

MINUTES FROM THE 2017 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING – 03/07/2017

PRESENT: Town Moderator, Terry A. Tatro, Selectboard Chairman, Tyler Gotshall, Alton Bruso, Lee Kimball, Chuck Pease, Selectboard Clerk, Donna L. Bohannon

AUDIENCE MEMBERS PRESENT: Beth Savage, Amy Erno Mashtare, Scott Mashtare, Anna Mashtare, Joseph Deyo, Julie Pease, Edward J. Bousquet, Darwin (Jr.) Cameron, Mo Theoret, Peg Theoret, Brian Markwell, Jamie Russin, Corinne Russin, Jason Essinger, Paul Fortin, Mary Fortin, Michael Savage, Douglas DiSabito, Heidi Gotshall, James Gotshall, Nathan Gotshall, Steve Deyo, Lorraine Bruso, Carol Behrman, Laura Limoge, Dick Ernst, Toni Lynn Soule, Guyer McCracken, Kim McCracken, Tim Tatro, Ricky Murray, Renee Murray, Jack Krizer, Paul Civetti, Lynne Carpenter, Ed Polk, Donna Polk, Ronald Kumetz, Caroline Korejko, Abby Alberico, Steve Reed, Mona Reed, Victoria Reed, Otis Reed, Joan Whitesell, Steve Thomas, David Ovitt, Mallory Ovitt, Robert Hilliker, Dorothy Hilliker, Natalie Prairie, George Boutah, Charles Shepherd, Jim Ross, Cheryl Wells, Keira Wells, Taylor Wells, Ashley Wells

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: The legal voters and residents of the Town of Alburgh met at the Alburgh Community Educational Center in said Town on Monday evening March 6th, 2017.

Moderator, Terry A. Tatro stated that there were two community members the Selectboard wanted to recognize and present with awards. He explained that he was going to allow the Board to make these presentations before the meeting officially opened, but that at the end of the meeting he would be asking the voters to ratify the minutes to include the presentation of the town awards. (Ratification was made at the end of the meeting – award presentation will be recorded here).

Terry asked that Victoria Reed come to the front of the audience as the Selectboard would like to recognize her for her volunteerism. Victoria stepped forward and Chairman, Tyler Gotshall explained that Victoria had been recognized by The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program for her work with the University of Vermont Children's Hospital. Tyler spoke a little about the program, presented Victoria with an award and expressed the pride the Town of

Alburgh should feel knowing she is a member of the community. Victoria will also be given a check in the amount of \$100 to add to the donations for Team Victoria and the Big Change Round-up for University of Vermont Children's Hospital.

Terry then stated that Joan Krizer would be awarded a plaque for her years as Animal Control Officer for the Town of Alburgh. He stated that Joan was unable to attend but her husband Jack Krizer was present to accept the plaque on her behalf. Clerk, Donna L. Bohannon talked briefly about Joan and the work she did for the Town. She then presented the plaque to Jack Krizer. Moderator, Terry A. Tatro continued to conduct the meeting.

The meeting opened at 7:45pm with the reading of the Warnings by Moderator, Tatro. The following business was transacted:

NOTE: All money issues were voted by printed ballot on Tuesday, March 7th, 2017 from 7:00am to 7:00pm at the Municipal Building.

- *Results of ballot votes will appear at the end of the minutes.*

Article #1 – Election of Officers – this is a ballot item -There was no discussion on this matter – results of 03/07/2017 voting will appear at the end of the minutes.

Article #2 – To consider and act upon the reports of the Town Officers –

- The article was read – Moderator Tatro opened the floor for questions and discussion –
 - Brian Markwell asked if the percentage of the difference between years could be found in the book.
 - There was limited discussion on this topic as the article that was being addressed was to act on the reports.
 - *Ed Polk motioned to accept the reports of the Town Officers as written – seconded by Jason Essinger – Moderator Tatro asked for those in favor – ayes were heard – Moderator Tatro asked for those opposed – no nays were heard – the Ayes have it – motion passed – reports accepted as written.*

Article #3 – Shall the voters vote to approve a budget of \$689,449.09 with the amount of \$391,707.09 to be raised by taxation to be used for general Town purposes for the fiscal year 2017/2018 – this is a ballot item –
results of 03/07/2017 voting will appear at the end of the minutes.

- The article was read – Moderator Tatro opened the floor for questions and discussion –
 - The question was asked about where the rest of the budget money comes from
 - It was answered that it comes from other revenues into the Town Clerks Office, such as recording fees, photocopy and faxing fees among other sources of revenue.
 - Alton Brusio added that occasionally the Town will have a surplus but this year that wasn't the case.
 - Carol Behrman asked if the \$11,900 for E911 signs was going to need to be expended again this year.
 - She was informed that no, that \$11,900 paid for all of the signs and there will be very minimal if any need to expend any more money for E-911 signs.
 - Ed Polk asked where the funds to get out of the Northwest Solid Waste District, that were voted a few years ago, went.
 - Alton explained that they would become part of the surplus but he didn't believe the funds were raised as there was another vote after the initial vote and with that vote, the Town chose to stay in the District.

- Carol Behrman asked about the line item for Holiday expenses. She wanted to know why the expenditure was so high.
- Alton explained that the number in the report reflect two years of Holiday expenses and that the fireworks from the previous year were included in that number.
- Lee Kimball explained that the categories are being renamed and reorganized for better transparency and clarity.
- Carol asked what \$33,000 for reappraisal funds was.
- It was explained that each year the State sends the Town money to be put into a reappraisal fund to be used for a Town wide reappraisal but that there were a couple of years that it didn't get allocated to the correct account. This number was simply to move the funds into the reappraisal fund where it belonged.
- Tim Tatro wanted to know why the Town created a budget but not stay within that budget.
- It was explained that a budget is an estimate and sometimes more funds come in than anticipated and sometimes there are unforeseen expenditures that need to be spent.
- Paul Fortin suggested that in future years a difference of budget items in percentage be shown in the book,
- Suggestion was noted and will be implemented in the 2018 Town Report.

- Brian Markwell asked how the Selectmen decided which organizations would be granted a donation.
- He was informed that the organizations submitted a request and that they are asked to show how they benefitted Alburgh. Most of them have a report in the Town report that shows how they benefitted Alburgh.
- Moderator Tatro asked if there was any more discussion on Article #3.
- No more discussion.
- Results of 03/07/2017 voting will appear at the end of the minutes

Article #4: Shall the voters of the Town vote to approve a budget of \$618,734.04 with the amount of \$527,334.04 to be raised by taxation, to be used for year-around maintenance of Town highways for the fiscal year of 2017 - 2018 (Ballot Item)

- The article was read – Moderator Tatro opened the floor for questions and discussion –
 - Cheryl Wells asked about the percentage of change and how that will affect the tax bills.
 - She was informed that this article in the Town budget is up by .075% so there should not be much of a change in the tax bills compared to last year.
 - Moe Theoret asked if there were any plans to purchase a new truck or any other equipment.
 - Alton informed him that there is not a definitive plan at this time but that some of the equipment will need to be replaced soon as it is getting old.
 - Skipper Deyo asked why one Highway employee gets more hours than the other two and why that employee is the only one that gets paid for helping at the Transfer Station.

- Alton explained that as the foreman, that employee is the one that gets called in to assess the roads in the event of a storm.
- Ramona Reed asked if there were plans to pave any roads this year.
- Alton stated that yes, Poor Farm Road was slated to be repaved early summer / late fall.
- Ramona asked if they planned to pave Missile Base Road.
- She was told that there weren't any plans currently to pave Missile Base Road but that it would be considered.
- Jr. Cameron asked if the water district planned on installing pipes along Poor Farm Road and if it is scheduled to be paved, should they consider paving after the waterline is laid.
- He was informed that the waterline is only being considered at this time and that no plans have been made.
- Moderator Tatro asked if there was any more discussion on Article #4
- No more discussion.
- Results of 03/07/2017 voting will appear at the end of the minutes

Article #5 – Shall the voters of the Town vote the sum of \$60,000.00 to be used to blacktop town highways for fiscal year 2017/2018.

- The article was read – Moderator Tatro opened the floor for questions and discussion –
 - Tim Tatro asked how long Poor Farm Road was.
 - Alton answered that it is approximately 2.1 miles
 - It was asked if \$60,000 would cover paving for that much road.
 - Alton stated that there is still paving money available from previous years.
 - Skipper Deyo asked if Poor Farm Road does not get paved this year, will some of the smaller Roads be paved.
 - He was informed that the Board will have to make that decision if Poor Farm Road does not get paved.

- It was asked if Poor Farm Road does not get paved, will the Town hold on to the money or use it for a different project.
- The Board will make that decision if they need to.
- Moderator Tatro asked if there was any more discussion on Article #5.
- No more discussion.
- Results of 03/07/2017 voting will appear at the end of the minutes

Article #6 – Shall the voters of the Town vote the sum of \$55,000.00 to the Alburgh Volunteer Fire Department Incorporated for general purposes for fiscal year 2017/2018.

- The article was read – Moderator Tatro opened the floor for questions and discussion –
 - This amount is level funded from the previous year.
 - Laura Limoge asked why there are two separate requests for the Fire Department.
 - It was explained that the reason that is done is that if the budget for General Purposes gets voted down, they still may have a budget to purchase equipment as needed.
 - Tyler Gotshall stated that the department sold the rescue boat for extra funds for the purchase of other equipment.
 - It was asked if there is another boat for the department.
 - It was said that there is currently a jet ski for the department and that it is a better, more efficient option as it is faster. The boat could not be launched last summer due to the water level.
 - Moderator Tatro asked if there was any more discussion on Article #5.
 - No more discussion.
 - Results of 03/07/2017 voting will appear at the end of the minutes.

Article #7, - Shall the voters of the Town vote the sum of \$15,000.00 to the Alburgh Volunteer Fire Department Incorporated for a reserve fund to be used to purchase equipment for the fiscal year 2017/2018.

- The article was read – Moderator Tatro opened the floor for questions and discussion
 - This amount is level funded from the previous year.
 - Carol Behrman asked if the new 3.3% tax for the State would come out of that amount/
 - The department budget was done when the new rule went into effect so it was not taken into consideration for this budget.
 - Moderator Tatro asked if there was any more discussion on Article #5.
 - No more discussion.
 - Results of 03/07/2017 voting will appear at the end of the minutes

Article #8 (incorrectly listed as 9) – Shall the voters of the Town vote to pay the current taxes to the Town Treasurer in four installments with due dates as follows: September 10, 2017; November 10, 2017; January 10, 2018 and April 10, 2018

- The article was read – Terry opened the floor for questions and discussion.
- No discussion took place.
- *Ed Polk motioned to pay the current taxes to the Town Treasurer in four installments as described – seconded by Carol Behrman –*
- *Moderator Tatro asked for those in favor – ayes were heard – Moderator Tatro asked for those opposed – no nays were heard – the Ayes have it – motion passed*

Article #9 (incorrectly listed as 10) - Shall the voters of the Town authorize the Selectmen to borrow money in anticipation of taxes, to pay the current expenses of the Town and to sign notes for that purpose for the fiscal year 2017/2018.

- The article was read – Terry opened the floor for questions and discussion.
- No discussion took place.
- *Ed Polk motioned to authorize the Selectmen to borrow money in anticipation of taxes, to pay the current expenses of the Town and to sign notes for that purpose – seconded by Dick Ernst - –*
- *Moderator Tatro asked for those in favor – ayes were heard – Moderator Tatro asked for those opposed – no nays were heard – the Ayes have it.*

Article #10 (incorrectly listed as 11) - To transact any other business that may properly come before this meeting.

- The article was read – Terry opened the floor for questions and discussion.
 - Heidi Gotshall asked if the Streetscape project was going to be finished this summer.
 - She was informed that the project will be going out for bid very soon and that the plan is to have it completed by the end of summer.
 - Carol Behrman asked what the cost to the Fire Department is to transport a patient or to answer a fire call.
 - Tyler answered that there is not a charge for fire calls and that most rescue calls are covered by insurance.

- There was a suggestion made that in the Town report, the previous year's warnings and the results of voting be included for comparison.
- Suggestion was noted and will be implemented in the 2018 Town Report.
- Moderator Tatro asked that the minutes be ratified to recognize and record the presentation of awards given to Victoria Reed and Joan Krizer.
 - *Toni Soule motioned to ratify the minutes to recognize and record the presentation of awards given to Victoria Reed and Joan Krizer – seconded by Ed Bosquet –*
 - *Moderator Tatro asked for those in favor – ayes were heard – Moderator Tatro asked for those opposed – no nays were heard – the Ayes have it – motion passed.*

RESULTS OF AUSTRALIAN BALLOT VOTING FROM 03/07/2017

Article #1 – To elect by Australian Ballot the following officers:

The following officers were elected:

Town Moderator, *Terry A. Tatro with 348 votes*

Town Clerk, *Donna Bohannon with 378 votes,*

Town Treasurer, *Donna Bohannon with 372 votes.*

Selectman for two (2) years – *Alton Brusco with 355 votes.*

Selectman for three (3) years - *Lee Kimball with 195 votes – Joseph (Skipper) Deyo with 169 votes.*

Lister for three (3) years – *Laura Limoge with 222 votes – Cheryl Dunn with 150 votes*

Auditor for two (2) years, *Barbara Baker with 359 votes*

Auditor for three (3) years – *56 Write in votes – No majority*

Deed Agent, *Terry Tatro with 338 votes.*

Town Agent, *Terry Tatro with 343 votes.*

Constable, *Terry A. Tatro with 238 votes George McGrath – 139 votes,*

Delinquent Tax Collector, *Terry A. Tatro with 334 votes.*

Grand Juror, *Ralph Tatro with 336 votes.*

Article #3– Shall the voters vote to approve a budget of \$689,449.09 with the amount of \$391,707.09 to be raised by taxation to be used for general Town purposes for the fiscal year 2017/2018 – **passed with 264 YES votes and 122 NO votes.**

Article #4: Shall the voters of the Town vote to approve a budget of \$618,734.04 with the amount of \$527,334.04 to be raised by taxation, to be used for year-around maintenance of Town highways for the fiscal year of 2017 – 2018 - **passed with 273 YES votes and 110 NO votes.**

Article #5 – Shall the voters of the Town vote the sum of \$60,000.00 to be used to blacktop town highways for fiscal year 2017/2018 - **passed with 297 YES votes and 88 NO votes.**

Article #6 – Shall the voters of the Town vote the sum of \$55,000.00 to the Alburgh Volunteer Fire Department Incorporated for general purposed for fiscal year 2017/2018 **passed with 297 YES votes and 89 NO votes.**

Article #7, - Shall the voters of the Town vote the sum of \$15,000.00 to the Alburgh Volunteer Fire Department Incorporated for a reserve fund to be used to purchase equipment for the fiscal year 2017/2018 - **passed with 258 YES votes and 117 NO votes.**

RESULTS OF SCHOOL VOTES

School District Moderator – *Terry A. Tatro with 336 votes.*

School Director – for two (2) years – *Michael Savage with 317 votes.*

School Director for three (3) years – *Virginia Wright with 21 write in votes*

Shall the voters of the school district approve the school board to expend \$5,611,188 which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? It is estimated that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in education spending of \$15,799 per equalized pupil. This projected spending per equalized pupil is 5.46% higher than spending for the current year. –

This was voted down with 191 NO votes and 190 YES votes

Approved:

Moderator Terry A. Tatro _____ **Date** _____

Respectfully submitted,
Donna L. Bohannon
Alburgh Town Clerk