

Town of Alton
Budget Committee Meeting
Town Hall Meeting Room
October 26, 2016
Minutes
Approved November 9, 2016

1. Call to Order at 6:30 pm
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call
Roger Nelson, Chairman
Michael Ball, School Department Representative
Andrew Levasseur, Member
John Markland, Selectmen's Representative
David Hershey, Member
Terrence O'Rourke, Member
Greg Fuller, Vice Chairman, Excused Absence
4. Approval of Agenda
D. Hershey motioned to approve the Agenda as presented and was seconded by T. O'Rourke with all in favor
5. Public Input I
None
Public Input I closed
6. Old Business
 - A. 2017 Town Department Budget Reviews

Code Official / Building Inspector - 4192

John Dever presented the budget to the Committee and stated this is his busiest year since he has been with the Town. Revenues are up 152% to what has been spent, \$64,737.00. As of October 25th we have a return of \$98,000.00. Building permits are up almost double this year with 30 permits issued to date.

The committee reviewed the budget, asked questions and discussed various line items.

There was a discussion on the hiring of an additional part time staff member. D. Hershey suggested the possibility of bringing on an intern and John Dever stated he will look into this option.

Solid Waste Department – 4324

Scott Simond presented the budget to the Committee and stated it has been a busy summer.

The Committee reviewed the budget, asked questions and discussed various line items.

There was a discussion on the purchase of scales. S. Simond stated in 2015 the total tonnage for demo, shingles and wood was 711 tons. The revenue was \$47,682.00 at \$20.00 per yard. The expense to dispose of it, including transportation, was \$78,348.00. That is \$30,666.00 in the red. If scales were available at 8 cents a pound which is \$160.00 a ton, the revenue would be \$113,760.00. We spent \$78,348.00 and the revenue would be \$35,412.00. R. Nelson asked how can we make the expenses come down. L. Dionne

stated it will be a gradual transition. Once the scales are installed some of these could slowly transition out of the budget. There is a disposal charge and a transportation charge for every single product. The anticipated expense for the scales is \$67,000.00 and it would not be a warrant article. It is going to be taken out of the revolving fund so no taxpayer funds would be used. It would be a gradual process for the recyclable items only.

Fire Department – 4220 and Ambulance - 9000

Chief Ryan Ridley presented the budgets to the Committee and provided the Committee with an overview of the Departments. There are currently 42 staff members.

The Committee reviewed the budget, asked questions and discussed various line items.

Currently the Town is classified as a volunteer/on-call fire department. Chief Ridley would like 24 hour coverage with at least two people for the ambulance on duty instead of on call so they can respond quickly noting there are more EMS calls than fire calls.

D. Hershey initiated a discussion on home owner insurance rates for towns classified as having a full time Fire Department vs. a volunteer/on-call fire department. Rates for towns classified as having a full time Fire Department have a lower rate for home owners insurance.

There was a discussion on hiring a private ambulance company.

7. New Business

A. School Financials – September

The discussion on the September school financials was tabled.

8. Public Input II

None

Public Input II closed

9. Other Business

D. Hershey had questions regarding the administration of the Town portion of Welfare. There are three pieces the Federal, State and town pieces. Looking at it from the town piece, assuming somebody qualifies for example on income and states they have a need, there is no provision that would restrict the town from providing assistance even if that person were not a resident of the town.

There is a requirement that anybody that receives town welfare is obligated to repay the town for that assistance in either of two capacities. One is repay in cash reimbursement or two work for the town to off set the costs the town incurred. Specifically what is our Town policy for providing off-setting employment to a welfare recipient to the town? This is a requirement of the statute. D. Hershey stated he did not see anything in the statute that indicated that you have to advance the money and then provide the employment. If it is an administrative struggle and somebody is looking for assistance today we keep a listing of immediate opportunities for someone to perform and they receive their wages at the end of the day in either cash or voucher.

D. Hershey would like to see that we establish a process for whatever we give out that we follow the rules and that the individual who receives the benefit provides compensating work for those wages.

There was a discussion on whether that person would become an employee of the town. D. Hershey stated yes and they would be entitled to workers compensation benefits should they be injured on the job while performing their offsetting duties.

L. Dionne stated that there are issues with the work program. The person may be handicapped, maybe we don't have any work available, there are a lot of liabilities placed on the Town and they have to be supervised, We do not want people in our offices unsupervised, strangers . D. Hershey stated we are paying strangers and if we don't have specific duties for them we can give them a mop and a broom or they can file in the library.

J. Markland stated what if a person has a criminal record and shouldn't be on Town property for various reasons. The liability to the town would be huge. L. Dionne added we have had welfare clients that are not allowed on any Town property.

T. O'Rourke stated the statute states "may" it does not say "must" and he does not believe this is an item for the Budget Committee but should be up to the Selectmen.

D. Hershey stated we have departments looking for part time workers. This could be a resource.

10. Adjourn

T. O'Rourke motioned to adjourn and was seconded by J. Markland with all in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Peggy Hawksley
Budget Committee Secretary
Approved November 9, 2016