

**ALTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
**Minutes**  
**September 12, 2023**  
**(Approved - October 10, 2023)**

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Chairman P. LaRochelle 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:

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Paul LaRochelle, Chairman  
Brock Mitchell, Vice- Chairman  
Andrew Morse, Selectman  
Nicholas Buonopane, Selectman, Selectman  
Richard Shea, Selectmen  
Ryan Heath, Town Administrator

**Agenda Approval**

R. Shea would like to add an item to the agenda under New Business #7 Housekeeping - Issues with the Website

B. Mitchell made a motion to approve the agenda as amended and N. Buonopane seconded with all in favor of the motion.

**Public Hearing - Acceptance of ARPA Funds - 6:05 pm**

P. LaRochelle opened the Public Hearing at 6:05 pm.

P. LaRochelle stated that the ARPA Funds are a surplus from the County for the Town. R. Heath stated that the County Delegation decided to disburse to the communities within the county. P. LaRochelle stated that the amount is \$20,000.00. The funds can be put towards any area that the Town sees fit to use. We have decided to use these funds to increase the benefits of the hiring and retention of the Town employees. There are no strings attached in any way with the State. If it is not accepted, we lose it.

P. LaRochelle closes the Public Hearing at 6:06.

B. Mitchell made a motion to accept the ARPA Funds of \$20,000.00 and N. Buonopane seconded.

**Announcements**

- The Public Participation Policy applies to all Selectmen meetings. A copy of it is on the back of each agenda, posted in this meeting room, and on our website.
- **NOTICE** The Town Clerk/Tax Collector's Office will be closed on Thursday, September 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2023 for the NH Tax Collectors' Association 84<sup>TH</sup> Annual Educational Conference

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

None

**Appointments**

None

**New Business**

**1. Issuance of Building Permit - Map 10 Lot 6 "Range Road"**

P. LaRochelle asked if all of the Departments issues were met. R. Heath stated that one thing that did pop up was the road cannot be named Range Road because we already have a Range Road. J. Call, Planner stated that she believes that a new name has been chosen.

N. Buonopane made a motion to grant the issuance of the building permit Map 10 Lot 6 and B. Mitchell seconded with all in favor of the motion.

## 2. HUB 66 Broadband Presentation

R. Heath stated that Hub 66 had reached out. They are working on a broadband ring around Barndoor Island. The State has put out nice funding packages for areas that are under served. In order to take advantage of this the Town needs to be in support of it. The application for the money is time sensitive. It needed to get before the Board in order to get a consensus of whether they want to support the initiative.

Andrea Vient and Michael Meteja approached the table. She explained that this is a program that was opened up last week from the State of New Hampshire. It was initially funded with \$25 million dollars and the intent is to use it to get every last person in NH that is either unserved or underserved access to high speed internet. The State has put in a request to transfer \$40 million dollars from the Bead Funding. One requirement is that the Town signs the application for the internet service provider doing the work. The program is a match program. R. Heath wanted to clarify for the Board that they are not looking for the match funding. There is no out of the pocket expense for the Town. They went on to explain some of the plans for getting high speed internet to everyone. Hub 66 would fill out an application with the State. The Town needs to sign the application with HUB 66. R. Heath stated that there has never been an attempt from other providers to service the islands at all. It is very unique.

N. Buonopane made a motion to accept HUB 66 Broadband presentation and B. Mitchell seconded. R. Shea stated that he is not happy with the State and Federal Government identifying all these needs. He has no objections to offering options to the citizens. The vote was called with all in favor of the motion.

## 3. Parks & Recreation Program Update

K. Troendle, Parks & Recreation Director approached the table. R. Heath stated that he met with K. Troendle and discussed youth programs. The Board has a breakdown of the programs offered on the table. K. Troendle explained the list of programs. They are currently working with the Town of New Durham Parks & Recreation. They are also partnering with the Towns of Farmington and Milton. She stated that they have to turn away people with credit cards. They can only accept cash or checks. They discussed the possibilities about renting or leasing a bus for field trips.

## 4. MS - 535

R. Heath stated that this is for the Board to look through. It is last year's voted appropriations and actual expenditures. This is done through the auditing process.

It is the consensus of the Board to sign the MS-535 for DRA.

## 5. DPW - Authorization for Sale of Surplus Vehicles/Equipment

S. Kinmond, Public Works Director approached the table. There are some items that have been identified which are not road worthy for the Town as well as items that have been there for a while. He is looking to put the items on Municibid.

B. Mitchell made a motion to allow the DPW Director to place items 1-5 on Municibid with the funds being returned to the General Fund and N. Buonopane seconded with all in favor of the motion.

## 6. Police Department - Purchase Pistol & Optics Request

T. MacDougal, Police Chief, approached the table. He explained the proposal is for the purchase of pistols. They looked at just getting the optics for the current fire arms. The cost of getting them milled was most expensive than expected. If they take their current pistols and trade them in they would be paying out \$212.00 per pistol. The cost is pretty close and they are an upgraded pistol. They would be coming from the manufacturer. In total they would be ordering 22 for the net cost of \$12,744.76. If they mill them, they can only do two at a time.

N. Buonopane made a motion to approve the purchasing of 22 new fire arms for the Police Department for a total of \$12,744.76 and B. Mitchell seconded with all in favor of the motion.

## 7. Housekeeping - Issues with the Website

R. Shea stated that has noticed that some committees need to be updated on the website. He also stated that it would be nice to put the term lengths for everyone on a committee.

## Old Business

### 1. Police Department - NH Office of Highway Safety Grant

T. MacDougal, Police Chief, returned to the table. He explained that this comes before the Board every year. They award certain amounts. It is the same as last year \$10,200.00 total. It is for a variety of different enforcement patrols. They are speed patrols, DWI enforcement, distracted driving, join the NH click, drive sober or get pulled over initiative, you drive you text you pay, etc. They have been the same for quite a number of years.

B. Mitchell made a motion to authorize the town Administrator to sign the NH Office of Highway Safety Grant as done every year in the amount of \$10,200.00 and N. Buonopane seconded with all in favor of the motion.

## 2. DPW - Storm Damage Update

S. Kinmond returned to the table. The memo is for the December of 2022 disaster declaration. They still have not completed all of the repair work for that. He explained what needs to still be completed. He met with the Assistant Public Works Director and the Foreman to go over what work that needs to be completed. He needs to find out if he can extend some of the repair period. The July storms have not had a declaration as of yet. There has been the potential of over expenditure of the DPW budget due to the disasters. He wanted to make the Board aware of that. He relayed what roads still need repair. He stated that the employees have not had much time to take time to spend with their families. Where he is short staffed he wanted to let the Board know that would be why things are not happening fast enough. He stated that there will be some staff that were not able to take time off and they will lose the time at the end of the year. He would like the authorization of the Board to work with some personnel and Town Administrator to make decisions on a case by case basis.

P. LaRochelle made a motion to approve the Town Administrator to work with the DPW Director for the employee vacation carry over from 2023 to 2024 and authorize the payout should funds be available to do so and N. Buonopane seconded with all in favor of the motion.

## 3. DPW - Zero Turn Mower Purchase

S. Kinmond remained at the table. He stated that this is more of a housekeeping item. They tried to buy a mower early on in the Spring. They had other purchases that needed to happen. They didn't have enough money to buy the high end commercial zero turn mower. In lieu of that he went to a lower grade unit. He would like to do the funding allocations from the appropriate reserve funds in order to clean up the finance piece of it.

N. Buonopane made a motion to authorize the Public Works Director to purchase the two Husqvarna 18 horse power zero turn mowers from the G & M Equipment in the amount of \$3,099.99 and the Cemetery Perpetual Care Trust in the amount of \$3,299.99 and authorize the decommissioning and sale for remaining pieces of equipment and A. Morse seconded with all in favor of the motion.

## 4. DPW - Revision to Highway Policies Sections 10.5 and 16

S. Kinmond remained at the table. He stated that this goes along with the Short Term Rental Process. Everything will be uniform across the board. J. Call, Town Planner approached the table. She highlighted all of the changes that were done to the policies.

P. LaRochelle made a motion to adopt the Highway Policies Section 16 Operating Procedures, Building Permission Requests on Class VI Private Roads and Island Property and R. Shea seconded with all in favor of the motion.

## 5. Short Term Rental Process - Approval

J. Call, Town Planner, approached the table. She explained the changes that were made to the documents per the suggestions of the Town Attorney. She did receive some more input from residents after the last meeting. She shared some of the concerns. One was the amount of the fee that the Town was requiring. It felt that it was too low. The suggestion is to increase it to \$250.00. She suggests that the Board consider in addition to the Regulations on page 3 to add #21. There were concerns that we didn't do enough to address the amount of people during the day. Discussion ensued in reference to unregistered guests. N. Buonopane stated let's give it a year and see how it works. After serious discussion, it was suggested to have #21 read up to four visitors per day. N. Buonopane strongly disagrees. J. Call stated that number 16 talks about inspections. She would like to propose that if things get busy in the Building Department to have the Code Official or his designee listed to do inspections. The Board needs to decide on a designee to sign off on the permits. P. LaRochelle stated that it should be the Code Enforcer. R. Heath stated that if the Code Enforcer is out sick, there should be a second designee. He suggested himself.

P. LaRochelle made a motion to accept the application for Short Term Rental Permit as amended this evening and R. Shea seconded. N. Buonopane stated that he was in agreement with all of the changes except the one to #21. The vote was called with 3 in favor, 1, against (NB), and 1 abstention (BM).

## Selectmen Reports

R. Shea stated that there has not been a Budget Committee meeting yet. But HHW is moving along.

N. Buonopane stated that ZAC went well and Old Home Week Committee did a great job.

A. Morse stated that he missed the CIP meeting.

B. Mitchell had nothing to report.

P. LaRochelle stated that the ZBA met on the 7<sup>th</sup> and with 6 cases and 3 cases were continued to next month.

#### **Town Administrator Report**

R. Heath wanted to invite the Board to a dedication for the Water Bandstand with a Historical Marker. The dedication will be on Saturday.

R. Heath stated that last year the Conservation Committee in conjunction with the Public Works Director, and myself, and other volunteers did a 319 Grant to help mitigate some of the storm water issues. They would like to re-submit this year and all they need is the consensus of the Board to do so. It was the consensus of the Board to move forward.

R. Heath stated that the Tax Collector wanted him to let the Board know that there will be a demonstration of some of the new voting machine at 1:00 tomorrow.

R. Heath stated that the Police Department and Parks & Recreation are looking for the support of the Board to have Trick or Treating hours on October 31 5-7 pm. The consensus of the Board is to allow this.

R. Heath stated that the next thing is about the drainage issues on Route 11D and the Clemm's property. He asked the Board what response they would like him to reply with. R. Shea stated that he would like to hear from the Public Works Director about the situation. S. Kinmond approached the table. He stated that he did meet with the homeowners. There really nothing that the Town needs to do. As far as the Planning and Zoning regulations relative to water, you are not supposed to divert water from your property to someone else's property. Any pipe that is existing, it is usually put back in the same location. It is the consensus of the Board to send a letter with the intent of letting them know that their hands are tied.

R. Heath stated that the next topic is the Stockbridge Road stop sign. N. Buonopane asked S. Kinmond if there is anything to do about the lines. He feels the only confusing thing is the lines going to the left. Can the lines be eliminated or go to the right. S. Kinmond stated that by rights, the thing that should happen is that the line break should be staggered back away from the intersection. It is now more of a defined intersection now. Before, there was a blended road section. He has already contacted a stripping company and have been working with them. P. LaRochelle stated that he feels that the Town has done their due diligence working very hard with public input to try and come up with the right decision such as the stop sign. The Town has contacted Eversource to move the telephone pole. He does understand the residents' concerns with the noise but at this time it is the right decision. There are not as many accidents now. Discussion ensued about individual opinions on the intersection. R. Heath stated that with the Board's support he will keep pursuing it. P. LaRochelle stated that he would like the Town Administrator to send a letter to the individual with concerns.

R. Heath stated that the last thing is an FYI that the Police Chief had mentioned to pass on to the Board. The Police Department had an all-time low of position vacancies. They do have a new hire on the Consent Agenda and he has two more vacancies to fill. They are in the process of back ground checks.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

None

#### **Consent Agenda Approval**

B. Mitchell made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda for September 12, 2023 as presented and N. Buonopane seconded with all in favor of the motion.

#### **1. 2023 MS-1 Report**

MS-1 Town Value Report for NH DRA

#### **Land Use Change Tax**

Torosian; Map 10 Lot 26; Frohock Brook Road; \$12,000

#### **2. Police Department**

New Hire, Patrol Officer, Michael Dahmke, \$31.60/ per hr, Start Date 10/1/2023

#### **3. Parks & Recreation Commission**

John Bernard, 3 Year Term, Expires March 2026

**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)

V. Bober approached the table. He thanked the Board and the Town Planner for passing the Short Term Rental Process. It is a good document to have. He wishes that people wouldn't think stop signs are suggestions.

D. Richardson approached the table. She read a letter into record.

*Good evening, my name is Donna Richardson and I am here this evening to address concerns outlined in my letter delivered to Town Administrator Ryan Heath on Aug 16, 2023 in which I asked for a non-public meeting with you. I discussed my concerns at length with Mr. Heath on Aug 23, 2023, at which time he denied my request for a non-public meeting and suggested that I take up my concerns by way of a ZBA appeal. However, tonight I bring before you the items that are outside of the scope of permissions & permits of the ZBA and are part of Town Codes and State Laws.*

*Town of Alton Tax Map 38, Lot 44 is owned by my family. This Lot (44) owns the Right of Way named Richardson Drive and this Right of Way DIVIDES lots 48 & 49 (aka 21 Richardson Drive and a currently un-numbered garage lot). This is significant in that Lots 48 and 49 were given building permits and my family was not notified as abutters. (\*\* This detail will be taken up with the mentioned ZBA appeal.)*

*As part of the construction, several things have happened that directly impact our property rights. My family is unduly burdened by the following items that need to be addressed:*

- 1. There are unauthorized and un-inspected utilities that run through my family property, Lot 44. The well, leach field and electrical lines for Lot 49 are located on Lot 48 requiring that they run through Lot 44, my family property. These permissions were never asked for or granted by my family. Please refer to Exhibits 1 - 5 and Photos A & B in the letter of Aug 16, 2023.*
- 2. Due to recent rain events, I began looking into what might be necessary for me to put in a dry well. I discovered that the owners of Lots 48 & 49 were to put in a Storm Water Management System. This was a requirement of the Conservation Committee approval based on the plan submitted to them. It has not been installed or addressed at all. The result of this lacking Storm Water Management System is on-going, excessive run-off onto and through my property and that of other abutters. Please refer to Exhibits 18 & 19, and Photos A & B in the letter of Aug 16, 2023.*
- 3. There is a Town issued, singular Certificate of Occupancy for structures on both lots. This is not legal as the structures are on separate lots; it is not one continuous lot nor are they considered contiguous lots. They are separated by Lot 44, my family property. The garage is permitted to be an unfinished, working or storage space and should therefore only get a Certificate of Completion. Further, if it is to be unfinished, I do not understand why it has water running to it or the need for a waste line. These non-permitted utilities run through Lot 44, my family property. Please refer to Exhibits 11 & 21 and Photos A & B of the letter of Aug 16, 2023.*
- 4. There is no separate electric meter or "911 address" on the garage located on the alternate lot. This results in the utilities running from the house back to the garage, and from the garage back to the house-- again through my family property without permission from, or notification to us during the permitting process. As these additional utilities were installed AFTER the errant Certificate of Occupancy, I cannot assure the safety of any Emergency responders and/or their vehicles should they be on the Right of Way for any length of time. These utilities were not inspected by the Town or the State, nor anticipated vehicle loads.*
- 5. Last, and perhaps most interestingly, the house and garage are not located on the lots for which their Shore land Applications were submitted. There were ZBA approvals on January 03, 2019, State applications on Jan 29, 2019, and subsequent Town permits based on State Approvals. How these changes were addressed/approved is unknown as there are no records in public forums.*

*Please refer to Exhibits 16, 19, 22, 23, 24 in the letter of Aug 16, 2023.*

*I am looking to you for enforcement of the Town responsibilities as it is the Town that has issued the errant Certificate of Occupancy for Lots 48/49, aka 21 Richardson Drive. In its simplest form, the above represents trespassing as no permissions were asked for or granted by my family for these utilities to run through our property. This results in an undue burden for my family as well as significant safety concerns should there be the need for 911 Emergency Services at 11, 16, 18, 19, 21, and 23 Richardson Drive.*

*I do not take lightly anything that I bring before you tonight.*

*What I am bringing forward does not reflect well on the Town, which is why I initially asked for a non-public meeting. My family has been here in Alton almost 100 years, we love it here and are very proud of our Town! Members of my family have actively participated on several Town committees and in decades of Town activities. One of my Mom's favorite things is Old Home Week, she often introduces herself as the "Cookie Mom" for the annual 5k and as the best ice cream scooper Roger Sample has ever recruited!*

*I am respectfully asking for your help in addressing our concerns and thank you for your time this evening.*

**Non-Public Session**

None

**Adjournment**

B. Mitchell moved at 8:48 pm to adjourn. N. Buonopane seconded. **Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy L. Bailey  
Recording Secretary

## ALTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

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Paul LaRochelle, Chairman

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Brock Mitchell, Vice-Chairman

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Andrew Morse, Selectman

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Nick Buonopane, Selectman

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Richard Shea, Selectman