

ALTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes

April 22, 2025

(Approved - May 13, 2025)

Chairman N. Buonopane convened the meeting at 6:00 PM.

P. LaRochelle led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and a Moment of Silence. The following staff members were present:

The following staff members were present:

N. Buonopane, Chairman
Paul LaRochelle, Vice-Chairman
Andrew Morse, Selectman
Richard Shea, Selectman
Drew Carter, Selectmen
Ryan Heath, Town Administrator

Agenda Approval

N. Buonopane made a motion to approve the agenda as presented and P. LaRochelle seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Announcements

- The Public Participation Policy applies to all Selectmen meetings. A copy of it is on the back of each agenda, posted outside this meeting room, and on our website.
- The Alton Town Clerk/Tax Collector's Office will be closed on Wednesday, May 14, 2025, as the staff will be attending the NHCTCA's Town Clerk Educational workshop. The office will resume normal business hours on Thursday, May 15, 2025 at 7:00 am.
- There will be a rabies clinic for dogs and cats at the Alton Central Fire Station, 65 Frank C. Gilman Hwy. (Route 140) on Saturday, April 26, 2025 from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. The cost per shot is \$30.00 and microchip is \$50.00. New this year - dog licenses are available for Alton & New Durham residents as the respective Town Clerks will be in attendance.

Public Input I (limited to 3 minutes per person on agenda items only)

J. Blackwood approached the table. She showed the Board some signs that have been created for the Swap Shop. They are organizational signs. She has checked into 14 different towns that have Swap Shops. 10 of the 14 got back to her and they all accept electrical items as long as they are looked at.

J. Bradbury approached the table. She stated that to her knowledge no one has ever died using a small appliance. Someone that is helping them paint knows about the accident that happened at the last Swap Shop because she was there. The person was carrying a box and could not see her feet and fell over her feet. She didn't fall on anything and it had nothing to do with a cord.

Appointments

Bonnie McAlary - Town Granted Access - Farmington Road/ Mount Major Snowmobile Club

R. Heath stated that this is still on the agenda even though the request was withdrawn is to let the Board see some photographs of the area in question. It shows what the actual space looks like should there be a future request. It is heavily wooded between the stockade fence and the cottage. The area is within the 50 foot Shoreline Protection disturbance area. It is just for future reference should another request come forward.

B. McAlary approached the table. She stated that she had P. Mason come to her house stating that he is now going to be using that easement, that he has the right to use that easement after she rescinded her request with the Board. The Mount Major Snowmobile Club had also rescinded their request. He is claiming that he is going to drag his kayak down the road and across the easement, go swimming, go fishing and has every right to as well as the public. She is asking for the Board to put in writing that permission was never given and is not to be used for that. She would like that clarified. R. Heath stated that that was not part of the original motion. That is key. N. Buonopane stated that the Board will have to discuss it further. He stated that R. Heath will contact her on what the Board decided on. It will be figured out.

New Business

1. Conservation Commission - Lakes Region Conservation Trust Contribution

G. Young, Conservation Commission, approached the table. What they have in mind is to donate \$10,000.00 towards the acquisition costs that will be incurred in transferring this piece of property from Mr. Gould through the Audubon Society to Lakes Region Conservation Trust. It is a piece of property on Stockbridge Corner Road. It is 84 acres. The money will be coming from

the Conservation Commission Fund. The Commission has voted to provide the money. The RSA's call for the Commission to come to the Board of Selectmen and let them know what they would like to do and get their approval. Then they have to have a public hearing and then make a final decision as to whether or not to make the contribution. He gave a brief history of the property.

D. Carter made a motion to permit Alton Conservation Commission to contribute \$10,000.00 to the Lakes Region Conservation Trust for the acquisition of the Gould Lot Map 6 Lot 6 Stockbridge Corner and R. Shea seconded with all in favor of the motion.

2. New Hampshire Interlocal Trust Membership

R. Heath stated that there is a formal letter that came in. They are our health insurance risk pool. A very strange turn of events has happened. They are going under effective June 30, 2025. They are made up of several different communities. Health Trust is another risk pool. When the Board of Directors met they were anticipating cost increases of 8% and operating under that assumption. The reality is that it was trending at 19% across the State. 90% of their members are operating on a "Fiscal" year. Their budgeting season is now into July. When they came out to set the new rates based on the trending their board recommended a 32% increase. What it does to the risk pool is members were hitting a low of 19% and a high of 64% with their health insurance rates. Immediately what happened is most if not all of that 90% of the pool withdrew and started shopping. Their staff and everybody is dissolving. They have referred us to a few different brokers or agents. There are several different options that they are trying to look into. Not one community saw this coming as well as the staff was surprised. They had a meeting with their legal counsel and the decision was to dissolve. This is an informational conversation for the Board. He did have a department head meeting last week and did disclose this to all of them.

3. Fire Department - Ambulance Billing

J. Reinert, Fire Chief, approached the table. He is looking for approval to write off the most recent archived balances. There are currently two accounts. One for \$2,290.00 and one for \$29,341.23 for a total of \$31,631.23. It is considered bad debt on the books so this is a way to not make it look inflated. Comstar had gone through every attempt to collect. There are four attempts. This is typically a non-resident ambulance bill. He explained that it is an accumulation of multiple accounts. R. Shea asked if this is a standard practice in other towns. J. Reinert said that it is.

N. Buonopane made a motion to write-off \$31,631.23 and A. Morse seconded with all in favor of the motion.

4. Parks & Recreation - Parks & Recreation Month & Professional's Day Proclamation

K. Troendle, Parks & Rec Director, approached the table. The Friends of Parks and Recreation and the Parks & Rec Commission are interested in promoting the benefits of Parks & Recreation and the services that are provided to the community and wanted to recommend that July be Parks & Recreation month and July 18, 2025 as Parks & Recreation Professional's Day. There are two sample proclamations included for the Board. R. Heath stated that just for clarification K. Troendle is looking for support of the Board in moving forward with this. They will be formalized and read them out loud at the end of June.

It is the consensus of the Board to move forward with this.

5. Old Home Weekend

K. Troendle remained at the table. R. Heath stated that he asked to have an Old Home Week discussion tonight. There are concerns that have come up on several different levels. One of the issues is that there is no committee. No one has volunteered. He would like to know from the Board as to whether or not to proceed with the fireworks display. We currently have \$13,940.00. The fireworks display for the 4th of July just cost \$19,000.00. That does not include any of the staff wages for Police or Fire. It is between \$4-5,000.00. We will have to pull money from other areas in the operating budget just to fund the 4th of July. He would like the Board's opinion on how they would like to move forward. P. LaRoche stated that it is very important to maintain the time slot for the 4th of July celebration as normal, but in lieu of the situation at hand not have the fireworks for Old Home Week. The remaining Board members agree.

It is the consensus of the Board to proceed with the 4th of July fireworks as planned and forgo the Old Home Week fireworks.

K. Troendle stated that the events that are currently planned for Old Home Week are the 5K Race, Craft Fair, Boat Show, Parade, Concert, Cribbage Tournament. She reached out to the Fire Department and asked about their chicken BBQ and the softball tournament between the Fire Department and Police Department.

Old Business

1. Town Clerk - 55th Annual Professional Municipal Clerks Week Proclamation

R. Heath stated that is something that the Town recognizes annually and have for quite sometime. The Town Clerk/Tax Collector is looking for the Board to support the Municipal Clerks Week, May 4-10, 2025.

It is the consensus of the Board to be in agreement with this again this year.

N. Buonopane read out loud:

"Proclamation

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ALTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes

April 22, 2025

55th ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL MUNICIPAL CLERKS WEEK
May 4 - 10, 2025

Whereas, The Office of the Professional Municipal Clerk, a time honored and vital part of local government exists throughout the world, and

Whereas, The Office of the Professional Municipal Clerk is the oldest among public servants, and

Whereas, The Office of the Professional Municipal Clerk provides the professional link between the citizens, the local governing bodies and agencies of government at other levels, and

Whereas, Professional Municipal Clerks have pledged to be ever mindful of their neutrality and impartiality, rendering equal service to all, and

Whereas, The Professional Municipal Clerk serves as the information center on functions of local government and community, and

Whereas, Professional Municipal Clerks continually strive to improve the administration of the affairs of the Office of the Professional Municipal Clerk through participation in education programs, seminars, workshops and the annual meetings of their state, provincial, county and international professional organizations.

Now, Therefore, we, Alton, New Hampshire Selectboard together with our residents in recognition of this event do hereby proclaim the week of May 4 - 10, 2025 as NATIONAL MUNICIPAL CLERKS WEEK in the Town of Alton, and further extend appreciation to our Professional Municipal Clerks and all Municipal Clerks, for the vital services they perform and their exemplary dedication to the communities they represent.

In Witness Whereof, we have here unto our hand and caused the Seal of the Town of Alton to be affixed this 22nd day of April 2025."

2. HHW - Intermunicipal Agreement

R. Heath stated that this is the agreement that was discussed at the last meeting. The Board had voted to move forward with Lakes Region Planning Commission and joining the Lakes Region Collection for Household Hazardous Waste. He neglected to have the Board make a formal vote to dissolve the Intermunicipal Agreement for HHW Product Facility. Wolfeboro is doing the same. It is not an adversary relationship. We are doing it together. We unfortunately lost our key coordinator for the whole program. Wolfeboro is looking to go to Lakes Region as well. It forces us to become a member and there is really no benefit to doing it jointly. It is beneficial for us to do it ourselves moving forward. This agreement came with several clauses. One of them is that there needs to be at least an 80% vote by the governing board to dissolve the agreement on the behalf of each municipality.

P. LaRochelle made a motion to dissolve the Municipal Agreement for the Household Hazardous Waste with Wolfeboro and N. Buonopane seconded with all in favor of the motion.

R. Shea asked if there are any assets that need to be split up. R. Heath stated that the agreement has a breakdown on how we are to split it up. There is a 70/30 responsibility between the towns which is 70% Wolfeboro and 30% Alton.

3. Acceptance of Electronic Payments

R. Heath stated that this is a housekeeping issue. The Town Clerk/Tax Collector was going through her DRA portal and the Town accepted to collect electronic payments for taxes. Our formal DRA record did not reflect that in the portal. She asked if the Board would take a vote tonight to accept electronic payments under RSA 80:52-c. We will go ahead and make that notation in our DRA portal.

A. Morse made a motion to accept electronic payments under RSA 80:52-c and D. Carter seconded with all in favor of the motion.

4. Swap Shop Update

R. Shea stated that the progress on the Swap Shop is as follows:

Entry wall with the windows, doors and siding has been completed.
Remote exit door has been installed for safety purposes.
One exhaust fan has been installed and one more to go.
Interior walls have been primed and scheduled to be painted by the end of this week.
Floor has been primed and will be painted tomorrow.

One exterior wall has been primed and remaining wall and finish coating are to be determined.
A professional sign maker has joint the effort.
Have received a lot of contributions of book cases and shelving.
Remaining major items are temporary fencing and gate, trenching and power, shelving that they have all the material for but need to do the installation.
Lighting

One question he has for the Board is if they are able to accept small electrical appliances. The research that has been done indicates that most if not all of the other towns do that. There is no record of great issues. The risk can not be completely ignored. The benefits of small appliances and the need and likely sources. He hopes the Board will support us going forward with allowing small appliances subject to the signage forgoing any risk. Possibly the Town Attorney could develop a waiver form for people that take an appliance. P. LaRochelle stated that it would be nice to have electricity there.

R. Heath stated that the DPW Director was not able to be here tonight as he is attending a meeting being held by Fish & Game in New Durham. He did forward on email with a few bullet points of the DPW involvement in the Swap Shop basically an update for the Board. The roof leaks have been sealed with recycled aluminum, street signs and/or caulking, leaks and breaks on exterior walls have been patched with recycled aluminum street signs, exterior doors have been removed along with the mounting hinges, a wooded wall has been framed and placed with an exterior door and window, flooring holes in existing container floor were repaired with recycled wood, large sections of loose plywood on interior walls have been removed, and DPW has ordered perimeter fencing to be installed. Work that still needs to be completed: Alton Excavation is not able to do the ditching for power, DPW has an excavator at the Transfer Station right now and they will trench it, and they will go back to grade the gravel in the front portion of the container.

Selectmen Reports

D. Carter had nothing to report.

R. Shea stated that Milfoil will be getting worked up for this year. He was invited to preview in New Durham the new check in system that they use for voting.

A. Morse had nothing to report.

P. LaRochelle stated that the Water Bandstand had it meeting. Members and Volunteers will be going out to clean and evaluate to see if anything is needed beyond painting and any small repairs. They will replace the flags. The next meeting will be June 11. The cleaning date will be May 17. The Master Plan Implementation Committee had it's first meeting and had discussions of ordinances and guidance for all departments. The next meeting will be September 17.

N. Buonopane stated that the Planning Board had a meeting. They had a conditional approval for the Cherry Valley Project and had a site walk before that.

Town Administrator Report

R. Heath stated that in the folder there is an authorization letter for the Finance Manager. She was originally appointed by the Board when there was no Treasurer or Deputy Treasurer under statute they were able to appoint a temporary. The new Treasurer has been elected but they do not have an appointed Deputy Treasurer. He did clarify with Legal and the Town Clerk that an elected or duly appointed Deputy have to be residents. With that said, until we can find a Deputy, the Board has the authority to allow the Finance Manager as a backup signator on the accounts. If the Treasurer is not available then they lose access to the accounts.

R. Heath stated that is an update to the Welcome to Alton sign. There is a group in Town that is very passionate about the sign. They are mounting a fundraising effort. They have opened their own account to store the money. The Town is not involved in that. They intent is to put an article in the paper soliciting funds and that the Town is not funding this because the Warrant Article failed. Should they raise enough funds they have the ability to come to the Board and ask the Board to accept the funds and the proposal and the Board can opt to move forward with the sign if it is fully funded through donations.

R. Heath stated that the last thing is that the Town Clerk let him know that there are discontinuing the paper notices that they send out for car registrations and dog licenses. It was something that was done as a courtesy. The savings is around \$3,000-\$3,500.00.

Approval of Minutes

April 1, 2025 - Public Session

P. LaRochelle made a motion to approve the minutes of April 1, 2025 Public Session and R. Shea seconded with all in favor of the motion.

April 1, 2025 - Non-Public Session

N. Buonopane made a motion to approve the minutes of April 1, 2025 Non-Public Session releasing #1 and #2 and P. LaRochelle seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Consent Agenda Approval

P. LaRochelle made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda for April 22, 2025 as presented and N. Buonopane seconded with all in favor of the motion.

1. Assessing Consent Items

Timber Tax

Treasure Coast Investments, LLC.; Map 4 Lot 13; L/O Frank C. Gilman Highway; \$4,378.21
Parker; Map 6 Lot 31-3A; 656 Stockbridge Corner Road; \$431.80
Cardinal; Map 6 Lot 42-2; 932 Stockbridge Corner Road; \$135.57
Kania; Map 9 Lot 32; 275 New Durham Road; \$18.29
Hills Grove; Map 2 Lot 13; L/O Dudley Road; \$1,167.25
Traurig; Map 5 Lot 53; 26 Coffin Brook Road; \$1,731.64
Boy Scouts of America; Map 7 Lot 7; L/O Avery Hill Road; \$4,127.21

Excavation Tax

Williams; Map 8 Lot 3-2; L/O Frank C Gilman Highway; \$151.92
Green Oaks Rally Dev LLC; Map 5 Lot 72; 398 Suncook Valley Road; \$296.96

Excavation Intent

Williams; Map 8 Lot 3-2; L/O Frank C Gilman Highway; \$0

Solar Exemption

Luffman; Map 11 Lot 13-31; 46 Highpoint Drive; \$0
Soller; Map 10 Lot 5-6; 308 Avery Hill Road; \$0
Turnel Trust; Map 62 Lot 1-9; 73 Mauhaut Shores Roa; \$0
Hotchkiss; Map 19 Lot 65; \$0
Sciola; Map 33 Lot 8; 106 East Side Drive; \$0
Glidden; Map 6 Lot 5-20; 56 Pheasant Lane; \$0
Silberdick; Map 11 Lot 13-16; 99 Alton Mtn Road; \$0

Disability Exemption

Ames-Richardson; Map 28 Lot 30; 41 Pine Street; \$40,000

Veterans Credit

Lombardi; Map 11 Lot 14; 246 Alton Mtn Road; \$750
Fogg; Map 28 Lot 51; 55 School Street; \$750
Wilson Trust; Map 34 Lot 33-85; 4 Oak Hill Road; \$750
Konopka; Map 12 Lot 22-8; 107 Lily Pond Road; \$750
Mazzeo; Map 72 Lot 131; 58 Alton Shores Road; \$750
Harrell; Map 2 Lot 2-3; 264 Dudley Road; \$750
Rezendes; Map 1 Lot 22; 550 Muchado Hill Road; \$750
McCann; Map 54 Lot 4-4; 460 Rt 11-D; \$750
Graves; Map 5 Lot 18; 284 Stockbridge Corner Road; \$750
Churchill; Map 31 Lot 47; 69 Pearson Road; \$750
Leary Jr.; Map 19 Lot 12; 34 Pond Road; \$750

2. Fire Department

New Hire, Part Time, Trevor Smith, Firefighter/EMT, \$20.20/hr., Effective 4/22/2025
New Hire, Full Time, Brandon Rague, Firefighter/EMT, \$24.25/hr., Effective 4/23/2025

3. Water Department

Irwin Marine	396 Main Street	Acct. 1151/274	\$106,434.04
Gregory Barsanti	53 Riverside Drive	Acct. 1036/375	\$1,072.80

Dan and Rebecca Johnson	34 Frank C. Gilman Hwy	Acct. 1247	\$268.00
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4. **Water Bandstand Committee**

David Johnston, 3 Year Term, Expires 3/2028

Discretionary Action on Requests for Appointments (No discussion, majority vote required to allow/not allow appointment)

None

Public Input II (limited to 5 minutes per person on any Governmental/Town Business)

K. Sullivan approached the table. She wanted to commend the Conservation Commission for obtaining that property on Stockbridge Corner. It is a solid win for the Town. Old Home Week Committee meeting she did attend hopefully other people would step up. Disappointing to see that no one would step up. There is training this Thursday evening for the Swap Shop.

C. Diveny approached the table. She thanked the Board for supporting the Parks & Recreation Department and the proclamation.

Non-Public Session

N. Buonopane moved at 7:28 pm to enter nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A: 3, II, I (legal advice). D. Carter seconded. Roll call vote:

P. LaRochelle - yes N. Buonopane III - yes R. Shea - yes
D. Carter - yes A. Morse - yes Roll call vote carried unanimously.

At 7:28 pm Chairman N. Buonopane convened the nonpublic session with the following people present:

P. LaRochelle, Chairman
N. Buonopane III, Vice-chairman
R. Shea, Selectmen
A. Morse, Selectmen
D. Carter, Selectmen
R. Heath, Town Administrator

N. Buonopane moved at 7:41 pm to exit the nonpublic session. P. LaRochelle seconded. Roll call vote:

P. LaRochelle - yes N. Buonopane III - yes R. Shea - yes
D. Carter - yes A. Morse - yes Roll call vote carried unanimously.

N. Buonopane moved to 'not divulge' item two of the minutes because divulgence of the information likely would adversely affect the reputation of any person other than a member of this board or render the proposed action of the board ineffective. P. LaRochelle seconded. Roll call vote:

P. LaRochelle - yes N. Buonopane III - yes R. Shea - yes
D. Carter - yes A. Morse - yes Roll call vote carried unanimously.

Adjournment

P. LaRochelle moved at 7:42 pm to adjourn. A. Morse seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Stacy L. Bailey
Recording Secretary