

**TOWN OF ALTON
DELIBERATIVE SESSION
FEBRUARY 3, 2021
PROSPECT MOUNTAIN HIGH SCHOOL
POSTPONED FROM FEBRUARY 2, 2021**

While those in attendance were finding their seats, the Town Moderator, Robin Lane-Douglas began by going over COVID-19 protocols; discouraging members from leaving their seats for other than using the microphone. She advised attendees to maintain 6 feet apart whether seated or waiting to use the microphone. If attendees are seated and have the proper distancing guideline, they can remove their masks.

Moderator Lane-Douglas welcomed 40 voters in attendance to the first session of the 2021 Town Meeting and asked all those who were not registered voters to stand.

All in attendance rose to Pledge Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Robin Lane-Douglas, Town Moderator, called the meeting to order at 6:04pm.

Reuben Wentworth, Selectmen Chair, introduced the members representing the Town of Alton.

Paul LaRochelle, Selectman
Rossiter “Bob” Holt, Selectman
Virgil Macdonald, Selectman
Phil Wittmann, Selectman
Elizabeth Dionne, Town Administrator
James Sessler, Town Attorney
Laura Parker, Finance Officer
Jennifer Collins, Deputy Town Clerk

Patrick O’Brien, Budget Committee Chair, introduced the members in attendance representing the Budget Committee.

David Hershey, Member
Reuben Parker, Member

Budget Committee Members not present:

Elizabeth Varney
Brock Mitchell
Karen Kharitnov, School Board Representative

Moderator Lane-Douglas then read the “Moderator’s Rules” that were supplied upon entering the auditorium.

You are hereby notified to meet at the Prospect Mountain High School on Tuesday, the second day of February, postponed to tonight, the third day of February, in the year two thousand and twenty-one, beginning at 6 o’clock in the evening for the purpose of deliberating upon the

following Warrant Articles and Town elections to approve the warrant articles by ballot vote which will be held on March 9, 2021 at St. Katharine Drexel Church (lower level), 40 Hidden Spring Road, from 7:00 am – 7:00 pm.

Article 1: To choose all necessary Town Officers for which there are vacancies, for such terms as may be permitted by law; and to elect: one selectman for three years, one town clerk/tax collector for three years, one treasurer for three years, one trustee of trust funds for three years, one trustee of trust funds for one year, one library trustee for three years, one library trustee for one year, two budget committee members for three years, one budget committee member for two years, one budget committee member for one year, two planning board members for three years, one supervisor of the checklist for three years, one supervisor of the checklist for one year and one zoning board member for three years.

Article 8: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000.00 to be added to the Benefit Pay Expendable Trust Fund, previously established in 2001. Said funds are recommended by the Town Auditors to be used to pay for benefits accrued by Town employees and redeemed when they leave employment with the Town of Alton, in accordance with the Town Personnel Policy. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0). (Majority vote required)

Reuben Wentworth moved Article 8 and was seconded by Virgil Macdonald.

Moderator Lane-Douglas gave the rationale to the article. There is approximately \$31,000 in this fund. With one employee retiring this year after 20+ years of employment, this should cover that expense. Leaving a balance of \$31,000 if anyone else leaves employment.

Reuben Wentworth stated that this is an annual appropriation the town asks for every year. At this point there are a lot of employees with 20+ years that are thinking about retiring. The Highway Agent, Ken Roberts being one of them. A lot of this expense will be going to him for all the vacation and sick time he has accrued. This will leave enough money in here in case somebody else decides to retire this year. As of right now we do not have any information of anyone else retiring.

No further discussion.

Reuben Wentworth motioned to restrict Article 8 and Virgil Macdonald seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the official ballot as written.

Article 9: Shall the Town raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$8,210,620.00. Should this article be defeated; the Default Budget shall be \$8,099,570.00, which is the same as last year (with the exception of the Water Budget) with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Board of Selectmen or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised Operating Budget only. This article does not include

special or individual articles addressed. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0).
Recommended by the Budget Committee (6-0). (Majority vote required)

Patrick O'Brien moved Article 9 and was seconded by Virgil Macdonald.

Patrick O'Brien clarified the budget that is presented and voted on is actually that of the Budget Committee not the Selectmen's budget. This season was challenging; there was a fair amount of back and forth and justifications, eventually coming to the figure presented tonight.

Loring Carr asked for clarification on the difference of two different numbers provided. On page four of five of the "2021 MS-DTB" handout it states the default budget is \$8,607,454 and the one in this article states "the Default Budget shall be \$8,099,570".

Laura Parker, Finance Officer, explained that the town default budget is \$8,607,454 and the water is \$507,884 which totals \$8,099,570. These numbers are separated to make it more transparent.

Mr. Carr asked how would one know that there are two separate default budgets with this form. And, what would happen if one passes and the other doesn't?

Mr. Carr moved on noting that the next page states "Reasons for Reductions/Increases" there is nothing there. By RSA 40:13 XI, A section 2 states "Reductions and increases to the previous year's operating budget including identification of specific items that constitute change by account code, and the reasons for each change." This form has not been completed in its entirety. Mr. Carr checked the posting at the Post Office, and it is the exact copy we have here. Stated this is not a legal posting without this information on page 5 of 5; "Reasons for Reductions/Increases" it is blank.

Ms. Parker stated she thinks she has never filed this piece of paper.

Mr. Carr states by law you should be providing the reasons for increases and decreases in the default budget. It wasn't posted with the warrant and suggests to table this warrant article and the water one too.

Attorney James Sessler stated that we don't vote on the default budget tonight. It is really for informational purposes only. The Board of Selectmen have until the printing of the ballot to make any changes to make them lawful. There is no need to table the actual operating budget. If it was a mistake the Selectmen can look at it and make a change before ballot goes to printing; hopefully by Friday afternoon. We are only approving the warrant article that goes on the ballot which is the operating budget before you tonight. Again, the default budget is only for informational purposes.

Moderator Lane-Douglas suggested to put any additional questions in writing to the Board of Selectmen for them to answer. The question has been answered that is pertaining to the warrant article.

Mr. Carr asked what are some of the differences in these line items. As he would like to be fair to each budget when making the choice to vote for or against the operating budget.

Moderator Lane-Douglas confirmed Mr. Carr has a valid point that needs to be addressed with the Selectmen in writing.

Mr. Wentworth advised Mr. Carr to put any questions or concerns in writing and drop them off tomorrow morning with the Town Administrator to allow time to be addressed. The Town Clerk has informed them tonight that she will be sending the ballot out for printing on Friday. This will allow the Selectmen to answer concerns before Friday.

Resident, Felice Carr asked to clarify that today we are being asked to vote on the budget with no explanations as to what the difference is between the operating and default budget. In past years we were provided the differences between the two budgets.

Mr. O'Brien stated the "Reductions/Increases" page is merely a summary page for the pages that follow. In which Mrs. Carr stated she does not have.

Moderator Lane-Douglas added that there is a handout in the back that has the itemizations and details on this. This is titled the "Budget Worksheet – Expenditures".

Mr. Wentworth stated budget expenditures worksheet was not posted. The state MS form that had to be posted was.

Resident, Richard Shea stated that he had the opportunity to watch the online deliberations of the two committees. The process could be smoother if the town staff could provide an initial bottom line full budget before the board to begin with to consider it. It appeared that some of the Selectmen were surprised by the bottom-line number after the department heads had presented their budgets – but it was told it should be ok. It seems like the judgement could be made if the information was made available ahead of time.

Mr. Wentworth agreed with Mr. Shea that it was confusing. The board failed to carry their totals down. We originally received a budget in full from each department head. We knew what the bottom line was. We went through the budget and met with the department heads twice and made our recommendations or reductions to our bottom line. Unfortunately, some did not carry the totals all the way down. When they realized this, the totals were up quite a bit. Then all of a sudden in those meetings that were presented online there was a vote to not allow the budget 3-2. Mr. Wentworth, himself was in favor of the budget presented with reductions made, three others voted against the budget. We felt at that time if the Board of Selectmen went to the townspeople on election day with this budget, we would end up with a default budget. The default budget meaning that our employees would not be taken care of even after working so diligently this past year with all the demands that were put on them. The board renegotiated and recommended a 2% reduction in the overall operating budget. Mr. Wentworth went on to state that he went to the Budget Committee with this recommendation, even though they already passed the budget with the minority of the Selectmen. The Budget Committee agreed with the 2% reduction, which leads us to the budget before us tonight. The departments came up with a way to reduce the bottom line. The operating budget at 8 million is a very fair budget. It is the bigger departments that are taking the 2% reduction, as they could absorb this cut without hurting services to the community.

Mr. Shea thanked Chairman Wentworth for his response. Inquired as to if the initial bottom-line budget is available to review.

Mr. Wentworth responded that the initial bottom-line budget is available for review. Please make this request in writing.

Mr. Shea inquired about FEMA, as they have indicated that they will be refunding the towns fully for their COVID related expenses. If they do follow through with this, is there a mechanism in place that would reduce the budget or would this simply go to the town surplus for the future?

Mr. Wentworth responded that money would go back into the surplus fund, which would help offset the tax rate if there is an increase this upcoming year.

Mr. Carr referenced the “Budget Worksheet – Expenditure” form he just received, and it states “policy – COLA” noted. Then asked how is policy/COLA a legal obligation.

Mr. Wentworth stated that any default budget includes a policy/COLA as this is a contractual agreement within our town policy. This has been reviewed by our Town Attorney for the past several years, as the same question keeps being brought up. According to our Town Attorney it is legal.

Mr. Carr responded this is \$94,000 less than what would be in the default budget. The numbers are incorrect; people need to be aware of this crisis.

Ken Roberts motioned to move the question to limit debate and was seconded by Virgil Macdonald. With a show of cards, the motion to move the question passed.

Reuben Wentworth motioned to restrict Article 9 and Patrick O’Brien seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the official ballot as written.

Article 10: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$475,042.00 for the operation and maintenance of the Water Distribution system for the ensuing year, said sum is to be offset by users’ fees. Should this article be defeated, the Default Budget shall be \$507,884.00, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town or by law. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-0-1). (Majority vote required)

Virgil Macdonald moved Article 10 and was seconded by Bob Holt.

Virgil Macdonald stated this budget is paid for by the water users. The Town pays for it through our taxes and then is reimbursed by the Water Department.

Loring Carr asked for the minutes to show that he is opposed. Again, the default budget was not properly posted.

David Hershey, speaking as a resident, understands the process as the funds are fronted by the taxpayers and then reimbursed by the user fees. Which was confirmed by Virgil Macdonald. Then asked if there was a credit risk with this process. For an example in all intents and

purposes the taxpayers front \$475,000 and user fees come in at \$420,000 leaving a \$55,000 shortage; how does this work into the process?

Chairman Wentworth responded that the taxpayers do not front the money anymore. Since the Selectmen opened up a fund after last year's election to get the money from the surplus fund that the water users have lost over the years. The Water Commissioner is not going to the Selectmen asking for the surplus. Right now, the water works revolving revenue fund has \$304,768. This fund increases with money coming in for late fees; creating revenue. This revenue is what is being used, not taxpayer dollars. This was a reason for separating it last year so none of the surplus money goes into the water department fund, it is going into the revenue fund.

Resident, Desmond Douglas asked how this will affect our tax rate. If this article passes our tax rate will go up.

Mr. Wentworth stated this will not affect our tax rate. This is why it is a separate article now from the regular operating budget. The revenues will already be there to cover this.

Mr. Douglas asked if the money is there, why do we need a warrant article. This is just confusing to have as a warrant article. The Town should have just kept the Water Commissioners.

Mr. Wentworth responded it is because we have to approve a budget for the Alton Water Works as it is not in the overall operating budget. The Town of Alton owns the Water Department, we can't just create a budget without the townspeople approving.

Reuben Wentworth motioned to restrict Article 10 and Bob Holt seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the official ballot as written.

Article 11: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$430,000.00 to be added to the Fire Department Equipment Capital Reserve Fund as previously established in 1973. **\$150,000.00 will come from the unassigned fund balance which means it will not be raised from general taxation and will not affect the tax rate.** The remaining \$280,000.00 will be raised from general taxation. Recommended by the Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0) (Majority vote required) (Recommended by CIP)

Phil Wittmann moved Article 11 and was seconded by Paul LaRochelle.

Phil Wittmann deferred to the Fire Chief, James Beaudoin to speak on behalf of this article.

James Beaudoin, Fire Chief, stated that originally the sheets provided tonight refers to \$180,000 recommended by the CIP committee. After talking with the Selectmen about replacing the ladder truck they suggested putting \$250,000/year for the next five to six years as it is looking to cost \$1.2 - \$1.3 million to replace the truck. This money will put the Town in the right direction to work with CIP to make a proper plan to get the truck replaced in a timely fashion when it is needed.

L. Carr stated that after watching the Selectmen's meeting, he thought this was for a \$300,000 fire boat.

Patrick O'Brien, Vice Chair of the CIP Committee, stated that none of these appropriations for CIP go to any one specific purpose. Each purchase is planned over a specific six-year time frame. The vehicle that is being mentioned is the next one that is coming up and that is why it was a topic for discussion. The whole idea of CIP is to save money over a period of time to avoid a large tax impact. When CIP was established, about four to five years ago, departments were in varying stages of needs of CIP. The first department that was very heavy in this was the Highway Department. As you will see over the last few years the appropriation for the Highway Department is very high as they had a lot of vehicles on the edge of failure and were replaced. The Fire Department is next in line, having the next oldest fleet that needs to be replaced. If you look at the CIP explanation sheet on the front page it will show you how much money is put away annually into CIP as a whole. The CIP committee focused very heavily on maintaining that bottom line number so that it is not a major increase or decrease year over year. This number may change per department or capital reserve but the proportion is relatively the same. You will see in 2026 of the master document the number will start coming down significantly as we get ahead of saving.

L. Carr stated to the Moderator that this response did not answer the question about the \$300,000 fire boat.

R. Wentworth stated the \$150,000 is being requested to come out of the unassigned fund balance. The Fire Chief came to the Board of Selectmen requesting \$300,000 for a new fire boat. You are correct about that. So, \$150,000 coming out of that and \$150,000 coming out of the ambulance revolving fund to replace the fire boat which is in need of replacing. The rest of the money being raised will go into the capital reserve fund identifying the new ladder truck down the road. Originally the Fire Chief asked if the \$300,000 came out of taxation then we said what if we could take some out of the ambulance fund as they use the boat for medical calls. Majority of their calls were medical calls.

L. Carr asked if the bid has already gone out for the fire boat.

R. Wentworth responded the RFP has been created.

Chief Beaudoin, clearing up any confusion, added the boat has always been in CIP. The ladder truck has not been funded through CIP the past few years. That is the change this year.

Reuben Wentworth motioned to restrict Article 11 and Phil Wittmann seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the official ballot as written.

Article 12: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the amount of \$15,000.00 to be added to the Grounds and Maintenance Vehicle Capital Reserve fund as previously established in 2019. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0). (Majority vote required) (Recommended by CIP)

Paul LaRochelle moved Article 12 and was seconded by Rueben Wentworth.

P. LaRochelle stated the \$15,000 is to be added to the vehicle capital reserve fund. It currently has a balance of \$45,659. This would be to put money towards the replacement of vehicles for 2023.

No further discussion.

Reuben Wentworth motioned to restrict Article 12 and Paul LaRochelle seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the official ballot as written.

Article 13: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$350,000.00 to be added to the Highway Department Equipment Capital Reserve Fund as previously established in 1981. Recommended by the Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0). (Majority vote required) (Recommended by CIP)

Virgil Macdonald moved Article 13 and was seconded by Paul LaRochelle.

Virgil Macdonald deferred to Ken Roberts, Highway Agent.

Ken Roberts affirmed the statement from Pat O'Brien about Capital Reserve Funds, especially for equipment. If you see in the overall plan by 2022 – 2023 this takes a nose dive. Took a while to build and catch up, now you're seeing it fall. This is due to the work the CIP committee has done to keep the tax rate as leveled as possible, no surprise in expense. It is one of the greatest things the town has done and urges to keep supporting it.

L. Carr asked how much is in the capital reserve now.

K. Roberts responded there are a couple of vehicles that have been ordered and not picked up. The balance will be around \$16,000 afterwards.

Reuben Wentworth motioned to restrict Article 13 and Virgil Macdonald seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the official ballot as written.

Article 14: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$950,000.00 to be added to the Highway Construction Capital Reserve Fund as previously established in 1998. Said amount is partially offset by revenues from the Highway Block Grant Fund estimated to be \$191,000.00. This is an annual appropriation that provides for the reconstruction of existing roadways. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0). (Majority vote is required) (Recommended by CIP)

Paul LaRochelle moved Article 14 and was seconded by Phil Wittmann.

P. LaRochelle deferred to Ken Roberts.

K. Roberts stated this is another project that has been taken on by the Town. The contract price right now is approximately \$1.2 million per mile of road and we have 89 miles of road in Alton. Fortunately, the Selectmen have decided to do a lot of in-house work. Last year we built 4 miles of road for just \$1 million, saves the town \$3.6 million. Unfortunately, the next couple of years there are two big roads coming up that can't be done by the highway department because of either what the terrain is like or time constraints. Church Street and School Street have time constraints. It is a 60-day build that needs to be done when school is closed. We've just awarded the engineering and we should have bids on that coming up. The estimated cost for Church

Street and School Street is \$1 million, we hope it comes in around that. If not, we may have to make this a two-phase project.

Mr. Shea asked about the discussion that took place during the last budget session concerning the \$950,000 requested. His impression was that a portion of those funds would be used for the engineering and surveying of Roberts Cove Road and would roll this year into the actual reconstruction. They did reconstruct half of the road last year and was hoping the second portion would be completed this year. It sounds as of now, that would not be the case unless this article is amended.

Mr. Wentworth responded that Roberts Cove Road would be done in the next two years. Because of the construction on Church and School Street we would use almost all the funds that are there.

Mr. Shea asked if the board would be in a position to know what the final costs are for Church and School Streets prior to the March vote.

Mr. Wentworth responded that this will be very tough. Just as Mr. Roberts stated, the engineering was just awarded to KV Partners.

K. Roberts added the engineers will come back at an estimated cost, and that is today's market. They are hoping it is around a million dollars. He has had some estimates just in conversation of \$1.5 million. He also has the survey for Roberts Cove Road just not the RFP out to the engineers yet. At this time, it would be a rush job to try putting it in now rather than sometime next year.

Reuben Wentworth motioned to restrict Article 14 and Virgil Macdonald seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the official ballot as written.

Article 15: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000.00 to be added to the Bridge Construction Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 1995. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0). (Majority vote required) (Recommended by CIP)

Virgil Macdonald moved Article 15 and was seconded by Reuben Wentworth.

K. Roberts reminded the audience about last year's meeting, when we raised an enormous amount of money to cover 20% of our costs for Loon Cove Road, a red listed bridge. We are still waiting for that application to go through. Right now, they are over \$1 million per bridge. So, our 20% will be approximately \$200,000. We are asking for money to put away for our next bridge maintenance. We have the money to apply right away, but we need to save to keep on going so we can have our side of the money available first before applying for the grant.

L. Carr inquired to the amount of this capital reserve.

R. Wentworth replied \$277,029.

Reuben Wentworth motioned to restrict Article 15 and Virgil Macdonald seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the official ballot as written.

Article 16: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000.00 to be added to the Highway Building Improvements/Repairs Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 2014. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0). (Majority vote required) (Recommended by CIP)

Phil Wittmann moved Article 16 and was seconded by Paul LaRochelle.

Phil Wittmann stated this capital reserve fund was established to add funds for future improvements to the highway garage.

L. Carr inquired to the amount of this capital reserve.

R. Wentworth responded \$76,984.

Paul LaRochelle motioned to restrict Article 16 and Virgil Macdonald seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the official ballot as written.

Article 17: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$30,000.00 to be added to the Rock and Asphalt Crushing Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 2017. Said funds are to come from the unassigned fund balance. **There will be no funds raised from general taxation. This will not affect the tax rate.** Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee 4-0). (Majority vote required)

Virgil Macdonald moved Article 17 and was seconded by Reuben Wentworth.

V. Macdonald deferred to Mr. Roberts.

K. Roberts stated that the Town has been doing rock and asphalt crushing for several years, stockpiling at our pit on Rines Road. The last four years we have crushed over ten thousand yards of gravel for about \$7 - \$8 per yard and you can buy it for \$13 - \$14 per yard. We are recycling the materials that are coming off the roadways and saving the town money.

Reuben Wentworth motioned to restrict Article 17 and Bob Holt seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the official ballot as written.

Article 18: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000.00 to be added to the Highway Sand Shed Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 2003. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0). (Majority vote required) (Recommended by CIP)

Paul LaRochelle moved Article 18 and was seconded by Bob Holt.

P. LaRochelle stated this capital reserve fund was established for the purpose of having a building to put sand in to reduce silica dust during the summer and winter months.

No further discussion.

Bob Holt motioned to restrict Article 18 and Paul LaRochelle seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 19: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000.00 to be added to the Highway Sidewalk Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0). (Majority vote required) (Recommended by CIP)

Reuben Wentworth moved Article 19 and was seconded by Virgil Macdonald.

R. Wentworth stated that we keep adding to this fund every year especially for projects like Church Street and School Street. This year we will be doing sidewalks along with the road reconstruction. This money will be used to help offset those costs so that the road reconstruction money can be put right into the highways. So, the money in the sidewalk fund will go to replace the sidewalks on the street and we will be able to make improvements in accordance with the American Disabilities Act.

No further discussion.

Reuben Wentworth motioned to restrict Article 19 and Paul LaRochelle seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 20: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$3,000.00 to be added to the IT Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 2020. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0). (Majority vote required)

Phil Wittmann moved Article 20 and was seconded by Paul LaRochelle.

P. Wittmann stated this capital reserve fund was established to fund large-scale IT hardware and software needs and emergencies over time, thereby, reducing any significant impact they would have on an annual budget.

Josh Monaco, IT Director, stated this fund was established to fund large-scale IT projects, replacements, cycling of computers and server equipment. Basically, will allow the town to keep technology current and allows to cycle out equipment as it gets older. Not only will we keep the services and computers running but will make sure the systems behind the scene are up-to-date.

No further discussion.

Phil Wittmann motioned to restrict Article 20 and Paul LaRochelle seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 21: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the amount of \$15,000.00 to be added to the Alton Bay Community Center Property Capital Reserve Fund as previously established in 2020. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0). (Majority vote required) (Recommended by CIP)

Paul LaRochelle moved Article 21 and was seconded by Bob Holt.

P. LaRochelle stated the capital reserve would be used for interior and exterior repairs such as: the roof, siding, floors, windows, kitchen, bathrooms, decking, boardwalk, fencing, rails, posts,

painting, support for underneath the building and boardwalk, and upgrades/repairs to the electrical, plumbing and heating systems when needed. The fund currently has a balance of \$10,000. This is a gem and recently had the opportunity to take a good look at the building and look at what it is needing. This building is starting to be in disrepair; all the items listed before really need to be addressed and fixed in order to preserve it.

D. Hershey asked which building is being discussed.

P. LaRochelle responded this is the Alton Bay Community Center, just past Shibley's at the Pier on Route 11.

Paul LaRochelle motioned to restrict Article 21 and Bob Holt seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 22: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the amount of \$1,000.00 to be added to the Mount Major Community Center Property Capital Reserve Fund as previously established in 2017. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-1). (Majority vote required)

Virgil Macdonald moved Article 22 and was seconded by Phil Wittmann.

V. Macdonald stated the funds would be used to repair the floors, windows, kitchen and bathrooms. The fund has a balance right now of \$961.42.

D. Hershey, as a resident, stated he struggles with spending money on this building as we are not sure when the last time it was used. His understanding and personal experience is that it hasn't been used in several years. There is no parking on the premises and is a vacant building for all intents and purposes. Mr. Hershey recalls about two to three years ago there was a theft at the location of some artwork/tapestries in the building. Again, you have another side of the lack of use and accountability for the building. This is a waste of money on a building that will never be used with no easy access.

V. Macdonald responded that the Town still owns this building and we have a responsibility for the upkeep.

R. Wentworth added the Town has looked into getting rid of this property. But, as of right now we are unable to do that as it is in a judge's hands. We've been told that we had to hold on to this. If you ever have a chance to talk to Mr. Sessler you can get more information about it. The theft that was mentioned did not happen on the Town watch, this happened while it was with the West Alton Fireman's Association. When the Town did take ownership of that is when we were asked about it. We were given this ownership through the courts. We need to put funds here just in case something happens with the building so we can make it safe and guard against theft. This is why it is a low amount of \$1,000.

Virgil Macdonald motioned to restrict Article 22 and Reuben Wentworth seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 23: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the amount of \$75,000.00 to be added to the Retaining Wall Capital Reserve Fund as previously established in 2018. Said funds are to come from the unassigned fund balance. **There will be no funds raised from general**

taxation. This will not affect the tax rate. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0). (Majority vote required)

Paul LaRochelle moved Article 23 and was seconded by Virgil Macdonald.

P. LaRochelle stated the retaining rock wall from the public boat docks to the swim area needs repair. The retaining wall is deteriorating at the water level due to the age and wave action. The cost of the repair is approximately \$90,000. The fund currently has a balance of \$20,352.

L. Carr asked what type of wall are we going to get. Will we be getting another wall like it is on the other side of the bay?

P. LaRochelle responded that these would be repairs to the wall with what is existing there now. Just redoing the wall underneath where it is deteriorating.

L. Carr followed up by asking if it was going to be the block as it is on the other side. Most of the townspeople are against this type of block.

P. LaRochelle responded that no it will not be.

Paul LaRochelle motioned to restrict Article 23 and Reuben Wentworth seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 24: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the amount of \$25,000.00 to be added to the Police Detail Revolving Fund established in 2016 and amended in 2018. Said funds to be added to this fund came from the sale of the Police Humvee, which have been deposited into the General Fund awaiting transfer into the Police Detail Revolving Fund in accordance with instructions from the DRA. Said funds are to come from the unassigned fund balance. **There will be no funds raised from general taxation. This will not affect the tax rate.**

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (4-1). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0). (Majority vote required)

Reuben Wentworth moved Article 24 and was seconded by Virgil Macdonald.

R. Wentworth stated earlier this year the Board of Selectmen allowed the Chief of Police to sell the Humvee. With the sale of the Humvee the Police Chief thought that the way the town had it all set up that equipment would be purchased through the revolving fund; he could receive that money through this fund to purchase a pick-up truck to haul their emergency management trailer and boat. Unfortunately, at that time the way the Humvee was purchased the funds have to go into the surplus fund. The Chief has asked the Board of Selectmen to ask the voters to have the \$25,000 released out of the surplus fund and transferred into the revolving fund for equipment and cruisers. The last twelve years the Police Department has funded their cruisers and boats through their revolving fund through the detail fund by doing special duties.

No further discussion.

Reuben Wentworth motioned to restrict Article 24 and Paul LaRochelle seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 25: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,650.00 for the purpose of purchasing twelve solar powered rectangular rapid flashing beacon pedestrian crossing signals and one solar powered driver feedback speed sign to be used as permanent

traffic and pedestrian safety measures throughout Main Street and the bay area. Said funds are to come from the unassigned fund balance. **There will be no funds raised from general taxation. This will not affect the tax rate.** Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-1). (Majority vote required)

Reuben Wentworth moved Article 25 and was seconded by Paul LaRochelle.

R. Wentworth deferred to Officer MacDougall on behalf of the Police Chief.

Todd MacDougall, Alton Police Lieutenant, stated the town is hoping to purchase and install a cross-walk sign as it describes here. The Town of Farmington has one on Central Street and is activated by push buttons and will alert oncoming traffic that somebody wants to cross. We want to install these in the bay area and on Main Street in high traffic areas of crosswalks. The traffic alert sign will be on the speed limit side as you're crossing the bridge coming into the bay. It will alert the driver what the speed is and give them a little slow down if they're exceeding the speed.

Desmond Douglas voiced his concern that almost 90% of people don't use the crosswalks where they are located now, they won't go to where the buttons are. Mr. Douglas does agree with the speed signs, especially in the bay right by the bridge.

D. Hershey agreed with the concept and principle for safety mechanisms. His personal experience when people see a pedestrian in the crosswalk or not, they are very aggressive at stopping to allow them to cross. What have there been in accidents as a result of the aggressive stopping? Is there a direct correlation in a reduction of accidents with this equipment?

Lieutenant MacDougall responded that thankfully we haven't had high impact crashes. We try to address those people who are not using the crosswalk as they should. The idea behind these signs is that instead of having the stand-up ones in the middle of the road, where people tend to hit them as targets, they would be on the outside and would help signify where the crosswalks are. It will also help those people who are not familiar with the area to locate the crosswalks. In short, we have not had a high number of incidents; the last pedestrian strike was at Route 140 and Main Street. Lieutenant MacDougall has stats from the state on the number of pedestrian fatalities. Thankfully we haven't had any fatalities in Alton, we just don't want to wait until they do start occurring. Our position is it will improve the pedestrian situation in the bay; we won't know until we invest in this.

F. Carr asked if the flashing lights would bother the residents who live near these signs. Lieutenant MacDougall shook his head no.

K. Roberts added that the problem we have is that there are so many vehicles parked where the crosswalks are located. Our town grows from almost 4,900 to 22,000 in the summer. It is so busy for someone to cross that roadway and there really is no indication but to stand out and wait. Mr. Roberts believes this is a great idea for the safety of our community.

Mr. Wentworth added that two families have donated a sign to the Town of Alton, located by the Christian Conference Center swimming area and the sidewalks there. It was getting to be hazardous for the kids crossing. With the cars parked there, kids would have to go out to the road and almost get hit. Most of the jaywalkers last year were adults and visitors to our community, not residents. Children can be taught to push the button, wait until the sign says to

walk; then alerts the drivers in the bay. This is a very low impact for safety measures to at least protect our children.

D. Douglas would like to see adjustments for crosswalks to allow for visibility. Most of the time people in the bay park right on the cross walks. Give pedestrians space on the crosswalk so that they can be seen.

Reuben Wentworth motioned to restrict Article 25 and Paul LaRochelle seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 26: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to raise and appropriate \$75,000.00 for the purpose of purchasing thirteen Motorola Portable radios and five Motorola mobile radios to be used by the Police Department. Said funds are to come from the unassigned fund balance. **There will be no funds raised from general taxation. This will not affect the tax rate.** Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0). (Majority vote required)

Paul LaRochelle moved Article 26 and was seconded by Phil Wittmann.

P. LaRochelle stated this will allow the police department to replace all of the inoperable and unsupported radios with new and better functioning ones. This will help increase department interoperability as well as overall officer safety.

Lt. MacDougall added that the two different models of portable radios they are looking to replace have been in service since 2002 and 2005. They generally have a ten-year serviceable life. This year we didn't have any events that we needed all of our officers on these radios, if we did, we wouldn't be able to give them all radios.

R. Shea stated he is in favor of this article. Particularly when something goes wrong communication is absolutely critical and it is easy to get screwed up with bad equipment or old frequencies. Having said this, was wondering with this and the previous article, are there Federal and State funds available; has this avenue been pursued for either article.

R. Wentworth responded that we have.

Virgil Macdonald motioned to restrict Article 26 and Paul LaRochelle seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 27: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$40,000.00 to be used for 2021 unanticipated Emergency Management related expenses. Said funds are to come from the unassigned fund balance. **There will be no funds raised from general taxation. This will not affect the tax rate.** Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0). (Majority vote required)

Virgil Macdonald moved Article 27 and was seconded by Phil Wittmann.

V. Macdonald stated this would give the Emergency Management Team the ability to cover expenses related to the COVID-19 pandemic that are not otherwise budgeted through the operating budget. This state of emergency has gone on far longer than anyone anticipated and the Town needs to be prepared for it to continue into the better part of 2021.

D. Hershey, resident, asked if in the event there are additional appropriations made from the government that will fulfill this void, is there an opportunity for this money to be targeted someplace else or will it go into a general fund.

R. Wentworth responded the money would go into the surplus fund. Right now, we budget for this down the road in case there are no additional funds coming in from the Federal and State Government. Last year the budget for Emergency Management was \$4,000. We did over expend this amount on other needs that the government did not fix. The reason for this is to have some money available especially for PPE.

Bob Holt motioned to restrict Article 27 and Phil Wittmann seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 28: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000.00 to be added to the Milfoil Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 2010. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0). (Majority vote required)

Bob Holt moved Article 28 and was seconded by Paul LaRochelle.

Bob Holt stated this is an ongoing capital reserve fund for the milfoil. That has been done for over ten years now by volunteers and has been very successful. Mr. Holt believes the committee has done a fantastic job. Kellie Troendle, Parks and Recreation Director, is here if anyone has any further questions.

Bob Holt motioned to restrict Article 28 and Paul LaRochelle seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 29: To see if the Town will vote to change the purpose of the existing Recycling Revolving Fund previously established in 2006. The original purpose of this fund was for facilitating and encouraging recycling as defined in RSA 149-M:4; The proposed change is to expand the purpose of the existing fund to include assisting with the expenses and needs of non-recycled items and equipment in accordance with RSA 149-M:4 and RSA 31:95-h,I,II,III,IV. This account is funded by recycling revenues. **There will be no funds raised from general taxation. This will not affect the tax rate.** Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). (Majority vote required)

Reuben Wentworth moved Article 29 and was seconded by Virgil Macdonald.

R. Wentworth stated that he brought this before the board earlier this year. This account currently has \$424,000. We usually maintain that same amount and some years can be higher unless we have to replace something in recycling equipment. What we are asking you to do is to open the fund a little, to allow the Selectmen use the funds for other parts to the operation of the solid waste center. Such as if the compactors and hoppers need to be rebuilt or replaced, these funds as the fund states cannot be used for these purposes and would be a significant impact to the taxpayers. Also, different equipment, such as the pick-up truck can be replaced down the road if it needs to, which shouldn't be for another ten years as it was replaced. All we are asking to do is to expand what this money can be used for.

No further discussion.

Reuben Wentworth motioned to restrict Article 29 and Bob Holt seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 30: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$14,000.00 to be added to the Town Hall Building Improvements Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 2011. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (4-1). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0). (Majority vote required) (Recommended by CIP)

Phil Wittmann moved Article 30 and was seconded by Reuben Wentworth.

P. Wittmann stated these funds will be used for improvements to the Town Hall. The current project these funds are being sought for is a sprinkler system for the Town Hall. The building has a smoke detector system, which is old, but no sprinkler system which places the Town in violation of State of New Hampshire Fire Safety Codes for occupancy limits in the upstairs meeting room as well as the hallways, and building exits.

No further discussion.

Bob Holt motioned to restrict Article 30 and Phil Wittmann seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 31: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$523.00 to be added to the Water Main Expense Capital Reserve Fund created in 2020. These funds were the remaining interest left after closing the Alton Water Works Water Transmission Line Extension Capital Reserve Fund and Alton Water Works Water Transmission Line Replacement Capital Reserve Fund in March of 2020. Said funds are to come from the unassigned fund balance.

There will be no funds raised from general taxation. This will not affect the tax rate.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0). (Majority vote required)

Reuben Wentworth moved Article 31 and was seconded by Bob Holt.

R. Wentworth stated last year this article was approved by a town meeting vote and was approved by the Department of Revenue. Then the individual from the Department of Revenue disallowed this after it was voted on because it did not have the exact interest to the date when it was approved. This article is a housekeeping measure that allows us to pull the rest of the money out that is owed to us with interest included. This is why it was written this way; was sent to and approved by DRA. We are asking for what is owed to the water users.

No further discussion.

Bob Holt motioned to restrict Article 31 and Reuben Wentworth seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 32: To see if the Town will vote to ratify the renewal of the long term lease between the Town of Alton (Lessor) and Shibley's at the Pier, Inc. (Lessee) for the land upon which the Restaurant known as Shibley's at the Pier is presently located. The building, decks and docks are owned by the Lessee. The land to be leased is more particularly described in the proposed lease and the land and the building, deck and docks are shown on a site plan attached to the lease. The proposed lease will be for a period of twenty (20) years commencing in 2021 and ending in 2041. The first year's rent will be \$11,060.40. The annual rent increase each year of the lease

thereafter starting in 2022 based on the annual increase in the Consumer Price Index as reported by the July Northeast CPI (Consumer Price Index) of each year starting in 2022. Each year's increase will never be less than 2% nor more than 5%. (A copy of the proposed lease and site plan are available for review at the Town Clerk's office) **There will be no funds raised from general taxation. This will not affect the tax rate.** Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). (Majority vote required)

Virgil Macdonald moved Article 32 and was seconded by Phil Wittmann.

P. LaRochelle stated this is a continuation for the Shibley's that will allow them to continue their business they have had for over 20 years. This will allow them to lease the land to continue the work in the community and hand down to their family. This is an asset to the bay and is a good location for the business. Again, there is no general taxation to the public.

D. Hershey, resident, agreed that it is a fixture and an asset to the Town. The only thing that comes to mind is the adequacy of the rent; \$1,000/month is that a reasonable amount of market rate – he does not know this, just a number throwing out there. Second, as time goes on a 20-year lease and there is a change in the successorship of the business; is the Town concerned or is there a mechanism for the disrepair of the building? To prevent going from a landmark to an eyesore.

P. LaRochelle responded it is in their best interest to continue the upkeep of the building.

R. Wentworth added that there are clauses in the lease that they have to maintain the upkeep and everything if there is disrepair showing. In addition to having to pay the \$11,000 per year, they have to pay the property taxes for their property. So, they're not just paying for the building, but they're also paying taxes on the assessed value of the land.

Wally Keniston, resident, asked if this 20-year lease period is in accordance with the previous lease or is it an extension and an increase of the amount of time.

Attorney James Sessler responded this is an extension of the previous lease, which had another two years to run. We were trying to define where the leased area was, we never had a good site plan. And when we came to an agreement with the Shibley's about the area that they are actually leasing and being taxed for, he asked if the Town would consider bringing it to the voters to renew the lease for another 20 years. So, it is a little early, they have another two years to run. But we're getting a better definition of the property that is being taxed and the lease. Everything else is pretty much the same. Except the base rent is being increased since the last lease. We left consumer pricing index increase as it was before. The payment of the taxes is the same as the previous lease. Everything is essentially the same, we're just extending the term and are defining the area leased better than we ever have.

Paul LaRochelle motioned to restrict Article 32 and Virgil Macdonald seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 33: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$12,500.00 for the purpose of supporting the Alton Community Services which provides a food pantry and assistance programs for fuel, prescriptions, utilities and housing in close coordination with the Alton Welfare Department. This is a special warrant article. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0). (Majority vote required)

Phil Wittman moved Article 33 and was seconded by Virgil Macdonald.

Peter Bolster, stated 22 years ago when he first moved to Alton he had the opportunity to work with Father Wegman, Bob Hatch, Liz Sweeney and St. Vincent DePaul to establish a food pantry for the Alton community. We came up with Alton Community Services to provide food and help for the community. The amount of cooperation from individual citizens, Hannaford supermarket, and churches have made it possible for the program to function. No one gets paid a cent for this operation. The donations from the community have been amazing as we continue to operate. This last year we purchased 15,260 pounds of food from the NH Food bank. Purchasing at pennies on the dollar. We probably received an equal amount of food donations from Hannaford's and other groups in the community. We are appreciative of the town for continuing to provide funds that we use primarily for the rent of the building. We also do grants for individuals in the community with fuel. Mr. Bolster stated he is appreciative of your consideration to this important program that means a great deal to our community.

No further discussion.

Bob Holt motioned to restrict Article 33 and Phil Wittmann seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 34: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,000.00 for the purpose of supporting the American Red Cross which provides disaster relief, shelters, basic household necessities and counseling. This is a special warrant article. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (4-1). Recommended by the Budget Committee (5-1). (Majority vote required)

Paul LaRochelle moved Article 34 and was seconded by Phil Wittmann.

P. Wittmann stated he had first hand experience with the American Red Cross when there was a flood that came through his neighborhood many years back. The very next morning the American Red Cross was there to help. Mr. Wittmann explained to those working for the program that some of his neighbors needed help more than he did. They would not hear of it, as everyone receives help from this program.

No further discussion.

Paul LaRochelle motioned to restrict Article 34 and Phil Wittmann seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 35: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000.00 for the purpose of supporting the Community Action Program which provides supplemental food, fuel, utility, transportation, meals on wheels, weatherization assistance and Women, Infants & Children food assistance program (WIC). This is a special warrant article. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0). (Majority vote required)

Virgil Macdonald moved Article 35 and was seconded by Bob Holt.

No discussion.

Reuben Wentworth motioned to restrict Article 35 and Paul LaRochelle seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 36: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,500.00 for the purpose of supporting Caregivers of Southern Carroll County & Vicinity, Inc. (includes Alton) which provides free transportation to handicapped, elderly and other residents needing assistance with all these services provided by volunteers. This is a special warrant article. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-0). (Majority vote required)

Virgil Macdonald moved Article 36 and was seconded by Reuben Wentworth.

No discussion.

Virgil Macdonald motioned to restrict Article 36 and Reuben Wentworth seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 37: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$500.00 for the purpose of supporting CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) which provides advocacy for abused and neglected children. This is a special warrant article. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-1). (Majority vote required)

Reuben Wentworth moved Article 37 and was seconded by Virgil Macdonald.

No discussion.

Bob Holt motioned to restrict Article 37 and Paul LaRochelle seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 38: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$12,000.00 for the purpose of supporting the Central New Hampshire VNA & Hospice which is a non-profit agency that provides health care, hospice care and maternal child health services. This is a special warrant article. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-1). (Majority vote required)

Bob Holt moved Article 38 and was seconded by Paul LaRochelle.

No discussion.

Paul LaRochelle motioned to restrict Article 38 and Bob Holt seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 39: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$15,750.00 for the purpose of supporting Lakes Region Mental Health Center which provides mental health care to area residents, services for children, elders, along with other emergency services. This is a special warrant article. Not recommended by the Board of Selectmen (4-1). Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-2). (Majority vote required)

Reuben Wentworth moved Article 39 and was seconded by Virgil Macdonald.

R. Wentworth, as a resident, added that he was the lone vote in favor of the article as a Selectmen. He is in favor of this article as years ago his daughter had an unfortunate mishap and had services provided by this group. This group has done a remarkable job. And looking at all the other non-profits that we have associated with tonight, you will notice that most of them are 5-0 and a few 4-1. We are talking \$62,000 in all our appropriations tonight if they pass at town

meeting. Which is minimal in this day in age with the drugs, stress on our family lives that we have seen personally. I hope this will be considered along with all the other non-profits.

D. Hershey, resident, stated he has nothing against the organization. Lakes Region Mental Health, non-profit, is owned by Genesis which is a very large corporation. Mr. Hershey is perplexed as to why they would seek a donation from the town under the provisions of the Affordable Care Act, private insurance, Medicare and Medicaid. Their services should be compensated appropriately through the medical healthcare system. To the extent if somebody is not covered by insurance and chooses to not purchase coverage through the Affordable Care Act, an organization such as Lakes Region Mental Health non-profit does have the ability to fill out an application on behalf of a patient and submit it for coverage and payment. In a situation we're hearing that they are not getting paid for services, I think it is an issue that someone is not doing the right paperwork. Again, Mr. Hershey is in great support of the organization. However, receiving a donation from the taxpayers over and above what is available to them through the healthcare system is not appropriate.

Ken Roberts motioned to restrict Article 39 and Loring Carr seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 40: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum \$3,000.00 for the purpose of supporting L.I.F.E. Ministries, Inc. which is a not-for-profit charity that provides food and staples to Alton residents. This is a special warrant article. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-1). (Majority vote required)

Phil Wittman moved Article 40 and was seconded by Paul LaRochelle.

D. Hershey, resident, stated the L.I.F.E. Ministries not for profit individuals are compensated even though they state they are "not for profit". Which, is fine. Mr. Hershey suggested this may be duplicative of Article 33, which is charged for doing essentially the same thing with the staff that is all volunteer. I would rather take the \$3,000 from Article 40 and put it in Article 33; which is not being made as a motion.

Phil Wittmann motioned to restrict Article 40 and Paul LaRochelle seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 41: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,575.00 for the purpose of supporting New Beginnings which provides 24-hour crisis support for domestic/sexual assault victims, operates a shelter and provides counseling. This is a special warrant article. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-1). (Majority vote required)

Virgil Macdonald moved Article 41 and was seconded by Reuben Wentworth.

No discussion.

Reuben Wentworth motioned to restrict Article 41 and Virgil Macdonald seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 42: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,500.00 for the purpose of supporting Waypoint formerly known as Child and Family Services of NH. This is a

special warrant article. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-1). (Majority vote required)

Virgil Macdonald moved Article 42 and was seconded by Phil Wittmann.

Wally Keniston, resident, urged the Select Board when putting the warrant articles together to mention the community where this organization is cited. To make sure it is in our best interest and supporting our community. It will help the voters to make an informed decision.

R. Wentworth responded that the Board of Selectmen requested letters from all the non-profit organizations explaining their expenses, finances, and where the money goes in to our community. They can't tell us who they helped as that is private information. All of the organizations responded to us with the information we requested. I can show you that the money they're requested and how it is going to be used in our community. I will take your suggestion into consideration for next year.

D. Hershey, resident, believes Article 42 is duplicative of Article 39, because of this he would not be supportive of this article. Those types of services are available for compensation through the various healthcare coverage programs. In many cases it is more of a function of the facility choosing not to do the required paperwork to submit a claim on behalf of their client.

L. Carr asked if the Selectmen are aware of what Mr. Hershey just said before recommending these articles.

R. Wentworth responded he was aware that the American Red Cross have some amount of federal money that goes to them and they take donations. And, they have help that they pay. The same reason why Mr. Hershey does not want to support the others. A lot of these organizations take money from the state, federal, and county governments. They ask for the donations from us to help the citizens in our communities. So, yes, we are aware of this as we have the last twenty years. We know they get subsidies from the government – county, state, and federal. As far as the insurance, such as Mr. Hershey is saying, you take an individual who doesn't have any insurance or participating in the great healthcare system in this country, they have to sometimes come up with those funds. Like he has said, it is \$62,000 of these warrant articles are all spent in the best places they can to help out our neighbors.

No response after Mr. Carr asked if all Selectmen were aware of this.

Virgil Macdonald motioned to restrict Article 42 and Paul LaRochelle seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 43: To hear reports of any committees, boards, trustees, commissions, officials, agents or concerns of voters; and vote to accept the same. Furthermore, to conduct any other business that may legally come before said meeting. (Majority vote required) **This is a petition article.**

Loring Carr moved Article 43 and was seconded by Felice Carr.

Mr. Carr stated he started this petition article. Has asked that the Selectmen to add every year. It may be some years nobody brings up an issue and some may bring up some issues. When can we do that?

Moderator Lane-Douglas responded this is SB2, when it was a Town Meeting the reports were required. As far as an SB2, in a deliberative session reports are not required.

R. Wentworth stated the Selectmen can add this in. Does not see a reason to add this anymore as it is an article that has no meaning anymore.

Mr. Carr asked if you don't think the Selectmen should hear anything from their concerned citizens at this meeting.

Mr. Wentworth responded we have regular posted Selectmen's meetings to attend and voice your concerns. But here is to do the business of the Town from the Town Meeting for expenditures for the next year. We have the articles we can discuss, but to wait until the end of the meeting to bring things back up all over again. That defeats the purpose.

Moderator Lane-Douglas stated that citizens can bring items up at the Budget Committee meetings and Selectmen's meetings to be addressed. The deliberative is only to discuss what goes on the ballot. To hear reports of various committees is important to know. It is a matter of going to the Select Board meeting, Budget Committee meeting, or any special committees that the board sets up.

Virgil Macdonald motioned to restrict Article 43 and Reuben Wentworth seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 44: In order to save the estimated cost of \$80,000.00 to \$100,000.00 to "reconfigure" the current Master Plan, which now preserves the rural character, natural beauty and unique quality of life that Alton citizens cherish: The voters direct the Planning Board to readopt the current Alton Master Plan without changes for the next ten year period. **This is a petition article. This article is not supported by the Board of Selectmen because it is contrary to the procedures set out in State law RSA 675:6 and it will therefore have no binding effect if adopted.**

Virgil Macdonald moved Article 44 and was seconded by Loring Carr.

L. Carr stated this article is self-explanatory, that during the second to last Master Plan Committee it was stated it was going to cost \$80,000 - \$100,000 for this master plan. Mr. Carr wanted to remind people that the master plan is not a legal document, it is non-binding. Believes the Town should save the money and that if people read the one we have now it is more than adequate.

Felice Carr added that there are people in the Town who are in a position where they are hurting for money and believes this should wait and not be spent this year. Would like to know why it is "contrary", is it because of state law?

Attorney Sessler stated the State law that is cited in here states that the master plan is adopted by the Planning Board and they're the ones who vote. It never comes to town meeting and the Planning Board gets the sole say in the master plan. Second of all, everyone needs to know there is no proposal to spend money. Mr. Sessler does not know where these figures come from, but there is no request to spend money this year on the master plan. And, a master plan has not been adopted yet. If the Planning Board wants to spend money, they need to come to Town Meeting and request it.

P. LaRochelle stated the Master Plan Committee was approved to have \$25,000 to seek out an RFP on a consultant. Strictly a consultant to go over the guidelines of giving the Master Plan Committee guidance of how to redo the master plan, which is 15 years old and outdated. This needs to be redone. The Town is growing and there is more of a need for a revised master plan.

So, \$25,000 had been appropriated to get that started. And, there is nothing else that has been sought out yet to get any additional sum of money. This amount of money was approved at town election last year.

Patrick O'Brien, representative to the CIP, stated he feels somewhat responsible for some of the information that is being twisted. There is no desire to change the rural character, natural beauty and unique quality of life that the Alton citizens cherish as identified here in this article. The desire to reopen the idea of a master plan has not been considered for some time now and is to help dictate the forward direction of the Town. Specifically, as it relates to CIP. It's hard to plan for expenses that we don't see coming. The CIP Committee can't make up this plan, and must look to the Planning Board and the Master Plan Committee. This is a working document that needs to be open and reviewed regularly, not every fifteen years. There was discussion if we were to completely redo the master plan it could be up to \$80,000 - \$100,000, this is depending on how much community involvement we have. This number could come down significantly with more volunteers we have.

Wally Keniston motioned to restrict Article 44 and Reuben Wentworth seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Article 45: By petition of 25 or more eligible voters of the town of Alton to see if the town will vote to urge that the New Hampshire General Court, which is obligated to redraw the maps of political districts within the state following the federal census, will ensure fair and effective representation of New Hampshire voters without gerrymandering.

Additionally, these voters ask the town of Alton to urge the NH General Court to carry out the redistricting in a fair and transparent way through public meetings, not to favor a particular political party, to include communities of interest, and to minimize multi-seat districts.

Furthermore, as the New Hampshire State Constitution, Part 2, Article 11 allows towns of sufficient population to have their own state representatives, not shared with other towns, for the town of Alton to petition the NH General Court for its own exclusive seat(s) in the NH House of Representatives if it does not already have it, ensuring that State Representatives properly represent the town's interests.

The record of the vote approving this article shall be transmitted by written notice from the selectmen to Alton's state legislators, informing them of the demands from their constituents within 30 days of the vote. **This is a petition article.**

Virgil Macdonald moved Article 45 and was seconded by Wally Keniston.

Brian Beihl, resident on Sunset Shore Drive, stated that every ten years the census bureau conducts their census. We have to allocate votes within our districts in NH; State Reps, State Senate, Executive Council, County Commission, and our Congressional districts. This process was fair for many years prior to 2011. In 2011, there were dozens of towns that were gerrymandered for partisan purposes. That was the last time. This warrant article is trying to prevent this from happening in 2021. Many of you may remember that Alton once had its own State Representative. That went away as we now share a rep with Gilmanton, as District 5. Any Town that has over 3,290 people should have its own State Representative exclusive to the Town. Alton is lucky as both of District 5 reps are from our town. This could switch in the future. This article is asking the General Court to make sure that Alton gets their own exclusive

state rep district. Overall, we are looking for fair, non-partisan, and transparent process of redistricting. This is a non-binding resolution and is important for Alton to join its voice with one hundred other towns across New Hampshire to ensure a fair process.

No further discussion.

Reuben Wentworth motioned to restrict Article 45 and Virgil Macdonald seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a favorable vote and will go to the ballot as written.

Wally Keniston motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Reuben Wentworth. The motioned passed with a favorable vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:48pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Collins
Recording Secretary