

TOWN OF ALSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Select Board

Approved Minutes for Meeting of October 22, 2024 at 5:00 PM

Town Offices, 15 Mechanic Street, Alstead, NH 03602

SELECT BOARD PRESENT: Joel McCarty, Chair, Gordon Kemp, and Matthew Saxton.

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"/>
Stephen Murrell	Police Chief	<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"/>
Jody Kercewich	Cemeteries	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rich Beringer	Fire Department	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bruce Bellows	Historical Society and Trustee of the Trust Funds	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

COMMUNITY MEMBERS: In person: Christan Myers, Patricia Beaudoin, Barbara Viegner, Joe Levesque, Marge Noonan, Judith Willis, Rich Nalevanko, Jonathan Landry, Mary Ann Wolf;
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: Lyn Girard, EMS Billing/Golden Cross Ambulance; Patricia Beaudoin; Mary Ann Wolf

Ms. Beaudoin – Owns the turnaround at the end of the road abutting her property. Walpole and Alstead both plow snow into that space and damage the surrounding trees and structures. The

road is also not being maintained by the Town (except to repair a broken drain once). They'd like someone to fix the drainage to allow water to drain into the abutting swamp rather than collecting in the road there. Mr. McCarty suggests scheduling a meeting with the Road Agent, and Ms. Beaudoin agrees. Mrs. Gratacos provided Mr. Trafton's contact information to Ms. Beaudoin and she will reach out to him.

Ms. Girard – (see 10/16 minutes, under “Other Information” for background on this topic)

Ms. Girard clarified that the Town is paying \$14 per **claim** (not per invoice). A heated conversation ensued between Ms. Girard, Director Moore, and Ms. Wolf regarding billing processes for the Town ambulance service. There were discrepancies between the statistics that Ms. Girard provided and what Director Moore had regarding what had been billed and collected. Mr. McCarty suggests that Ms. Girard, Director Moore, and Ms. Wolf meet on their own to continue this discussion. The three then excused themselves and Ms. Wolf and Director Moore rejoined the meeting a while later. Director Moore said that one of the options he's hoping to contract for with a billing service is a beginning to end process. With Golden Cross, the Town maintains a significant administrative burden that they would be relieved of if we went with EMax Billing. Per Director Moore, Ms. Girard is going to look into how our fees would change if she were to implement a beginning to end service. He will continue to investigate both companies.

Ms. Wolf – Re: recent wage study presentation; clarification: It was perceived that she noted that the Police staff retirement payments were taken out of their paychecks. This is not the case, instead 11% is paid by the staff member, and 34% is paid by the Town. She also notes that while she didn't choose population for the presentation, it does play into the Police and Transfer Station budgeting.

ACTION ITEMS: Review & sign Payables Manifest (\$); Review and sign Letter & check to Trustee of the Trust Funds; Discussion regarding Fire Chief hiring committee; Announce dates for Budget Hearing, Deliberative Session and Town Meeting; discuss information regarding FLSA and plan moving forward; discuss mailer to residents regarding the Public Hearing on November 12th; review & approve payment to Dubois & King; review & sign bill payment request for Vilas Pool; review & instruct Admin in regards to 91-A request for information.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS: 10/16 meeting minutes were reviewed, amended and approved as amended by the Board.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. **Washed-out glass** – Mr. Saxton reports that he has been communicating via email with Mr. Hubbard and Mr. Trafton, and Mr. Trafton says as long as Mr. Hubbard's team can move the debris to the edge of road, his team can remove the debris. The location it will be moved to has yet to be determined, pending review and advice from Primex. Mr. Beringer has a gravel pit and may be interested in taking it. Mr. McCarty will ask Mr.

Trafton to connect with him to discuss the details. Mr. Saxton has provided Mr. Trafton's message to Mr. Hubbard and is awaiting a quote for the work.

- B. **Thayer Brook bypass** – No updates.
- C. **Bridge projects** – No updates.
- D. **Dams** – No updates.
- E. **Status of property at M11 L2 (abuts Town Hall)** – No updates.
- F. **Model T MOU** – No updates.
- G. **Employee Health Insurance** – No updates.
- H. **Fire Dept Policies** – No updates.
- I. **Fire Chief Search** – Mr. Beringer asks if the Committee will just be interviewing candidates, or soliciting public input as well? Mr. McCarty says the Board will ensure this question is asked of the Committee at their first meeting this or next week. Mr. Beringer asks if these meetings will be public? Mr. Saxton says they will need to check with the Town attorney, as sensitive, private information about the candidates will be discussed during the meetings. Mr. Kemp agrees that interviews typically aren't public. Ms. Wolf announces she has been asked to recuse herself from participating in the Committee, so she will not be participating. The Board met 10/21 to review regulations for the Committee.
- J. **Pine Cliff Road information/updates** – Mr. McCarty reports that non-point source storm water pollution at three sites in the Lake District has been discussed (boat launch, Arbor Way, dirt portion of Pine Cliff Road). He communicated with NH Fish and Game point of contact (who is responsible for the boat landing) and has provided this communication to the rest of the Board to review. He is proposing a relationship with the Town to divy up responsibility for remediation there. As part of the 2012 Lake Warren Watershed Management Plan, there is a rehab plan for the boat launch, which would improve drainage and reduce runoff. It is the hope that NH Fish and Game will help with the expense of this project, but NHDES has some grant funding availability, and if our partner in the work is another State agency the regulatory burden will be diminished.
- K. **210 Gilsum Mine Road land merger talks** – No updates.
- L. **Complete Streets Information** – No updates.
- M. **Department & Board**

NEW BUSINESS:

OTHER ITEMS: The Board unanimously agrees (per Warrant Article 3) to take \$250,000 out of the Capital Reserve Fund for Bridge Design and Consulting Services.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Cemeteries – Ms. Kercewich presents her budget to the Board.

Emergency Management – Director Reynolds reports that he has not heard anything from Rescue, Inc (has reached out several times). He is still getting quotes from vendors for emergency preparedness supplies. He checked with NH Homeland for funding for emergency services under the OEM banner, and there is one available at 50%, in kind. This unfortunately

does not include the items we're searching for. He provided emergency management resources to Mrs. Gratacos, who printed them and has them available in the front office. Mr. Levesque is going to look into the possibility of having Vilas Pool be an emergency location with the Interim Superintendent.

Police Department – Chief Murrell reports that the Board should have seen the recent application for part time Police Officer by now, and asks for the Board's approval to move forward with the hiring process (which takes several months). ***The Board agrees unanimously.*** There will be a budget impact, which will be reflected in the upcoming budget meeting. He wants to suggest some potential Committee members for the hiring of the new Fire Chief: Brian Hughes, or possibly a chief from another department. Trunk or Treat reminder: 10/31; there will be around 10 or 11 "trunks" at this time, but more people can sign up.

School Board – Mr. Levesque reports that he and Mr. McCarty will meet 11/4 for contract negotiations for Support Staff at the High School.

Town Office Administrator – Mrs. Gratacos reports that she and Mr. Kemp have a phone conference on 10/24 with the main auditor regarding the Ambulance Revolving Fund.

Transfer Station, Ambulance, and Parks –

Director Moore reports that:

- Ambulance – 150 calls to date. He has a service request in to First Net to repair one of the MegaFi's. While on the phone with them, he explained the situation with Director Reynolds looking to obtain some emergency preparedness equipment. They have a charitable arm and grant writing service, so they are forwarding their grant writing information to him, which he will forward along to Director Reynolds. Ambulance 2 is fixed now.
- Parks – Planning to mow 10/23.
- Transfer Station – The oil burner issue has been fixed. One of the Selectman from Acworth came to ask some questions about operations, and they entertained the idea of consolidation. Mr. Levesque reports he emailed NH the Beautiful to see if they'd be willing to provide funding for a new recycling dumpster.

Vilas Pool – Mr. Kemp reports that the pool has been drained and will remain so for about a week.

BOARD REPORTS:

Mr. Kemp – He has a request from the Planning Board to put a warrant article forth to change the required Board members from 7 to 5. There is a fire prevention event at the middle school 10/25. We had a warrant article for fire gear, and there is a note asking if a Purchase Order is necessary for an upcoming purchase. The Board unanimously agrees that there should be a Purchase Order.

Mr. McCarty – Dates for the Budget Hearing, Deliberative Session and Town Meeting are as follows:

Budget Hearing: 1/14/25

Deliberative Session: 2/1/25

Voting Day: 3/11/25

Reminder about the Public Hearing on 11/12 at 5:00 pm at the Town Hall regarding Route 123, hosted by NHDOT.

Tried to nail down the last date for petitioned warrant articles, but needs clarification and will provide information once available. Filing period for Public Offices 1/22-1/31. Budgets and warrants must be signed and posted by 1/27/25.

Mr. Saxton – Updates provide via Old Business above.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS: Mr. Nalevanko reports that at a recent Meet the Candidates event, someone said that Alstead has the largest homeless child numbers in the State. He wanted to bring this to the Board’s attention. Mr. Levesque said he will follow up with the School Board about this.

INFORMATIONAL:

EXECUTIVE SESSION/S: RSA 91-A:3, II (c) - reputation

On a motion made by Mr. Kemp and seconded by Mr. Saxton, ***the Board voted by roll call (Joel – y; Gordon– y; Matt – y) to enter non-public at 6:50 PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (c) reputational.***

On a motion made by Mr. Saxton and seconded by Mr. McCarty ***the Board voted to leave the non-public session at 7:00 PM. The motion passed unanimously.***

On a motion made by Mr. McCarty and seconded by Mr. Saxton ***the Board Chair adjourned the public meeting at 7:09 PM.***

Next regular Select Board meeting:	Tuesday, October 29, 2024 @ 5:00 PM, Town Offices, 15 Mechanic Street.
Next FM School Board meeting:	Monday, November 11, 2024 @ 6:00 PM, High School (2nd Monday)

Next 5-Town Select Board meeting:	TBD – Reschedule in progress
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Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Steuwe

Recording Secretary