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2
3 **TOWN OF ALTON**
4 **BUDGET COMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETING**
5 **December 6, 2023, at 6:00 PM**
6 **Alton Town Hall**

7 **MEMBERS PRESENT**

8 Guy Maloney, Chair
9 Priscilla Terry, Member
10 Carol Locke, School Representative
11 Richard Shea, Board of Selectmen Representative
12

13 **OTHERS PRESENT**

14 Ryan Heath, Town Administrator
15

16 **CALL TO ORDER**

17 Chair Maloney called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Roll call was taken for members present.
18

19 **Approval of Agenda**

20 No changes were made to the Agenda.
21

22 **MOTION: To approve the agenda as presented. Motion by Ms. Terry. Second by Mr.**
23 **Shea. Motion passed unanimously.**
24

25 **OLD BUSINESS**

26 **Approval of Minutes**

27 Meeting of November 2, 2023 – Postponed.
28

29 **NEW BUSINESS**

30 **FY 2024 Default Budget Review**

31 Mr. Heath stated there are two default budgets for review by the Committee: The Town default
32 and Water Department default budgets. He stated there are no indications of anything other than
33 last year's budgeting aside from an item that was removed. It was clarified there are no contracts
34 moving forward and one-time purchases have been removed from the budget. Other lines remain
35 consistent with last year. There are no wage increases this year.
36

37 **MOTION: To approve the Water Department default budget for FY 2024 in the amount of**
38 **\$538,475. Motion by Ms. Terry. Second by Ms. Locke. Motion passed unanimously.**
39

40 Mr. Heath gave an overview of the default budget for the Town; he stated there are no wage
41 increases; he noted there were increases in the line for elections and by law, those elections have
42 to be held. Mr. Heath stated there are increases in benefits, which are required by law for various
43 positions and are contractual; there is a reduction in Assessing as the mapping update was
44 removed. He stated there are increases for insurances, which are required to be maintained by
45 law. Ms. Terry asked for clarification that not every line item would be the same as 2023 because

46 of increased costs for items they are required to have. Mr. Heath confirmed that is correct. He
47 stated one time purchases are also removed from the default budget calculation
48

49 **MOTION: To approve the Town of Alton default budget for FY 2024 in the amount of**
50 **\$9,521,748. Motion by Mr. Shea. Second by Ms. Locke. Motion passed unanimously.**
51

52 The Committee reviewed and discussed the proposed Warrant Articles.
53

54 Mr. Heath noted the articles have not been numbered yet as they are awaiting the zoning articles
55 which precede the budget articles.
56

57 ***Article: Benefit Pay Expendable Trust Fund***
58

59 *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000.00 to be added to the*
60 *Benefit Pay Capital Reserve Trust Fund, previously established in 2000. Said funds are*
61 *recommended by the Town Auditors to be used to pay for benefits accrued by Town employees*
62 *and redeemed when they leave employment with the Town of Alton, in accordance with the Town*
63 *Personnel Policy. Majority vote required. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). (The*
64 *estimated tax impact is \$.02)*
65

66 The funds will be added to the existing capital reserve to pay for the accrued benefits owed to
67 employees leaving employment with the Town, consistent with the conditions laid out in the
68 employee manual. The fund currently has a balance of \$26,213.46.

69 Ms. Locke asked how much the bottom line would be increased. Mr. Heath stated for every
70 \$25,000, it's a penny. He explained the impact of the warrant articles on the tax rate and noted
71 the only costs that are under the control of the Town is the municipal number, which is currently
72 \$4.40 with the current rate. He stated the operating budget starts back at \$0 and that is where the
73 rate is built from. Mr. Heath stated roughly every \$25,000 is a \$0.01. It was clarified that the
74 purpose of this review by the Budget Committee is either to recommend the articles or not
75 recommend the articles.
76

77 **MOTION: To recommend the Benefit Pay Expendable Trust fund in the amount of**
78 **\$50,000 for the 2024 budget. Motion by Mr. Shea. Second by Ms. Locke. Motion passed 3-**
79 **1-0.**
80

81 ***Article: Town Operating Budget***
82

83 *Shall the Town raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by*
84 *special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately; the amounts set forth on the*
85 *budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set*
86 *forth therein, totaling \$10,269,813.00? Should this article be defeated, the Default Budget shall*
87 *be \$9,521,748.00, which is the same as last year with certain adjustments required by previous*
88 *action of the Town or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in*
89 *accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised Operating Budget only.*

90 *This article does not include special or individual articles voted separately. Recommended by the*
91 *Board of Selectmen (5-0). (Majority vote required) (The estimated tax impact is \$4.70).*

92 The proposed operating budget is the aggregated amount established during the budgeting
93 process that is needed to operate Town functions and services for the year.

94
95

96 Ms. Locke noted the items contained within the Operating Budget were reviewed and voted on
97 by the Committee in previous meetings. It was noted that while there are some increases this
98 year, the county and school taxes are the highest increases to taxpayers.

99
100 **MOTION: To recommend the Town of Alton Operating Budget in the amount of**
101 **\$10,269,813 for the 2024 budget with a default amount of \$9,521,748. Motion by Mr. Shea.**
102 **Second by Ms. Locke. Motion passed 3-1-0.**

103

104 *Article: Operation of the Water Department*

105

106 *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$560,810.00 for the operation*
107 *and maintenance of the Water Distribution system for the ensuing year, said sum is to be offset*
108 *by users' fees. Should this article be defeated, the Default Budget shall be \$538,475.00, which is*
109 *the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town or by*
110 *law. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). (Majority vote required) (The estimated tax*
111 *impact is \$.26)*

112 The proposed water works operating budget is the aggregated amount established during the
113 budgeting process that is needed to operate Town's municipal water system for the year.

114 It was confirmed this article does not have a tax rate impact as it is a revolving account and is
115 offset by user fees.

116

117 **MOTION: To recommend the Operation of the Water Department as presented. Motion**
118 **by Mr. Shea. Second by Ms. Locke. Motion passed 4-0-0.**

119

120 *Article: Municipal Parking Lot*

121

122 *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000.00 to expand the*
123 *Library Parking Lot for Municipal use. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7,*
124 *VI and will not lapse until the project is completed or by 12/31/2028 whichever is sooner. Said*
125 *funds are to come from the unassigned fund balance. There will be no funds raised from general*
126 *taxation. This will not affect the tax rate. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0).*
127 *(Majority vote required.)*

128

129 This money will be used to begin the permitting and engineering to expand the library parking
130 lot off Depot Street. This will create a larger municipal parking area in the center of town that
131 can be used by the community for events, municipal business, and employee parking.

132 Mr. Heath stated the funds for this article would come from the Unassigned Fund balance. He
133 explained the current balance is over \$4,000,000 which is about 13% and New Hampshire
134 Department of Revenue recommends keeping that balance under 17%. He stated the expenditure
135 of the funds is by the Board of Selectmen with authorization by NH DRA. He stated it also
136 affects the Town's bond rating in the event a bond is needed.

137

138 **MOTION: To recommend the article for the Municipal Parking Lot as presented. Motion**
139 **by Mr. Shea. Second by Ms. Locke. Motion passed 4-0-0.**

140

141 **Article: Capital Reserve Fund Appropriations**

142 *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$ 135,000.00 to be added to the*
143 *following capital reserve funds:*

144 *Highway Sand Shed CRF*

\$10,000.00 \$29,820.72

145 *Sidewalk CRF*

\$10,000.00 \$15,341.55

146 *Highway Building Improvements/Repairs CRF*

\$20,000.00 \$70,024.59

147 *Senior Center CRF*

\$20,000.00 \$468.70

148 *Town Owned Parking Area CRF*

\$15,000.00 \$52,951.96

149 *IT CRF*

\$20,000.00 \$16,790.74

150 *Building & Improvements Transfer Station CRF*

\$20,000.00 \$167,215.49

151 *Jones Field CRF*

\$10,000.00 \$20,141.32

152 *Milfoil Treatment Program CRF*

\$10,000.00 \$40,955.16

153 *Said funds to be raised through taxation. Current fund balances are in gray.*

154 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). (Majority vote required.) (The estimated tax*
155 *impact is \$.06)*

156

157 Mr. Heath stated NH DRA suggested various CRFs be combined rather than separating out the
158 items with separate warrant articles to make it easier for voters. He stated the Board of
159 Selectmen combined items under \$20,000. Ms. Locke asked for an explanation of how the CRFs
160 are spent. Mr. Heath explained each CRF is established with a statement of purpose for that fund;
161 he stated the Board of Selectmen are agents to expend so department heads cannot expend the
162 funds without prior approval. Ms. Terry stated she is concerned about the overall effect on the
163 tax rate, noting the fund balances seem pretty good for most of the CRFs. Mr. Shea noted voters
164 have the opportunity at the Deliberative Session to amend the wording and dollar amounts for
165 the CRF.

166

167 **MOTION: To recommend the article for the Capital Reserve Funds Appropriations as**
168 **presented. Motion by Mr. Shea. Second by Mr. Maloney. Motion passed 2-2-0.**

169

170 **Article: Fire Department Equipment Capital Reserve**

171 *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$200,000.00 to be added to the*
172 *Fire Department Equipment Capital Reserve Fund as previously established in 1973.*

173 *Recommended by the Selectmen (5-0). (Majority vote required.) (The estimated tax impact is*
174 *\$.09)*

175

176 This money will be used to continue the current capital improvement plan. The funds are needed
177 to repair and replace all apparatus and equipment used by the fire department. The fund currently

178 has a balance of \$1,552,289.05. Mr. Heath stated an ambulance is on order and fire truck engine
179 have been allocated from that balance but the balances on those purchases have not been paid.
180 He stated these amounts for the warrant articles were the recommendations from the Capital
181 Improvement Planning Committee; he noted this contribution was reduced this year to help
182 offset increases in other areas.

183

184 **MOTION: To recommend the article for the Fire Department Equipment Capital Reserve**
185 **as presented. Motion by Mr. Shea. Second by Ms. Locke. Motion passed 3-0-1.**

186

187 ***Article: Aerial Ladder Truck***

188 *To see if the Town will vote to authorize the selectmen to enter into a 7-year lease purchase*
189 *agreement in the amount of \$717,247 to finance the purchase and equipping of an Aerial Ladder*
190 *Truck for the Fire Department, and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$128,438 for the first*
191 *year's payment for that purpose. This lease agreement contains an escape clause. The annual*
192 *lease payments will be approximately \$128,438.*

193

194 Mr. Heath explained the fire department wants to buy an aerial ladder and because it's a long
195 term cost, the breakdown is shown in the article. He explained the tax rate is impacted by the
196 yearly payment amount, which is about \$0.05. He also explained the balance in the CRF has
197 outpaced the inflation costs. It was noted the Town does have a 1999 ladder truck and its difficult
198 to get parts for the older vehicle.

199

200 **MOTION: To recommend the article for the Aerial Ladder Truck as presented. Motion by**
201 **Mr. Shea. Second by Mr. Maloney. Motion passed 4-0-0.**

202

203 ***Article: Rock and Asphalt Crushing Capital Reserve Fund***

204 *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$30,000.00 to be added to the*
205 *Rock & Asphalt Crushing Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 2017.*
206 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). (Majority vote required.) (The estimated tax*
207 *impact is \$.01)*

208

209 This capital reserve fund was established for the purpose of crushing recyclable materials. The
210 fund currently has a balance of \$36,002.85. Mr. Heath stated this fund is used on a regular basis
211 for the Town to be able to process aggregate for the benefit of the Town rather than excess fill
212 just being disposed of.

213

214 **MOTION: To recommend the article for the Rock and Asphalt Crushing Capital Reserve**
215 **Fund as presented. Motion by Mr. Shea. Second by Mr. Maloney. Motion passed 3-1-0.**

216

217 ***Article: Bridge Replacement Capital Reserve Fund***

218 *To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$150,000.00 to be added to the Bridge*
219 *Replacement Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 1995 and to designate the*
220 *Selectmen as agents to expend. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). (Majority vote*
221 *required.) (The estimated tax impact is \$0.07)*

222 Mr. Heath explained the bridge work projects around Town that need to be addressed. This
223 capital reserve fund was established to assist with the cost of repair/replacement of Town owned
224 bridges. The fund currently has a balance of \$25,024.88.

225

226 **MOTION: To recommend the article for the Bridge Replacement Capital Reserve Fund as**
227 **presented. Motion by Mr. Shea. Second by Mr. Maloney. Motion passed 3-1-0.**

228

229 ***Article: Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund***

230 *To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$200,000.00 to be added to the Highway*
231 *Equipment Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 1981. Recommended by the Board*
232 *of Selectmen (5-0). (Majority vote required.) (The estimated tax impact is \$.09)*

233

234 Mr. Heath stated the current balance of the fund is about \$331,000. He stated this account covers
235 repairs on all the large equipment. These funds would fund the CIP planned 2024 Highway
236 Department replacements of front line fleet vehicles. The fund currently has a balance of
237 \$132,097.22.

238

239 **MOTION: To recommend the article for the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund as**
240 **presented. Motion by Mr. Shea. Second by Mr. Maloney. Motion passed 2-2-0.**

241

242 ***Article: Retaining Wall Capital Reserve Fund***

243 *To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000.00 to be added to the Retaining*
244 *Wall Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 2018. Recommended by the Board of*
245 *Selectmen (5-0). (Majority vote required.) (The estimated tax impact is \$.02)*

246

247 Mr. Heath stated this is mainly for the stone wall that runs from the pavilion and down past
248 Shibly's. He explained the damage and repairs that have been ongoing. The retaining rock wall
249 from the public boat docks to the swim area needs repair. The retaining wall is deteriorating at
250 the water level due to age and wave action. The cost of the repairs is approximately \$90,000.
251 The fund currently has a balance of \$84,260.75.

252

253 **MOTION: To recommend the article for the Retaining Wall Capital Reserve Fund as**
254 **presented. Motion by Mr. Shea. Second by Ms. Locke. Motion passed 3-1-0.**

255

256 ***Article: Alton Bay Community Center Property Capital Reserve***

257 *To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$30,000, to be added to the Alton Bay*
258 *Community Center Property Capital Reserve fund, as previously established in 2020.*
259 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). (Majority vote required.) (The estimated tax*
260 *impact is \$.01)*

261

262

263 Mr. Heath stated this fund is used for repairs and maintenance to the property (old train station).
264 He explained the repairs and rebuilding that have been done and the work that is needed to
265 continue maintaining the old building. Rationale: The funds would be used for interior and
266 exterior repairs such as: painting; replace support beams; decking; boardwalk; fencing; railings;

267 supports for underneath the building and boardwalk; siding; flooring; windows; kitchen;
268 bathrooms; and upgrades/repairs to the septic, electrical, plumbing and heating systems when
269 needed. The fund currently has a balance of \$45,991.48.

270

271 **MOTION: To recommend the article for the Alton Bay Community Center Property**
272 **Capital Reserve Fund as presented. Motion by Mr. Shea. Second by Mr. Maloney. Motion**
273 **passed 2-2-0.**

274

275 **Article: Grounds & Maintenance Vehicle and Equipment Capital Reserve Fund**

276 *To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000.00 to be added to the Grounds*
277 *& Maintenance Vehicle and Equipment Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 2019.*
278 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (4-1) (Majority vote required.) (The estimated tax*
279 *impact is \$.01)*

280

281 Mr. Heath stated this fund is part of the CIP plan for replacement vehicles; it maintains the
282 existing fleet and purchases new vehicles. Rationale: The funds would be used to purchase
283 replacement vehicles and equipment when needed for the Grounds and Maintenance Department,
284 which maintains thirty-eight Town properties. Department performs general maintenance of
285 Town properties and buildings; plowing; mowing; trash removal at all Town buildings and
286 public parks; turf management and custodial care of Town buildings. The fund currently has a
287 balance of \$8,735.36.

288

289 **MOTION: To recommend the article for the Grounds and Maintenance Vehicle and**
290 **Equipment Capital Reserve Fund as presented. Motion by Mr. Shea. Second by Mr.**
291 **Maloney. Motion passed 3-1-0.**

292

293 **Article: Town Hall Building Improvement Capital Reserve Fund**

294 *To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$60,000, to be added to Town Hall*
295 *Building Improvement Capital Reserve fund, as previously established in 2011. Recommended*
296 *by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). (Majority vote required.) (The estimated tax impact is \$.03)*

297

298 Rationale: These funds will be added to the Capital Reserve fund for future improvements to the
299 Town Hall Building, such as mechanical upgrades, interior improvements, or exterior
300 enhancements or improvements. The fund currently has a balance of \$32,640.97.

301 Mr. Heath stated no office repairs have been done on the first and basement floors yet; a
302 third ADA bathroom also needs to be done. The filing room also needs to be done; storms caused
303 damage to the brick walls and there is a proposal to rebuild the handicap ramp.

304

305 **MOTION: To recommend the article for the Town Hall Building Improvement Capital**
306 **Reserve Fund as presented. Motion by Mr. Shea. Second by Mr. Maloney. Motion passed**
307 **3-1-0.**

308

309 **Article: IT Network Server Replacement**

310 *To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$40,000, to be used for the replacement*
311 *and upgrade of the Town's information technology servers. Said funds are to come from the*

312 *unassigned fund balance. There will be no funds raised from general taxation. This will not*
313 *affect the tax rate. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (4-0). (Majority vote required.)*
314

315 Mr. Heath explained two of the eight servers have been replaced but the additional servers
316 greatly need to be upgraded for security and software purposes; there is no impact to the taxes.
317

318 **MOTION: To recommend the article for the IT Network Server Replacement as presented.**
319 **Motion by Mr. Shea. Second by Mr. Maloney. Motion passed 4-0-0.**
320

321 ***Article: New Riverside Cemetery Capital Reserve Fund***

322 *To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum \$50,000 to be added to the New Riverside*
323 *Cemetery Capital Reserve Fund, previously established in 2023. Recommended by the Board of*
324 *Selectmen (4-1). (Majority vote required) (The estimated tax impact is \$.02)*
325

326 Mr. Heath stated the engineering work has been done and the plan is to start building the fund to
327 do the work. Rationale: This fund is used for the expansion and maintaining of the New
328 Riverside Cemetery, Located on Suncook Valley Highway. The expansion will include
329 additional burial lots, and columbarium relocation and expansion. This will also include future
330 expansion of the maintenance facilities at the cemetery. The fund currently has a balance of
331 \$75,000.00.
332

333 **MOTION: To recommend the article for the New Riverside Cemetery Capital Reserve**
334 **Fund as presented. Motion by Mr. Shea. Second by Ms. Locke. Motion passed 3-1-0.**
335

336 ***Article: Highway Reconstruction Capital Reserve Fund***

337 *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,450,000.00 to be added to the*
338 *Highway Reconstruction Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 1998. Said amount*
339 *is partially offset by revenues from the Highway Block Grant Fund estimated to be \$201,935.00.*
340 *This is an annual appropriation that provides for the Maintenance of existing roadways.*
341 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). (Majority vote required.) (The estimated tax*
342 *impact is \$.66)*
343

344 It was noted the fund balance is about \$65,000; this fund is nearly depleted each year.
345 Mr. Heath explained the rationale: This capital reserve fund was established to continue the
346 pavement preservation and road rehabilitation a practice which aligns with our Road Surface
347 Management System and manages, costs to the town by performing this practices. The fund
348 currently has a balance of \$70,726.39.
349

350 **MOTION: To recommend the article for the Highway Reconstruction Capital Reserve**
351 **Fund as presented. Motion by Mr. Shea. Second by Mr. Maloney. Motion passed 3-0-1.**
352

353 ***Article: Environmental Capital Reserve Fund***

354 *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000.00 to be added to the*
355 *Environmental Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established in 2022. Recommended by the*
356 *Board of Selectmen (3-2). (Majority vote required) (The estimated tax impact is \$.01)*
357

358 Mr. Heath stated this fund was established to deal with stormwater contamination on Mills Pond.
359 He stated the Town is working on applying for a 319 grant through the State of New Hampshire
360 but engineering firms have to be hired to create plans. This fund would be used for events such
361 as severe storm damage or septic system failures which can result in environmental damage that
362 should be addressed and corrected as quickly as possible in order to avoid extensive and long-
363 lasting adverse consequences. The warrant article makes the funds available to any Town
364 department that finds itself facing an environmentally-related challenge. The fund currently has
365 a balance of \$36,452.87.

366 **MOTION: To recommend the article for the Environmental Capital Reserve Fund as**
367 **presented. Motion by Mr. Shea. Second by Mr. Maloney. Motion passed 3-1-0.**
368

369 **Article: Local Radio Communications**

370 *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000.00 to repair and replace*
371 *the local radio communications for the Town of Alton. Said funds are to come from the*
372 *unassigned fund balance. There will be no funds raised from general taxation. This will not*
373 *affect the tax rate. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). (Majority vote required)*
374

375 Mr. Heath explained this is a one-time purchase and outlined the rationale: These funds will
376 be used to repair, maintain, and purchase new radio, repeater, and support equipment needed for
377 Town departments and vehicles. This will ensure our municipal departments can adequately
378 communicate with each other during emergency and storm operations with or without power.
379 Mr. Heath stated if the repeater on Prospect Mountain goes down, the entire area of
380 communications goes down. He explained it is tied in with the Belknap and Strafford Counties
381 systems.

382 **MOTION: To recommend the article for the Local Radio Communications as presented.**
383 **Motion by Mr. Shea. Second by Mr. Maloney. Motion passed 4-0-0.**
384

385 **Article: Nonprofits**

386 *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$49,325.00 for the purpose of*
387 *supporting the following nonprofits and their individual appropriations:*

388 American Red Cross	\$2,000.00
389 Caregivers of Southern Carroll County & Vicinity, Inc.	\$2,000.00
390 Granite VNA & Hospice	\$12,000.00
391 Community Action Program (CAP)	\$10,000.00
392 Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)	\$500.00
393 Lakes Region Mental Health Center fka Genesis	\$15,750.00
394 Life Ministries, Inc.	\$3,000.00
395 New Beginnings	\$1,575.00
396 Waypoint fka Child and Family Services	\$2,500.00

397
398 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0). (Majority vote required) (The estimated tax*
399 *impact is \$.02)*
400

401 Mr. Heath stated none of these line items are new requests; all have been historically approved
402 by voters.

403

404 **MOTION: To recommend the article for the Nonprofits as presented. Motion by Mr. Shea.**
405 **Second by Mr. Maloney. Motion passed 3-1-0.**

406

407 **Public Input**

408 None.

409

410 **Next Meeting:**

411 January 10, 2024, 6:00 PM.

412 January 16, 2024, 6:00 PM.

413

414 The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 PM.

415

416 Respectfully Submitted,

417 *Jennifer Riel*

418 Jennifer Riel, Recording Secretary

DRAFT