

TOWN OF ALTON

**ADVANCED COPY SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE
ALTON BUDGET COMMITTEE
ALTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**ALTON BUDGET COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
(Approved 05/08/07)
APRIL 10, 2007**

Present: Stephen Miller, Elizabeth Dominick, Virgil MacDonald, Karen Painter,
Gregory Fuller, Jeffrey St. Cyr (School Board Representative),
Terri Noyes (School Board Representative – Alternate),
Peter Bolster (Alton Selectmen Representative), Krista Argiropolis (Recorder)

I. CALL TO ORDER

S. Miller called the meeting to order at approximately 6:35PM.

II. ROLL CALL

All members were present.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

V. MacDonald motioned to approve the minutes of February 6, 2007 and E. Dominick seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of three, with four abstaining. (SM, VM, ED / abstain – JS, GF, KP, PB)

[Recorder's note: There were five Budget Committee members in attendance at the 2/6/07 meeting. Two of those members did not run for Budget Committee at the end of their term. Only the remaining members of the Budget Committee who were present at the 2/6/07 meeting voted to approve the minutes.]

V. MacDonald motioned to approve the minutes of March 20, 2007 and E. Dominick seconded the motion. K. Painter noted the following corrections on page two: she moved to New Hampshire in 1989 but moved to Alton in 1994; she has a BS in nursing and a masters in BA; and she noted one typographical error. The motion passed by a vote of five, with two abstaining. (SM, VM, ED, GF, KP / abstain – JS, PB)

IV. OLD BUSINESS

S. Miller spoke about improving attendance to meetings and requested better communication from the representative of the selectmen and the school board. T. Noyes stated she felt his comment was unfair and noted that she had contacted him when she could not be available. She discussed scheduling conflicts and situations that can arise that would keep the school board representative from being able to attend the meeting. There was a discussion about how the members of the Budget Committee could best communicate when they could not be present at a meeting or if there was a scheduling conflict.

V. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

G. Fuller motioned to elect S. Miller the Chair of the Budget Committee and V. MacDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote. (SM, VM, ED, GF, KP, JS, PB) S. Miller thanked the members of the Budget Committee for their support.

V. MacDonald motioned to elect G. Fuller as the Vice Chair of the Budget Committee and S. Miller seconded the motion. G. Fuller motioned to elect V. MacDonald as the Vice Chair of the Budget Committee and E. Dominick seconded the motion. There was a discussion about the strengths that both V. MacDonald and G. Fuller could bring to the position. V. MacDonald stated he did not feel he was the best candidate because of his schedule. The motion to elect G. Fuller as the Vice Chair passed by a vote of five. (SM, VM, KP, JS, PB / no – GF, ED)

There was a discussion about the JMA Budget Committee. The Alton Budget Committee sends three representatives for the review of the PMHS budget and Alton will be chairing the JMA Budget Committee this year. E. Dominick, K. Painter, and S. Miller were nominated as the representatives for the JMA Budget Committee by V. MacDonald. The motion was seconded by G. Fuller. The motion passed by a unanimous vote. (SM, VM, ED, GF, KP, JS, PB) It was decided by consensus that V. MacDonald would be an alternate for the JMA Budget Committee and that S. Miller would serve as the Chair for the JMA Budget Committee.

The outcomes of the election of officers for the Alton Budget Committee are:

Chair:	Stephen Miller
Vice Chair:	Gregory Fuller
JMA Budget Committee:	Stephen Miller (Chair) Elizabeth Dominick Karen Painter Virgil MacDonald (alternate)

VI. NEW BUSINESS

S. Miller announced that there would be a meeting of the JMA Budget Committee on Monday, April 16, 2007 at 6:30 PM in the Library/Media Center at PMHS.

S. Miller spoke about the Economic Uncertainty Fund, which came from a warrant article and allows for \$60,000 to be used for electricity and fuel, in the instances of budget shortfalls. He stated that it was his understanding that the money was being used for other things, such as paying staff to be on committees and teachers' salaries. The PMHS School Board had given permission on 4/3/07 for the business manager to use the funds. T. Noyes stated that it was not being used for anything other than electricity and fuel. She explained that the DRA would not allow them to do that, as the money had been set-aside specifically by a warrant article. The business manager was going to bill each town half of the cost of electricity and fuel for the remainder of the school's fiscal year, which is four months. T. Noyes passed out a draft (unapproved) copy of the PMHS School Board meeting minutes from 4/3/07, which detailed the business manager's presentation and justification for asking the Board's approval to utilize the Economic Uncertainty Fund. S. Miller stated that he understood what T. Noyes was saying but felt he was confused from an email she had sent out to the Alton Budget Committee members announcing this budgeting change. T. Noyes reviewed her email and asked how they could have drawn that conclusion. She stated that she had basically copied what Paul Landry, Barnstead Budget Committee, had communicated with the members of his budget committee. The members of the Committee stated that the email had been confusing to them. T. Noyes apologized for the confusion and offered for the members of the Committee to contact her at any time, if they had any questions about anything to do with the school. It was felt that this misunderstanding was resolved and the members of the Alton Budget Committee understood the intent of the fund draw down.

There was an open discussion about if the Budget Committee should adopt a policy about speaking to the press. T. Noyes spoke about the policy that the School Board had and how they were asked to refer question from the press to the Board's Chair. There was a motion made to have members of the Budget Committee route any questions from the press through the Chair of the Committee. G. Fuller stated he felt that was a violation of his rights as a citizen and felt he should not have to give up his rights because he had been elected to a committee or board. Prior instances of Budget Committee members speaking to the press were discussed. The motion made earlier for a press policy was retracted after discussion. It was felt that this policy was not necessary at this time.

S. Miller spoke about the meeting schedule. The schedule is, as follows:

- May 8, 2007
- June 12, 2007
- July – no meeting
- August – no meeting
- September – to be announced.

Meetings will begin at 6:30 pm and be held at the Alton Town Hall. S. Miller asked K. Argiropolis if she could send reminders out to the members of the committee a day or two before the meetings and if she could post these meetings.

[Recorder's Note: P. Bolster left the meeting at approximately 7:32PM]

S. Miller handed out copies of the Town of Alton, Actual and Budgeted Expenses and Encumbrance for March 2007. He requested the members of the Committee to review it and welcomed them to contact him with any questions or concerns about it. He offered to follow up with any department heads or managers concerning shortfalls or areas of question in the report. He stated that he would get the answers to the questions and present them at the May 12, 2007 meeting.

VII. PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public input.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

E. Dominick motioned to adjourn and V. MacDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote. (SM, VM, ED, GF, KP, JS, PB) The meeting ended at approximately 8:03pm.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, May 8, 2007 at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Krista Argiropolis
Recorder