

**TOWN OF ALTON
DELIBERATIVE SESSION
FEBRUARY 5, 2014
PROSPECT MOUNTAIN HIGH SCHOOL**

Mark Northridge, Town Moderator, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

All in attendance rose to Pledge Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

R. Loring Carr introduced the members representing the Town of Alton.

Lisa Noyes, Town Clerk
E. Russell Bailey, Town Administrator
James Sessler, Town Attorney
R. Loring Carr, Chairman
Cydney Johnson, Vice Chairman
Marc DeCoff, Member
Robert Daniels, Member
Peggy Hawksley, Recording Secretary

David Hussey was absent due to illness.

A. McLeod introduced the members representing the Alton Budget Committee.

Andy McLeod, Chairman
Krista Argiropolis, School Board Representative
Elizabeth Dominick, Member
Ruth Messier, Member
John Markland, Member
Lawrence Tilly, Vice Chairman

R. Loring Carr addressed all in attendance with the following statement:

If you are not aware of this already, Selectman David Hussey has decided not to seek another term on the Board. On behalf of myself, and the rest of the Board of Selectmen, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Selectman David Hussey for his last five years of his service on the Board and to our community. You have always taken the effort to make unbiased decisions in the best interest of the town. Thanks again for a job well done.

The audience provided a round of applause in recognition for David's years of service and his commitment to the community.

Mark Northridge read the Moderator's Rules.

Mark Northridge called upon R. Loring Carr, Chairman, Board of Selectmen to deliver the State of the Town message. An overview of achieved goals and objectives for 2013 was presented and he thanked all in attendance for their efforts and support throughout the year.

Andy McLeod, the Budget Committee Chairman, gave an overview of the Budget Committee's efforts on the 2014 operating budget. He noted that the approved budgets reflected great efforts from the members of the Select Board and Town Operations personnel to maintain the lowest level of taxation for the town of Alton.

WARRANT ARTICLES

You are hereby notified to meet at the Prospect Mountain High School on Wednesday, the Fifth (5th) day of February in the year Two Thousand and Fourteen (2014), beginning at seven (7:00) o'clock in the evening, for the purpose of deliberating upon the following Warrant Articles and the Town elections to approve the warrant articles by ballot vote which will be held on March 11, 2014 at the Prospect Mountain High School from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm. Yesterday's meeting due to weather was postponed to today the 6th of February.

Warrant Articles 1 through 8 had no motions or discussion.

R. Loring Carr motioned to move Articles 42, 43, and 44 to the beginning of the warrants. The motion was seconded by C. Johnson.

R. Loring Carr spoke in favor of the motion and stated they are petition articles and that a lot of people are interested in these articles by the number of signed petitions and therefore we would like to go through these first. The motion passed with a majority in favor.

Please see Warrant Articles 42, 43 and 44 below.

Article 9: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to sell at public auction to the highest bidder based on a minimum (not absolute) bid amount to be set by the Selectmen based on the assessed value; further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$400,000 to be added to the Fire Equipment Capital Reserve said sum to come from the sales of property listed below and no amount to come from taxation. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (3-0) and the Budget Committee (6-0) (A majority vote is required)]

MAP/LOT	LOCATION	ACREAGE
9-11	Henry Wilson Hwy	.70
12-49	Bay Hill Road	9.0
12-7	Bay Hill Road	.40
19-60	Rines Road	.23
28-6	Frank C. Gilman Hwy	.39
29-7	Frank C. Gilman Hwy	.22
71-15	Marlene Drive	.26
72-1	Frohock Brook Road	.40
72-2	Frohock Brook Road	.41
72-3	Frohock Brook Road	.40
39-45	Leigh Drive	1.0
2-20	Arianna Drive	3.19
2-20-5	Arianna Drive	3.23
4-28-1	Dudley Road	.86
5-38	Coffin Brook Rd	5.00
9-37	New Durham Rd	.40
		Estimated total \$394,900

Cydney Johnson moved Article 9 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion.

Cydney Johnson spoke on behalf of Article 9 stating these 16 parcels were taken back through tax liens or were left to the town. The town has no use for them and would like to sell them and tie the proceeds to

Article 22. Any funds raised from the sale of these properties to be placed into the Fire Equipment Capital Reserve Fund.

Steve Miller asked if the minimum bid the town was looking for was in any documentation. E. Russell Bailey responded that if it passes the Board of Selectmen would establish that along with setting up the auction of the property.

Steve Miller asked if it would make sense to put this in a trust for future purchase of town property, either a beach, a playground or an extension of a playground as opposed to an immediate need to that the town can draw upon at some future date.

Cydney Johnson stated we have an immediate need in the Fire Equipment line that is going to be a very large expense. We thought the best way to treat the taxpayers was to use the money to try and offset the expense that we have coming with the Fire Department.

Raymond Howard stated he does not have a problem with the article and it would be nice to put these properties back on the tax roll and asked what if we don't raise \$400,000.00.

Cydney Johnson responded that the DRA has stated in order for this to be a viable article that we had to put an amount in there but we are not held to this amount. If a lower amount is raised all of that can go towards Article 22.

Marc DeCoff motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 9 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 10: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate **Sixty Five Thousand Dollars (\$65,000.00)** to be placed into the Town Hall Building Improvement Capital Reserve Fund as previously established. This would be used in 2014 for the replacement of the roof and repair of the dormers and trim and other repairs to the town hall. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Marc DeCoff moved Article 10 and R. Loring Carr seconded the motion.

R. Loring Carr spoke on behalf of Article 10 and stated currently we have \$39,751.00 in the account. The trim and roof are getting worn and we have some missing trim and some of it is rotten. That is the number one item we want to repair. We have an issue with the lift and we would like to tackle the front historical doors as they are in bad shape and we still have storage issues. This year we spent \$42,000.00 for the windows, septic, insulation and a boiler vent. The Co-op contributed \$6,600.00 for the insulation.

R. Loring Carr motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 10 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 11: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00)** to be added to the Sidewalk Capital Reserve Fund as previously established for the upgrade and maintenance of existing sidewalks. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Robert Daniels moved Article 11 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion.

Robert Daniels spoke on behalf of Article 11 and stated that the area is located across from the town hall and extends from Church Street to Route140, Mooney Street. The work will consist of replacing the existing sidewalk. The Highway Department plans to remove and prepare for the laying of the curb and sidewalks and the concrete work will be completed by a contractor.

Robert Daniels motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 11 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 12: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Forty Thousand Dollars (\$40,000.00)** to be added to the Landfill Closure Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established. These funds are being used to deal with the contamination at the landfill and to meet the state regulatory requirements. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Cydney Johnson moved Article 12 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion.

Cydney Johnson proposed to amend the article to read “to raise and appropriate \$30,000.00”. We are looking to decrease the amount by \$10,000.00.

Marc DeCoff seconded the motion

Cydney Johnson stated we currently have 10-12 test wells on site and we are not anticipating the need for any more in the near future. We currently have a balance of \$15,924.00 in this Capital Reserve and felt we could reduce this to \$30,000.00. We will be looking to add the \$10,000.00 to Article 13, which will be explained when the article is reviewed.

Amendment passed.

Cydney Johnson motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 12 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 13: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00)** to be placed in the Benefit Pay Expendable Trust Fund, as previously established. Said funds are recommended by the Town Auditors to be used to pay for benefits accrued by Town Employees and redeemed when they leave employment with the Town of Alton, in accordance with the Town Personnel Policy. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Marc DeCoff moved Article 13 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion.

Marc DeCoff motioned to amend Article 13 to “\$30,000.00”. R. Loring Carr seconded the motion.

Marc DeCoff spoke on behalf of Article 13 and stated currently we have \$7,396.51 and last year we expended out \$20,759.88. We have people that are leaving or retiring this year and it would exhaust that fund.

Raymond Howard asked how many employees were leaving and Marc DeCoff stated 2 that we know of.

Amendment passed.

Marc DeCoff motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 13 and R. Loring Carr seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 14: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000.00)** to be added to the Building and Site Improvement Capital Reserve Fund for the Transfer Station, as previously established, which also includes the EPA storm water management implementation requirements. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

R. Loring Carr moved Article 14 and Robert Daniels seconded the motion.

R. Loring Carr spoke on behalf of Article 14 and stated it is for the future recycling area for the hard plastics, metal baler for the cardboard and storage for the aluminum cans. It is a continuation of our improvement of the dump.

Scott Simonds Solid Waste Director stated it is also to replace the recycling building in the future. The existing building is too small for the equipment and storage and a new one would generate more products and more revenue.

R. Loring Carr motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 15 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 15: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Twenty Seven Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$27,500.00)** to be added to the Milfoil Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established as recommended by the Milfoil Committee. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Robert Daniels moved Article 15 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion.

Robert Daniels spoke on behalf of Article 15 and stated the Alton Milfoil Committee has asked that Warrant Article 15 be placed on the 2014 ballot in the amount of \$27,500.00. It is the same as it was in 2013. Milfoil is a rapidly growing underwater plant found in lakes and other water bodies and is known to disrupt boating and other water activities. Efforts to control milfoil include diver assisted suction harvesting and herbicide treatment. The 2014 plans for milfoil control include treatment in Roberts Cove, Barndoor Island, Parker Marine and recommendations from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services.

Cydney Johnson motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 15 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 16: To see if the Town will vote to establish a Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of maintaining and/or repairing the water bandstand and to raise and appropriate the sum of **Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00)** to be placed into the Fund. This sum (\$20,000.00) to come from the fund balance (surplus) and no amount to be raised from new taxation. Also to vote to appoint the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend from the Water Bandstand Capital Reserve Fund. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Cydney Johnson moved Article 16 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion.

Cydney Johnson spoke on behalf of Article 16 and stated that the water bandstand is only 1 of 2 left in the country. It is a historical landmark. Several years ago we had some volunteers that performed a tremendous amount of work and also Winnepesaukee Marine replaced portions of the cribbing. There is currently a lot of work that needs to be done, including the replacement of the roof and siding and the eaves are currently rotting. This money would go toward preserving this historical landmark and making sure that it is there for years to come. It has become a landmark in the town of Alton and people look forward to seeing it every year. I think it is important that we maintain it and we hope that you vote to pay for it.

Steve Miller stated that even at \$200.00 a square foot couldn't you build a new one for \$20,000.00 and lug it out there.

E. Russell Bailey responded no it would be over \$100,000.00 plus there would be permitting issues. It is built on a rock with special cribbing.

Cydney Johnson motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 16 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 17: To see if the Town will vote to establish a Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of making necessary improvements and /or repairs to the Cemetery Buildings and to raise and appropriate the sum of **Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00)** to be placed into the Fund as recommended by the Cemetery Trustees. Also to vote to appoint the Cemetery Trustees as agents to expend from the Cemetery Building Improvement Capital Reserve Fund. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Marc DeCoff moved Article 17 and R. Loring Carr seconded the motion.

Sean Mann, Cemetery Trustee Chairman, spoke on behalf of Article 17 and stated the current building we have at Riverside is twenty years old and we have to do quite a bit of work on it to patch it up and keep it maintained. Plus the Holbrook site is in disarray. We have had to patch leaks in the roof and the floor. The mortar and the bricks are falling apart.

Marc DeCoff motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 17 and R. Loring Carr seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 18: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000.00)** to be added to the Senior Center Pearson Road Capital Reserve Fund as previously established. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

R. Loring Carr moved Article 18 and Robert Daniels seconded the motion.

R. Loring Carr spoke on behalf of Article 18 and stated currently we have \$29,147.00 in the account and this is for the future 36 x 36 addition. We are estimating we are going to need about \$130,000.00 to finish the project.

Peter Bolster stated he has been privileged when he was on the Select Board to be the liaison on the committee. Phase IV is the 36 x 36 addition which is part of a plan approved by the BOS a number of years ago. We have done this piece by piece and improved it as we have gone along. When the new addition is put on it is going to be a very unique asset to the town of Alton in terms of its size and being able to have private functions there, a community center as well as a senior center. As of now without the \$30,000.00 that we are asking for in 2014, \$75,000 in tax assessment has gone into the building. Town employees have put in about \$35,000.00 worth of work in terms of site preparations and other aspects. \$143,000 has been raised in money. We have received free consultation, for site work and septic and they have done it for nothing. We have the promise from a local contractor to frame the new addition and to roof it at no cost. We will probably have enough to start it, frame it in and enclose it after town meeting if the \$30,000.00 is appropriated.

Robert Longabaugh questioned whether more private donations are needed to complete Phase IV. Philosophically Marybee and I have contributed to it and we are opposed that it is public money. It is a community resource so it should not be necessary for private money to be included for completion.

Marc DeCoff motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 18 and R. Loring Carr seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 19: Shall the Town raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein,

totaling **Six Million Eight Hundred Twelve Thousand Thirty Five Dollars (\$6,812,035.00)**. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be Six Million Seven Hundred Forty Three Thousand Three Hundred Ninety One Dollars (\$6,743,391.00), which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Alton or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. [Appropriation recommended by the Board of Selectmen (4-0) and Budget Committee (4-0-2).]

This article does not include special or individual articles addressed. (A majority vote is required)

Robert Daniels moved Article 19 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion.

R. Loring Carr spoke on behalf of Article 19 and stated it is self-explanatory. The Board presented a budget to the Budget Committee and we amended our number to theirs.

Raymond Howard stated that last year's operating budget was \$1,200,000.00 which means our operating budget is jumping by over \$600,000.00 this year.

R. Loring Carr stated we expended \$6,192,321.00 and \$265,035.00 is the surplus.

Steve Miller asked if the surplus has ever been lower than that over the last few years. There is a consistent significant surplus every year. Where is it generated from and why is there not a tighter budget?

E. Russell Bailey explained that we average around \$250,000.00 between revenue and what we under run on expenses and we have more revenue than projected. When the tax rate is set it is based on projected revenue because there are two months left and that is usually a conservative number because you don't want to over estimate your revenues. This year we are around \$100,000 under when we net everything out. The revenues I won't know for sure until the auditor finishes. It is usually a combination of the two things and it accrues over the years. We have around two million in our account balance now and we are around the 8-9% range. We are supposed to be in a range between 5-15% so we are right in the middle where the DRA likes to see it.

Steve Miller asked instead of having all the warrant articles for various amounts it seems to me that there should be language in the warrant articles that if there is a surplus that the surplus be used to pay for those approved warrant articles instead of us voting extra money and then floating a surplus at the end of the year.

E. Russell Bailey stated it is usually the policy of the Selectmen on how much they want to roll down on the surplus. They want to maintain a certain amount of surplus for the financial integrity of the community. The Board has been using the number of 1.8 million as a benchmark they don't want to go below.

Robert Longabaugh stated what he does not see in the warrant articles and assumed it is being taken care of in the operating budget is police cruisers. Every year we would have a warrant article for a police cruiser and retire a cruiser and it has not happened for about a year now. How are we taking care of the police cruisers?

R. Loring Carr stated this year the Board is going to do a lease program. It will cost \$36,741.00 for four vehicles. We are doing this because of the repairs, as the vehicles get older they climb terribly. We think we will save a lot of money on repairs on the vehicles as they will be under warranty.

Raymond Howard stated in another four years we will be doing this again but it will be part of the budget. In 2012 we took \$32,000.00 in asset forfeitures into a police cruiser article and we purchased a cruiser in 2012. This year we took \$49,000.00 in asset forfeitures and left over money in the police budget and bought cameras and computers that the town's people voted down. R. Loring Carr stated they voted down

a police cruiser with a camera in it. Raymond Howard wanted to know why weren't the asset forfeitures used to buy a cruiser.

Ruth Messier spoke and stated if you look at the vote from the Budget Committee on the town budget you will see I voted against it and I want to explain why. The Police Department Budget and what they are planning on doing is a great idea and I don't dispute it at all. It is the way to go. I do object to the voters not knowing in advance that this was going to be put into the budget instead of a special warrant article. I know that the voters voted down the cruiser time and time again. I do think we need those vehicles. I object to taking it out of the hands of the voters but it is a needed item and the plans they have are great. I just wish the voters had some forewarning.

Barbara Howard stated our Police Department has grown every year. I don't think for a town of our size it warrants that level of financial commitment for our safety and maybe we ought to do a hard analysis or assessment. Do we ever look at any one of our departments and do a critical analysis of the functioning and if we are operating at the best that we can, best practices, most frugal for the taxpayers and asked does that ever get done.

Cydney Johnson responded that two years ago the town hired MRI, the Municipal Resources Inc. and they did a full audit on the Police Department. The audit came back showing that for the size of the town, the population and everything that goes into keeping a town safe warranted the number of officers that we currently have and even noted that we may be short a couple of full time officers. We have chosen to shore that up with a couple of part time officers. We had an outside firm that came in and did an independent study.

Cydney Johnson motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 19 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 20: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Two Hundred Eleven Thousand Eight Hundred Fifty Six Dollars (\$211,856.00)** and to authorize the withdrawal of the \$211,856.00 from the Ambulance Operation Fund as previously established under RSA 31: 95c for the purpose of funding the ambulance personnel wages, ambulance supplies & equipment, training, and vehicle fuel/maintenance. This appropriation is covered by the revenue from the ambulance insurance payments and there will be no funds raised from general taxation. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Cydney Johnson moved Article 20 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion.

Marc DeCoff spoke on behalf of Article 20 and stated it is usually between \$130,000 and \$140,000 a year. The Chief came to the Selectmen and our volunteers do an outstanding job but it is harder to get more volunteers in the department. We used to keep per diem for the summer only and the Chief has now asked to keep it year round. That is why there is an increase in the ambulance fund. The ambulance fund currently has a balance of \$300,000.00 and usually we take in revenues of around \$140,000.00 to \$150,000.00. Eventually the fund is going to run out. We are trying to ease into it to see what the best fix is for the taxpayers.

Marc DeCoff motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 20 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

Moderator Mark Northbridge called for a break at 9:15pm.

Moderator Mark Northbridge resumed the Deliberative Session at 9:25pm.

ARTICLE 21: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00)** to be added to the Alton Fire Station Capital Reserve Fund as previously established.

[Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Marc DeCoff moved Article 21 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion.

Marc DeCoff spoke on behalf of Article 21 and stated the Fire Department Improvements balance is \$237,526.21. This is to be added to increase the line for future expansion.

Marc DeCoff motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 21 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 22: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00)** to be added to the Alton Fire Equipment Capital Reserve Fund as previously established. This capital reserve was established to repair/replace the fire vehicles; _ engine number 5 which was built in 1975 is 38 years old. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

R. Loring Carr moved Article 22 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion.

R. Loring Carr spoke on behalf of Article 22 and stated we currently have \$147,202.00 in the account. We have one truck that is over 38 years old and we have a ladder truck that is quite old. The ladder has some problems and we have an estimate of \$55,000.00-\$60,000.00 to fix the ladder. These are very high cost items.

R. Loring Carr motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 22 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 23: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00)** for the purpose of repairing/maintaining the West Alton Fire Station. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until completed or by December 31st 2015. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Robert Daniels moved Article 23 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion.

Robert Daniels spoke on behalf of Article 23 and stated the article is for the repair and maintenance of the West Alton Fire Station. The building is in need of repair consisting of new overhead doors, furnace, windows, insulation in the attic and to repair the ceiling in the kitchen due to water leaks, replace paneling on walls also due to water leaks, re-sheet rock the bathroom, remove the shower stall and install a petition wall to separate the rear bed.

Steve Miller asked what is the need for Article 21 and 23 being separate articles.

E. Russell Bailey stated that Article 23 is separate because it is a leased building and not a town building. Part of the lease agreement is that we maintain it.

Steve Miller stated all the votes he sees are 4-0, who wasn't present to vote. R. Loring Carr responded Mr. Daniels. S. Miller asked Mr. Daniels if he would have voted for all of the warrant articles and Robert Daniels responded he would have voted yes on this one. Steve Miller continued and asked Robert Daniels if he would have voted for the operating budget and Robert Daniels responded no. S. Miller asked Robert Daniels if there were other articles that he would not have voted for. Robert Daniels responded that he would have to go through them. Steve Miller stated for the record he would like to know which articles he would have voted for. Mark Northridge interjected and stated that it does not tie into this warrant article.

Cydney Johnson motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 23 and was seconded by Marc DeCoff. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 24: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00)** to be added to the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund as previously established. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Cydney Johnson moved Article 24 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion.

Cydney Johnson asked the Road Agent, Ken Roberts to speak on behalf of Article 24. Ken Roberts stated we have run the decaying fleet into the ground. It is time to start bringing it back up. We have converted hours to miles as set up as a standard. Ken Roberts gave a breakdown of the miles per equipment. No major maintenance has been done on these except for the loader. If we don't start putting money into the Capital Reserve when these things go down, they run from \$168,000.00 to \$178,000.00 as of today, for replacement. We do not have that in the Capital Reserve. The amount in the capital reserve currently is \$66,361.21. The \$100,000.00 is really essential in the Capital Reserve next year.

Cydney Johnson motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 24 and R. Loring Carr seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 25: To see if the Town will vote to establish a Capital Reserve fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of covering unanticipated and emergency maintenance and/or repairs of all Town Department vehicles and equipment and to raise and appropriate the sum of **Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000.00)** to be placed into the Fund. This sum (\$30,000.00) to come from fund balance (surplus) and no amount to be raised from new taxation. Also to vote to appoint the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend from the Town Equipment Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Marc DeCoff moved Article 25 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion.

Marc DeCoff spoke on behalf of Article 25 and stated this is a new article the Selectmen decided to bring forward. This is just to have for emergency expenses.

Ken Roberts added that the loader expenses last year were \$46,000.00 to keep it running and a new one is about \$160,000.00. It is a good investment to keep it another few years.

S. Miller stated he agrees with everything Ken Roberts said on Article 25 and asked why Article 24 wasn't done the same way.

Ken Roberts responded that one is about maintenance of equipment the other is about purchasing equipment.

Marc DeCoff motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 25 and R. Loring Carr seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 26: To see if the Town will vote to establish a Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of making necessary improvements and /or repairs to the Highway Buildings and to raise and appropriate the sum of **Forty Thousand Dollars (\$40,000.00)** to be placed into the Fund. This sum (\$40,000.00) to come from fund balance (surplus) and no amount to be raised from new taxation. Also to vote to appoint the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend from the Highway Building Improvement Capital Reserve Fund. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

R. Loring Carr moved Article 26 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion.

R. Loring Carr spoke on behalf of Article 26 and stated this is for a roof leak on the Highway building. We have a quote for \$48,000.00 for roof coating and it does not include the fiberglass insulation.

R. Loring Carr motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 26 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 27: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Seven Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$750,000.00)** to be added to the Highway Reconstruction Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established. Said amount is partially offset by revenues from the Highway Block Grant Fund estimated to be \$161,335.15. This is an annual appropriation that provides for the reconstruction of existing roadways. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is require)

Robert Daniels moved Article 27 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion.

Ken Roberts spoke on behalf of Article 27 and stated this was established a few years ago. We do about 90% of our own construction. We reduced engineering, which used to cost us \$130,000.00 a mile and we put it back into our roads. If this is appropriated; our meeting will be with the BOS on what we propose to do and what we will add to that. In 2010 \$747,000.00 for road reconstruction; 2012 \$1,372,000.00 for road reconstruction; 2011 \$528,000.00 and 2013 \$545,000.00. This year you will see a lot of shims and overlays. Monument Square is a big project we have coming up and will include all of the sidewalks and parking in the area.

Cydney Johnson motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 27 and R. Loring Carr seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 28: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00)** to be added to the Library Building Improvement/Repair Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established as recommended by the Library Trustees. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is require)

Cydney Johnson moved Article 28 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion.

R. Loring Carr requested that Holly Brown, Library Director speak on behalf of Article 28.

Holly Brown talked about the work that was completed over the years. In the spring there will be some painting that will be completed on the front of the building. This will leave us with a balance of \$1,546.00. There is quite a lot of wood rot in the back of the building. A high estimate is \$6,000.00 to fix the wood rot and to paint the woodwork would be another \$4,000.00. The library concrete steps are deteriorating and the metal treads are loosening and pulling away and this is a safety issue.

Cydney Johnson motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 28 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 29: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Eight Thousand Four Hundred Fifty Six Dollars (\$8,456.00)** for the purpose of supporting the Community Action Program which provides supplemental food, fuel, utility, transportation, meals on wheels, weatherization assistance and Women, Infants & Children food assistance program (WIC). This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until completed or by December 31st 2014. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Marc DeCoff moved Article 29 and R. Loring Carr seconded the motion.

Steve Miller requested a point of order and asked if it would be possible to vote on Articles 29 through 39 in total.

Mark Northridge responded that it has been discussed with the Selectmen and he would like to see them all in one article. I have been told by a lot of the people that they want to talk about individual agencies. So the answer is no.

Marc DeCoff motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 29 and r. Loring Carr seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 30: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Twelve Thousand Dollars (\$12,000.00)** for the purpose of supporting the Central New Hampshire VNA & Hospice which is a non-profit agency that provides health care, hospice care and maternal child health services. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until completed or by December 31st 2014. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

R. Loring Carr moved Article 30 and Robert Daniels seconded the motion.

Sylvia Countway spoke on behalf of Article 30 and stated she would like to urge everyone to vote in favor of this article. The \$12,000.00 we are requesting is the same amount we have requested for the past two years. Last year we had 3,416 visits to patients in the town of Alton and that represented 192 patients.

R. Loring Carr motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 30 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 31: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00)** for the purpose of supporting the American Red Cross which provides disaster relief, shelters, basic household necessities and counseling. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until completed or by December 31st 2014. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (3-0) and the Budget Committee (5-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Cydney Johnson moved Article 31 and R. Loring Carr seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on this article.

Cydney Johnson motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 31 and R. Loring Carr seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 32: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00)** for the purpose of supporting the Alton Community Services which provides a food pantry and assistance programs for fuel, prescriptions, utilities and housing in close coordination with the Alton Welfare Department. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until completed or by December 31st 2014. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Cydney Johnson moved Article 32 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on this article.

Cydney Johnson motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 32 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 33: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Three Hundred Thirty Dollars (\$330.00)** for the purpose of supporting the Medication Bridge Prescription Program which is a not-for-profit volunteer program that provides assistance to residents in need of prescriptions in coordination with the Alton Welfare Department. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until completed or by December 31st 2014. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (3-0) and by the Budget Committee (5-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Marc DeCoff moved Article 33 and R. Loring Carr seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on this article.

R. Loring Carr motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 33 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 34: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **One Thousand Five Hundred Thirty Dollars (\$1,530.00)** for the purpose of supporting New Beginnings which provides 24 hour crisis support for domestic/sexual assault victims, operates a shelter and provides counseling. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until completed or by December 31st 2014. [Appropriation is recommended by the Selectmen (3-0) and by the Budget Committee (5-0-1)] (A majority vote is required)

R. Loring Carr moved Article 34 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on this article.

R. Loring Carr motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 34 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 35: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Twelve Thousand One Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$12,150.00)** for the purpose of supporting Genesis which provides mental health care to area residents, services for children, elders, along with other emergency services. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until completed or by December 31st 2014. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (3-0) and by the Budget Committee (5-0-1)] (A majority vote is required)

R. Loring Carr moved Article 35 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion.

Cydney Johnson spoke on behalf of Article 35 not as a member of the BOS. For fiscal year 2012 to 2013 there was a 17% increase of services provided to the residents of Alton by Genesis. In fiscal year 2013 ninety people received services, forty-two of these were from ages 0 – 17, forty-five were ages 18 to 61 and there were three people over the age of 62. In 2012 charity care funded \$5,015.00 and there was a 118% increase in 2013. The charity care from Genesis was \$10,951.00. Genesis has a presence one day a week in the ACS and one day a week at the PMHS. The amount of \$12,150 requested is represented of actual services provided and not reimbursed to Genesis.

Cydney Johnson motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 35 and R. Loring Carr seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 36: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00)** for the purpose of supporting Caregivers Transportation which provides free transportation to handicapped, elderly and other residents needing assistance with all these services provided by volunteers. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until completed or

by December 31st 2014. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

R. Loring Carr moved Article 36 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion.

Marybee Longabaugh spoke on behalf of Article 36 and stated last year through November the total individual trips was 1,411. 444 of those were reimbursed and it was a total of 60,293 miles. This is an all-volunteer program. The \$2,000.00 they are asking for is to help them with the phone service they have. The Alton people who drive, only drive Alton residents and are never asked to drive anyone else.

Cydney Johnson motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 36 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 37: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00)** for the purpose of supporting CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) which provides advocacy for abused and neglected children. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until completed or by December 31st 2014. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Marc DeCoff moved Article 37 and R. Loring Carr seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on this article.

Marc DeCoff motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 37 and R. Loring Carr seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 38: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Two Thousand Four Hundred Dollars (\$2,400.00)** for the purpose of supporting Appalachian Mountain Teen Project. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until completed or by December 31st 2014. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Cydney Johnson moved Article 38 and R. Loring Carr seconded the motion.

Ray Conner of the Appalachian Mountain Teen Project spoke on behalf of Article 38 and stated we have worked with the Alton youth for a very long time. We are very thankful for Alton's continued support of our programming. We work with youth which at least 75% receive free or reduced lunch which creates challenging life circumstances. We create an opportunity to connect with each other and go on outdoor and service learning trips to build their confidence.

R. Loring Carr motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 38 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 39: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500.00)** for the purpose of supporting Child & Family Services. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until completed or by December 31st 2014. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Robert Daniels moved Article 39 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on this article.

Cydney Johnson motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 39 and R. Loring Carr seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 40: To see if the Town will vote to discontinue the portion of Stockbridge Corner Road which is described as a small spur access road off the main road leading to Route 28 near the intersection of the two roads. This to be effective upon completion of the intersection upgrades being done by NH DOT which is scheduled to be completed by September 2014.

Cydney Johnson moved Article 40 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion.

Cydney Johnson spoke on behalf of Article 40 and stated this portion of the road will be closed as part of the Route 28 widening project. If we choose to continue use of this then the town would be required to essentially maintain a road that leads to only one driveway. We are asking for support in discontinuing that portion.

Robert Longabaugh asked what would happen to the discontinued portion.

E. Russell Bailey responded that it would go back to the abutting property owner.

Cydney Johnson motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 40 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 41: We the undersigned registered voters of the Town of Alton request you to insert the warrant for the 2014 Town Meeting, the following article:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$500 to purchase audio recording devices for the purpose of recording the audio of all Town meetings of a public body as defined in RSA 91-A:2(I) "a meeting means the convening of a quorum of the membership of a public body". The audio recording will also serve as a backup to any video recordings. The recordings are to be easily accessible for review by the public. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-0) and by the Budget Committee (5-0-2)] (A majority vote is required)

Marc DeCoff moved Article 41 and R. Loring Carr seconded the motion.

Andy McLeod stated as a Budget Committee member he voted against it. This is one of the petition articles that nobody came and described what was going on. My assumption was that they wanted to set up another audio/visual system in the Heike Room for multiple meetings going on in town hall. To do that properly you need a true video system and \$500.00 will not cover it.

A. McLeod proposed to amend Article 41 to \$2,500.00. Lawrence Tilley seconded the motion.

Andy McLeod continued that it states to act as a back up. He spoke about the audio problems in the Heike Room. We would need to have a technical person to go in there and figure it out. I think \$2,500.00 would cover it. It is possible it could be \$3,500.00 but I am putting forth \$2,500.00.

Robert Longabaugh stated that the Heike room is equipped to take video but there is no separate audio recording. Right now the Heike room can do video.

Andy McLeod stated it is true there is something down there.

Steve Miller believes \$1,500.00 would more than cover it.

Amendment failed.

Marc DeCoff motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 41 and R. Loring Carr seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 42: We the undersigned registered voters of the Town of Alton request you to insert the warrant for the 2014 Town Meeting, the following article:

To see if the Town will vote to not pay the estimated membership fees of \$7000 to be a member of the Lakes Region Planning Commission. [The Selectmen made no recommendation (2-2) and not recommended by the Budget Committee (5-0-2)] (A majority vote is required)

R. Loring Carr moved Article 42 and Robert Daniels seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on this article.

R. Loring Carr motioned to restrict reconsideration of Article 42 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 43: We the undersigned registered voters of the Town of Alton request you to insert the warrant for the 2014 Town Meeting, the following article:

To see if the Town will vote to remove the current employment position of Alton Town Planner with a 2012 actual salary of \$64,040 per year plus benefits. [Article not recommended by the Selectmen (3-1) and not recommended by the Budget Committee (5-0-2)] (A majority vote is required)

Robert Daniels moved Article 43 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion.

R. Loring Carr made a motion to amend Article 43 to add “research shows hiring a consultant to fulfill these duties will cost between \$75.00 - \$100.00 per hour plus mileage for an approximate cost of \$120,120 (based on \$87.50 per hour) plus mileage.”

Marc DeCoff seconded the amendment.

R. Loring Carr stated he based the information on an interim planner that we had in 2010 and his rate at the time was \$75.00. I have adjusted for inflation and came up with \$87.50. The interim planner’s cost between August and December of 2010 was \$30,821.00. That would come out to \$73,970.00 and adjusted for inflation it comes to \$88,700.00 and therefore, it would clarify how much it would cost for a consultant.

Barbara Howard spoke against the amendment and continued the statement you are adding to the article is based on one bit of information. Did anyone research what is currently going on and what the rates are?

R. Loring Carr responded that he is speaking on this as a member of the public. He stated that is the only data that he has and it was presented at the Budget Committee and nobody showed up. We have not had any input, nobody stood up and said what was behind all this and I did some research and this is what I came up with. If someone had stated what their thoughts were behind this I think it would help us all out.

Robert Longabaugh added people signed the petition and we would like to hear from one of them as to why we shouldn’t pass this amendment. The Tea Party view is smaller government is better, but it is going to end up costing us more and asked for one of the petitioners to speak on why we should be against this amendment.

Raymond Howard was wondering if all of the figures are accurate. The Town Planner’s budget is around \$90,000.00 with benefits, plus staff and continued I have nothing against the town planner as I work with him as a member of the Planning Board, it is about the money. We need to roll back some of the expanding costs in this town. This year if all of the articles pass we are going to be adding over \$525,000.00 to our warrants.

Steve Miller asked the BOS what is the total cost of the Planning Department. The Planner, plus staff, plus benefits vs. the cost of using outside sourcing and do we need a part time planner to sign off or to do anything in house or could that be done by some other person in Town Hall like the Assessor?

R. Loring Carr responded that the Planning Department bottom line is \$115,267.00. Steve Miller asked so would you be replacing \$120,000.00 with \$150,000.00? R. Loring Carr stated \$115,000. Steve Miller asked if it would be a wash within \$5,000.00. R. Loring Carr stated he researched what it was in 2010. Steve Miller continued that with inflation it would be around \$120,000.00. R. Loring Carr agreed. Steve Miller asked besides the cost factors are there any qualitative reasons we should have an in house planner vs. outsourcing it.

R. Loring Carr referred to David Collier Planning Board Chairman and asked him to come down and speak on the issue.

David Collier stated that there is quite a benefit to having a Planner on staff. One is to help guide the staff with regulations, the statutes and subdivision regulations and also to help applicants with applications with respect to the regulations to make sure everything is met. If we were outsourcing it takes time and it delays applications. Volunteers on the Planning Board would be there even longer. We have seen that happen with delays in the planning process with past situations. It would take longer. Outsourcing as far as a land surveyor, which is what I do, it helps to have the Planner in house. It is faster, easier and it helps to have someone who knows the rules and regulations of the town.

Steve Miller stated for a net difference, for something less than \$20,000.00 or whatever it is it makes a lot of sense to have an in house planner who cares about the Community. Steve Miller continued I am also a member of Zoning Board and when you have an inefficient planning Department it slows up everything. Sometimes it puts the Zoning Board almost to a stop. I think it is critical to have somebody in the Planning Department who cares about managing Alton's affairs.

Ken Roberts of the Alton Highway Department commented that he is a little confused about something. He stated that he thought we were talking about the Town Planner's job only and what you have stated is the entire budget for the department. We still have to keep staff we can't count that money as part of what we are discussing. We really need to talk about the Planner itself and asked if he was looking at it correctly. R. Loring Carr stated Steve Miller asked a question that he did not have the numbers for and provided the bottom line numbers. Ken Roberts continued that is the number for the entire staff and you are not going to get rid of the entire department you will still need staff to work

R. Loring Carr responded that he does not have the numbers and would have to figure them out. He would like to add that back in 2010 when we had a lot more planning issues come up we had a technical person in that area, when we had less work, the Board eliminated that position and gave the secretary more hours. We have tried to address Mr. Howard's concerns about there being less sub-divisions going on and we feel right now is a good time to catch up on our zoning issues that the Planning Board is currently working on.

Felice Carr stated that we should keep the amendment in there with the amount and as a voter if I am voting on it I would like to know if we have the position deleted that it would cost the additional amount in there. It would give me a better point of knowledge to find out if I would rather have it in or not.

Earl Bagley, Chairman of the Conservation Commission, stated that a lot of times we go out and find violations on projects. We are able to go in and talk to Ken and he can pull the plan up and determine what people are supposed to be doing and what they are not supposed to be doing. I was on the Planning Board a long time ago and we had planners coming and going and an interim planner in between and it never worked. A new person comes in and asks where is this street, where is that street, he has no idea about the town what so ever. We have somebody and I think we should keep him.

Amendment passed

Peter Bolster spoke and he believes the amendment helps the voters see from a financial point of view that it won't save us any money. He further spoke about the benefits of a full time Planner and how competent our current planner is.

Representative Jane Cormier spoke and stated the warrant article amendment is fine but it really should say "may" cost. We are talking about numbers that have not been thoroughly vetted. It has been said a lot on the record. "May" cost is a huge difference between "will" cost. We don't really know and at this point it is a guesstimate.

Steve Miller stated as an observation we have towns that border us that are getting rid of fire chiefs, police chiefs, they are getting rid of all different town services and the bottom line is nobody wants to move into those towns that are not run professionally. I don't want to see this town have the reputation that we are the lowest cost provider of services.

Raymond Howard stated for a point of order and asked if it was speaking to the amendment.

Mark Northridge stated yes he is speaking to the amendment, he is talking about reducing and you even mentioned the reduced budget and he is responding to it.

Robert Daniels proposed to amend the article to reflect "the 2014 budgeted salary with benefits of the Town Planner which is \$88,837.00."

He explained people may want to know that as the amendment says the 2012 salary of \$64,040.00.

Mark Northridge asked if the rest of the wording would remain the same and just the dollar amount would change. Robert Daniels responded yes keep the rest of it the same.

Mark Northridge read the proposed amendment to Article 43 is to change the section "To see if the Town will vote to remove the current employment position of the Alton Town Planner with a 2014 actual salary of \$88,837.00 per year plus benefits."

A point of order was called to clarify that it should state with benefits.

There was a discussion on how the wording should appear and Mark Northridge stated it was written as plus benefits.

Mark Northridge again read the amendment to all in attendance.

"To vote to see if the town will vote to remove the current employment position of the Alton Town Planner with a 2014 actual salary of \$88,837.00 per year including benefits."

The article was previously amended to add "research shows hiring a consultant to fulfill these duties will cost between \$75.00 - \$100.00 per hour plus mileage for an approximate cost of \$120,120.00 (based on \$87.50 per hour) plus mileage."

Jane Cormier asked for a point of order and asked if it was possible to add the word "may" and not "will" cost. Do we have to do a separate motion to add that word in there?

Mark Northridge stated in speaking with the Town attorney we are starting to get to a point where we are fooling with the intent of the people who signed the petition warrant article. They did not say "may".

Barbara Howard spoke and stated R. Loring Carr said it will cost and that it is based on 2010 numbers that he projected with the increase to 2014. He has put out numbers that are not exact. Can we add the word "may" now or not?

Mark Northbridge stated no and he is willing to put it in for information for the voters but he does not want to start fooling with the intent of the people that put this in.

Jane Cormier called for a point of order and that we are discussing the amendment and my question before was we had on record two or three times spoken that the numbers were not solid and that rather than say in the amendment "it will cost" my suggestion is "it may cost X". Those numbers are not verified. "Will" would mean that those are the numbers.

Mark Northridge stated he is not going to change the wording that the petitioners put in there.

Jane Cormier stated it is not the petition it is the amendment.

Mark Northridge stated he needs to first see if there is a second.

Robert Longabaugh seconded the motion.

Mark Northridge stated he is going to leave it as it is worded by the people and will allow the dollar amount to be changed. I think the point of the group was to put an updated number in there just like I allowed the Selectmen to put in what they thought would replace it.

R. Loring Carr stated he did that as an individual.

Barbara Howard stated we have an individual with unverified numbers who made a motion and it passed. She asked if she could make a motion to change it and put the word "may" in. Mark Northridge stated he thought the "may" was regarding the \$64,000.00. He further stated he would allow a motion, but a motion can't be made until we take care of the motion that is already out there.

A question was asked if the article could be removed from the warrant and Mark Northridge responded no.

Amendment failed.

Cydney Johnson motioned to restrict reconsideration of Article 43 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 44: We the undersigned registered voters of the Town of Alton request you to insert the warrant for the 2014 Town Meeting, the following article:

To see if the Town will vote to remove the current employment position of Alton Town Assessor with a 2012 actual salary of \$68,599 per year plus benefits. [Article not recommended by the Selectmen (3-1) and not recommended by the Budget Committee (5-0-2)] (A majority vote is required)

Cydney Johnson moved Article 44 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion.

Cydney Johnson spoke on behalf of Article 44 and spoke as a member of the public and not a member of the Board of Selectmen.

Cydney Johnson motioned to amend Article 44 and add "The Town of Wolfeboro currently contracts for these services at a cost of \$95,000.00 per year plus an additional \$125,000.00 for re-evaluation every five years for a total budgeted amount of \$120,000.00 annually."

R. Loring Carr seconded the motion

R. Loring Carr spoke in favor of the amendment and stated these numbers were acquired from the consultant currently employed by Wolfeboro who does their assessing. Other towns that show that it ends up costing the town more are Meredith, Gilford, and Moultonboro. All come in at an average of \$141,800.00 per year. I don't think people realize our assessor is also doing our re-evaluation that is required every 5 years. According to the Uniforms Standards of the Professional Appraisal Practice that was sent to us from the state, Alton should be within 10% of the market value. That is between 90% and 110%. Our Medium ratio is 99.2%. We also have a coefficient of dispersion to be 15 or less, Alton's is three. This shows we are getting good value for our dollar. If it passes it will end up costing the town more money.

Raymond Howard stated we are not comparing apples to apples. Wolfeboro has an operating budget of about fifteen million and they have a much more complex assessing than we do in Alton, on a much grander scale. A couple of years ago we had to pay about \$40,000.00 to straighten out our assessing. It is nothing personal it is about the money. We are trying to find ways in these hard economic times to draw down some of the cost to the taxpayers.

Robert Longabaugh stated regardless of Wolfeboro I'm sure our Town Administrator must have figured out what would it cost the Town to do the assessing by a contractor or somebody else.

E. Russell Bailey responded we have not done a detailed analysis just a review of other towns. It would definitely be in the range of 140 or even higher because we go out to bid especially when you consider all of the activity of the re-evaluation. It isn't just one activity.

Cydney Johnson spoke on Raymond Howard's comment of Wolfeboro being a more complex town. The Town of Alton currently has 5,821 parcels and the town of Wolfeboro has 5,700. In addition to that Meredith has 5,700 parcels and they pay \$81,744.00 plus benefits. Moultonboro has 7,000 parcels and they pay \$166,500.00 a year. Center Harbor has 1,030 parcels and they pay \$84,000.00 per year.

Raymond Howard stated we are not calculating in the subcontractor being paid \$20,000-\$30,000 a year that we have been paying for the re-evaluation on top of the salary.

Cydney Johnson spoke and read into the record the current duties of the Town Assessor.

Felice Carr stated she is in favor of keeping the amendment. She feels it is important voters know what they are going to lose in services and what it may cost.

Roger Nelson asked what the benefits are costing us in addition to the salary. Robert Daniels responded that the 2014 budgeted salary including benefits is \$109,700. Roger Nelson continued and stated that makes a big difference if you are saying it is \$140,000.00 in Wolfeboro and \$109,000.00 here.

Jane Cormier wanted to point out that not all towns have full time assessors. There are towns that have an assessing technician. Alton has a population of 5,200 people with about 5,800 parcels for taxation. The town of Wakefield is similar to Alton, population of 5,100, with 5,800 parcels and their assessing is much lower at 127 compared to Alton's at 181,000. We spend about 42% more. Barnstead, Loudon, and Hopkinton have no assessor positions. Cities like Franklin do not have a full time assessor. Although people can take the side that we need to have all of these full time positions funded, there are other communities that do fine with less and that should be noted.

R. Loring Carr stated it is important that people realize that by state law every five years we have to have a re-assessment. The assessing technicians can't do that. Our Assessor is doing that and it saves the costs. That is why when we talked about this Wolfeboro also has to add in \$25,000.00 per year, because every five years they are spending \$125,000.00 for re-assessment.

Amendment passed.

Robert Daniels stated Wolfeboro has a town budget of over \$15,000,000.00, twice the budget of Alton.

Robert Daniels would like to amend the wording to add after 2012 salary of the Town Assessor as \$68,599.00 per year plus benefits and add “and a 2014 budgeted salary including benefits of \$109,700.00.”

Raymond Howard seconded the motion.

Amendment failed.

Raymond Howard stated that it is pretty bad that we can't put the actual amount into the article, the real numbers.

Robert Longabaugh would like to speak against Article 44. I am a taxpayer and I don't mind paying for town services.

R. Loring Carr would like to add that the article was presented at the Budget Committee public meeting and nobody showed up to explain it. I feel when someone starts a petition article, as I have in the past, it is your obligation to explain it to the Budget Committee and the legislative Board and that was not done. No one talked to the Assessor about what his duties were. What we are trying to get across is that this is going to cost more money. The cost is the whole issue here.

Jane Cormier speaking as a citizen and tax payer of Alton stated she takes note with what Loring said and that sometimes when you can't get to the other meetings that doesn't mean that you don't care or that you somehow misplaced the process. We are here tonight to address the very things we are talking about and to somehow have this facetious argument that we weren't there before so what we say tonight doesn't count. It is simply not what public officials are supposed to do. We are supposed to be here tonight to do this work that we are doing and that is as important as any prior meeting that we might be at. I want to put out there that many of the issues we had in the past between citizens and servants here in Alton has been because there has been a lack of clarity on the record and that has caused most of the problems. These actual numbers should be given to the people, not anything less. They deserve that and if your argument is that we need that position then that is fine. It is a good argument. But the truth should be 100% as we know it to be on these warrant articles that our citizens vote on.

Ruth Messier has listened to everything and agrees with what Loring said that when the Budget Committee got these petition articles we really questioned what the people had in mind that were submitting them. It would have been a big help to everybody had they been at that meeting as well as this meeting. We could have then been looking at some of the figures that we are not talking about but we weren't aware of what the actual reason was behind the petition.

Robert Longabaugh commented that smaller government sounds wonderful but to cost us more money does not make sense.

Marc DeCoff motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 44 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 45: To see if the town is in favor of having the office of town clerk combined with the office of the tax collector, thereby creating a new office of town clerk-tax collector to be held by one individual. If a majority of those persons voting on the question vote in favor of creating the combined office of town clerk-tax collector, at the next annual meeting in 2015, occurring after the vote of approval of this article, the town shall choose, by ballot, one individual as town clerk-tax collector, and such individual shall serve for a term of 3 years. The term of any individual then in office as town clerk or tax collector shall

cease and the newly elected town clerk-tax collector shall take office after the March 2015 town meeting. [Article recommended by Selectmen (4-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Marc DeCoff moved Article 45 and R. Loring Carr seconded the motion.

Marc DeCoff spoke on behalf of Article 45 and stated the time has come where we have the opportunity to combine these two positions with the Tax Collector retiring. The department is now \$70,705.00. By combining the two we will be able to reduce the budget by putting in a part time person to help out with the tax collecting.

Steve Miller stated we have the finest Town Clerk and finest Tax Collector, but believes that it makes sense to combine the position. He would like to see if it is possible to make it an appointed position by the Town Administrator just like most any other Department Manager.

E. Russell Bailey stated that no it has to be elected.

Andy McLeod stated to his knowledge there are three full time people and one part timer. It is your intention to have one full time manager and how many assistants?

E. Russell Bailey responded that it would be one full time elected official, one full time deputy and one part time clerk.

Andy McLeod stated you think you can do the job with one less full time person.

E. Russell Bailey stated yes with the efficiencies of the computerized system and the other improvements that have been made.

R. Loring Carr motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 45 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 46: To hear any reports of any committee, board, trustees, commissions, officials, agents or concerned voters and to vote to accept the same. Furthermore, to conduct any other business that may legally come before said meeting.

Ruth Messier addressed the audience and stated I just have to say congratulations to everybody with all the articles that we moved and it is only quarter past 10:00 Congratulations everybody.

Andy McLeod stated that he would like to bring everyone's attention to Elizabeth Dominick. She volunteered and came forth to fill a position on the Budget Committee for the year. She is done with her job as of a minute or two from now and I would like to give her a round of applause.

Mark Northridge stated as moderator he would like to thank all of the people that participated this evening and the volunteers, Sylvia Countway and Robin Lane, School Moderator. It was a very pleasant meeting.

Marc DeCoff made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Elizabeth Dominick seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 10:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Hawksley
Recording Secretary