

## **Alstead Advisory Budget Committee Minutes for the January 24, 2018 meeting (6:30pm)**

### **Members in attendance:**

Chris Hansen, Chair  
Glenn Elsesser  
Marge Noonan  
Carol Reller  
Chris Rietmann  
Sam Sutcliffe  
Mary Ann Wolf  
Joe Levesque

### **Review agenda and minutes**

Minutes of the previous AABC meeting (1/3/2018) were approved with the corrections in the version Priscilla sent to us on 1/5/18. No further corrections were needed.

### **Member Terms of the Alstead Advisory Budget Committee**

There is a discrepancy between the member terms list that Priscilla reported to the town office and the list that Trish reported. Chris Hansen will take this as an action item. He will check with the Town Moderator (Susan Norlander) and get the official list to Kelly Wright at the town office.

Note that Chris took care of this action item on 1/25/2018, and now only Juliana's term expires this year.

### **Recommendations on 2018 Warrant Articles**

The AABC considered the content of the expected warrant articles and voted our recommendations. The articles are listed by subject, since we did not have the exact language, nor the numbers to be assigned to the articles. Eight committee members were in attendance.

- Town operating budget for 2018: \$1,612,746 – 7 yea, 1 nay
- Paving for 2018: \$175,000 (precise source amounts to be determined, but mostly from fund balance, the rest from what is available from SB-38) – 8 yea, 0 nay
- Library steps: \$60,000 from the Library Capital Reserve Fund – 7 yea, 1 abstain
- Vilas Pool Pedestrian Bridge: \$15,000 from new taxes (increase of 9 cents per \$1000) – 5 yea, 3 nay
- Town Hall Renovations: \$66,000 from fund balance – 8 yea, 0 nay

## Recommendations on 2018 Warrant Articles (continued)

- Ambulance Capital Reserve Fund: \$10,000 from fund balance and \$5000 from new taxes (increase of 3 cents per \$1000) – 8 yea, 0 nay
- Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund: \$25,000 from new taxes (increase of 16 cents per \$1000) – 6 yea, 1 nay, 1 abstain
- Highway Capital Reserve Fund: \$5000 from fund balance and \$50,000 from new taxes (increase of 31 cents per \$1000) – 8 yea, 0 nay
- Bridge Capital Reserve Fund: \$25,000 from new taxes (increase of 16 cents per \$1000) – 8 yea, 0 nay
- Library Capital Reserve Fund: \$15,000 from fund balance – 8 yea, 0 nay
- Road Projects Capital Reserve Fund (new CRF): \$10,000 from new taxes (increase of 6 cents per \$1000) – 8 yea, 0 nay

The AABC decided not to make any recommendations for or against the three petitioned warrant articles (Thanksgiving gift baskets, Cemetery trust fund, Offshore wind turbines)

The AABC also decided not to propose any amendments to any of the warrant articles at this meeting. Proposed changes to any of the warrant articles by any AABC members at the deliberative session will be as private citizens, not as members of the AABC. Please make sure you make that clear, if you have any issues with the warrant articles.

## Raises for Town Employees in 2018

While the AABC fully supports performance reviews for town employees prior to receiving raises, we decided not to pursue whether there was full adherence to this policy with the BOS until after the Town meeting and Town election.

## Health Insurance

The AABC will ask the BOS if they are interested in having the AABC form a subcommittee to investigate what comparable towns provide for health insurance benefits and the cost to employees. The goal of this subcommittee will be to get the best return on the dollar for both the town and the employees. As with the raises, we will not ask the BOS about this issue until after the town meeting and town election. Other possible projects will be presented to the BOS along with this health insurance project at that time.

Note that Mary Ann provided this list of comparable towns from her work on a previous subcommittee:

Antrim, Bethlehem, Chichester, Dunbarton,  
Marlborough & Roxbury, New Durham, Rollingsford

## Format of Printouts

The AABC would like to ensure that the printouts for the deliberative session on 2/3/18 include the last 2 or 3 years' operating budget along with this year's proposed budget. This will allow people at the meeting to see the details of increases or decreases with respect to cost.

## Capital Reserve Funds

Nothing new to report on CRFs. They average about a 1.9% annual return, after fees are deducted.

## Deliberative Session Seating

The AABC proposed that we should sit together at the deliberative session on 2/3/18. There is no plan to provide any food or beverages for this event. We hope to do a better planning job to host a pot luck for this meeting next year!

## Action items

- Chris H. will contact Susan Norlander about the discrepancies in the current AABC member term limit expiration dates and present an updated list to Kelly Wright for publication in the Town Report.
- Chris H. will present Kelly Wright with the results of our recommendations on the 2018 Warrant Articles for publication in the Town Report.
- Someone needs to check with Kelly Wright about the printouts for the deliberative session and ensure that they show side-by-side comparisons of costs for previous years. Volunteer?

## The End

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10pm. Chris H. proposed the adjournment; Mary Ann, Carol and Chris R. seconded, no one opposed.

## Next Meetings

Alstead Deliberative Session:  
Saturday, February 3rd 2018 at 10:00am, Metcalf Gymnasium, Vilas School

AABC Meeting:  
Wednesday, February 14th at 6:30pm, Alstead Town Office

*Submitted by Joe Levesque*