

**TOWN OF ALSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
**Select Board**  
**Unapproved Minutes for Meeting of November 29, 2022 at 5:05 p.m.**  
**Town Hall, 9 Main Street, Alstead, NH 03602**

**SELECT BOARD PRESENT:** Joseph Levesque, Joel McCarty, Matthew Saxton.

**STAFF PRESENT: In person:** Penny Gendron, Police Administrator; Ben Hoy, Transfer Station Supervisor; Jodi Kercewich, Cemetery Trustee; Kim Kercewich, Fire Chief; Jesse Moore, Ambulance Chief; Susan Norlander, Moderator; Mary Schoppmeyer, Office Administrator; Adam Vose, Ambulance Assistant Chief; Barbara Wilson, Supervisor of the Checklist and Ambulance Lieutenant.

**COMMUNITY MEMBERS: In person:** Glenn Elsesser, Gordon Kemp, Mark Mastrocinque, Rich Nalevanko, Marge Noonan, Barb Viegner, Judith Willis, others. **Google Meet:** Craig Winter.

**GUESTS:** Kim Kercewich, Fire Chief re: 2023 Fire and Forestry budgets; Susan Norlander, Moderator re: 2023 Moderator portion of Election budget; Bobbie Wilson, Supervisor of the Checklist re: 2023 Supervisory portion of Election budget; Jodi Kercewich, Cemetery Trustee re: 2023 Cemetery budget; Jesse Moore, Ambulance Chief re: 2023 Ambulance budget.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**PUBLIC HEARING RE: ACCEPTANCE OF UNANTICIPATED FUNDS:** 5 PM to 5:05 PM. See separate public hearing minutes for this date.

**CALL TO ORDER:** The Board Chair called the regular Select Board meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. and yielded the floor to the first guest presenter.

**PRESENTATIONS: Fire and Forestry budgets:** Chief Kercewich requested \$62,992 for the Fire budget, an increase of \$1537 over last year's Fire budget of \$64,529. Increases are due to anticipated increases in wages, phone cost, postage prices, and vehicle repair parts. The Chief requested \$6900 for the Forestry budget, an increase of \$699 over last year's Forestry budget of \$6201. Increases are due to expected increases in wages and mileage. The Board asked about the status of Engine 3 repairs; the chief replied that he has been unable to obtain any additional quotes so far. The Board thanked the Fire Chief for his presentation and his service. **Election budget:** The Moderator requested \$5019 for her portion of the 2023 Election budget, a decrease from the \$17,000 2022 Moderator budget that is explained primarily by the fact that 2023 requires only one election session for town and school voting. Increases in expected wages are explained by increased pay rates. The Moderator expressed her gratitude that about half of the election workers donate their time. There followed a discussion of how this year's mid-term election went (exceptionally well), whether the town expects to purchase a ballot counting device (no), who makes the device purchasing decision (the voters), who sets the date of Town Meeting in February (the Select Board), whether the Attorney General's Election Report will be posted on the town website (yes), and the potential for improved election parking opportunities (a warrant article is anticipated). The Board thanked the Moderator for her presentation and her service and the Moderator yielded the floor to the Supervisor of the Checklist. The Supervisor requested \$10,184, an increase over last year's supervisory budget of about \$7000. Increases are explained by increased mileage, training, and advertising required in 2023 to prepare for the Presidential election in 2024, plus the need to replace 3 older laptop computers that can no longer support the required election software. It was observed that the hard drives in the old laptops need to be destroyed. The Board thanked the Supervisor of the Checklist for her presentation and her service and the Supervisor yielded the floor to the Cemetery Trustee. **Cemetery budget:** Ms. Kercewich requested \$31,222 for 2023 cemetery maintenance, an increase of \$2000 over the 2022 cemetery budget that is explained by an increased wage for the custodian. Changes to remaining accounts are explained by moving money from other line items to cover the costs of needed stone repairs plus loam and seed needed to correct sinking graves. The Board thanked Ms. Kercewich for her presentation and her service and the Ambulance Chief took the floor. **Ambulance budget:** Chief Moore requested \$55,803 for the 2023 ambulance budget, an increase of \$26,581 over the 2022 budget. Increases are explained by anticipated wage increases (\$3,000); the cost of Alstead obtaining its own Paramedic license and equipment to support a paramedic team; increased repair costs (\$5000); increased cell phone costs; and increased software subscription costs for mandated computer-based reporting utilities. Discussion followed about the implications of Alstead having its own paramedic team (first in Cheshire County & southwest NH, Alstead bills others instead of paying others for that service so increased revenue, some new equipment required); impact on capital improvement plan and ambulance capital reserve; what Alstead's options are if the current ambulance fails (support from Southwest Mutual Aid vs having a backup ambulance); and how much ambulance

revenue is generated each year (enough to pay for itself). Chief Moore noted that both call volume and frequency of overlapping ambulance calls is increasing, and the remarkable size, capability, and response rate of the Alstead team (7-10 per call) means that there are enough people to staff a second ambulance if there was one; limitation of that idea is a place to house a second vehicle. Chief Moore reported that he has been asked to speak at Dartmouth about how to recruit, staff, and maintain a volunteer ambulance squad - a testament to how well Alstead's squad is working. The Board thanked Chief Moore for his efforts on behalf of the town and the squad and commended his successes. There was additional commentary about how several Alstead departments (Cemetery, Transfer Station, Ambulance, and Fire) work hard to bring in revenue that defrays their costs, after which Chief Moore yielded the floor to the Board Chair.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:** Minutes of November 22, 2022. On a motion made by Mr. Saxton and seconded by Mr. McCarty, ***the Board voted unanimously to approve the public minutes as written.***

**SELECT BOARD REPORTS: SAU60 Budget:** Mr. Levesque reported that the 2023 budget being considered by the Fall Mountain Budget Committee is currently at approximately 36 million dollars, an increase of about one million dollars over the 2022 budget. The committee is considering ways to reduce costs. One method is increasing class size to allow eliminating teaching positions. He reported that the tax rates for the five district towns are not set yet because the NH Department of Education rejected the first submission of the school's MS 626 form and it had to be recrafted and resubmitted; approval is still in progress. A discussion followed about enrollment levels (about 1496 for 2023, compared to 1503 for 2022). More students are "tuitioning in" from Unity, Goshen, and Lempster than ever. There followed an extended discussion about enrollment implications and tuition rates; Mr. Levesque promised more numbers next week. Mr. Saxton and Mr. McCarty had nothing additional to report this week.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS: Transfer Station:** As a followup to last week's presentation about a cooperative agreement with Hubbard Farms and Trex Decking, Mr. Hoy brought in additional materials and email answers in an effort to answer questions about the program. With its current baler Alstead produced 40 bales of co-mingled plastic at about 450 lbs per bale. The price for co-mingled plastic is \$.01 per lb; we received a credit for \$205. Bales of sorted plastic generally retrieve a higher price; colored plastics sell for less because of the dyes used. Trex wants bales of type 1 and 2 bags only, and not other plastics. Questions included whether the baler installed for the program could be used for non-program materials (yes); whether the Trex price for baled bags fluctuates or remains stable (stable at \$.14 per lb). We can't produce bales of sorted plastics with only one baler due to the logistics of baling plastics; having the second baler would allow more flexibility. The Board found the email answers insufficiently brief and the printed materials to be of the marketing variety and short on facts associated with the economics of baling. Rich Nalevanko asked whether contracts would be executed with Trex and with Hubbard Farms and what language those contracts would contain with regard to pricing, commitment to the program, and so on (no answers available). Mr. Hoy agreed that terms in writing are a good idea. Barb Viegenger asked if the transfer station can store 40 bales (yes and Alstead would work with other towns to consolidate loads to further increase efficiency).

**INFORMATIONAL:** The next regular meeting of the Select Board is scheduled for Tuesday, December 6, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. Langdon will host the next Five-Town Select Board meeting on Friday January 27th, 2022 at 4:30 PM.

Before adjourning Mr. Saxton thanked the public in attendance for participating in the Alstead government process. On a motion made by Mr. McCarty and seconded by Mr. Saxton, ***the Board Chair adjourned the public meeting at 6:23 PM.***

Respectfully submitted,  


Mary Schoppmeyer, Office Administrator