

TOWN OF ALTON  
ALTON BUDGET COMMITTEE  
APPROVED  
MEETING MINUTES  
DECEMBER 16, 2008

Committee Members: Steve Miller, Chair  
Karen Painter, Vice Chair  
Greg Fuller  
Elizabeth Dominick  
Richard MacDonald

Alton Select Board: Alan Sherwood, Chair  
Pat Fuller  
Bill Curtin  
Peter Bolster  
Steve McMahon

Others Present: Russ Bailey, Town Administrator  
Jonathan Hale, Architect  
Captain Scott Williams, Alton Fire Department  
Captain Ryan Heath, Alton Police Department  
Members of the Public

I. CALL TO ORDER

S. Miller called the meeting to order at approximately 6:45 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

III. CIP

A. Sherwood handed out a document of safety findings and recommendations that were made in 2003. He spoke about the study and who was involved in the study. He reviewed some of the recommendations that were made at that time. He spoke about the expansion of the Fire Department and some of the capital reserve funds that had been created for the Alton Fire Department and the Alton Police Department. He discussed some of the options that the Board of Selectmen have explored and recommended. There was a brief discussion of bonds being explored.

J. Hale presented information on the plans to renovate the Town Hall. He spoke about changes to be made to the vestibule that will help with stopping heat loss in the building. The entrance will allow for handicapped access. He spoke about the community center and the need for two additional offices for staff. He discussed changes to the Fire Department and some of the changes that will be made to the existing structure. He spoke about some of the issues of dealing with the administration office areas and student quarters that are needed in the building. A second addition will be added to the back of the building with dorm areas, bathrooms, etc. on the second floor. J.

Hale reviewed the proposed changes to the Alton Police Department, which includes a garage area, second floor, and renovations to the first floors.

There was a question and answer session with the Budget Committee. S. Miller asked about the proposed changes and asked if they were the minimum amount of changes requested or the maximum amount of changes requested. J. Hale responded that the Fire Department's request was just above a minimum space needs request and that the Town Hall's and Senior Center's request were the minimum request. He stated that the Police Department's request was not an absolute minimum but that the Police Department would be making sacrifices during the renovation period to help facilitate the completion of the project.

S. Miller asked how far into the future these changes were projected to be sufficient for the departments, based on the projected population increases. S. Williams stated that the Fire Department building was built in 1961 and there had been two changes made to the building. He stated that this update to the building would take them into a full-time building and this would take them well into 2020. He spoke about some of the changes to the bays that have been designed into the plans.

A. Sherwood spoke about the long term facility needs that had been estimated in the committee that had met in 2003 and spoke about the West Alton Station. It is estimated that this building plan is an effective 20-year plan and will meet the needs of these departments for the next 20 years.

P. Bolster spoke about the seasonal population changes in the Town of Alton. P. Fuller spoke about the budget process and approval of warrant articles for the projects.

R. MacDonald asked if windows and other things had been looked at (energy issues) for the Alton Town Hall. R. Bailey stated they are still looking at the energy issues and upgrades needed to the Town Hall. P. Bolster stated that one of the possible improvements will be the weatherizing of the public buildings and possible grant money that will be available to the town.

There was discussion about the projected needs of the town based on population estimates. The Board and Committee discussed parking needs for employees and for people needing access to the Town Hall and other municipal buildings. R. Bailey spoke about some of the grants available to the town for renovations to the Senior Center and other buildings. He stated that they could not really apply for a grant until they had a plan. P. Bolster spoke about the stimulus package and some of the energy issues that are being explored and the work of the Energy Committee.

R. Bailey discussed the handouts that were given to the Committee. He stated that this is something that will not need to be voted on until January, 2009. G. Fuller felt that the Committee needed more time to read the recommendations.

A. Sherwood spoke about the financing of the projects and the examples of the twenty year bonds that are being explored. He reported that an interest rate of 5.5% has been received from the bank. He spoke about the total cost with amortization for some of the projects. There was discussion about the final costs of the projects and R. Bailey noted that some of the numbers they have presented have many contingencies to them.

S. Williams spoke about the needs of the Fire Department and noted that the East Alton station did not need any changes.

A. Sherwood spoke about the time frame for the first payment on the bond. He noted that no payments would be due in 2009 but that the first payment would be in 2010. He noted that this year's budget would be about the same as the previous year's approved budget. R. MacDonald felt that this was a good time for the town to get bonds.

S. Miller asked if the Board voted unanimously on the Bond issues and A. Sherwood responded that they were.

R. Bailey spoke about when the projects would be presented to the public. He stated that if there was a 60% vote on the March, 2009 vote that they would be going out to bid around July, 2009. He stated that the potential of the Bond would be around \$1.6 million but the cutoff was \$2 million. He spoke about the revenue, such as sale of town property and other sources of revenue that will help to take the costs down. He stated that they would have true numbers in the fall of 2009 and would go forward with the projects then. The Warrant article will be about \$2 million just because of the estimated costs. The capital reserves will also be offsetting the costs of the bond.

There was discussion about presenting the information to the public.

E. Dominick asked if the projects would be done at the same time or what the period would be. R. Bailey stated that the projects would be bid separately but bidders would be allowed to group them. He stated that small projects, such as the Senior Center renovations, would be a small project, that those would get more local bids. He stated the schedules would be to complete all projects in the year 2010.

G. Fuller asked if there was a window of time if the town approved the bond. R. Bailey stated that they would need to make the first payment but they could not make a lot of money off the interest for the bond. S. McMahon stated that there is not enough land in the center of town to build anything that would be used for a municipal building.

S. Miller thanked the Board and the department members for their planning and forethought.

A. Sherwood motioned to adjourn the joint session of the Alton Budget Committee and the Board of Selectmen and P. Bolster seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

#### IV. ADJOURNMENT (Selectmen Meeting)

The meeting with the Alton Selectmen adjourned at 8:00 PM.

#### V. ALTON BUDGET COMMITTEE (meeting)

The Alton Budget Committee convened at 8:12 PM.

#### VI. UPCOMING MEETING DATES

S. Miller motioned to have the school public hearing on January 6, 2008 with a snow date on January 7, 2008. R. MacDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, GF, RM, KP, ED, SMc)

S. Miller suggested working on Warrant Articles on Tuesday, December 30 and to finish police and the budget. S. Miller asked to complete the School budget on December 22, 2008.

R. Bailey handed out a worksheet showing changes to the budget. He spoke about the issues with the new highway truck that was recently totaled. They will need to have a truck for sanding the roads.

#### VII. MEETING MINUTES

G. Fuller motioned to approve the meeting minutes of November 13, 2008 and R. MacDonald seconded the motion. (SM, ED, GF, RM, SMc / abstain – KP, TN)

R. MacDonald motioned to approve the meeting minutes of November 20, 2008 and K. Painter seconded the motion. (SM, KP, ED, RM / abstain – GF, SMc, TN)

E. Dominick motioned to approve the meeting minutes of December 4, 2008 and R. MacDonald seconded the motion. (SM, KP, ED, RM, SMc / abstain – GF)

K. Painter motioned to approve the meeting minutes of December 9, 2008 and G. Fuller seconded the motion. (SM, KP, RM, GF, TN, SMc / abstain – ED)

#### VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

G. Fuller asked what the outside requests were from all of the outside agencies and R. Bailey responded with a list of Special Warrant Articles. He noted that the Board has recommended all of the human services except for three of them. He noted that there were four items for the town, such as a highway pickup truck and bridge replacement capital reserve.

#### IX. ADJOURNMENT

K. Painter motioned to adjourn and E. Dominick seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (SM, KP, GF, ED, SMc, RM)

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Krista Argiropolis  
Recorder