

## Alstead Advisory Budget Committee Minutes for the March 18 meeting

### Members in attendance:

Bonnie Chase  
Dan Curll  
Glenn Elsesser  
Chris Hansen  
Carol Reller  
Donna Sabin  
Priscilla Sawa  
Nick Sintros  
Juliana Stevens  
Sam Sutcliffe  
Les Thomas  
Jonathan Wildes  
Mary Ann Wolf

### Also present:

Chris Reitman

### Topics discussed:

- We discussed the role of alternate members in the committee and agreed on revisions to the proposed description. (See *Agenda Items for Next AABC Meeting*.)
- Chris R. summarized last night's Select Board meeting:
  - Joel was appointed Chairman.
  - Work on harvesting the gravel/sand from Mt. Elsesser and creating a new parking lot behind Vilas School will start at the end of this school year.
  - Emergency repairs to the septic system at the Town Hall should begin this week.
  - Bids will be solicited for repairs to the slate roof of the Historical Society building. The Select Board needs more details about the leak.
  - Chris R. will draft a policy for the Select Board describing when multiple bids are required for town projects.
  - It was noted that elected officials control their own budgets and set compensation for themselves as well as for their employees.
- We reviewed the legal opinion solicited in 2014 by the Select Board of Article 21 (the 3% cap). According to that opinion, the article is legal and the cap applies only to Article 2, the operating budget.

- We discussed the committee's communication policy and agreed on revisions to the proposed description. (See *Agenda Items for Next AABC Meeting.*)
- Chris R. said that the Select Board will meet soon in an executive session to discuss compensation for certain employees.
- Chris R. is testing a web plugin that would support an electronic town calendar.
- We agreed that the second week of every month would be a good time to review the financial report from the previous month. On the fourth week of every month, we might meet briefly or use that time for subcommittee work.

### Subcommittee Reports:

- The Quarterly Report subcommittee has drafted a brief Q2 report that will focus on the June tax bill and revenues.
- The Emergency Management Study Group (EMSG) met on March 5. The first priority is to draft a job description for the new police chief.
- The Financial Data subcommittee will meet next Monday with Linda and Chris R to review the town's financial management system.
- The Financial Planning subcommittee has added detail to Jonathan's example Planning Calendar. We reviewed the updated calendar and suggested further revisions.
- The DPW subcommittee has agreed on the top five tasks for the summer:
  - Introduce better record keeping for employee hours/tasks.
  - Introduce better record keeping for equipment use/repairs.
  - Management training.
  - Better management of the trash compactor and trips to Claremont.
  - Define snow-plowing service levels for high vs low priority roads.

### Motions:

- The meeting minutes of March 11 were approved, with the corrections from Carol and Sam.
- We agreed to meet the second and fourth week of each month for the next several months. (Moved by 1. Mary Ann 2. Sam: 7 yes / 4 no / 1 abstention)

### Action items:

- Carol will send an electronic version of the updated Planning Calendar to Chris to share with the Select Board.
- Juliana will try to make sure than Bonnie, Glenn and Nick are sworn in next week.

### Next meeting:

March 25 at 7:00 pm at the Town Offices.

### Agenda items for Next AABC meeting:

- Reports from subcommittees

- Discuss whether to add a new subcommittee on employee compensation for elected officials
- Discuss what kind of financial reports we would like to see
- Vote on whether to add the following text to the By-laws:
  - Alternates may attend all public and executive sessions of the Budget Committee and participate in discussions, but may not vote unless designated by the chairperson as a voting member.
  - At a regular meeting, an alternate may be appointed as a voting member if a regular member is absent.
  - An alternate may be counted toward the quorum of the board if the chair has designated the alternate as a voting member for that meeting.
  - Alternates may serve on subcommittees.
- Vote on whether to add the following text to the By-laws:
  - The Alstead Advisory Budget Committee uses several methods to share information, express opinions and hold discussions, including public meetings, e-mail, and shared document storage (Google Drive).
  - All documents must be approved by a vote at a public meeting of the committee before they can be published or posted. These documents could also be reviewed for accuracy by at least one outside expert, such as a Select Board member. To facilitate the review and approval process, documents intended for publication or posting should be submitted early and often to the whole committee by email for review.
  - All committee members are urged to have an email address. Committee members might choose to create a separate email address for AABC email to avoid having their personal email subject to review, in the event of a lawsuit.
  - Pursuant to RSA 91-A and to ensure that the committee — and each of its subcommittees — keeps an accurate and complete record of activities, a copy of the final version of important documents, such as meeting minutes, analyses and reports, and policy documents, will be stored in the committee's folder on Google Drive. Committee members can also keep works in progress on Google Drive to make it easy for multiple people to edit a single copy of a file.
  - The committee does not require any member, except for the Secretary, to use Goggle Drive. For help uploading or downloading documents to/from Google Drive, see the Secretary.

#### Comments from the public:

- None.