

Town of Alton

Budget Committee Meeting
Minutes

APPROVED

November 28, 2006

Present: Stephen Miller; William Curtin; Elizabeth Dominick; Virgil MacDonald;
Laurie Boyce, Terri Noyes (ACS Board Rep.),
Pete Shibley (Selectmen's Rep.); E. Russell Bailey, Town Administrator;
Krista Argiropolis, Secretary; Tom Hoopes, Planning Board
Members of the Public

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Miller called the meeting to order at 6:06pm.

II. ROLL CALL

T. Noyes and L. Boyce arrived at 6:06pm. E. Dominick arrived at 6:12pm.
(SM, VM, WC, ED, SMc, TN, LB)

III. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – November 16, 2006

W. Curtin motioned to approve the minutes of 11/16/06 and V. MacDonald seconded the motion.
The motion passed by a vote of three, with three abstaining and three absent. (SM, VM, WC /
absent - ED / abstain – PS, TN, LB)

IV. CORRESPONDANCE

There was no correspondence.

V. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

VI. CIP – Tom Hoopes, Vice Chair, Alton Planning Board

Mr. Hoopes reported on the CIP Budget. He stated that the members of the Planning Board consisted of Jeremy Dube – Chairman, Cris Blackstone - Ex-Officio Member, Robert Eddie, and Loring Carr – School Board Representative. Mr. Hoopes stated that he saw Mr. Carr in one meeting for approximately five minutes and he didn't know what happened.

He announced that under the school department, the "Land Purchase" line item had been changed because there was no presentation made so it was changed to say "To The Appropriate School System Upgrade". He stated that the Building Expansion Project under the Police Department was for a study to be done for building upgrades later. Mr. Hoopes offered to share the book with backup documentation with the members of the Budget Committee, if it was needed.

The CIP Budget for the Highway was reviewed. Mr. Bailey noted that the Budget Committee was not going to vote on CIP that night because the Selectmen needed to vote on the items first. There was discussion about the vehicles, chipper, etc. There were no questions.

The CIP Budget for the Fire Department was reviewed. There was discussion about funds for engines and other vehicles. Mr. Bailey stated that the Ambulance (\$37,244) was in the articles that includes all the ambulance fees and a special fund, but it will be included in the special revenue that will be paid for out of the ambulance revenue. The Ambulance fund can pay for the vehicles, wages, etc., but it will be redefined by the Selectmen later this year to say that it will include fuel, training, and other materials needed to make it more self-sufficient.

There was discussion about the chief asking firemen to not go on ambulance calls. Mr. Miller asked if it was due to political reasons. Mr. Bailey stated it was due to budget restrictions and that the chief had the final say in who could or could not go on calls. There was a discussion about the vehicles that are mentioned in the requests.

Ms. Noyes asked why the Committee was reviewing CIP prior to the Selectmen. Mr. Bailey responded that it was due to timing. Ms. Noyes asked Mr. Hoopes what the position of his department was in CIP. Mr. Hoopes responded that CIP was given to the planning board to review because it involved long term planning. He stated they did not make cuts or recommendations. He stated they reviewed it to make sure it was valid requests but they did not make cuts.

Mr. Hoopes spoke about the request to have an ambulance stationed in East Alton, which would be manned by students. He spoke about the insurance rates of the town vs. personal insurance rates. He stated that if they did not have enough coverage in one part of town, the insurance rates would go up in those areas. He stated that having the students available and the volunteers was a bonus to the town and that he fully supported the program.

Mr. Hoopes spoke about the growth in Alton. He announced that Laconia was the only town in the entire Lakes Region with more building permits at that time. He spoke about the possibility of having impact fees that would go to the schools or to emergency services. When new subdivisions come in there would be a fund for future growth items, such as to fund more classrooms in the school to accommodate or offset the growth in the school. It can only fund capitol – not operating budget.

The CIP Budget for the Solid Waste Department was reviewed. Mr. Bailey explained there was a fund to add to the capitol plan. The plans are being finished to redesign the re-cycling and site. It is a long term project and will take two to three phases. There will be six recycling containers for separating waste. This will help to cut costs. There was discussion about the improvements and cost savings that will result from the re-design.

The CIP Budget for Parks & Recreation was reviewed. Mr. Bailey explained that the approximately \$13,000 in the budget was not enough to pay for the rebuilding of the green monster, materials and labor. They were looking to get some volunteer assistance with rebuilding the green monster. Mr. Bailey stated the Beach Committee was asking for a fund to purchase a

beach so that Alton could have a public beach. Mr. Hoopes stated that Alton has the greatest mileage on Lake Winnepesaukee but there is not much of a public beach available for swimming.

The CIP Budget for the Police Department was reviewed. Mr. Hoopes spoke about the requested network file server and stated that it was an estimate. There were no other questions.

The CIP Budget for the School Department was reviewed. Mr. Miller asked what the upgrades were for that were requested. Mr. Hoopes stated it was first stated as being for a land purchase but that there was never any follow-up information or presentations given about it, so it was re-worded as being for upgrades. Mr. Bailey reminded the Committee that the School Board would word the warrant article. There was a discussion about the Fire Suppression System for the school. Ms. Noyes stated that whether the building was renovated or not, the school still needed to implement the system and the money would have to be used for it. Mr. Shibley explained that the money could not be used for anything other than what it was requested for in a warrant article.

The CIP Budget for the Administration budget. Mr. Bailey stated the line item for sidewalks was for new sidewalks or for maintaining current sidewalks. Mr. Bailey spoke about the line item for septic and the possibility of implementing a town septic system. There were no other questions. Mr. Miller thanked Mr. Hoopes for his presentation and comments.

The Committee reviewed and discussed the Special Warrant Articles. Mr. Bailey reviewed the budgeted amounts for the previous year. The Committee reviewed the new budgeted amounts. Mr. Bailey noted there was a new program called CASA – Court Appointed Special Advocates. There was a discussion about the various programs such as the VNA, Genesis, Medication Bridges, Youth Service Bureau, etc. Mr. MacDonald stated that Genesis came to the school to offer services. Ms. Noyes stated that Genesis, when it came to the school, that the students were treated as patients and paid via insurance or as self-pay but were not there as a crisis treatment provider to walk-ins. There was a discussion about the re-purchase of the Long lot. There were no other questions.

XII. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Miller suggested that COLA (Cost Of Living Allocation), which Alton pays about \$66,000 a year, and asked if the Committee thought it made sense to hand the money to the department heads to hand out as merit pay. Mr. Shibley stated they would have to do the policy over again if that was the case and that he, Mr. Miller, could not make that change. Mr. Shibley stated that he could make that recommendation to the Selectmen but that it would be up to the Selectmen to consider this. Mr. Miller noted he was not recommending this change for this year.

There was no other new business.

XIII. PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public input.

XIV. AJOURNMENT

Mrs. Boyce motioned to adjourn and Mr. Curtin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. (SM, VM, WC, LB, ED, TN, PS)

The next meeting is scheduled November 30, 2006 at 6pm.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:43pm.

Respectively Submitted,

Krista A. Argiropolis
Keeper and Transcriber of Minutes