

Town of Alton Budget Committee
APPROVED MINUTES
November 15, 2017 @ 6:30 PM
Alton Town Hall
1 Monument Square, Alton, NH 03809

1. Call to order at 6:30 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Present:

Roger Nelson, Chairman
Greg Fuller, Member
David Hershey, Member
Everett Clark, School Representative Alternate
Reuben Wentworth, Selectmen Representative

Others:

Liz Dione, Town Administrator
John Markland, Selectmen Representative Alternate

Absent:

Peter Leavitt, School Representative
Andrew Levasseur, Member
Terrence O'Rourke, Member

4. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Greg Fuller to accept the Agenda as presented. Second by David Hershey. No discussion. Motion passes with all in favor.

5. Approval of Minutes

- September 21, 2017
Table approval of minutes to November 16, 2017 meeting.
- October 19, 2017
Mark Peter Leavitt as Leavitt as absent
Table approval of minutes to November 16, 2017.

6. Old Business -

Roger Nelson announced to the public present that during Public Session any public input is to be directed to what is represented on the Agenda.

7. New Business

Review of Town/School Department Budgets to include:

- a. Assessing Department (Tom Sargent)
- b. Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) (Sarah Silk)
- c. Conservation Commission (Earl Bagley)
- d. Budget Committee (Roger Nelson)
- e. Alton Central School (Kathy O'Blenes and Pam Stiles)

A. Assessing (4195)

Roger Nelson - Line 184 question. Contracting Services. Budgeting \$19000. Over 5 years doesn't match up with the number

Tom Sargent - Measure list every 5 years, In between 5 years just do a walk about.
Roger Nelson - up with 5-year average. Budgeting close to 5 year average. No other questions
Tom Sargent - Amend vehicle maintenance from \$400. Vehicle will not pass inspection. \$42,000.
Liz Dione has been discussion with Selectmen. No decision reach only discussion on sources, type of vehicle (new or used). Was not aware he was going to ask for this increase. Selectmen are looking at possibilities to replace it. Hopefully before Dec 15.
Roger Nelson not going to change budget until he hears from Liz Dione.
David Hershey has concerns having an employee driving in an unsafe vehicle.
Liz Dione agrees - this should be taken care if soon.

B. Household Hazardous Waste (4326)

Roger Nelson noted an average \$14900 gone to \$19900.
Sarah Silk stated there is a new 3-year contract - no way of predicting quantities or items. Disposal of the waste is the majority of the budget.
Roger Nelson asked for a copy of the contract.
Sarah Silk does not have one with her tonight - never been before the Budget Committee before.
Roger Nelson asked if she knows what they spent this year?
Sarah Silk stated they have not received all the bills at this time.
Greg Fuller asked if this is a fixed contract?
Sarah Silk stated they pay according to item and quantity. Have an advantage of having a Hazmat Building so they start in May through Oct.
David Hershey asked why the difference on allocation?
Sarah Silk said based on attendance?
David Hershey asked if Wolfeboro has a higher disposal rate?
Sarah Silk stated it is because of convenience located in the community. Comes to Alton twice.
David Hershey asked why does Wolfeboro have a greater amount of disposal?
Sarah Silk based on the quantity of people that attend and number of households.
David Hershey asked about insurance.
Sarah Silk noted the facility is owned by the town of Wolfeboro and pays Wolfeboro \$75 per year.
Building is located at a brush facility. Stated the plan is modeled plan after LRPC since the 1980s.

C. Conservation Commission (4612)

Earl Bagley noted they changed from Recording Secretary to use the Building Inspector Secretary to be more informative at the meetings. Conservation monitor easements once a year. Most income comes from current use penalties.
Roger Nelson asked on line 020. Overtime.
Earl Bagley stated that using the Building Secretary puts her past the 40-week limit.
Roger Nelson noted the 5-year average was \$95 and listed is \$1000.
Earl Bagley noted again that the Building Secretary gets time and half for the meeting.
Roger Nelson asked about Meetings and Conference.
Earl Bagley stated they never know who is available for the different opportunities, so they want it available if anyone can attend the different one available to them.
Roger Nelson asked about Contracted Services underbudgeted.
Earl Bagley stated for mowing on easements (every other year).
Roger Nelson questioned it should be 0 this year then.
David Hershey asked about Line 015. Wages.
Earl Bagley stated If the building secretary cannot do the meeting that cover the alternate secretary. That secretary gets paid regular wages.
Ruben Wentworth stated that meetings do overlap. When meetings overlap it calls for different town employee secretary to cover for another.

D. Budget Committee (4131)

Roger Nelson stated it shows spending \$1479 and has a budget of \$2000.

Discussion on the open line for telephone and discussion on deleting this line for \$1.

Roger Nelson stated we will discuss this more when it is to be voted on.

E. Alton Central School

Roger Nelson asked for number they closed out on and second question was where is the money?

Kathy O'Blenes distributed a memo explaining answer.

Unreserved \$821,702. Of that they had excessive revenue of \$347,000 over the budget. Majority of that was from PMHS of \$205,000. \$24,700 from rebates, fixed assets, rental fees, small sales of fixed assets. Other was \$90,700 for Medicaid reimbursement and catastrophic aid of \$26,000.

2 tier situation - if you underestimate the revenue and gain more, that is considered surplus and underspending the budget and they underspent the budget by \$474,000. The majority of that consisted of salaries from various lines throughout the budget due to transition of people. \$51,000 left over from fuel oil line, \$101,000 from transportation. \$78,000 from repairs and maintenance line buildings and grounds.

When there is a fund balance, no monies transfer but it is a credit where there is excess revenue and underspending in the operating budget. That number is put on to the MS 24 which is the estimate revenue document that they supply to DRA by September 1. That number is captured and used for tax rating. The 821,000 decreased their assessment on this year's budget. So the town does not have to give them \$821,000. It is taken off from the approved budget for this year. That goes into setting the tax rate.

David Hershey asked about the Medicaid reimbursement?

Kathy O'Blenes stated it was from special needs student population.

David Hershey asked what catastrophic aid?

Kathy O'Blenes answered it is a calculation set by the Dept. of Education, if they have students that have hit a threshold of expenditures in one year.

David Hershey asked do you expect this to reoccur or are these special circumstances?

Kathy O'Blenes expect to reoccur - "crap shoot" some are up and some down, student driven
Catastrophic is prorated from the Dept. of Ed.

David Hershey asked - anticipated - audit finalized

Roger Nelson suggested to review Budget Summary, Account 1100 Regular Program. Shows a dollar change 18/19 change vs the 17/18 budget.

Pam Stiles distributed a brief summary.

Pam Stiles - when they put together the budget for the School Board they put together an overview that helped to answer some of the questions in a more proactive way so you could get a sense of how this was put together. The budget is almost \$15 million and has a lot of moving parts to it. Did work to make sure lines were aligned this year. They did some moving around to make more sense.

Gathering information from Department heads they begin with a -0- based budget and put in what they need not a wish list. Working with quotes and good faith estimates. New strategic plan done in a very collaborative manner with the Town, parents and staff; a mission on how they are moving forward. They took their main themes of the strategic plan and that is what drove decisions across the budget.

Title 2A Funds added due to not knowing how Federal Government is going to move, which is primarily professional development money. Any items added are from quotes and estimates. Enrollment is a big part of decisions. Looking at decreased enrollment again for next year. They have worked over the years with a cushion of 10. Next year about 435. Going through the budget they went through by function. Anything that was over or under \$1500 they made note of. Cost items under \$1500, a lot of it is salaries, some equipment, but a good portion was salaries and the changes. Some functions have considerable changes reflective of being to move to be in the correct line items. Some are reflections of costs that were made last year not needed this year.

Initiatives in the budget, 4 have been brought forward. Literacy Coach, Reading and Writing, Math Coach, increased professional development, and more substitutes. Looking at class size reduction. Looking to add 1st grade and 5th grade teacher this year due to move-ins during the summer. Working on personalizing more instruction. Personal learning opportunities for middle school - a precursor to high school. Personalizing with elective offered and a pilot program call Cageet. A way to utilize accessibility of technology to students who do not have this available at home. This is all initiatives that were not in the budget last year. Cost for teachers for the literacy coach is \$56,000. Stem initiative to continue. All initiatives for 18/19 come to about \$83,000.

Enrollment projections for next year. Looking at approx. 436, but again looks like they stay about 10 either side. Using town reports and birth rate records.

Distribution of funds. Majority goes to high school tuition. The largest piece of that goes toward instruction and special Ed. and then other areas are divided up. They are a little bit under ½ percent where they were last year. This budget was done with a lot of different initiatives in mind but moving them ahead, giving them what they need and a thoughtfully done budget.

Roger Nelson asked if the enrollment is down, why can't existing teachers be moved to help with the 5th grade and 1st grade as opposed to hiring more teachers?

Pam Stiles noted that last year they reduced 2 teachers. Don't have teachers to move into place.

General discussion of projected class sizes, national sizes and what Alton class sizes are moving toward in estimation. Comparison of national average to policy of Alton Schools.

Pam Stiles stated educational decision comes in where there is question.

David Hershey suggested maybe we should go back to visit policy and getting a target number.

Roger Nelson asked about Curriculum Director?

Pam Stiles this was a line item that was moved to the 1100 function from Enrichment.

Roger Nelson - What was the CVA percent increase this year?

Kathy O'Blenes noted the \$103,000 - is there a period of time that you then incur long term liability, in a situation of a declining enrollment and hiring a new teacher for possible 2-3 year period, can you hire temporary teacher.

Pam Stiles teachers new to a district are with them for 3 years, after that, it is a year to year contract. New teacher has to be with them for 5 years.

Roger Nelson asked on page 3, workbooks/math. Is this new?

Pam Stiles answered not in previous budget/consumables

Roger Nelson asked of language arts is new \$7700

Pam Stiles answered it is for Software - part of pilot, (science was in last year's budget - using this year) previously in technology line. I.e. software for math now in math line not technology.

Greg Fuller asked why are we using new stuff? What happened to old stuff?

Pam Stiles noted using on line math workbooks. Not abandoning the old.

Roger Nelson asked about special education

Greg Fuller asked about Technology.

General discussion the Cageet program. It is a modem hat has a firewall - only can access the work they are assigned. Checks out at the library to do work and return it. Student Chrome book assigned from school.

Roger Nelson asked on page 8. increase in other consultants, \$8000 increase

Jennifer Katz-Borrin spoke. Increase students coming there will be over spending this line this year.

In anticipation with spending this year so double number based on student needs.

Roger Nelson - increase in tuition of private sources

Jennifer Katz-Borrin answered out of district placement

Roger Nelson page 9, Highschool - other consultants

Jennifer Katz-Borrin joint maintenance agreement.

Roger Nelson, Tuition - private sources

David Hershey - elementary private tuitions. Currently have students in HS that are out of district.

Roger Nelson Enrichment?

Pam Stiles answered student opportunities that generally are not academic in nature.

Roger Nelson is this a requirement?

Pam Stiles not required

Greg Fuller Asked why health services up?

Kathy O'Blenes stated a person opted to take the insurance

Roger Nelson improvement of instruction?

Kathy O'Blenes for teacher instruction - new programs, etc.

Greg Fuller page 21 - salary for school board - Is there going to be a warrant article?

Pam Stiles said they do not need it.

Roger Nelson - page 22 salary increase (\$54,000 merit increase)

Kathy O'Blenes pool of money for merit increase - based on end of year evaluation 15 administrators (non teacher rolls), and 41 support staff. 3% increase per the school board.

Roger Nelson did receive a copy of PMHS budget but no warrant articles

Pam Stiles - noted Warrant articles to be done in December

Roger Nelson building maintenance - door question, asbestos abatement, interior doors, handles and locks

Kathy O'Blenes - asbestos abatement is in a warrant article,

Roger Nelson asked about the decrease in heat?

Kathy O'Blenes being more efficient - replace windows, locked in a rate for diesel for next year 2.047.

Greg Fuller asked about telephone up over 10%.

Kathy O'Blenes said they had some issues with 911 being able to identify them. Had to add extra fees to make phones be able to call 911 throughout the facilities, 5-15 cents per month per phone charge. Added blocking features for international phone calls.

David Hershey asked about transportation - question on hiring a driver and a bus for athletics.

Pam Stiles looked at it - was not cost feasible.

Kathy O'Blenes noted that dental 3 % increase 2.3, Health 5% decrease of 1.1%.

David Hershey would like to see specific goals and objectives for enrollment and suggestions for class size.

Roger Nelson disconcerting to see huge surplus.

Kathy O'Blenes noted it was default budget from deliberative session.

Public input.

John Markland resident. Grandson moved to private school and his numbers are 13 per classroom. Ask question if enrollment numbers include special Ed.?

Pam Stiles said yes.

John Markland asked if special Ed. students could move to another district but not affect the class size?

Everett Clark answered that special Ed. student not in the district that moved does not affect class sizes.

8. Public input closed.

9. Other Business. None,

10. MOTION to adjourn at 8:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn Schaeffner, Recording Secretary