

TOWN OF ALTON
ALTON BUDGET COMMITTEE
(Approved 12/8/09)
MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 3, 2009

MEMBERS PRESENT: Karen Painter, Chair
Steve Miller
Richard MacDonald
Marc DeCoff
Loring Carr, Selectmen's Representative

MEMBERS ABSENT: Greg Fuller, Vice Chair
Terri Noyes, School Board Representative

OTHERS PRESENT: Kathy Holt, Superintendent
Members of the Public

I. CALL TO ORDER

K. Painter called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

G. Fuller and T. Noyes were absent.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV. AGENDA

M. DeCoff motion to approve the agenda as presented and R. MacDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

V. JMA BUDGET UPDATE

S. Miller reported that there was a meeting of the JMA Budget Committee on December 2, 2009. M. DeCoff, R. MacDonald, and himself were present. He noted there wasn't a representative present from the Alton School Board for the meeting and spoke about his concerns about the absences of a representative from the Board at the meeting. He reported that the split between Alton and Barnstead for the JMA this year is 49.81% (Alton) and 50.19% (Barnstead). The budget for FY 2010-2011 is \$6,778,680.00, a \$20,000 increase from the previous year. He reported on grants that will be received, which total \$290,000.00 to help supplement the budget and noted that \$1.82/gal has been locked for the heating oil price for the year. There are four Warrant articles proposed, one of them is for an expendable trust fund for the teachers' tuition reimbursement, and S. Miller spoke in favor of the article. He spoke about the set up of the JMA

and funding set up, noting he needed to ask the DRA for clarification on a discussion about budget cuts made at the towns' level.

S. Miller spoke about the role of the JMA Budget Committee and noted that he was wrong that they were "just an advisory committee". He presented copies of the JMA to the Committee for their review. L. Carr stated that the JMA document he handed out was the original one that was passed out and thought that it had been changed after the public hearing. S. Miller stated that he had the DRA look for copies to confirm that was the correct agreement and reported he received the copy from Superintendent Paul Bartolomucci (PMHS). He stated he asked for amendments and the latest documentation. He stated that the JMA Budget Committee has the same power and authority to cut the budget that the town budget committee has, and that they do not have to present the same budget that the school board presents. There was discussion about being sure the documentation was correct on S. Miller's findings.

S. Miller requested get reimbursed for copies of a book for the members of the Budget Committee. K. Painter requested S. Miller to wait until she checked on the Committee's budget to see if they could afford them.

VI. SCHOOL BUDGET

K. Holt handed out requested documents about test scores to the Committee and a new draft of the budget the Committee because of recent changes that had been made, such as the approval of the transportation contract and the insurance rates they have received recently. She spoke about the transportation contract, and reported there was a bid presented by First Student that had only a three percent increase. The bid is for five years, with a total increase of nine percent over the span of the five years. There was review and discussion of the Transportation budget, including transportation of the Special Education. S. Miller asked for a results analysis to be done of the test results of students who had attended summer school.

K. Holt spoke about a proposed in the Speech Therapy classroom, where a window will be placed in the classroom. There was discussion about using some of the offices for classrooms.

K. Holt noted that the total budget increase was just over two percent from the previous year. She spoke about the history of the budget last year and the budget freeze that was done because of building issues. There was discussion of the funding of student learning and NECAP scores.

The Committee discussed making recommendations on the budget. K. Holt noted that T. Noyes would have been present but was at the Holiday Concert at PMHS and that K. O'Blenes would have been present but was sick. She spoke about her concerns about the Committee making recommendations on the budget without additional representative being present from the school district. K. Painter stated the meeting was posted and it was the prerogative of Committee to make recommendations that night if they felt it was appropriate.

There was a discussion about the proposed security system for the Library and Media Center at PMHS.

S. Miller motioned to review the school budget for FY 2010-2011 and to make recommendations on it. M. DeCoff seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

S. Miller stated he would like to level fund the entire budget. He stated there has always been a significant surplus and felt it was a function of the general budget being under-funded, with a lot of “fluff” in the budget. He stated they could go through the budget on a line-by-line basis, but wanted to know the opinion on his statement from other Committee members. R. MacDonald stated he was for it.

S. Miller motioned to reduce the budget for Alton Central School, SAU #72, for Fiscal Year 2010-2011 by \$2,487.00. R. MacDonald seconded the motion. S. Miller felt there was about \$150,000.00 that was questionable but felt that the budget would pass if it was level funded. He spoke about the increase proposed in the PMHS budget, noting that he would like to have a decrease of about 1%, so that the total budget for the two SAU’s would be less than last year’s budget. He felt that he could not justify cutting more from the budget because of test scores. R. MacDonald and M. DeCoff agreed with S. Miller. K. Painter spoke about her concerns about the building issues, test scores, and felt the budget was put together very thoughtfully. She asked if \$2,000, in the scheme of things, would really make a difference in the budget, as the off-set of the total budget was just 0.3% increase. S. Miller spoke about other areas where he felt cuts could be made but noted this was not a good year to make the cuts. L. Carr asked K. Holt if she could make \$2,000 in cuts on the budget and bring it back and K. Holt responded that she would like to talk with the Principal about where she would like the cuts made. **L. Carr amended to approve the budget if it is level funded and have the Superintendent bring back the budget once the appropriate cuts were made and R. MacDonald seconded the amendment. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.**

VII. UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE

There was an open discussion about the impact that the county budget has on the taxpayers. K. Painter stated she would like it if L. Carr reported on the county budget and spending.

The Committee discussed insurance for the school. R. MacDonald felt the school should do what the town was doing with insurance and felt there had been significant savings.

VIII. UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE

JMA Budget Committee (all meetings start at 6:00 p.m.)

Monday, December 7, 2009

Thursday, December 10, 2009 (Public Hearing) at 6:00 p.m.

Alton Budget Committee (all meetings start at 6:30 p.m.)

Tuesday, December 8, 2009 – Open/CIP

Tuesday, December 15, 2009 - Work/Review Session

Tuesday, January 12, 2010 - Public Hearing

Thursday, January 14, 2010 - Public Hearing

Tuesday, January 19, 2010 - Snow Date

The Budget Committee meeting schedule for December 10, 2009 was cancelled due to a conflict with the JMA Budget.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

K. Painter motioned to adjourn and M. DeCoff seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Krista Argiropolis
Recorder, Public Session