

Alstead Advisory Budget Committee Minutes for the August 9, 2017 meeting

Members in attendance:

Glenn Elsesser
Chris Hansen
Marge Noonan
Carol Reller
Chris Rietmann
Priscilla Sawa
Juliana Stevens
Sam Sutcliffe
Barbara Viegener
Mary Ann Wolf

Also present

Joe Levesque

Review agenda and minutes

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as amended.

Committee Reports:

Vilas Pool Committee:

The AABC's revised question list went to the VPC only yesterday, because of computer problems. It is a good idea to send a copy of this list to the Select Board, in case follow-up is required.

The VPC spending rate is faster this year than last year, but there is currently no way to measure whether this has attracted more people or not. According to the Vilas Pool Trust, admission to the facilities must be free. However, that does not preclude asking for a "suggested donation".

The VPC will have to institute a more formal organizational structure and accounting system in order to qualify for grants. This would also make it easier for us to recommend that the town give the VPC additional financial support.

CIP Committee:

Glenn has not yet made changes to the CIP that we reviewed at the end of last year. (There is a copy of this version on our Google Drive.) He is working to gather information on items not currently in the plan, including repairs to the Historical Society's building, as well as the repairs to the pedestrian bridge at Vilas Pool. Glenn

has not yet been able to meet with the FD chief about the items scheduled for next year.

The Select Board has signed the hazard mitigation plan, but there are still more steps to complete before we can apply for a grant to make the improvements.

There is a meeting tomorrow (August 10, 7 am) to go over the repairs to the library steps. The Library Trustees need approval from the town at a special hearing in order to finance these repairs using money from the trust.

Ambulance Committee:

Kelly has suggested that Mary Ann make her presentation to the Select Board on August 23, but the date has not been confirmed.

MuniSmart improvements:

Kelly hasn't responded to Chris R's request for a meeting about getting better reports from the MuniSmart software.

Select Board meeting

Chris H. brought up the need for a computer security and maintenance policy at the SB meeting. The result is that we have been tasked with creating a draft of the policy.

Block Grant Hearing

The Select Board will hold a hearing at the town hall at 6:30 next Tuesday, August 15, to formally accept the highway block grant from the state.

Town Administrator

Carol has been working on a list of important tasks that are currently not getting done. She is willing to go to the Select Board and ask them to set up a committee to consider whether hiring a town administrator would help the town run more efficiently. Sam and Priscilla offered to meet with Carol to help develop an approach for her request.

Budget Status

We weren't able to review the budget because there was only one printed copy on the table.

2017 Audit and Financial Report

Priscilla has combined the 2016 and 2017 MS 535 (the annual Financial Report of the Town Budget) into a single Excel file so that we can start to compare the town's finances year to year. This report is issued every spring by the DRA, based on the report submitted by the town auditors, and it covers the previous year. In other words, we have data covering 2015 and 2016. It would be great to have five-years of data altogether, but Kelly says the earlier reports are in the basement.

The data in this report is very solid and includes several important numbers, such as the Unassigned Fund Balance and the amount of unpaid taxes at the end of the year.

Priscilla's file, the Multi-Year Financial Report, will be ready for the committee to review at the next meeting.

Action items

Julie will send a copy of the VPC question list to the Select Board.

Chris R. will send his draft computer policy and inventory list to Chris H.

Carol will send her list of administrative tasks to Sam and Priscilla.

Chris H. will invite Susan to the next meeting to swear in our newest member, Joe.

Chris H. will ask Kelly to provide us with printed copies of the budget in the future.

Glenn will send an electronic copy of the 8/1 budget to the committee members.

Priscilla will add Joe's email to our email alias and send him a link to the Google Drive.

Priscilla will send the Multi-Year Financial Report to Chris R and Glenn for their advice and input.

Next meeting

August 23

Agenda items for next meeting

Tracking List: budget reviews, job descriptions, building maintenance, transfer station, CIP, Bragg Lane, physicals for the fire squad.

Planning Calendar events for 2018 budget and warrant articles

September: Town departments develop budget scenarios

October: Town departments present initial budgets to SB; Select Board sets tax rate for December 2017 bills.

November: Select Board starts to develop the budget and warrant articles.

December: AABC reviews the budget and warrant articles.

January 9: last day for petitioned warrant articles

January 16: last day for Budget Hearing

January 25: last day to post warrant articles and budget

February 3 or 10: 2018 Deliberative Session

March 13: 2018 Town Meeting

Submitted by Priscilla Sawa, Secretary