

TOWN OF ALSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Select Board

Approved Minutes for Meeting of March 25, 2025 at 5:00 PM

Town Offices, 15 Mechanic Street, Alstead, NH 03602

SELECT BOARD PRESENT: Joel McCarty, Chair, Gordon Kemp, and Joe Levesque.

STAFF PRESENT:

Name	Position	In Person	Google Meet
Misty Gratacos	Town Office Administrator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shelley Steuwe	Recording Secretary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jesse Moore	Director of Sanitation, EMS & Grounds	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steve Reynolds	Dir Emergency Management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prescott Trafton	Highway Department	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bobbie Wilson	Supervisors of the Checklist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mike Kercewich	Fire Chief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wendy Underwood	Police Department	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

COMMUNITY MEMBERS: In person: Marge Noonan, Judith Willis, Jean Brooks; **Google Meets:**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. McCarty called the Select Board meeting to order at 5:00 PM and then proceeded with leading the agenda-based discussion.

GUESTS: Judith Willis –

Ms. Willis asks the Board to consider repainting the crosswalk by the Library, and labeling the parking space closest to the Library in the Millot Green parking lot as handicap. Alternatively, a handicap space can be created in the space at the junction of Main Street and Library Ave. The Board unanimously approves moving forward with this and will ask Mr. Trafton to do so.

ACTION ITEMS: Review and sign Bills Manifest (\$20,192.16); review and sign Warden Service Bill; review and sign two (2) Pay Rate Sheets; review and sign appointment for NEW Deputy Town Clerk/Deputy Tax Collector; review random mail in Mail Folder; review, discuss and sign MOU between Town of Alstead and Shedd-Porter Memorial Library

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS: 3/18 meeting minutes were reviewed, amended and approved as amended by the Board.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. **Washed-out glass** – No update.
- B. **Thayer Brook bypass** – No update.
- C. **Bridge projects** – Mr. McCarty reports that the Federal Government prevents towns from using the same engineering firm to do the design and right-of-way work as the supervision of the construction. We are still on track to advertise beginning 5/15. Between now and the middle of April, we will need to complete an analysis and proposal for the supervision of construction and come up with a proposal for the estimated cost associated with this work. He has identified a possible consultant to help with this (Randy Rhoades), and is working on getting an estimate of how much it will cost to use him as a consultant.
- D. **Dams** – No update.
- E. **Status of property at M11 L2 (abuts Town Hall)** – No update.
- F. **Model T MOU** – No update.
- G. **Fire Dept Policies** – Mr. Kemp reports he has requested an update from the committee.
- H. **Pine Cliff Rd info/updates** – No updates.
- I. **210 Gilsum Mine Road land merger talks** – No update.
- J. **Complete Streets Information** – No update.
- K. **Department & Board**

NEW BUSINESS:

There is a meeting scheduled with Lisa Mudge, DRA, for 3/26 at 11:00am to discuss the assessor's process for the Town's 5 year revaluation.

OTHER ITEMS:

Mr. McCarty is working with Ms. Gratacos to schedule a meeting to discuss an update for the Office Administrator job description, including adding new tasks, the LPA II certification, and wage review.

REMINDER that the Town Office Administrator will be out of the office from 4/4-4/13 (available by email in the mornings only).

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Emergency Management – Director Reynolds reports that the Town’s 911 representative, Kelly Teeter, delivered maps today. He’s holding on to one for EOC purposes, and will order one more so that one can be posted at each fire station and at the Police Department. He will also send a digital copy to Ms. Gratacos.

The Emergency Management Plan is underway. He talked about Genesis to get that up and running.

Safety audits will be done sometime next month by Primex.

This is First Responder Wellness Week. Reminder that EMS mental health trainings need to be completed and filed with the Town Office.

Fire Department – Chief Kercewich reports that he is waiting to hear from Advantage Truck Group to see when they can get Engine 1 in for exhaust repair.

Mr. McCarty says that a big public thank you will be put in local newspapers and personal thank you notes will be sent to those involved in the Gendron Fisher Automotive fire. Chief Kercewich says that when the garage rebuild is complete, Scott Gendron wants to have an open house for the public.

Mr. McCarty asks about a dry hydrant Garland Sand and Gravel, and Chief Kercewich says that he’s just waiting for the pit to dry out some so that he can drive the firetruck up there.

Mr. McCarty asks for a status update on the dry hydrant at Vilas Pool. Chief Kercewich says that it is operational, and he thinks the recent malfunction was due to human error, not a mechanical issue. Mr. McCarty asks if annual inspections of the dry hydrants are completed, and Chief Kercewich says yes. They are filed through run sheets and can be filed with the Town Office as well.

Mr. McCarty reports that Fish and Wildlife and the National Park Service have a tentative interest in the small piece of land near the dry hydrant adjacent to the 2005 Flood Memorial/Library Bridge and the well that serves the Library. They are not planning on taking it away, but are looking to change its designation to “recreational” to offset the actual taking of permanent easements on the Route 123 project. It doesn’t change the Town’s access.

Highway – Mr. Trafton reports they are doing really well with keeping up with mud season road maintenance.

They are doing a lot of services on fire apparatuses and Town trucks.

He will be talking to Ben Northcott of Fuzzy Bros about getting sand/gravel. They’ll start making it in the next month, and sand needs to be taken off site as it is made.

Chris Garland has allowed us to store gravel in his pit.

Mine Safety and Health Administration training is coming up in the next couple of weeks (yearly class to stay in compliance with working in pits).

Starting 4/1, they will be switching from 5 eight-hour shifts to 4 ten-hour shifts.

Town Office Administrator – Ms. Gratacos reports that she is working on setting up a meeting with the abutters to the Hill and Comstock Road bridge projects regarding temporary easements, the price of which needs to be negotiated with the landowners.

Her Town-appointed work laptop and cell phone have both been delivered and set up. Mr. McCarty asks that she add the cell phone number to her contact information on the Town website.

Mrs. Steuwe asks the Board if it's possible to check with the FMSRD to see if there is a high school student interested in providing temporary coverage for the Recording Secretary position, and Mr. McCarty says he will look into this.

Transfer Station, Ambulance, and Parks –

Director Moore reports that:

- Ambulance –
 - He has provided an invoice for the used mower to the Board.
 - Ambulance 1 is fixed.
 - He went to Joe Bates garage across from the Town Office to measure the bays and determined they are large enough to store Ambulance 3. He also visited Ward Timber Framing and there is no space available there. He got some prices for different carports (Mr. Kemp is not in favor of this option). Gilsum EMS looks forward to having a relationship with us in the future, but is not interested in just storing the ambulance (would like us to cover them for EMS services). We could also look into the empty bay at the Transfer Station (Board in favor of looking into this). Mr. McCarty says he is working on putting together a committee to evaluate the feasibility of Alstead offering ambulance services to one or more nearby towns. Mr. Kemp volunteers to chair this committee and will appoint members.
 - CPR/AED training has been completed by Ambulance and Fire Department crews. Director Moore will work on getting the remaining Town employees through the training (will wait until Ms. Gratacos returns after 4/16).
- Parks – No updates.
- Transfer Station –
 - He asks Mr. Trafton if the Highway Department could use the dry box trailer that used to hold plastic. Mr. Trafton says that they are considering it and he will discuss it further with Director Moore.
 - They would like to return to brush burning in the summer once monthly, but this would require Fire Department supervision. Chief Kercewich will bring this up to

his group and come up with a cost for their supervision. He also suggests burning during the winter to avoid a need for their supervision.

BOARD REPORTS:

Mr. Kemp – He provides an update on the issue of property ownership brought up by Charlie Pratt of Newell Pond Road. Peter Rhoades says the Town owns the plots, but the Registry of Deeds in Keene says there are no deeds on record for them. Mr. Kemp recommends that the Land Use Boards come up with a plan so that Mr. Pratt owns the affected plots, and that in the short term the Board vote to allow him to hire an insured/licensed individual to remove the trees at his expense. The Board unanimously approves of the Land Use Boards part of the plan, but would like to wait on removal of trees until ownership is determined.

He displays a rough draft design for the lockbox/dropbox for the Town Tax Collector from Donald Crump, and the Board approves of this design.

He reads a notification from the Department of Treasury talking about COVID relief funds and the review of how funds were used by the Town.

He reviews an order for street signs from last July that the Board talked about using ARPA funds for. The Board approves unanimously of proceeding with this and reverting back any re-coded funds.

He motions to accept Chris Reitmann's resignation from the Planning Board, and the Board unanimously approves.

He motions to appoint himself, Heidi Konesko, Jesse Moore, Sean Johnson, and Steve Reynolds to the Ambulance Feasibility Study Committee. He recommends starting with just Alstead members to establish expectations and ground rules before looping in out of town members. The Board approves unanimously.

Mr. McCarty – He received complaints from some bus drivers about the condition of Thayer Brook Road, which he discussed with Mr. Trafton. He also received a complaint from a resident on Pine Cliff Road about road conditions there. After discussing this with Mr. Trafton, the plan is to complete some soil testing to evaluate the quality of the gravel the Town uses to maintain dirt roads during mud season to ensure it meets the State's standard.

He attended a recent meeting with several key players regarding the Library roof and reports that fortunately, a new roof is not necessary. That said, they are talking about changing access to the Library to make it more accessible.

He received urgent communications from Health Trust and Representative Gruber. We are being asked to lobby the legislature to avoid Health Trust being crippled. Legislature is also trying to pass a bill to prevent Selectboards from talking to members of legislature on behalf of the Town.

National Grid is spraying toxic material in Alstead to protect the power lines from vegetation.

Mr. Levesque – He would like to take on the responsibility of running the Town website, and the Board approves unanimously.

He asks for Board signature on the MOU between the Town and the Library.

He is looking into getting a grant to fund bullet proof vests, but he's unsure if this will still be possible, given that the Bureau of Justice Assessment Committee has been removed.

He just came from a meeting where the Southwest Region Planning Commission is going to become the 5th group in NH to take part in the New Hampshire Public Deposit Investment Pool (PIDP). He has a contact with PIDP who has offered to come to a Selectboard meeting to discuss what they do. He would like the Selectboard Administration, the Alstead Treasurer and the Alstead Trustees of the Trust funds to look into this organization to see if the Town's money would be better served by investing it in PIDP rather than where it is currently being invested.

It has been explained to him that he is the most qualified Selectboard member to participate in the Walpole Withdrawal Committee, so he offers to take this on. The school board will also hire a 3rd party consultant until 7/1. Mr. McCarty agrees Mr. Levesque should participate, but Mr. Kemp recommends that Mr. McCarty be the appointed member.

The Board approves unanimously of Mr. Levesque signing grant paperwork for the Fire Department on behalf of the Selectboard.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS:

INFORMATIONAL:

EXECUTIVE SESSION/S:

On a motion made by Mr. Levesque and seconded by Mr. McCarty ***the Board Chair adjourned the public meeting at 6:34 PM.***

Important Upcoming Events/Meetings

Date/Time	Subject	Location	Notes
April 1 at 5:00 pm	Selectboard Meeting	Town Offices; 15 Mechanic Street	
April 14 at 6:00 pm	FMRSD School Board Meeting	High School	2nd Monday of each month

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Steuwe

Recording Secretary