

MINUTES OF ANNUAL TOWN AND TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING

Monday, March 3, 2014

The legal voters of the Town and Town School District of Alburgh, met at 7:30pm at the Alburgh Elementary Community Educational Center, as Warned, and transacted the following business:

NOTE: All Officers and money issues were voted by printed ballot on Tuesday, March 4, 2014. 431 voters cast their ballots.

Annual Town Meeting opened at 7:00pm by Moderator, Terry Tatro, with the reading of both the Town and the Town School Warnings. The Town School District portion of the meeting was first.

Article 1: To hear and act on the reports of the Alburgh Town School District officers as published in the Town Report as of June 30, 2013.

Ed Polk motioned to accept as written – Beth Savage seconded. Motion carried. No opposition.

Article 2: Will the Alburgh Town School District authorize the Alburgh School Board to borrow in anticipation of taxes?

Dick Ernst motioned to allow borrowing – Kim Feiker seconded. Motion carried. No opposition.

Article 3: To transact any other business proper to come before this meeting.

Terry Tatro suggested talk on Article 5. Skipper Prairie said there's no formal presentation but there's an orange info sheet available for each meeting attendant.

Ed Polk noted 5.23% increase but on page 43 in town report there's 7% increase stated. Which is correct? Alton Bruso said numbers aren't the same so percentages are different. Ed Polk reiterated which is correct? Mike Savage said gold piece is correct. School figures weren't finalized when town report was created. Ed Polk said page 43 should be correct because increase is exact money in town report. Alton Bruso believes gold paper is correct. Doug Disabito remarked the listed years are incorrect. Terry Tatro asked what figure is correct; Mike Savage said \$5,066,193.

Ed Fisette asked if changes were from State which Alton Bruso answered was correct, the legislature has not finalized numbers yet. Ed Fisette said a big piece of school costs are handed down from State. Other school boards send letters of protest, does Alburgh's?

Mike Savage said no. Alton Bruso has let Commissioner know face to face but no letters have been sent. Ed Fisette said a more formal stance is needed. He motioned School Board finalize control issues with State, go on the record for high costs being passed onto Alburgh. Peggy Theoret seconded. Motion carried. No opposition.

School Board will send letter to Department of Education, representatives, and the governor and copy Ed Fisette. Steven Deyo wondered if it did other towns any good to write letters of protest.

Ed Polk asked why it was necessary to give principal a 14% raise. Alton Bruso said the new principal didn't get as much, had a 3% raise. Ed Polk said it was very confusing. Terry Tatro said it was a 14% increase over last year's budget. Toni Soule asked if there was an 11% rebate.

Ed Fiset didn't understand, \$82,400 is what the principal will be paid.

George Feiker asked what a school counselor was. Janet Cerro explained it's like a guidance counselor. They're responsible for meeting with students experiencing problems at home or school. Give instruction around drugs/alcohol/dangers in society, works with teachers and students going to high school. She was only part time this year. Moe Theoret asked if she was busy being full time. Janet Cerro said she was more than busy now, holding certain groups of kids struggling at lunch or other times of day. After a question from George Feiker, Renée Patterson said the counselor makes \$70,942 full time.

Toni Soule saw there was quite an increase in Pre-K numbers, 23 now enrolled answered Janet Cerro. Skipper Prairie said it is State mandated to offer Pre-K either on site or off.

Kim Feiker asked how many ipads the school was buying. Janet Cerro said 3-4 per class. 27-36 total that will stay in classrooms. Patti Savage asked if tablets would be better. Janet Cerro explained the ipads are refurbished and tablets are not as interactive.

George Boutah asked if the budget increase had anything to do with high schools. Mike Savage said yes, tuitions increased and quantities of students.

Ed Polk wanted the expected the tax rate. Mike Savage said it is not yet set. Alton Brusio said residential would be up \$.10.

Heidi Gotshall asked if village kids will have a bus again. Some buses are running empty and thinks school board should look into that.

Kim Feiker asked if cost effectiveness on page 39 of town report was from the State? Alburgh has 2 administrators while most comparable towns have 1. Renée Patterson explained home school coordinator (HSC) is considered an administrator. They are like a vice principal. Most schools have one but it may be under a different name. Renée Patterson said current home school coordinator is not administrator because he doesn't have a degree in administration. HSC is not for homeschooling, but for helping families and the school work together.

George Feiker asked if any cuts had been made. Principal did go through and make some budget cuts. He then said GISU should work on consolidating schools. Alton Brusio said most towns did not want to consolidate. Alburgh has 200+ students. Perhaps someday but not now.

George Feiker asked if each school uses GISU. Alton Brusio said yes, supervisory unions are looking to consolidate also.

Article 5: Shall the voters of the Alburgh Town School District appropriate \$5,330,925 necessary for the support of schools for the year beginning July 1, 2014?

(Ballot item).

Article 5 was opposed by 229 votes with 163 in favor.

Article 6: To elect all School Officers as required by law (1 Year positions unless otherwise specified):

(Ballot item).

SCHOOL MODERATOR

SCHOOL DIRECTOR—2 YEARS

SCHOOL DIRECTOR—3 YEARS

The following Officers were elected:

School Moderator, Terry Tatro, unopposed with 380 votes

School Director—2 Years, Michael Savage, unopposed with 345 votes

School Director—3 Years, Write-in Allyson Sweeney with 58 votes defeating write-in Alan Bowser with 11 votes

John Beaulac motioned to adjourn school portion of meeting. Ed Polk seconded. Motioned carried, no opposition. The Town portion of the meeting then commenced.

Article 1: To elect by Australian Ballot the following officers (All 1 Year positions unless otherwise specified):

(Ballot item).

AUDITOR—3 YEARS

CONSTABLE

DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTOR

LISTER—3 YEARS

SELECTMAN—3 YEARS

TOWN CLERK

AUDITOR—2 YEARS

DEED AGENT

GRAND JUROR

SELECTMAN—2 YEARS

TOWN AGENT

TOWN TREASURER

The following Officers were elected:

Auditor—3 Years, no successful write-in

Auditor—2 Years, no successful write-in

Constable, Terry Tatro, unopposed with 377 votes

Deed Agent, Terry Tatro, unopposed with 377 votes

Delinquent Tax Collector, Terry Tatro, unopposed with 371 votes

Grand Juror, Ralph Tatro, unopposed with 367 votes

Lister—3 Years, Janet Rothschild, unopposed with 349 votes

Selectman—2 Years, Steve Aubin, unopposed with 368 votes

Selectman—3 Years, Bernard Savage, unopposed with 274 votes

Town Agent, Terry Tatro, unopposed with 373 votes

Town Clerk, Donna Bohannon with 207 votes defeating Linda Gotshall with 206 votes

Town Treasurer, Linda Gotshall with 208 votes defeating Donna Bohannon with 203 votes

Article 2: To consider and act upon the reports of the town officers.

Ed Polk motioned to accept article as written. Ed Bousquet seconded. Motion carried. No opposition.

Article 3: Shall the voters of the town vote to approve a budget of \$613,643 with the amount of \$450,000 to be raised by taxation, to be used for year-round maintenance of Town highways for the fiscal year 2014-2015.

(Ballot item).

Peggy Theoret asked which roads will be worked on. Guy Palardy said East Alburgh and Boutah Roads.

Connie Boutin asked if the town was going to do section of Blair Road leading to border. Guy Palardy said not this year. Greenwoods was done in 2013 and would have been lost if it wasn't done. Not enough money to do more roads—trying to maintain what we have.

Ed Polk remarked town has 3 highway members full time. Why is there a budget increase? Guy Palady explained one is a foreman and has higher pay.

John Beaulac said electric bill was very high. Roxanne Creller said because there was electricity in 2 locations (Missile Base and new garage).

Article 3 was approved with 256 votes in favor and 166 opposed.

Article 4: Shall the voters of the Town vote to approve a budget of \$690,454.14 with the amount of \$466,300 to be raised by taxation, to be used for general Town purposes for the fiscal year 2014-2015.
(Ballot item).

John Beaulac asked why audit is so high. Roxanne Creller explained she got 3 quotes.

Ed Polk noted \$2,000 error on page 11 compared to amount warned. Roxanne Creller noted later there was no error, Polk was looking at only subtotal. Correctly warned figure was on following page (12).

Toni Soule asked what the tax sale expense category included, Roxanne Creller said it was for lawyer fees, newspaper advertising, etc. Terry Tatro clarified the town sometimes "buys" property at tax sales but is reimbursed when said property is redeemed or resold.

Article 4 was approved with 247 votes in favor and 172 opposed.

Article 5: Shall the voters of the Town vote the sum of \$55,000 to the Alburgh Volunteer Fire Department Incorporated for general purposes for the fiscal year 2014-2015.
(Ballot item).

No pertinent discussion.

Article 5 was approved with 291 votes in favor and 126 opposed.

Article 6: Shall the voters of the Town vote the sum of \$15,000 to the Alburgh Volunteer Fire Department Incorporated for a reserve fund to be used to purchase equipment for the fiscal year 2014-2015.
(Ballot item).

No pertinent discussion.

Article 6 was approved with 253 votes in favor and 164 opposed.

Article 7: Shall the voters of the Town vote the sum of \$60,000 to be used to blacktop Town highways for the fiscal year 2014-2015.
(Ballot item).

No pertinent discussion.

Article 7 was approved with 293 votes in favor and 128 opposed.

Article 8: Shall the voters of the Town vote to pay the current taxes to the Town Treasurer in four installments for the fiscal year 2014-2015 with due dates as follows: 9/10/14, 11/10/14, 1/10/15, 4/10/15.

Ed Polk motioned to adopt all 4 dates. John Beaulac seconded. Motion carried. No opposition. Renée Patterson asked why the town adopts the dates if there are no penalties. Terry Tatro replied for convenience.

Article 9: Shall the voters 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 2014-2015.

Ed Polk motioned to borrow, Mike Savage seconded. Motion carried. No opposition.

Article 10: Shall the voters of the Town vote a one time sum of \$33,755 to be used to pay off the indebtedness to the Northwest Solid Waste District, which will eliminate all future yearly membership fees and save \$22/ton for all garbage shipments.

(Ballot item).

Terry Tatro did not like warning wording, but there was no way to change it now. Various indirect comments were spoken.

Article 10 was approved with 299 votes in favor and 126 opposed.

Article 11: Shall the voters if the Town authorize tax exempt status to be given to the Alburgh Volunteer Fire Department.

(Ballot item).

No pertinent discussion.

Article 11 was approved with 321 votes in favor and 103 opposed.

Article 12: Shall the voters of the Town authorize tax exempt status to be given to the Alburgh Rod & Gun Club.

(Ballot item).

Rod & Gun Club provides hunter safety and firearms education in addition to allowing use of their grounds.

Article 12 was approved with 242 votes in favor and 173 opposed.

Article 13: To transact any other business that may properly come before this meeting.

Someone asked when 13 Vantine Avenue site was going to get cleaned up. It is currently in the State's hands.

George Feiker remarked on speeds on Greenwoods and Blair Road. It was explained to call the Sheriff's Department.

Mitzi Johnson and Bob Krebs, county representatives, spent time on budgets and highlights of what they do. The Shoreline Bill will go at least another month before the public knows anything.

J.P. Ladd motioned to adjourn meeting. Renée Patterson seconded. Motion carried. No opposition!

Respectfully submitted,



Terry A. Tatro
Alburgh Town and School Moderator



Danielle James Choiniere
Alburgh Assistant Clerk



Alton Brusio
Selectman / School Board Director