

Alstead Advisory Budget Committee Minutes for the December 16, 2015 meeting

Members in attendance:

Marge Noonan
Priscilla Sawa
Nick Sintros
Juliana Stevens
Sam Sutcliffe
Mary Ann Wolf

Also present:

Michael Gordon
Bob Quaglin
Barbara Viegener

Select Board meeting:

The Select Board agreed that they would seek three bids for any projects more than \$500. Previously, the threshold was \$1000. They also agreed to standardize project descriptions.

The Select Board agreed to keep the same assessors, but change the auditors, just to have a fresh set of eyes looking at our books.

The Bell Hill project was canceled because the estimate of the cost to the town was over \$180K. The FEMA money we received (\$6000) will be sent back.

The Veterans' exemption will increase from \$60 to \$300.

There is still no bid for the Vilas Dam inspection.

The Article 2 wage adjustments and the Health Insurance changes were scheduled to be discussed in the non-public session.

Gen Gov committee:

We discussed the layout of the Q4 report.

Discussion of warrant articles:

We agreed that our goal is to keep 2016 taxes more or less the same as 2015. We assumed for the purposes of the discussion that 2016 operating budget will be the same as 2015 (\$1,545K). Funding the remaining warrant articles either from CRFs or from the fund balance, not from new taxes, would allow us to meet our goal.

We noted that since the Select Board has decided to retain \$250K in the fund balance, we could spend up to \$475K from the fund balance.

We discussed each transfer to a CRF within the context of the planned purchases listed in Glenn's CIP. We noted that the CIP needs to be more thoroughly vetted before we can have complete confidence in our decisions.

We also discussed whether to simplify cases where there was both a withdrawal from a CRF and a transfer to the same CRF.

Here is what we tentatively agreed to:

Article 2. Operating budget	\$1,545,501	(raised by new taxes)
Article 3. Transfer to Bridge CRF	\$ 25,000	(fund balance)
Article 4. Transfer to Highway CRF	\$ 45,000?	
Article 5. Transfer to Trns. St. CRF	\$ 10,000	(fund balance)
Article 6. Transfer to FD CRF	\$???	
Article 7. Transfer to Library CRF	\$ 15,000	(fund balance)
Article 8. Transfer to Ambulance CRF	\$ 25,000	(fund balance)
Article 9. Transfer to PD CRF	\$ 0	
Article 10. Paving (just March Hill?)	\$???	
Article 11. Striping (move to department budget)		
Article 12. Rescue/pumper	\$ 500,000	(\$380K from CRF and \$120 fund balance)
Article 13. Bell Hill (canceled)	\$ 0	
Article 14. Equipment trailer	\$ 15,000	(Highway CRF)
Article 15. Stone walls in cemeteries	\$???	
Article 16. Stone wall at Millot Green	\$???	
Article 17. Design bridges	\$???	
Article 18. Cut trees in Alstead Cntr.	\$ 5,000	

All items marked with question marks are tentative or unknown and need to be confirmed with the relevant department head or other knowledgeable person.

Other old business:

- We decided not to meet on Dec 23. We will meet on Dec 30 and Jan 6.

Motions:

- The meeting minutes of Dec 9 were approved (3/yes, 0/no, 3/abstentions)
- We agreed to present the Q4 report to the Select Board, after Mary Ann incorporates our comments. (6/yes, 0/no, 0/abstention)

Action items:

- Mary Ann will ask Bruce Bellows about the stone walls.
- Nick will ask David about the trucks and the cost of paving March Hill Rd only.
- Priscilla will ask Carol to ask the FD and the Ambulance captain about future capital improvements, specifically whether it is possible to refurbish Engine 2 instead of replacing it and whether we need to replace the ambulance or purchase major equipment in the near future.

Next meeting:

No meeting Dec 23. We meet next on Dec 30 at 6:30 pm at the Town Offices.

Agenda items for next meeting:

- Finalize recommendations on warrant articles.

Comments from the public:

- None.

Minutes submitted by Priscilla Sawa