ALTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes
September 22, 2026
(Approved – October 13, 2026)

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
Drew Carter, Vice-Chairman
Andrew Morse, Selectman, Excused
Richard Shea, Selectman
Jack Sleeper, Selectmen
Ryan Heath, Town Administrator

Agenda Approval

P. LaRochelle stated that New Business #4 Police Department – New Hire Officer Sign-On Bonus – Request and Old Business #1 Fire Department – Ambulance Purchase Request needs to be removed from the agenda.

P. LaRochelle made a motion to approve the agenda as amended 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.

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

None

Appointments

None

New Business

1. Brian Fortier – Barn Sign – Approval

B. Fortier, Owner of West Alton Marina, approached the table. R. Shea stated that he will recuse himself from this because his boat is at West Alton Marina. B. Fortier stated that he is looking to paint the barn at the entrance to the marina. He stated that it would be along the lines of an old barn advertisement on the side of the building. He is here before the Board to see if it is a good idea. P. LaRochelle asked him if he is aware of the sign ordinance that the Town has. B. Fortier stated that he was and he checked with the Code Officer who said that the only thing regarding painting a structure like this with a business advertisement was to come before this Board. P. LaRochelle stated that he believes that he would not only have to come to this Board but also before the Zoning Board. B. Fortier stated that is not what the Code Official indicated. D. Carter stated that it is his understanding that he would have to go before the ZBA because that is so much larger than anything permitted. D. Carter asked how bid of a sign it is. B. Fortier believes that it is 20 feet x 40 feet. It will be facing downtown direction. P. LaRochelle asked if it was visible from Cherry Valley Road. B. Fortier stated that it is. J. Sleeper asked if it would be visible from the other direction. B. Fortier stated that he did not propose to put the side on the other side of the barn. There are trees on the other side. D. Carter asked if there were any thoughts on lighting. B. Fortier stated that he did not. There is a road sign for the intersection so it could possibly be lit by that. P. LaRochelle asked if any signs that were there right now would be removed. B. Fortier stated that the original sign was removed and is screwed to the side of the barn right now. If he is able to put this sign on the barn he is going to try and remove the billboard that is obstructing views coming out of the marina. He owns the billboard but the permit is through the State and that runs every 7 years. It renewed in 2024. He is trying to see what his options are. He wants to either get rid of the billboard, move the billboard back, or do something on the side of the barn. P. LaRochelle asked if there ever was a sign like this on the barn before. B. Fortier said not that he has any pictures of. If this is a no go then he'll probably be back to the Town to see what other options there are.

D. Carterr made a motion to permit West Alton Marina to be heard by the ZBA for a sign on the barn with the final determination on size and color and relationship with the existing billboard all considered in their decision and P. LaRochelle seconded and added that he is on the Zoning Board and will be recusing himself from the Zoning Board when this comes up with 4 in favor and 1 recusal (RS) of the motion.

2. Town Moderator – Budget Questions

G. Young, Town Moderator, approached the table. He is here tonight to ask the Board to approve some money in the budget to purchase poll books for the conduct of the elections. He explained some of the processes that are required by everyone before, during, and after and elections. Poll books do the same for the ballot clerks and the Supervisors of the Checklist. They make it faster to check in voters. They make it more accurate to check in voters. They make the reporting that the Supervisors do after the election much simpler, easier, and faster. He would like to have them online for 2028. In order for that to happen they need to be purchased in 2027. R. Shea asked if there is a feeling for the number of towns in New Hampshire that are using them. G. Young stated that he did not specifically research that. They are becoming more and more popular across the state. There are two brands that have been approved by the State. Th brand that he recommends to purchase is from the same manufacturers as their tabulator. R. Shea stated that he had the opportunity to see this demonstrated in New Durham and he was very happy with it. It is not connected to the internet so those people who think all elections are crooked can't claim that in this case. He doesn't see a downside to this except for the cost. He would be in favor of this. D. Carter stated that when this came up last year he was probably the most vocal about it because of the tight budget they were working with. From what he has read this would save and probably a worthwhile investment. J. Sleeper asked if they could get quotes from competing companies so that they can get a level for the purchase and that justification for the sole source. G. Young stated that he can do that. J. Sleeper stated that he tries to adhere to that. That is something that the Town's people are very vocal about wanting to see them get three quotes and follow our purchasing procedure. G. Young stated that he can only get one more. R. Heath asked if there is an issue with the compatibility with the voting machines. He asked if the poll books and the voting machines recently purchase are compatible. G. young stated that VX Works is the same company that makes the tabulator. The two devices do not talk to each other.

It is the consensus of the Board to have another quote before they make their decision.

3. Police Department – Rifle Grade Body Armor Purchase – Request

A. Painchaud, Police Chief, approached the table. The body armor that all of the Police Officers wear currently is the same as what every other police officer in the country wears which is soft body armor. Most of them wear it in something that is called an outer carrier. It gets the weight of the waist and up on the chest. They can also take it off if they are typing reports or on the phone. Inside of the outer carrier is level 3A soft body armor. It is designed to stop pistol calibers. A lot of agencies have opted to go with a separate plate carrier. Officers can keep them in their trunk so if they are going to a hot call they ca throw it on. He has been talking to Safariland and other agencies who have gone this route. The carrier that the officers currently use has a pocket in the front that will accept rifle grade plates. He figured that would be a better option. The officers can keep it in their cruiser bag which is usually on the passenger seat. They can grab the plate and slide it in if they want that increased threat protections. They could wear that rifle grade plate all the time if they so choose. They are looking at purchasing new plates in the amount of 17. All full-time and part-time officers would be equipped with a rifle plate specifically issued to them. The company that has the most capability is directly through Safariland. They make the existing carriers and armor. Those plates are $570.00 a piece. He did get another quote. The account that they are looking to pull it from the Police Asset Forfeiture Account. It was started a long time ago. It was from a case with the DEA where a big sum of money from an asset forfeiture case. Over the years the get matching body armor grants through the State and that money match gets put into that asset forfeiture account. He explained the difference in the products from different manufacturers. J. Sleeper asked if these plates have any type of shelf life. A. Painchaud stated that soft armor does. From the body sweat and stuff it is about 5 years. The hard plates do not expire. He passed out samples for the Board to look at.

P. LaRochelle made a motion to allow the Police Chief to purchase new rifle grade body armor 17 plates in all for $9.690.00 from Safariland Company with funds to be taken out of the Police Asset Forfeiture Account and D. Carter seconded with all in favor of the motion.

4. ~~Police Department – New Hire Officer Sign On Bonus – Request~~

**Removed*

5. Town Clerk/Tax Collector – 2022 and 2023 Tax Deeding

R. Heath stated that the Tax Collector was not able to be here tonight. She wanted to provide this information to the Board because it is lengthy. There is no action required tonight. This is more informational. Action will be required from the Board on October 13. She wanted to give the Board time to adequately look at the information before making a decision.

6. 2027 Budget Presentation

- Planning 4191

C. Armstrong, Planner, approached the table. He mostly carried forward the same budget as last year. The part-time line item was to allow the minute taker attend the Planning Board and ZBA. That is not something that they really had so he removed that line. Benefit buyout was reduced.. He reduced the reference material line. They recently re-engaged with the Lakes Region Planning Commission which allows them to purchase the blue planning books at a discounted rate. He did increase the line item for postage. He also increased the meeting an conference line with the cost of the NHMA conferences going up.

D. Carter made a motion to advance the proposed 2027 budget for Planning for a total of $169,281.00 and P. LaRochelle seconded with all in favor of the motion.

- Building 4192

R. Therrien, Code Official, approached the table. He stated that this is down from last year. He eliminated the part-time position. The travel and mileage was reduced as well. That was mainly for the part-time position.

P. LaRochelle made a motion to approve the 2027 budget for the Building Department in the sum of $125,336.00 and D. Carter seconded with all in favor of the motion.

- IT 4145

J. Monaco, IT Director, approached the table. He stated that between last year's budget and this year's there is a $7,000.00 increase. There are a lot of major decreases in some of the lines as well. He explained some of the infrastructure that needs to be replaced or upgraded.

D. Carter made a motion to advance the IT Department's 2027 budget at $217,083.00 and R. Shea seconded with all in favor of the motion.

- Parks & Recreation 4520

K. Troendle, Parks & Recreation Director, approached the table. The budget that she is presenting is almost level funded with the exception for the full-time wages and the benefit buyout. Those two have increased.

P. LaRochelle made a motion to approve the Parks and Recreation Budget for 2027 in the sum of $141,004.00 and R. Shea seconded with all in favor of the motion.

- Police 4210

A. Painchaud, Police Chief, approached the table again. He would like to give a quick shoot out to Lieutenant Bill Tolios. He worked extremely hard with the Town Administrator and Finance. The budget is showing a 3% increase. They do not have any real expensive equipment except for their vehicles. The wages are where most of the increase is. They are currently short four positions. Two of the four vacancies they partially funded for 2027.

J. Sleeper made a motion to accept the proposed Police Operating Budget of $1,522,518.00 for the 2027 budget year and R. Shea seconded with all in favor of the motion.

- Administration
  - Interest/Short Term 4723

D. Carter made a motion to advance the 2027 budget for Interest on Tax and Revenue Anticipated Notes for $1.00 and R. Shea seconded with all in favor of the motion.

- Audio/Visual 4199

R. Shea made a motion to forward with the budget for Audio/Visual for $2,000.00 and P. LaRochelle seconded with all in favor of the motion.

- Emergency Management 4290

P. LaRochelle made a motion to approve the 2027 budget for Emergency Management for $11,003.00 and J. Sleeper seconded with all in favor of the motion.

- HHW 4326

P. LaRochelle made a motion to approve the 2027 budget for HHW for $27,568.00 and R. Shea seconded with all in favor of the motion.

- Street Lights 4316

D. Carter made a motion to advance the 2027 budget for Street Lights for $33,500.00 and R. Shea seconded with all in favor of the motion.

- Patriotic Services 4583

J. Sleeper made a motion to accept the 2027 budget for Patriotic Services for $23,690.00 and D. Carter seconded with all in favor of the motion.

- Budget Committee 4131

P. LaRochelle made a motion to approve the 2027 budget for Budget Committee for $2,691.00 and R. Shea seconded with all in favor of the motion.

7. Water Bandstand Committee – Video Camera/Weather Station Discussion

P. LaRochelle stated that he is recusing himself from the Board for this. He approached the table as a citizen. This is the proposal for the Alton bay Water Bandstand Weather Cam and Weather Station. It is from the Alton Bay Seaplane Base and Runway. They would like to purchase the items and have them mounted to the Bandstand. It would be for use by anyone. They can use it to see the ice runway or boat activity. He has spoken to J. Monaco, IT Director, and it would be relatively easy to connect to the internet. It would not be any responsibility of the Town. They would be happy to defer the cost for joining the internet and for the electricity. There would be no liability whatsoever to the Town. D.. Carter asked if this is something that will be running year round. P. LaRochelle stated that it would. D. Carter stated that he liked the fact that it states there will be no recordings.

R. Shea made a motion to authorize the Alton Bay Seaplane Base and Ice Runway to proceed with the installation of the camera to allow observation of the bay and a weather station to provide basic weather information over the internet using the internet connection with our existing facility in the Town Center building at no cost to the Town in accordance with the presentation from P. LaRochelle and J. Leavitt dated 9/16/2026 and J. Sleeper seconded with 3 in favor and 1 recusal (PL).

P. LaRochelle rejoined the Board.

Old Business

1. ~~Fire Department – Ambulance Purchase Request~~

**Removed*

2. Blueberry Lane Kayak Rack – Update

R. Heath stated that he put on the table the agreement that was referenced at the previous meeting about the use of Town's property and access. He also provided a previous agreement. Neither agreement has any discussion or any conversation about use. It is all about restoration of a wetland stream bed. He stated that there is still the proposal for the kayak rack. It is up to the Board now. P. LaRochelle stated that as nice as it seems there is only about 40 feet. He doesn't think it will be in the best interest of the Town.

P. LaRochelle made a motion to deny the use of the land for a kayak rack and D. Carter seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Town Administrator Report

R. Heath stated that the first thing is to set the date for the Deliberative Session. He proposed February 2, 2027.

It is the consensus of the Board to have the Deliberative Session on February 2, 2027 at 6:00 pm.

R. Heath stated that the next pertains to something from a previous meeting. He met with P. Bolster in reference to the Bike Trail proposal. He would like to form a committee for this.

It is the consensus of the Board to move forward with this.

R. heath stated that the next thing is a Public Hearing needs to be set up to accept funds from ACA. These are funds for Health and Wellness.

It is the consensus of the Board to have a Public Hearing on October 13, 2026.

R. Heath stated that the last thing is a Dam Update. He is still working with Legal. He did find experts that handle every aspect of this situation. DES did go out today and fully lowered the dam.

Selectmen Reports/Questions

J. Sleeper stated that the Master Plan Implementation met last week.

R. Shea stated that Milfoil Committee meets tomorrow, The Swap Shop is doing well. He attended the Master Plan Implementation and CIP meetings.

D. Carter stated that he wasn't able to attend the Conservation Committee meeting.

P. LaRochelle stated that the upcoming ZBA meeting has been cancelled. He would like to thank the American Legion and the Police Chief and Fire Chief for their participation in the September 11 Memorial.

Approval of Minutes

July 28, 2026 – Public Session

R. Shea made a motion to approve the minutes for July 28, 2026 – Public Session and J. Sleeper seconded with all in favor of the motion.

September 9, 2026 – Public Session

Tabled

Consent Agenda Approval

D. Carter made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda for September 22, 2026 as presented and R. Shea seconded with all in favor of the motion.

1. **Fire Department**

Burwell, Gavin, PT Student Intern, $17.95/hr, effective 9/23/2026

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)***

S. Espositio approached the table. She thanked the Board for the information about the Dam. She is surprised there is not more people here for it tonight.

L. Carr approached the table. He stated that the board should put a paper out about the dam. He thinks the decision about the barn was prejudiced. He also thinks that the Poll Books should happen.

G. Young approached the table. He stated that there are 69 towns using the Poll Books. Conservation Commission has a Facebook page that is putting out regular updates about the dam.

K. Sullivan approached the table. She discussed the Master Plan. She thinks that the Bike Trail is a good idea. She would like an update on the Hidden Springs project. The Town should direct people to the Conservation Commission's Facebook page about the dam.

Non-Public Session

P. LaRochelle moved at 8:32 pm to enter nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A: 3, II, a (personnel) and c (reputation). J. sleeper seconded. Roll call vote:

P. LaRochelle – yes J. Sleeper – yes R. Shea – yes
D. Carter – yes A. Morse – Excused Roll call vote carried unanimously.

At 8:32 pm Chairman P. LaRochelle convened the nonpublic session with the following people present:

P. LaRochelle, Chairman
D. Carter, Vice Chairman
R. Shea, Selectmen
J. Sleeper, Selectmen
R. Heath, Town Administrator
A. Painchaud, Police Chief

Police Chief A. Painchaud left the meeting room.

P. LaRochelle moved at 8:59 pm to exit the nonpublic session. R. Shea seconded. Roll call vote:

P. LaRochelle – yes J. Sleeper – yes R. Shea – yes
D. Carter – Yes A. Morse – Excused Roll call vote carried unanimously.

P. LaRochelle moved to 'not divulge' item two of the minutes because divulgence of the information likely would adversely affect the reputation of any person other than a member of this board or render the proposed action of the board ineffective. D. Carter seconded. Roll call vote:

P. LaRochelle – yes J. Sleeper – yes R. Shea – yes
D. Carter –Yes A. Morse – Excused Roll call vote carried unanimously.

P. LaRochelle motioned to promote Officer Cameron Spellman to the rank of Corporal with a pay increase to $36.64 an hour. R. Shea seconded. **Motion Carried.**

Adjournment

D. Carter moved at 9:00 pm to adjourn. J. Sleeper seconded. **Motion carried.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Stacy L. Bailey