

**TOWN OF ALTON
DELIBERATIVE SESSION
FEBRUARY 3, 2016
PROSPECT MOUNTAIN HIGH SCHOOL**

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

Warrant Articles 1, which pertains to who is running for office and Zoning Articles 2 through 6 which have already been through the hearing process cannot be amended and there will be no discussion.

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

Cydney Johnson introduced the members representing the Town of Alton.

Lisa Noyes, Town Clerk
James Sessler, Town Attorney
Elizabeth Dionne, Town Administrator
Cydney Johnson, Chairwoman
Lou LaCourse, Vice Chairman
Virgil Macdonald, Chairman
Philip V. Wittmann, Selectman
Marc DeCoff, Selectman
Peggy Hawksley, Recording Secretary
E. Russell Bailey, Town Administrator

Budget Committee Chairman Andy McLeod introduced the members representing the Alton Budget Committee.

Andy McLeod, Chairman
Roger Nelson, Vice Chairman
Steve Miller, School Board Representative
John Markland, Member
Terence O'Rourke, Member
David Hershey, Member, Absent

Mark Northridge read the Moderator's Rules into the record.

Mark Northridge called upon Cydney Johnson, Chairwoman of the Board of Selectmen, to deliver the State of the Town message.

Cydney Johnson provided an overview of accomplishments, achieved goals and objectives. She noted that four long term employees have decided to retire, Ken McWilliams, Town Planner and his assistant Randy Sanborn; Larry Nolan from Parks and Recreation; and Scott Williams retired after many years as the Alton Fire Chief. At the beginning of 2016 Town Administrator, Russell Bailey will be retiring after 13 years of service and will be greatly missed. Cydney Johnson praised Russell Bailey for his attributes and all that he has brought to the Town of Alton stating he will be missed.

Cydney Johnson continued and stated with change comes opportunity. We have successfully hired Nicole Strong as the new town planner and Elizabeth Dionne as the new Town Administrator and we welcome both of them. Also recognized was the passing of Alton residents Paul Richardson and Shirley Lane who made the Town a better place through their volunteerism. Paul Richardson was a dedicated member of the Milfoil Committee and an active member of the Beach Committee. Shirley Lane gave countless hours of her time to the community while serving as Treasurer of the American Legion and school in addition to serving as a Cemetery Trustee and a Library Trustee. Their thoughtfulness and love of community will be missed.

Bob Longabaugh called for a point of order regarding a notice that was provided that states Fact or Fiction. Paul White stated he is the author.

Moderator Mark Northridge informed all in attendance that you are hereby notified to meet at the Prospect Mountain High School on Wednesday, the third (3rd) day of February in the year Two Thousand and Sixteen (2016), 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 8, 2016 at the Prospect Mountain High School from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm.

WARRANT ARTICLES

Alton resident Paul White motioned to move Article 42 to an earlier position on the list of Warrant Articles in order to better understand the process that is required in applying this article and was seconded by Marc DeCoff.

Motion passed with a favorable vote.

Steve Miller requested a point of order and requested a count of registered voters and non-registered voters. The count reported is 59 registered voters and 8 non-registered voters.

ARTICLE 42: We, the following duly registered voters in the Town of Alton, do hereby respectfully submit the following article to be placed on the warrant for the 2016 annual meeting. "Shall we discontinue the Water Commissioners as established under RSA 38:18 and delegate the construction, management, control and direction of the water department to the Board of Selectmen? If approved, to be effective 90 days following the date of the 2016 annual meeting." (A majority vote is required)

Lou LaCourse moved Article 42 and Steve Miller seconded the motion.

Steve Miller spoke on behalf of the article. He informed those in attendance that until recently he was a Water Commissioner and resigned a week ago. He stated he believes that there are serious issues in the Water Department that can't be addressed by the Water Commission or Town Administration.

Steve Miller stated that Mr. Rick Skarinka, Head engineer for the Department of Environmental Services (DES), called him stating he had read Mr. Miller's article concerning the deficiencies at the Water Department and that they have serious concerns. Steve Miller stated he met with Mr. Skarinka and was informed that an audit would be sent to the Water Commissioners. They discussed the audit line by line to see if Steve Miller could alleviate any of the deficiencies.

Steve Miller stated the Water Department is out of money. There are water subscribers that do not have water because there is no money. He believes if this isn't fixed the residents on the East side of the lake may have problems. He also stated that there are hydrants in Town that do not work and there is a ton of water that is going into a black hole. Through the audit provided by the DES in 2014 the Town of Alton averaged 211,000 gallons per day. Today the number is closer to 250,000 gallons per day. According to the DES we should be using 113,000 gallons per day. There is currently 100,000 gallons per day of treated water going into a black hole.

Steve Miller stated he mentioned this to the Water Commissioners and he asked to see a plan to fix the infrastructure and was told they did not have one. The DES in the report stated the Water Department has 30 days to provide a capital plan. The reservoir was built in the early 1930's and up until this report the only alarm on the reservoir was a light or sound alarm that could only be seen by an abutter or someone driving by.

Steve Miller stated that if it is turned over to the Town the biggest fear is that the taxes will automatically go up. He explained that the revenues equal the expenses. You would be giving the Selectmen the opportunity to refinance a bond.

Lou LaCourse spoke on behalf of the Selectmen and stated initially 4 out of 5 Selectmen signed the petition. Since that time, the State has come in and has completed an inspection of the system and made some recommendations. Early on there was no plan for the repairs and now the State does have a plan to work with the Water Department to correct the issues and weaknesses in the system and as of now the Selectmen do not recommend Article 42.

Alton resident Raymond Howard asked that if this is a petition warrant article, can it be changed. Mark Northridge stated that yes it can be changed you can amend a petition warrant article.

Alton Resident Dave St. Cyr stated he would like to hear some history on the water system and Water Department. How many miles of line do the Department serve; how big is the water reservoir; what is the age of the water system. He would like an objective history of the Water Department that would help us to make a decision on this issue. He would like someone who is not involved in the issue that may have some history so that we might be more informed.

Superintendent of the Water Department, William Curtin stated that the reservoir goes back to 1936 and the size is 250,000 gallons. The infrastructure is old and the pump house at Levey Park was also done in the 1930's and the one at Jones Field was completed in 2008 or 2009. Some of the lines on School Street are 4 inch lines. There are maps on the initial system and some that go back to the late 1800's. Some of them show different size lines from what is currently there. There is probably 15 miles of lines. There are lead joints and there could possibly be lead pipes.

The public asked questions about the piping and how the Water Department measures up to EPA regulations. William Curtin stated that lead and copper tests are done on actual households. The latest tests showed there was no lead in the water and households will not have to be tested for another three years. A question was asked on what the consequences would be if it is not addressed now. William Curtin replied that a yearly sample is taken and no lead has been detected.

Alton Resident Loring Carr asked if the petition is a suggestion that all tax payers pay for the water system now instead of the rate payers.

Steve Miller responded no, that it is just for the rate payers. If it is taken over by the selectmen that have the knowledge, ability and resources to refinance and to adjust the rates, it is possible to get out of the hole with a long term Capital Improvement Plan.

Loring Carr continued that he looked in last year's book on page 262, line 307, Reservoir Expense, and they put in \$4,380.00. If you disagreed with the number why wasn't there a petition article to put money in this budget? Loring Carr continued and stated I also noticed a Maintenance Expense line. The Water Department spent \$43,000.00 in 2013. Why weren't these issues fixed instead of trying to pass it over to the Selectmen? Also on the same page, line 899, Contingency Expense, they put \$4,000.00 in it. There are lines in the budget. This problem could have been solved by asking the Selectmen to put more money into it.

Steve Miller responded that when the Operating Budget comes up, he is going to make a motion that \$200,000 be added to the budget to fix the main line down by Parker Marine. The DES has stated it needs to be fixed.

Alton resident Barbara Howard stated she was wondering if the article passed and it went over to the Selectmen what liability the Town would bear if the Selectmen are overseeing it.

Russ Bailey stated that the Town is liable now. The Water Commission is a department of the Town, within the Town budget. The liability would not be any different, there would be a difference of management and the Town owns the water system but the bills are paid by the rate payers.

Raymond Howard asked if William Curtin could tell us how much the DES cost us in getting a permit to do the Bay Bridge project.

William Curtin stated he would like to note that it will cost less than \$100,000.00 to fix the water line under the bridge not \$200,000.00 that Steve Miller stated. We were prepared to make the repairs when the DES got involved and we were told we could not do it the way it had been proposed and that it had to be engineered and surveyed. It cost an additional \$18,000.00. Steve Miller was correct in stating we did not have the money and we asked the Town for the money and they said they did not have the money.

Water Commissioner Paul White stated it seems that everything that we are accused of or have or haven't done seems to be a mute point. At a meeting with Richard Skarinka held at the Water Department with William Curtin and I, six items were listed that the Water Department had to respond to. We submitted to the DES everything that we lined up and we conformed to that. The article that he wrote states Fact Not Fiction. We are working to get it done. The bottom line is in the agreement with DES they understand that we are limited in funds. At this given juncture all six articles have been answered. DES is satisfied and he is amazed at the difference in the exchange of conversation where the opponents say that Rick Skarinka told him that everything was wrong. We have an agreement to try and work out a 30, 60 or 90 day payment for certain projects. We are accused of not having put anything in for grants or loans. Only to find out we were not informed but have sent the paperwork and we have it posted. Some of it we can afford. We can't do a thing according to the DES until June and they will work with us to get it done.

We are doing the very best that we can. It is all a matter of what you want to believe. We are going to get out of the hole. There is going to be an increase and you can't hide it. It is going to come down to the vote. I only ask that you think carefully. He also noted that he received a letter from the DES stating that the staff is more than qualified.

Bob Holt is a new resident to the Town of Alton and a former water commissioner and stated that the Water Department is old and needs work and has very few customers to generate the revenue. He does not think that, with all due respect, the BOS can do any better. As far as borrowing money it has to be voted on by the people. They are part of Alton. He is in favor of leaving it the way it is. A lot of issues have been brought up but he believes the commissioners will address them to the best of their abilities.

Dave St. Cyr stated if he is hearing right the town is responsible for the Water Department.

Russ Bailey stated the Water Department is run by the Water Commissioners by statute which states that they have the authority to do the management and set up the budget but it is still part of the Town. It is run by rates. There are no tax dollars spent on the water system. It is part of the Town and part of the Town budget.

Dave St. Cyr asked what is to prevent the BOS from developing a warrant article, a capital reserve fund, for the water system in town, similar to what we do for the Fire Department, Police Department and the Highway Department. Is there anything in the law that says we cannot post a warrant article? Is there anything preventing the BOS from doing that?

Russ Bailey responded that there is nothing in the statute that would restrict either the Selectmen or the Water Commissioners from asking the Selectmen to have a warrant article to establish a reserve for the Water Department and use tax dollars. There are towns that do that. They have some of their capital done by the taxpayers vs. the rates. It can happen either way. The voters would have to approve it.

Dave St. Cyr stated as a Trustee of the Trust Funds there is nothing that he sees other than the typical capital reserves items that come across his desk from the Water Department. There is no capital improvement and the BOS or the Water Department has put in any requests. Before we can even look at funding for something like this we are looking at next year.

Steve Miller stated we are currently paying off a loan of around \$800,000.00. We can't refinance because we are in debt already and it would just stretch out the payments we had borrowed at a higher rate. He stated he recommended a Water Department warrant article for emergency funds twice and was voted down twice. I respect the voters.

William Curtin responded stating that the survey that was completed by the DES was performed on December 9th and the report was received on January 4th. With regards to the reservoir, we thought we had a major leak, but it was due to the fact that it was a dry summer and the volume of people that were in Town. We contacted Underwater Solutions and they went in and checked the entire tank. They found a few cracks and checked them and found that none of them were leaking. They stated that the reservoir is going to need some work. A new reservoir will cost approximately \$1.00 a gallon. The one we have is 250,000.00 gallons. He stated that we are not going through 250,000 gallons a day. We are pumping roughly 172,000 gallons per day.

Loring Carr would like to amend the article to add the word “not”.

Mark Northridge stated that the article can’t be amended.

Attorney James Sessler stated that the voters have a right to vote on it by the petition of the vote. He can’t change a petition warrant article by changing the language to make it a non sensible article. It has to as it was written.

Marc DeCoff motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 42 and Virgil Macdonald seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

Article 7: To see if the Town will vote to establish a Police Detail Revolving Fund pursuant to RSA 31:95-h, for the purpose of providing for the payment of payroll and overhead for police special details. All revenues received for police special details will be deposited into the fund, and the money in the fund shall be allowed to accumulate from year to year and shall not be considered part of the town’s general fund balance. The Town treasurer shall have custody of all monies in the fund, and shall pay out the same only upon order of the governing body and no further approval is required by the legislative body to expend. Such funds may be expended only for the purpose (payroll and overhead) for which the fund was created. [Recommended by the Selectmen (5-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Cydney Johnson moved Article 7 and Lou LaCourse seconded the motion.

Police Chief Ryan Heath spoke on behalf of the article and stated it is for private details and we currently allocate money in our operating budget to pay for private details. Private details are hired out by contractors for road construction and they pay a fee for the officer, cruiser and an administration fee to the Town. The Town is reimbursed all the money. The way it is currently set up is gross appropriating in the operating budget and we are raising money through taxation. When the money comes back in from the contractor it goes into the General Fund and does not offset the line in the operating budget. We don’t know ahead of time what is coming in. They come in weeks ahead of time and not a year prior so that we could budget properly. The last two years we have exceeded our allotted amount in our operating budget in excess of \$70,000.00. We have had to go back to the auditors and request for these unforeseen projects and that they treat them as an “in and out” account. This will eliminate all of those issues and problems. If we have a revolving account, payroll and overhead is paid out of the account when the money comes back in from the contractors and offsets it. There will be no need to raise money through taxation.

Cydney Johnson stated it is a recommendation of the Town Auditor that we do this.

Raymond Howard stated from what he understands the officers are doing this when they are off duty. Why isn’t the contractor hiring the officer and paying him directly.

Virgil Macdonald responded that it is a revolving account so we don’t have to take the money out of taxation and the money goes back into the General Fund. This sets it up so money goes in to the account and is paid out of the account. The cruisers are hired out and they pay any administration fee.

Bob Holt stated most towns do it this way. When you hire out the cruiser and police officer out of the account, what happens to the overage?

Virgil Macdonald stated it will stay in the account so we don't have to build an account every year. It is only used for the private duty.

Cydney Johnson stated that any funds that are accumulated at the end of 10 years would have to come back to the Town for a vote for change of use.

Lou LaCourse motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 7 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

Article 8: 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 funding Old Home Week events such as the Barbershoppers, band concerts, magic shows and other forms of activities. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until completed or by December 31st 2017. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (5-2)] (A majority vote is required)

Lou LaCourse moved Article 8 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion.

Marc DeCoff stated the Old Home Committee asked the BOS to add an additional \$2,500.00 this year to fund the different events for Old Home Week to make it even better this year than last year.

L. LaCourse motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 8 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

Article 9: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) for the purpose of funding the repair and upgrade of the sidewalks in Alton Bay only. This would include the sidewalks along the water and paved sidewalks along Route 11. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until completed or by December 31st 2017. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (5-2)] (A majority vote is required)

Marc DeCoff moved Article 9 and Virgil Macdonald seconded the motion.

Virgil Macdonald stated there is currently \$34,880.77 in the account. The rough estimate is \$55,000.00 to complete the sidewalks from Bizzy Corner to the Mount Pier.

Bob Holt asked if the work would be done in house or would it go out to bid.

Virgil Macdonald responded that it would go out to bid.

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

ARTICLE 10: 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 (5-0) and the Budget Committee (6-1)] (A majority vote is required)

Virgil Macdonald moved Article 10 and Philip Wittmann seconded the motion.

Virgil Macdonald stated that this is for the sidewalks downtown. We currently have \$36,705.00 in the account and want to add \$20,000.00.

Dave St. Cyr asked for clarification on both Article 9 and Article 10 if this is a one-time expense versus the capital reserve for the sidewalks.

Russ Bailey stated the article for the Alton Bay sidewalks is a special article which means it can only be spent for the purpose listed in the article so it is not a capital reserve and would not go to the Trustees.

Virgil Macdonald motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 10 and Philip Wittmann 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 Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) to be placed into the Town Hall Building Improvement Capital Reserve Fund as previously established. This would be used for upgrading the HVAC, the handicap lift and other needed repairs to the town hall. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and the Budget Committee (7-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Philip Wittmann moved Article 11 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion

Lou LaCourse stated that this article is for the continued repairs to Town Hall. Specifically for the HVAC system and there is currently \$21,800.00, in the account. There is a bid for the repairs of \$120,000.00 and we have \$80,000.00 from the trust fund.

Bob Longabough motioned to amend the amount of money from \$20,000.00 to \$35,000.00 and add the words after handicap lift “with \$10,000.00 of this amount being devoted to engineering expenses to develop plans and a cost estimate to install an elevator in Town Hall to connect the basement, first floor and second floor.” Resulting costs estimate will be used to frame an article for the 2017 Town meeting which will seek voter approval to expend such monies and install the described elevator. The motion was seconded by Mark DeCoff.

Mark Northridge stated he could not allow it because it changes the purpose of the Warrant Article.

James Sessler stated the DRA would view the engineering expense specifically as probably a non allowable change of purpose. Instead of defeating the whole thing it is better to do it next year and carefully with the Selectmen so you can think about it and do a special warrant article.

Dave St. Cyr stated he had a recommendation to the Town and BOS that the Clough Morrell Fund which will be used in large part to fund the town hall improvements, in this case for the new HVAC system and potentially has the where with all to do the engineering for that as well.

Give me the opportunity to review the Clough Morrell documents and see if there is money in there that can be used for the engineering and you can come up with the money to pay for it. He will check and get back to us.

Steve Miller asked for a point of order and asked Attorney Sessler if we could simply raise the amount to \$35,000.00 without adding any constraints with the BOS here they would have an understanding where that money is intended to go even though you couldn't hold them to it.

Attorney Sessler responded when they go to ask for the money to be released from the Trustee of the Trust Funds, the Trustee of the Trust Funds needs to make sure there is a proper purpose. It is ultimately their decision to release the funds. Attorney Sessler stated he would rather see you take the time to have a properly developed special warrant article for next year and make sure you cover all these things or address them through the Clough Morrell Trust Fund. It is not that easy just to spend it on anything you want if you raise the amount. The Trustee of the Trust Funds has to really look at it and abide by the purposes of the trust.

Steve Miller stated it makes sense to at least have the money in the warrant article at this time and then he can make the decision and the BOS can decide to spend or not spend the \$10,000.00.

Attorney Sessler responded that it is up to the voters it is not a legal opinion.

Philip Wittmann motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 11 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

Break taken at 8:28 pm

Meeting resumed at 8:38 pm

Article 12: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twelve Thousand Dollars (\$12,000.00) 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 (5-0) and the Budget Committee (5-2)] (A majority vote is required)

Cydney Johnson moved Article 12 and Lou LaCourse seconded the motion.

Cydney Johnson stated we currently have \$19,262.00 in the fund and one monitoring well can cost approximately \$14,000.00. At any test time we may be required to add one to three wells depending on how the tests come back. We continue to add to this fund in the event that does occur.

Scott Simons, Solid Waste Director stated the monitoring is done yearly in May and every other year additional testing dependent on what they find. It used to be twice a year but we don't know. We never know what is going to happen.

Barbara Howard asked if there is a number that we would eventually reach in regards to the testing of the wells where we would finally think about cleaning it up once and for all. This is just going to keep growing and growing as the contamination spreads and we have to keep adding more wells. Has anybody looked at a stop gap and to say we have to clean this up?

Scott Simons responded that there are a couple of things that can be done. The landfill can be dug up and moved to the property next door. If you got rid of it, it would cost around \$5,000,000.00

Cydney Johnson motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 10 and Lou LaCourse 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 Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000.00) 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 (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (7-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Lou LaCourse moved Article 13 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion.

Lou LaCourse stated the money is used to cover retirement vacations and sick times and we have a number of people retiring this year and we are wiping out the money that we have.

Bob Holt asked for the balance of the account.

Lou LaCourse responded \$13,471.00.

Lou LaCourse motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 13 and Marc DeCoff 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 Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) 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 (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-0-1)] (A majority vote is required)

Marc DeCoff moved Article 14 and Virgil Macdonald seconded the motion.

Marc DeCoff stated this will be added to the fund that is already established which has a balance of \$77,716.76 and will be used to improve the site at the Transfer Station.

Scott Simons stated we are looking at building a recycling and solid waste facility station where you can drive thru allowing us to recycle more and make more money.

Marc DeCoff motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 14 and Virgil Macdonald 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 Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00) to be added to the Milfoil Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established as recommended by the Milfoil Committee. [Appropriation

recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (7-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Virgil Macdonald moved Article 15 and Philip Wittmann seconded the motion.

Virgil Macdonald stated they have been working on this for a few years to eradicate the milfoil in Lake Winnepesaukee and the Merrymeeting River. There is presently \$18,264.00 in the account. They want to add to this to allow for the diver assisted pulling of milfoil and applying of herbicide.

Dave St. Cyr asked if the state contribution to this fund depends on the approval of the warrant article.

Virgil Macdonald responded that the state does contribute for Milfoil Control. The Town contributes two-thirds and last year the state provided \$7,736.50.

Virgil Macdonald motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 15 and Philip Wittmann seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 16: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000.00) for the purpose of upgrading the Alton Bay restrooms (east and west) and the Alton Bay Community Center restrooms to provide for handicap accessibility. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until completed or by December 31st 2017. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-1)] (A majority vote is required)

Philip Wittmann moved Article 16 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion.

Mr. Wittmann stated it is important to update the restrooms and it is overdue in making it wheel chair accessible so that our citizens and visitors can appreciate and enjoy Alton Bay.

David St. Cyr noted that the article states that it will not lapse until completed or until December 31, 2017. Does that mean our taxes contribute for half the first year in 2016 and the other half in 2017 or is it all collected out of 2016 tax revenues.

Cydney Johnson stated it is out of 2016 tax revenues with two years to complete the project.

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

ARTICLE 17: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00) for an engineering consultant to develop a plan to upgrade and expand the Jones Field recreation facility. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until completed or by December 31st 2017. [Appropriation not recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and recommended by the Budget Committee (5-2)] (A majority vote is required)

Philip Wittmann moved Article 17 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion.

Kelly Troendle of the Parks and Recreation Department spoke on behalf of the article stating that the Jones Field facility has one baseball field, one softball field and one T-ball field. This facility is used by the public for general use and by organized children and adult sport leagues. The Parks and Recreation Commission is currently working on a master park plan and has identified and prioritized improvements to be made at Jones Field. Through site visits they have identified property boundaries and with clearing provided by the Highway Department and Parks and Recreation Department staff more space is available at the facility for the expansion of fields to accommodate the sports teams and uses. Improvements are necessary at the facility now and it makes sense to look at the larger picture and incorporate the gaining of additional space with the development of regulation sized fields that are properly graded with drainage. The \$20,000.00 will be used to develop a plan with an engineer to properly locate fields in the correct orientation and determine the placement of dugouts and fencing and the location of amenities like a concession stand. Space will also be allocated for a walking path around the field complex that is ADA accessible and a dog walk area. The engineer plan would include park design and field layout with bid specifications and cost estimates. The Parks and Recreation Commission would use the engineer's plan to apply for land water conservation fund grants and in securing other donations in addition to a 2017 Town warrant article for project funding. Recreation facilities are important components in a well rounded healthy community. The fields are used for programs and activities that promote community, team work, family time, and exercise and life skills.

Philip Wittmann stated that it seems at this point a little premature to hire an engineer and consultant and prudence definitely needs to be made at Jones Field. It can be explored immediately by a committee made up of members of Parks and Recreation, the public, Alton Youth League and the Water Department. I believe that is the way to explore it at this time.

Virgil Macdonald stated we allow our road agents to engineer our roads and to do our roads to make them safe and believes it would be more economical to allow the road engineer to engineer the drainage instead of spending tax dollars for an engineer.

Dave St. Cyr asked how much more developable space do we have at Jones Field. What additional space do we have to add additional facilities and add more fields?

Kelly Troendle responded that it appears to be about four acres. The Water Department would be involved in the meeting process to work with the town and the Parks and Recreation Department for expansion and William Curtin has offered to sit on the Committee. Using the Highway Agent is an option but we had spoken to Steve Smith Consulting and Peter Howard as the engineer and that is where the \$20,000.00 came from. That includes state permits for the four acres and Lake Shore Protection Act permitting and also working with the Planning Board process and conducting site surveys and the engineering.

Barbara Howard asked where did the idea originate from, was it the BOS or Parks and Recreation.

Kelly Troendle stated that the idea started with the Alton Youth League coming to the Parks and Recreation Commission with concerns about the field and concerns specifically about the dugouts and the fencing and wanting to move things around. The Parks and Recreation Commission at the same time was doing a master park plan and in working together we decided it would be best to look at the property and look at the boundaries and talk about expansion of the field with professional assistance before we started moving dugouts and fencing.

Barbara Howard continued we have fields behind the elementary school, we have fields at the high school we have a total of 750 kids in town. It seems that maybe the people that really want it could do some fund raising and roll up their sleeves and generate some monies for the projects and get some sweat equity in the game instead of coming to the tax payers continuously.

Kelly Troendle stated she believes it is important to have an engineered plan to go solicit donations and apply for land water conservation fund grants. If you are asking for money it is important to have a plan for what you are asking for.

Bob Holt stated that if they are going to do anything with the park there has to be an engineer and noted that the Selectmen voted 5-0 against and asked if the BOS was still 5-0 and they responded yes. Bob Holt stated he would go with the BOS.

Raymond Howard asked how much of the property is developed now.

Kelly Troendle responded that she does not have the correct information at this time but would get it later.

Philip Wittmann motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 17 and Cydney Johnson 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 Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00) for the purpose of repairing the lake wall on the west side of Alton Bay covering the area from the boat docks to the swim area. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until completed or by December 31st 2017. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (5-2)] (A majority vote is required)

Philip Wittmann moved Article 18 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion.

Philip Wittmann spoke on behalf of the article stating the wall needs to be repaired and the permits are already approved.

There was no discussion.

Philip Wittmann motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 18 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 19: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) to be added to the Cemetery Building Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established as recommended by the Cemetery Trustees. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (5-2)] (A majority vote is required)

Cydney Johnson moved Article 19 and Lou LaCourse seconded the motion.

Cydney Johnson spoke on behalf of the article stating that it came to the BOS at the request of the Cemetery Trustees. It is for ongoing building improvements.

There was no discussion.

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

ARTICLE 20: 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 Nine Hundred Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Seven Dollars (\$6,900,267.00). Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be Six Million Eight Hundred Sixty Five Thousand Three Hundred Eighteen Dollars (\$6,865,318.00), 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 (5-0) and Budget Committee (5-2).]

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

Lou LaCourse moved Article 20 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion.

Steve Miller motioned to amend the Operating Budget to \$6,985,267.00 and was seconded by William Curtin.

William Curtin stated that the Water Department would be willing to borrow the \$85,000.00 and reimburse the Town.

Dave St. Cyr stated that the amount can only be added to the bottom line of the budget. It can't be added to a specific line. You cannot direct where it can be spent. It is up to the governing body to spend the money where ever they please.

Attorney James Sessler stated that the Water Department is set up with an Enterprise Fund and is never funded by tax dollars. It has never been that way in the Town of Alton. This is the first time anyone has tried to raise tax dollars for the Water Department. The BOS do not have to spend it. If they decide they want to spend it and keep it as an Enterprise Fund they could probably enter into an agreement on behalf of the town's people and pay it back with interest. You are borrowing tax payer money on something that is not supposed to be tax payer funded.

William Curtin stated so if the Water Commissioners want to put a warrant article together and have the BOS put it on that it would be paid by tax dollars.

Attorney James Sessler responded then you are going to have the tax payers fund a water system that very few people use. That is why it is an Enterprise System. Typically the tax payers don't fund a water department like this with tax payer money because it is supposed to be funded by the users.

William Curtin continued if the voters did vote to do it then there wouldn't be a problem.

Attorney James Sessler stated then there wouldn't be a problem. The tax payers would be burdening themselves.

Bob Holt stated that in the past he believed the Town of Alton loaned money to the Water Department and they pay it back. The motion states that the tax payers are going to give the BOS \$85,000.00 more. If approved they do not have to pay it back. He believes the intention of the Water Commission is to pay it back.

Attorney James Sessler stated the BOS do not have to spend the money on the Water Department and can spend it any way they want. If they do decide to give it to the Water Department I assume they would lend it not just give it out and protect the taxpayers dollars and make sure it gets paid back. Attorney Sessler stated he could not speak for the BOS. It does not restrict them from lending the Water Department the money.

Barbara Howard stated that the problem she sees is that most people aren't going to know why the number changed. People aren't going to be informed of what this is and if something comes up and you need the money somewhere else and believes it will get crazy. Why wasn't there any money attached to the other articles? If you are asking the tax payers to pay for something they are not using and there are only a small amount of people using it. I think it should be a stand alone request for the tax payers so there is more transparency in the vote.

Virgil Macdonald stated the problem we have is there is a broken pipe that needs to get fixed before summer. By doing this we could loan them the money and the taxpayers get their money back.

Barbara Howard stated there is no guarantee that the money would be used for the Water Department.

Virgil Macdonald stated the BOS has always done what the people have asked. It is up to the Town of Alton to vote it in.

Barbara Howard asked is there any reason why the Water Department can't come to you outside of this meeting and work together and figure out how we can borrow some money to help out the Water Department.

Virgil Macdonald stated the Town did not have the money to lend them.

Steve Miller stated that the Water Department has already gone to the BOS and they were turned down.

Russ Bailey stated the request was made near the end of the year and the only source would have been the fund balance and the BOS can't arbitrarily go into the fund balance surplus and loan it out. In discussion with the Town Attorney he feels that there is an implied authority for the Selectmen to do a loan where there is funding made available. It isn't explicit anywhere in the statutes. It would be up to the Selectmen then if they wanted to do it, if the \$85,000.00 is approved, to make an agreement with the Water Commission. The Water Commissioners bottom line is that they will still have to increase the rates because of the money one way or another.

Attorney James Sessler stated he has done this before with other towns and has worked with the Laconia Water Works for over 25 years in a relationship with the city of Laconia. What the Water Commissioners should know is that one of the conditions is that they will be forced to raise their rates to pay the Town back in short order. Unless the tax the taxpayers want to have a special warrant article and agree to be taxed to fund your users, you are going to have to pay the money back and you are going to have to raise the rates. That is usually the condition of any loan that they might make to you. Any capital improvements that they approve and spend tax payer money on. They have to protect the tax payers.

William Curtin stated he understands that. The rates were raised at the beginning of 2015 and at the end of 2015 and they will be raised again in July. He stated that when he came on as a Water Commissioner the Water Department owed the town \$60,000.00. We planned on paying it back in three years and ended up paying it back in a year and half.

Attorney Sessler stated the bottom line is and my recommendation to the BOS is that it is not the best way to do this, to add it to the operating budget; it is probably the worst mechanism to do it. You can vote the amendment, but the bottom line is they don't have to do it this way and it will be up to them to protect the taxpayers in the best they can.

Dave St. Cyr stated that he is not against the Water Department fixing the water systems problems for the people who use it. The problem he has with the amendment is that it's my tax money that is funding a loan to the Water Department that's good for 1 year. Are you going to refund me that \$85,000.00 on next year's tax bill that I don't legally have to pay? You are raising my taxes to pay an \$85,000.00 increase in the budget that has to come from me. Do I get a refund next year? You're saying it is going to be a loan. It is your operating budget and you are going to give it to the Water Department. How do I get that back because I paid for it?

Mark Northridge repeated the amendment, to change the dollar amount from \$6,900,267.00 to 6,985,267.00.

A vote was taken and the amendment failed.

Lou LaCourse motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 20 and Virgil Macdonald seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 21: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$160,000.00) and to authorize the withdrawal of the \$160,000.00 from the Ambulance Operation Fund as previously established under RSA 31:95c for the purpose of funding the ambulance personnel wages, ambulance supplies and 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 (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (7-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Marc DeCoff moved Article 21 and Virgil Macdonald seconded the motion.

Marc DeCoff spoke on behalf of the article stating the Ambulance fund was set up so that all of the revenue from the insurance companies and everyone who pays is put into it. There is no tax dollars used for this warrant article.

There was no discussion.

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 Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) to be added to the Alton Fire Station Capital Reserve Fund as previously established. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-1)] (A majority vote is required)

Marc DeCoff moved Article 22 and Virgil Macdonald seconded the motion.

Marc DeCoff spoke on behalf of the article stating that this is an ongoing fund and currently there is \$333,255.82 in the fund. This is for future expansion of the Fire Department.

There was no discussion.

Marc DeCoff motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 22 and Virgil Macdonald 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 Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$60,000.00) 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 and equipment. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-1)] (A majority vote is required)

Marc DeCoff moved Article 23 and Virgil Macdonald seconded the motion.

Marc DeCoff spoke on behalf of the article and stated this is a fund that has been established for a while and there is currently \$281,779.66 in the fund. There is also another line that has \$80,211.00 in it. This was from the sale of land from tax deeding and can't be used until everyone has a chance to state their claim.

Raymond Howard asked for an explanation on the tax deeds.

Marc DeCoff explained that when the auction was held on the property the BOS decided that the proceeds of the sale would go towards the Fire Department for equipment. The sale of the property was \$80,211.00 but has to be held for a period of time in the event someone comes back and claims their taxed deeded property.

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

ARTICLE 24: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seventy Five Thousand Dollars (\$75,000.00) to be added to the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund as previously established. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-1)] (A majority vote is required)

Virgil Macdonald moved Article 24 and Philip Wittmann seconded the motion.

Virgil Macdonald stated that this is to help repair the equipment in the Highway garage and there is currently \$26,131.00 in the account.

There was no discussion.

Virgil Macdonald motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 24 and Philip Wittmann seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

Article 25: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the selectmen to enter into a five year lease agreement for Four Hundred Forty Thousand Dollars (\$440,000.00) for the purpose of leasing a front end loader and grader for the highway department and to raise and appropriate the sum of Eighty Eight Thousand Dollars (\$88,000.00) for the first year's payment for that purpose. This lease agreement contains a non-appropriation escape clause. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-1)] (A majority vote is required)

Philip Wittmann moved Article 25 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion.

Virgil Macdonald stated that the grader we have is a 1998 and needs about \$69,000.00 worth of repairs and the cost to replace it is about \$325,000.00. We can lease a loader and a grader for \$88,000.00 a year for five years. It would be cheaper to do this and then every five years we would have new equipment coming in. After five years it will drop to \$40,000 a year and we will not have all of the repairs.

Ken Roberts provided the audience with the current condition of the equipment. We are looking at the lease program which is the lowest impact to the taxpayers today. We came up with an estimate of \$88,000.00 for five years for a total of \$440,000.00 and we will have two new pieces of equipment with full warranties for five years. If we decide to re-enter a lease purchase again we figured that cost will actually drop down to about \$45,000.00 year. If you rent a grader it is \$7,500.00 per month. For the first five years the grader will cost about \$5,000.00 to operate. When you get into the warranty program that is when the benefit comes back to us.

Barbara Howard asked if the voters vote it down will this be rolled into the Operating Budget without the voter's permission. Are you going to respect the voters?

Virgil Macdonald stated if it is voted down, it is voted down.

Loring Carr asked if \$440,000.00 is mid-range or specific equipment.

Ken Roberts responded that it is the estimated total cost of the lease for both pieces of equipment.

Loring Carr continued and asked if it was John Deere, Case, Caterpillar and Ken Roberts responded that the estimates came from Caterpillar.

Bob Holt asked if it is a full warranty and if it will go out to bid and after five years who owns the equipment. Ken Roberts responded the Town does and a decision will need to be made on

whether or not we enter into another lease purchase agreement. Bob Holt stated so after five years you no longer have to lease and keep the equipment and Ken Roberts responded yes.

Virgil Macdonald stated or we can trade them in and stay on the lease and keep the warranties.

Bob Holt asked if it would be a package deal or will you be able to accept bids on the grader and loader separately and the BOS can make their decision. Ken Roberts stated you may get a better price on a package deal. Bob Holt stated you may want to look at leasing them separately and he is in favor of it.

Loring Carr asked about Article 24 for \$75,000.00 and Article 25 for \$88,000.00. Is any of the \$75,000.00 going to be applied to the lease? Ken Roberts stated that the \$75,000.00 is the capital reserve.

Loring Carr responded so none of the capital reserve funds will be added and the \$88,000.00, it stands alone.

Russ Bailey stated they had to be kept separate. By law we cannot take a capital reserve fund and use it for a lease agreement.

Philip Wittmann motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 25 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 26: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Nine Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$950,000.00) 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 \$162,966.00. This is an annual appropriation that provides for the reconstruction of existing roadways. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (7-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Cydney Johnson moved Article 26 and Lou LaCourse seconded the motion.

Ken Roberts spoke on behalf of the article and gave a history and the process of road reconstruction. With the Town taking over the road work we have greatly reduced the costs. For the last two years we have red lined the budget. It is time for us to step forward and keep the project going. We have saved an enormous amount of money. We can do the work we just need help with the money.

Bob Woodward from Rines Road stated last year Rines Road was listed as one of the roads to be addressed and he did not hear it on the list this year. Ken Roberts responded that the meeting with the BOS has not taken place yet and they make the decision on the roads.

Cydney Johnson stated that they make the decisions after Town meeting and see how much is appropriated. We defer to Ken Roberts to give us a list in order of importance. We can't make any decisions until after the warrant has been approved.

Bob Woodward responded that the road has been falling apart for some time and it is not getting any better.

Ken Roberts stated he agreed but the funding has not been there. That is why we are asking for more funding so that we can complete the roads.

Cydney Johnson motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 26 and Lou LaCourse 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 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 (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (7-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Lou LaCourse moved Article 27 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion.

Library Trustee Betty Jane Meulenbroek spoke on behalf of the warrant article and provided an overview of what has been repaired in the past. The exterior of the building has been either repaired or replaced and it is now time to address the interior. Repairs are needed in numerous areas that were damaged due to the roof leaking in the past. This includes the reception area and the offices; walls and ceilings near the elevator on both the first and second floors. The interior has not had a fresh coat of paint in nearly 20 years. It is showing age with peeling and cracking. The front concrete steps are deteriorating and the metal insert trays are loosening up and brick retaining walls are cracking and separating and water is entering these areas freezing and causing damage. The carpet is almost 20 years old and is showing signs of wear and the front roof will have to be replaced at some point. This will be the decision of the Trustees as to where the monies will be spent. With the current building fund insufficient to get these projects completed we risk being underfunded. Your consideration will be very much appreciated.

There was no discussion.

Lou LaCourse motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 27 and Marc DeCoff 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 Eight Thousand Nine Hundred Dollars (\$8,900.00) 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 2016. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (5-2)] (A majority vote is required)

Marc DeCoff moved Article 28 and Virgil Macdonald seconded the motion.

Raymond Howard asked the BOS what the criteria is for voting on the non-profits.

Virgil Macdonald stated we let the people decide.

Raymond Howard motioned to amend Article 28 to read Community Action Program of Belknap Merrimack County Inc. Non-Profit to see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,900.00 for the purpose of supporting the Community Action Program Belknap Merrimack County Inc. which provides rural transportation, meals on wheels and senior companion program. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until completed or by December 31st 2016.

There was a discussion on how the warrant should be worded. Raymond Howard stated that these organizations have many tentacles and we have to be careful to specify which one you are donating to.

Virgil Macdonald stated that it is his understanding in dealing with the non-profits in the past that this is the amount of money that they have spent in the Town and they are asking to get reimbursed.

Mark Northridge read the proposed amendment for clarification. Article 28 would be changed to read "To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,900.00 for the purpose of supporting the Community Action Program Belknap Merrimack County Inc. that provides rural transportation, Meals on Wheels and senior companion program. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until completed or by December 31st 2016."

Mark Northridge noted that the dollar amount changed, the name has changed and programs have been taken out.

The motion was seconded by Virgil Macdonald.

Raymond Howard stated that the Community Action Partnership of Belknap Merrimack County has five programs. The five programs, Meals on Wheels; Senior Companion Program; Rural Transportation Program. He does not have a problem with those programs. They also have two other programs. Family Planning and Pre-natal which are primarily referral services to Planned Parenthood for funded abortions. The Pre-natal services teach woman how to eat, breastfeed and change diapers. He just does not see a good value for the tax payers in those two programs.

Raymond Howard stated the number he came up with, \$5,900.00 is a breakdown of how the other programs are funded in their request to other towns. I am willing to adjust the funding number if someone can show him a year to year request or something that has specific numbers and can be calculated out.

Cydney Johnson stated that the Town was provided with a breakdown of the services that were provided to the residents of Alton by the Community Action of Belknap Merrimack counties. Cydney Johnson read the request which stated that \$157,900.00 worth of service dollars provided to the residents of the Town of Alton utilizing federal, state and local funds. We respectfully request consideration of our services and submit the following recommendation to the Budget Committee to see if the town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$8,900.00 for the continuation of services to the low income residents of Alton through the Laconia Area Center the Community action Program Belknap Merrimack County Inc.

Cydney Johnson stated that it has been the opinion of the BOS that items brought forward such as this should go to the residents of the town unchanged so that they can vote for them. They

have the opportunity also to go through and thoroughly investigate each and every one of these. Someone made the point earlier of adding \$85,000.00 or \$200,000.00 to the bottom line may be great for the people sitting in this room and for those who actually watch it on the computer however will they know what they are voting on when they go to the polls. Let's give our towns people the opportunity to vote on these themselves rather than cut it. Not a single one has failed in the past 20 years or so. You may personally not agree with it, but the rest of the town does feel they have a duty to help their neighbor and I would hope that you would honor the fact that we live in a country that allows us to vote on things like this and not have a room full of people take that away.

Raymond Howard stated that we also honor the taxpayer's money being used properly.

There was a discussion on changing of or amendment of articles.

A standing vote was taken with 12 in favor and 19 opposed, the amendment failed.

Terrence O'Rourke called for a point of order and asked if anyone was monitoring the three minute rule limit.

Barbara Howard stated we have to allow the people to vote however this is a democratic process that people showed up for. To say no you can't make any changes because of the rest of the Town. Everybody knows how the rest of the town is going to vote. We can't continue with our democratic process. That is censorship. We have had multiple speakers go beyond three minutes. Last year Raymond and I got all the financials for all the revenue sources and how many people they provide services for the towns in the County. We completed a spread sheet. Some of the non-profits have more than 11 revenue resources. 80% of the revenue resources are all tax funded. There are very few sources that come to these programs that are not tax funded. So they are getting it from each town, the county and the state and feds and grants that are tax funded. Some of the organizations that claim to be non-profit have thousands, hundreds of thousand and some millions set aside in investments. This is why we are looking at it so carefully. What you are not thinking about and seeing the whole picture is that these people go to all the towns in the county and ask for money. Then they go to the county and state and ask for money. Simultaneously they can bill Medicaid and Medicare. If you have Medicaid or Medicare you have managed care and managed care companies help recipients get transportation and pay for all of their medical services. There are a lot of in home supports that are being billed to Medicaid and Medicare and are simultaneously taking our tax dollars. It is duplication of revenues. This is the concern and they are valuable services. It doesn't mean it should be carte blanche

There was a discussion on how the non-profit warrant articles should be presented going forward. Mark Northridge provided information on the Committee that was formed to review the process of the non-profits. He felt that there should be a committee made up of townspeople that look at them before they come to the Deliberative Sessions to review

Marc DeCoff motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 28 and Cydney Johnson 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 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 2016. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and the Budget Committee (5-2)] (A majority vote is required)

Virgil Macdonald moved Article 29 and Philip Wittmann seconded the motion.

Raymond Howard stated the VNA and Hospice are a great service to the community. He could not find out any financial information on the organization. His research determined that there are currently no job openings and their average salaries a year are \$80,000.00 year plus benefits.

Roger Nelson motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 29 and John Markland 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 Two Thousand One Hundred Twenty One Dollars and Forty Four Cents (\$2,121.44) 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 2016. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (4-1) and not recommended by the Budget Committee (4-3)] (A majority vote is required)

Philip Wittmann moved Article 30 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion.

Andy McLeod spoke for and against the article stating he has personally benefited from the Red Cross. The Red Cross will not give an appropriate accounting of where the funds go.

Andy McLeod motioned to amend Article 30 from \$2,121.44 to \$1.00 and was seconded by Roger Nelson.

Amendment passed with a favorable vote.

Philip Wittmann 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 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 2016. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (5-2)] (A majority vote is required)

Lou LaCourse moved Article 31 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion.

Raymond Howard felt that the money will actually stay in the community.

Virgil Macdonald motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 31 and Cydney Johnson 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 Two Hundred Twenty Seven Dollars (\$227.00) 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 2016. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (5-2)] (A majority vote is required)

Lou LaCourse moved Article 32 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion.

There was no discussion.

Lou LaCourse motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 32 and Virgil Macdonald 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 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 2016. [Appropriation is recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (5-2)] (A majority vote is required)

Marc DeCoff moved Article 33 and Virgil Macdonald seconded the motion.

Raymond Howard motioned to amend Article 33 from \$1,530.00 to \$1.00 and was seconded by Roger Nelson.

Raymond Howard stated he was unable to find any financial statements or any breakdown of their budget. The only thing he could find was that they have a shelter in Milwaukee Wisconsin.

Cydney Johnson stated they have a shelter in Laconia. The Budget Committee was provided with a breakdown and 86% goes towards direct services and 14% goes to administrative costs.

Steve Miller noted a point of interest that anytime you have administrative costs under 20% for a non-profit it is considered an efficient organization.

A standing vote was taken with 12 in favor and 18 against the amendment. The amendment failed.

Marc DeCoff motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 33 and Virgil Macdonald 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 Fifteen Thousand Seven Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$15,750.00) 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 2016. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (4-3)] (A majority vote is required)

Virgil Macdonald moved Article 34 and Philip Wittmann seconded the motion.

Raymond Howard motioned to amend Article 34 to \$1.00 and was seconded by Roger Nelson.

Raymond Howard spoke against the article stating that after reviewing their financial statements he discovered that they have about 1.3 million in investments and provided \$185,000.00 in raises.

Cydney Johnson motioned to allow Police Chief Ryan Heath to speak on the article and was seconded by Virgil Macdonald.

Ryan Heath stated that when a police department brings in a person who is having psychiatric issues and they are brought to the hospital Genesis is the one who sends out a counselor and does the evaluation. They make the determination based on their evaluation. If the individual needs further treatment or counseling they are the ones who make the decision on whether the individual would go to the NH State Hospital. Genesis has been utilized to help troubled teens and juveniles. They have long term counseling treatment and we have referred a lot of people in Town to Genesis. The exact content of the treatment and how often they go is all confidential information. We work closely with Genesis in the School system. They send counselors into the schools to help students who need their services.

Roger Nelson stated last year they served 110 patients in Alton for a cost of \$2,964.00. They are asking for \$15,000.00.

Raymond Howard stated he is not challenging the program or what they do. His concern is their financial statements and what they are saying is they have so much extra tax payer money that they can give seven employees \$189,000.00 in raises. They can also put more money into the stock market. Is this being a good steward of our tax dollars?

Cydney Johnson added that she was a past board member of Genesis and also having a very personal experience of Genesis she is familiar with the investment account that Raymond Howard was referring to and stated that the income came from the sale of property and a large donation from someone who's family member who benefited from the services of Genesis. Genesis did serve 100 residents in Alton last year. Thirty nine of them were from the ages of 0 – 17; for ages 18 – 61 sixty four people were served; age 62 and over seven people were served. The cost of the \$2,964.00 that was quoted is the charitable care for the 18-61 age bracket only. Cydney Johnson read to the audience questions presented by David Hershey and the responses provided by Genesis.

Raymond Howard stated his concern is, are they using our tax dollars prudently and for the purpose intended at a reasonable cost to the tax payers. He stated the Executive Director went from \$130,000.00 to \$190,000.00 a year. The psychiatrist went from \$250,000.00 to \$360,000.00. Is it fair to pass this kind of cost onto the tax payers?

Cydney Johnson responded that as a former board member there is not a psychiatrist there who is making \$350,000.00 a year and 12% of their costs are administrative costs.

Amendment failed.

Virgil Macdonald motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 34 and Philip Wittmann 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 Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00) for the purpose of supporting Caregivers of Southern Carroll County and Vicinity, Inc. (includes Alton) 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 2016. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (6-1)] (A majority vote is required

Philip Wittmann moved Article 35 and Virgil Macdonald seconded the motion.

There was no discussion.

Cydney Johnson motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 35 and Philip Wittmann 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 Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) for the purpose of supporting CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) 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 2016. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (7-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Lou LaCourse moved Article 36 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion.

There was no discussion

Lou LaCourse motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 36 and Cydney Johnson 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 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 2016. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (4-3)] (A majority vote is required)

Lou LaCourse moved Article 37 and Marc DeCoff seconded the motion.

Beth Clay Executive Director of the Appalachian Mountain Teen Project provided an overview of the program and stated that for twenty-two years Alton has supported the project. Our request for \$2,400.00 is the flat line request for each of the eight prior years. There are currently ninety

three children in the program and twenty one alumni from Alton and three students from Alton are currently enrolled. The annual cost per child is just under 4,000.00. \$2,400.00 from Alton will allow the program to offset the cost of providing transportation to each of the three enrolled students, participate in outdoor education and leadership opportunities in the summer months and to receive one on one mentoring from our trained staff throughout the school year at PMHS and at ACS.

Lou LaCourse motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 37 and Marc DeCoff 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 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 2016. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) and by the Budget Committee (5-2)] (A majority vote is required)

Marc DeCoff moved Article 38 and Virgil Macdonald seconded the motion.

There was no discussion.

Marc DeCoff 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 Three Thousand Dollars (\$3,000.00) for the purpose of supporting L.I.F.E. Ministries which is a not-for-profit charity that provides food and staples to Alton residents. This is a petition article. [Appropriation not recommended by the Selectmen (4-1) and not recommended by the Budget Committee (7-0)] (A majority vote is required)

Virgil Macdonald moved Article 39 and Philip Wittmann seconded the motion.

Steve Miller motioned to amend Article 39 to \$1.00 and was seconded by Terrence O'Rourke.

Steve Miller stated that they did not put a value on Life Ministries or what they do that was not a consideration. In speaking for himself, he believes that there should be separation of church and state and if passed it could set a precedent for a number of religious organizations to ask for equal money and equal time and the BOS will be having discussions on how much to give to other churches or temples. This belongs in the outside non-profit prevue and is not something the town should be involved with.

Amendment passed with a favorable vote.

Marc DeCoff motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 39 and Philip Wittmann seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 40: To see if the Town will vote to delegate the duties and responsibilities of the Cemetery Trustees to the Board of Selectmen. This article is recommended by the Cemetery Trustees (3-0) and Board of Selectmen (4-1) (A majority vote is required)

Philip Wittmann moved Article 40 and Cydney Johnson seconded the motion.

Philip Wittmann spoke on behalf of the article and read a letter into the record from the Cemetery Trustees supporting the Warrant Article and dissolving the Board of Trustees.

Loring Carr asked when the change would take place. Russ Bailey responded that the statute states six months.

Philip Wittmann motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 40 and Virgil Macdonald seconded the motion. The motion passed with a favorable vote.

ARTICLE 41: To see if the Town will vote to have all of the non-profit warrant articles listed together in one warrant article instead of individually as separate warrant articles which is how it is currently done. This article is not recommended by the Selectmen (5-0) (A majority vote is required)

Marc DeCoff moved Article 41 and Lou LaCourse seconded the motion.

Virgil Macdonald stated we have studied this as part of a committee and agreed we should let the people decide to put it all together to shorten the voting. We want to let the people decide whether they want them separate or keeping them all together.

Loring Carr motioned to amend the Warrant article and add after “how this is currently done” the following wording “the procedure to review non-profit requests as recommended by the Non-Profit Amendment Committee established at the 2015 Deliberative Session shall be adopted. A standard form of information from these organizations will be reviewed by an independent advisory committee comprised of two Selectmen, two Budget Committee members and a Trustee of the Trust Fund. This Committee shall advise the Selectmen and the Budget Committee during the budgeting and warrant article process of its findings and recommendations.” The motion was seconded by Steve Miller.

Loring Carr stated that at the end of the 2015 Deliberative Session he made a motion that a Committee be formed to look into combining the articles. The Committee met and came up with procedures. He believes tonight has shown exactly why we need a more detailed review. We have three different numbers and three different stories of what is going on. One told us there was a 29% change in salaries, we don't know why. We have one amendment because we can't find any information so they want it reduced to \$1.00. The Selectmen showed they do have the information. I don't believe the non-profits are being reviewed closely enough. I know there is a problem that some people will vote no for the whole thing because it is one article. It is not a silver bullet that will solve all of our problems. If tonight we had this committee that asked more detailed questions a lot of this discussion would be eliminated. It is also a burden to the voters going into the voter's booth and spending time going over the articles. I think the committee came up with a good procedure. It is open ended. If this advisory committee feels it needs more information other than what we presented it would be up to them. You have to realize too that

the Selectmen legally have the right to put warrant articles in if they want to or not. It is just an advisory committee. Another issue is every other year we get another organization that comes in and asks for more money. There is nothing that vets these people to say what their administrative costs are and how many people do they serve in the town of Alton. I think if those things could be more detailed and spelled out it would help the voters. I can see both sides of the argument. We came up with a process. I would ask that the Selectmen provide this committees recommendations and procedures and make them available at the town hall so people can see them before the voting.

Cydney Johnson stated she could agree with everything except lumping them all together for the very reason you said. It does take the power to vote an individual organization out of the hands of the tax payers. For that one reason I can't get behind it.

Loring Carr stated I believe this is the only way we can work around that problem is to combine them. It is a process we have to work through with the RSA's and the way we do articles. It is the same as the operating budget. There are items in there that the Budget Committee would not agree with, one item they vote no on. There is only so much you can break down and it becomes a burden to the voters. It is a balancing act.

Virgil Macdonald stated they were lumped together for years and were only broken out a few years ago.

Andy McLeod stated he was also on the Committee with Loring Carr and has gone back three years and there was not one non profit that has ever been voted down and they pass at least 2 to 1 and some have passed 5 to 1. Creating this will let things flow nicely.

Mark Northridge reviewed the amendment. **“The procedures to review non-profit requests as recommended by the Non-Profit Amendment Committee established at the 2015 Deliberative Session shall be adopted. A standard form of information from these organizations will be reviewed by an independent advisory committee comprised of two Selectmen, two Budget Committee members and a Trustee of the Trust Fund. This Committee shall advise the Selectmen and the Budget Committee during the budget and warrant articles process of its findings and recommendations.”**

Amendment passed with a favorable vote.

Andy McLeod motioned to amend to insert after “all of the town non-profit warrant articles” insert “with the associated costs and total non-profit costs”. Motion was seconded by Lou LaCourse.

Steve Miller stated he believes it is not needed and it will be confusing for the tax payers.

Amendment passed with a favorable vote.

Mark Northridge stated with regards to the time line for turning the Cemetery Department over to town hall is 90 days not 6 months.

ARTICLE 43: To hear any reports of any committees, boards, 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.

Roger Nelson motioned to adjourn and was seconded by Mark DeCoff and passed with all in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 11:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Hawksley
Recording Secretary