over 100 private cemeteries in Alton, of which the upkeep is the responsibility of the families. Mr. Miller asked Ms. Lane what the balance of the trust fund was at this time. Ms. Lane responding that she would get that information to the Committee. She stated that they had never had to go to the town for budget money.

VII. Tax Collector – Anne Kroeger

Ms. Kroeger presented the proposed budget for the Tax Collector (4133). The Committee reviewed and discussed the budget by each line item. All areas were felt to be covered

VIII. Fire Department – Chief Alan Johnson, Mary Jane Dascoli

Chief Johnson reviewed the proposed budget for the Fire Department (4220). The Committee reviewed and discussed the budget by each line item. Chief Johnson stated that there was an increase of about 10% in the number of calls over last year. They now had six students at the fire station, but they had eight students last year. Chief Johnson spoke about the scope of duties the Fire Department performs, including ambulance runs, the Fire Setters Intervention (FIT) program, safety education programs for the school, and training of students.

Chief Johnson spoke about the proposed Fire Chief's Salary (4420-005; \$54,800). He stated that the average for the area, including smaller towns, was about \$58,000. It was noted by the Selectmen that a step increase was received last year and the Selectmen had proposed that the Fire Chief's Salary should be decreased to \$53,204.

The Firefighter's Wages (4220-016; \$50,000) were reviewed and discussed. Chief Johnson stated they had spent approximately \$45,000 and this year they had spent \$42,399, to date. He noted the run volume is up over 10% from last year.

Over-time Wages (4220-020; \$6,000) was reviewed. Chief Johnson stated that he had cut down considerably on the training to save money. The expenditure as of 09/06 was \$2,111. The Board of Selectmen has recommended \$4,000 for Over-time Wages.

There was a discussion about the Fire Department, scope of duties, training, equipment, standards, and programs. Mr. Shibley stated that it was a town-backed fire department and was a good investment for the town because of the revenue generated by ambulance service. He commended Chief Johnson for his work.

Chief Johnson spoke about the Fire & Rescue Department vehicles. The 1987 FMC / 1250 GPM Engine, which is twenty years old, needs to be replaced due to corrosion issues and other mechanical problems. A warrant article will be asked for to replace this vehicle.

The Committee discussed the Fire Alarms (4220-245; \$6,487). This is to cover any work needed to maintain the municipal fire alarm system and replacement of street boxes. The Selectmen had recommended \$2,800 for this line-item. It was felt by the Selectmen that the boxes were antiquated and should need little or no upgrades.

The Ambulance Operational Fund (4801-603; \$139,085) was reviewed. This amount is requested to cover the annual costs of patient care consumables, supplies, emergency medical staff coordination hours / shifts / call wages, emergency medical staff equipment and its maintenance, vehicle maintenance, fuel, training, and certification. The ambulance account is self-sustaining; it is at no cost to the tax payers. The ambulance is on the third year of a five year lease. The emergency medical staff receive no benefits. Chief Johnson noted that there has been an increase in the number of calls, but that there is less personnel to go on the calls now.

The Committee and Chief Johnson completed the review of the proposed budget for the Fire Department. All areas were felt to be covered.

IX. Budget Committee's Vote on Proposed Budgets Presented

Cemetery (4195):

Mrs. Boyce motioned to accept the proposed budget for the Cemetery (4195) at \$88,716 and Mr. Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote. (SM, ED, LB, WC, PS / absent – TN, VM)

Tax Collector (4311):

Mr. Curtin motioned to accept the Selectmen's proposed amount of \$6,000 for Tax Postage (1-4133-133) and Ms. Dominick seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote. (SM, ED, LB, WC, PS / absent – TN, VM)

Mrs. Boyce motioned to accept the Selectmen's proposed amount of \$1,900 for Lien Redemption (1-4133-168) and Mr. Curtin seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote. (SM, ED, LB, WC, PS / absent – TN, VM)

Mrs. Boyce motioned to accept the proposed Tax Collector's budget (4133) at \$61,474 and Mr. Curtin seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote. (SM, ED, LB, WC, PS / absent – TN, VM)

Fire Department (4220):

Mr. Shibley motioned to accept the Selectmen's proposed amount of \$53,204 for the Fire Chief's Salary (4420-005; \$54,800) and Mrs. Boyce seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote. (SM, ED, LB, WC, PS / absent – TN, VM)

Mr. Shibley motioned to accept the Selectmen's proposed amount of \$50,000 for the Firefighters' Wages (4420-016; \$54,000) and Mr. Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote. (SM, ED, LB, WC, PS / absent – TN, VM)

Mr. Shibley motioned to accept the Selectmen's proposed amount of \$4,000 for the Over-Time Wages (4420-020; \$6,000) and Mrs. Boyce seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of four. (no - SM, / yes - ED, LB, WC, PS / absent – TN, VM)

Mr. Miller motioned to accept the Selectmen's proposed amount of \$4,000 for the Part-Time Wages-Forest Fire (4420-025; \$4,000) and Mr. Shibley seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote. (SM, ED, LB, WC, PS / absent – TN, VM) *[Recorder's note: the amount proposed and the Selectmen's recommended amount for this line item is confirmed to be the same t \$4,000.]*

Mr. Shibley motioned to accept the Selectmen's proposed amount of \$5,765 for the Computer Expenses (4420-162; \$6,100) and Mr. Shibley seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote. (SM, ED, LB, WC, PS / absent – TN, VM)

Mr. Miller motioned to decrease the proposed line item for Uniforms (4220-206; \$2,290) to \$240 and Mr. Shibley seconded the motion. The motion failed. (yes - SM, PS / no - ED, LB, WC, / absent – TN, VM)

Mr. Curtin motioned to accept the Selectmen's proposed amount of \$2,800 for Fire Alarms (4220-303; \$6,487) and Ms. Dominick seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote. (SM, ED, LB, WC, PS / absent – TN, VM)

Mr. Miller motioned to decrease the proposed line item for Pre-Employment Screening (4220-449; \$1,200) to \$500 and Mr. Curtin seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of four. (no - LB / yes – SM, ED, LB, WC, PS / absent – TN, VM)

Mr. Curtin motioned to accept the amended proposed budget for the Fire Department (4220) at \$283,801 and Ms. Dominick seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of four. (no - LB / yes – SM, ED, LB, WC, PS / absent – TN, VM)

X. Public Input

There was no public input.

XI. Non-Public Session

Mr. Miller motioned that the meeting was to be moved to a non-public session, based on RSA 91-A:3 II (c). The motion was seconded by Mr. Curtin and passed unanimously. S. Miller, yes; W. Curtin, yes; P. Shibley, yes; E. Dominick, yes; L. Boyce, yes. The Board entered into non-public session at approximately 9:05pm.

XII. Return to Public Session

Mr. Shibley motioned to return to public session and Mr. Curtin seconded the motion The motion passed by a unanimous vote. (yes - SM, ED, LB,. WC, PS / absent – TN, VM)

The meeting returned to Public Session at approximately 9:25pm.

XIII. Motion to Seal the Minutes of the Non-Public Sessions

Mr. Miller motioned to seal the minutes of the non-public session for one year and Mr. Shibley seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote. (yes - SM, ED, LB,. WC, PS / absent – TN, VM)

XIV. Decisions

Mrs. Boyce motioned to accept the non-public meeting minutes of October 31, 2006, as amended and Mr. Curtin seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote. (yes - SM, ED, LB,. WC, PS / absent – TN, VM)

XV. Adjournment

The next Budget Committee Meeting will be held on November 6, 2006 at 6PM.

Mrs. Boyce motioned to adjourn and Mr. Shibley seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote. (yes - SM, ED, LB,. WC, PS / absent – TN, VM) The meeting adjourned at 9:35PM.

Respectively Submitted,

Krista A. Argiropolis
Keeper and Transcriber of Minutes