

Alstead Advisory Budget Committee Minutes for the January 4, 2017 meeting

Members in attendance:

Chris Hansen
Carol Reller
Mary Ann Wolf
Julianna Stevens
Sam Sutcliffe
Glenn Elsesser
Les Thomas
Barbara Viegener
Marge Noonan

Also present:

Chris Rietmann

Minutes and action items from previous meeting

Minutes of the December 21 meeting were approved as amended (Chris Rietmann and Les Thomas should be removed from the list of people attending) with 1 abstention.

Select Board meeting

Glenn gave a review of the Selectman's meeting and the current warrant articles. (Copies sent to AABC members by email.) There is a question of the CIP not being kept up (implemented). Cuts in the capital reserve funding could mean "skyrocketing taxes" in the future when needed equipment must be purchased instead of gradually adding to the funds each year. The SB plan to submit a flat line operating budget and is still being revised.

SB met with a representative of the Conservation Commission for an explanation of their line item use. They will meet with Kelly to make it clearer.

Warrant articles at this time:

- DPW request for 10 wheel truck was turned down as this would take too much of the fund balance.
- Paving has been cut to a figure similar to previous years of \$150,000 from fund balance. The issue with this is getting behind on the paving, which will likely cost more in the future.
- The Police Cruiser is back to being a lease with 14,000 from Capital reserve (warrant article).

- Bridge fund has sufficient amount available for temporary bridges but will request \$15000 from taxes to have money available for matching State funds.
- Library \$15,000 will be raised by taxes.
- Ambulance to capital reserve of \$25,000 from Fund Balance.
- Need to fix cable to communication tower at cost \$17,000 by taxes. This is necessary for the Police Dept. to communicate with each other.

Other possible warrants:

- Return New Town Hall capital reserve to the fund balance.
- Cemetery capital reserve to be returned to the town as the land this was formed to purchase is no longer available.

Red lined bridges:

The current plan of using capital reserve for temporary bridges reduces the amount available for the 80% from the State. There is no guarantee this program will become available again. There was much discussion on the 80/20 split and exactly what qualifies for this. Kelly has started an inquiry into this so we will have a clear direction on how to proceed with funds for the Bridge CRF and should have the information before the Public Hearing.

Other issues

A question was raised of any past vote of having the Select board's recommendation on each warrant article or is this decided each year?

Any warrant article by petition is due by 1/10/17. The AABC is presenting a warrant article to have a numeric tally of their recommendation listed on each article. This is to be for each year, not decided year by year. Copies were distributed for signatures. It will be necessary to move from the floor of the deliberative session to have the numeric tally of the AABC included on the ballot this year next to each warrant.

The Public Budget Hearing will be postponed, as there was not proper notification and posting of the event.

Some budget lines will need \$1.00 listed instead of 0, as this will allow the movement of monies within the department if necessary.

The SB policy this year was for each department to submit all bills by 12/15 so they can be paid in 2016. This is necessary in order to not carry the payments into the new year.

There was some discussion concerning the difference between the tax year and the fiscal year.

The AABC felt the building maintenance line item should be increased as well as money (\$6,000) for preparing the Emergency Management grant from SWRP to bring the town up to date.

Town Clerk/tax collector budget is to be kept flat but they can move money within their own budget.

By law the town is required to keep a percentage of its budget available for emergencies. In the past year we had need of \$30,000 for forest fires, \$4,000 for computers and \$18,000 for fire station door. This demonstrated the need to plan for contingencies and not spend 100% of every department budget.

There is still a need for better tracking of expenses at the transfer station. Need a spreadsheet with columns for C&D, electronics, appliances and other (tires, etc.), all items that residents are charged for disposal. This way the town will know what is being spent or saved on these items.

The town has a new web site <http://www.alstead-nh.org> This adds a feature of registering your car online.

The AABC discussed the need for a Town Administrator to aid in running the town. The HR committee previously recommended this. Motion was made and seconded that "The committee begin the process of defining and evaluating further action for a Town Administrator" Passed by a hand vote. This will be worked on in the coming year.

Sam Sutcliffe was asked to prepare the AABC report for the Town Report. As he was absent for part of last year it would be appreciated if members would send him ideas by email, such as an over view of the transfer station committee work and other work done by the committee.

Several members have terms expiring this year. It was requested that they remain for another term. They are very much needed.

Next meeting will be scheduled after the next BOS budget working session.

Respectively submitted by Marge Noonan