

ALTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes
November 18, 2024
(Approved - November 26, 2024)

Chairman P. LaRochelle convened the meeting at 6:00 PM.

P. LaRochelle led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and a Moment of Silence. The following staff members were present:

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Paul LaRochelle, Chairman
N. Buonopane, Vice-Chairman
Andrew Morse, Selectman, Excused
Richard Shea, Selectman
Drew Carter, Selectmen
Ryan Heath, Town Administrator

Agenda Approval

N. Buonopane made a motion to approve the agenda for November 18, 2024 as presented and R. Shea seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Announcements

- The Public Participation Policy applies to all Selectmen meetings. A copy of it is on the back of each agenda, posted outside this meeting room, and on our website.

P. LaRochelle stated he would like to pause for a minute for an announcement. He would like to say a few words for our former Selectman, Bob Holt who passed away on October 30, 2024. We're truly very much so thankful for all his service to our community in our town. What he did as a Selectman and how he participated. We thank you very much. You will truly be missed.

Public Input | (limited to 3 minutes per person on agenda items only)

Appointments

None

New Business

1. Setting of the Tax Rate

R. Heath stated that on the table there's a graph and a spreadsheet for the Board. The new proposed tax rate for the for the town in its entirety would be \$12.98. That is with a \$10,000 overlay, which was what was recommended by both finance and the assessing office. That's just a cover any abatement, and it's expected to be minor. What this graph does is it shows that our current tax rate is 1318. The proposed tax rate as it stands without any money being paid down from the fund balance directly to the tax rate and the 10,000 overlay we still are going down 20 cents to 1298 overall. More importantly on this graph, the color graph next to you. I want to demonstrate both for the board, but also the public that's going to be watching this is that our town rate, even though it only reflects an overall decrease of 20 cents, the town, our tax rate is broke up into four sections. We got town, local school, state school, and county. And the assessing office put this graph together for me. If you look at the years across the top, the very top is the town rate. In 2021 we started out at \$3.50. Fifty-seven. Fifty-seven. Twenty-twenty-two. We went to \$3.91. And twenty-twenty-three we went to \$4.44. So the reduction reflected in the proposal would be three dollars in seventy two cents which is a significant draw much more than twenty cents but if you look down unfortunately we had to absorb a slight increase in local school a slight increase in state school county went down one penny so still absorbing that with the reduction in our local town burden tax burden We've gone down substantially, but it will overall reflect a 20 cent decrease as it's. My recommendation, recommendation moving forward to the board is that we leave it the way it is at 1298 with that reduction. Not buying it down. Instead, turn our focus to putting money down on the proposed operating budget and expenses coming up for 2025. I'm happy to answer any questions aboard my half. Do you have unusually high concerns about the 2025 expenses going up the careful? Right now, based on what are proposed budgets that have been preliminary approved? There is an increase in the operating budget of about 9.2%. That's over a course of absorbing expenses and payroll over two years. So with that in mind, the idea would be that we can help ease the burden on the taxpayers by offsetting it with the fund with some of the fund balance. One of the things I forgot to point out on this spreadsheet, on the bottom is a fund balance count. So currently we have four million, six hundred and fifty, six thousand, five hundred and thirteen dollars in the fund balance. DRA, we talk about DRA's

recommendations. If you look, it's put out that the maximum amount that DRA recommends is at 17%. So right now we're operating at 14%.

D. Carter made a motion to approve as presented the Tax Rate of \$12.98 with a \$10,000.00 overlay and N. Buonopane seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Old Business

None

Selectmen Reports

N. Buonopane stated that there is a Planning Board meeting tomorrow night.

Town Administrator Report

R. Heath stated that he would like to get the Board's approval to set the Deliberative Session date. According to NH Municipal Association calendar the window has a Tuesday that falls on February 4, 2025. He would like them to approve that date with a snow date of February 5, 2025.

N. Buonopane made a motion to approve those dates and R. Shea seconded with all in favor of the motion.

R. Heath stated that the only other thing is that March 11, 2025 is the date for voting.

Approval of Minutes

None

Consent Agenda Approval

None

Discretionary Action on Requests for Appointments (No discussion, majority vote required to allow/not allow appointment)

None

Public Input II (*limited to 5 minutes per person on any Governmental/Town Business*)

None

Non-Public Session

None

Adjournment

D. Carter made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:20 pm and R. Shea seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Respectfully Submitted,



Stacy L. Bailey
Recording Secretary