

# MINUTES FROM THE ALBURGH ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD ON 03/01/2021

The annual Town meeting for the Town of Alburgh was held via Zoom as an informational ONLY meeting. NO votes were cast at the meeting. The link to the meeting can be found by clicking or by copying and pasting the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/xE4Q8B3oErJ5q2YP8nfNu3IH9yT3vxiTKwLy2il7U79-oWHOXmA2XMdbHRe8Rldk.id-yR-YB2F8BS4Nu?startTime=1614642133000>

MEMBERS PRESENT (ALL VIA ZOOM) FOR TOWN: Town Moderator, Terry A. Tatro, Selectboard members Lee Kimball, Alton Brusco, Chuck Pease, Kenneth Millman, Selectboard Clerk, Donna L. Bohannon, Assistant Clerk, Danielle James Choiniere

AUDIENCE MEMBERS PRESENT (ALL VIA ZOOM):

Ryan Savage, Michael Savage, Judith Trem, Jeanne Bousquet, Corrine Russin, Ron Kumetz, Matthew LeFluer, “Deborah’s I-pad”, Michael Poquette, Susan Millman, “Guest”, Mallory Ovitt, “library”, Jane Dwinell, Brian Markwell, Charles Kelly, “Tonya’s I-pad”, “Adam’s phone”, Stacey Ladd, “Fire tablet”, Mike Donoghue, Ellen Vaillancourt, John Chesarek, Ramona Reed, Doug DiSabito

**NOTE: ALL items were voted by printed ballot on Tuesday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

➤ Results of ballot votes will appear at the end of the minutes.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: The legal voters and residents of the Town of Alburgh met via Zoom on Monday evening March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

Moderator, Terry A. Tatro opened the meeting at 7PM, explained that there were 10 articles on the warning and that he would go through each one and allow questions or comments to be made on them: He also explained how to do that.

**Articles were numbered incorrectly and will appear here correctly.**

**Article #1:** Terry explained that Article #1 was to elect the town officers and stated that there was nothing to discuss but that the positions would be voted on the next day, March 2<sup>nd</sup> and that the polls would be open from 7am to 7pm on that day.

**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.
- o There was no discussion on this topic.
- o It was explained again that this would be a ballot item the next day.

**Article #3:** Shall the voters of the Town vote to approve a budget of \$ 678,861 with the amount of \$536,711 to be raised by taxation, to be used for general purposes for the fiscal year 2021-2022?

- The article was read – Moderator Tatro opened the floor for questions and discussion.
- o Moderator Tatro explained that this was a ballot item and would be voted on the

following day by Australian ballot.

o Judith T. asked via “chat” why article three and article four were separate.

- It was explained that article three applies to the general fund and article four refers to the highway fund and that funds can be carried over year to year in the highway fund but not in the general fund, therefore they are voted separate.

**Article #4:** Shall the voters of the Town vote to approve a budget of \$708,440 with the amount of \$616,940 to be raised by taxation, to be used for year-round maintenance of Town Highways. for the fiscal year 2021-2022?

- The article was read – Moderator Tatro opened the floor for questions and discussion.

There was no discussion on this topic.

**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 the fiscal year 2021-2022?

- The article was read – Moderator Tatro opened the floor for questions and discussion.

o There was no discussion on this topic.

**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 2021-2022?

- The article was read – Moderator Tatro opened the floor for questions and discussion.

o There was no discussion on this topic.

**Article #8.** Shall the voters of the Town of Alburgh vote to raise by taxation, a sum not to exceed \$300,000, to be used to purchase a new ambulance/rescue vehicle, which will be owned by the Alburgh Volunteer Fire Department Incorporated. Funds would be raised over a period of 6 consecutive years (50,000 or less each year), with the first \$50,000 raised in fiscal year 2021/2022?

- The article was read – Moderator Tatro opened the floor for questions and discussion.

- Judith T. asked why a new ambulance was needed.
- Ron Kumetz, Fire Chief, explained that the second ambulance is over 10 years old and has issues that will soon make it not inspectable.
- He also explained that the ambulances are the most frequently used of the department’s vehicles.
- He then explained that the average usage of an ambulance is ten years.
- Judith asked if it would be more cost effective to start budgeting the money over the course of the next ten years instead of asking for it over the course of six years.
- Ron agreed and explained that the department is working on a capital equipment plan but a new rescue vehicle is needed now.
- Lee Kimball asked what the average cost of an ambulance was, and Ron said that it is about \$300,000 without some of the equipment.
- Ron also explained that although some of the equipment can be moved from the old ambulance, there are strict guidelines for certain pieces of equipment, such as the stretchers that can cost about \$20,000 and that some of that will need to purchase new to fit the new vehicle.

- Matthew LeFluer asked if a different chassis could be purchased and the box put on that chassis.
- Ron explained that yes it could be, but that the cost would most likely not be any less.
- Corrine Russin asked if article six and seven were different than the \$75,000 that is part of the budget.
- She was informed that yes, it is. The budgeted amount is for a capital equipment fund.

**Article #9: (Appears as a second article #8 in the book – corrected here)** 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, 2021, November 10, 2021, January 10, 2022 and April 10, 2022.

- The article was read – Moderator Tatro opened the floor for questions and discussion.
- o There was no discussion on this topic.

**Article #10:** Shall the voters authorize the Selectmen to borrow money in anticipation of taxes, to pay the current expenses of the Town and sign notes for that purpose?

- The article was read – Moderator Tatro opened the floor for questions and discussion.
- o There was no discussion on this topic.

Moderator Tatro asked if there were any other questions or comments and reminded all present that since no votes were being made via Zoom, the meeting would simply end when all questions and comments were done. He explained that he wanted to allow plenty of opportunity for the public to speak.

- Lee Kimball took this time to honor two Selectboard members who were not running for re-election.
- Ken Millman was recognized for being a team player and giving his all to the Board and the Town for the past several years. He was thanked for his service.
- Alton Brusio (AKA; The Mayor) was recognized for serving on the Selectboard and the Schoolboard for many years. He too was thanked for his years of service.

Moderator Tatro asked again if there were any questions or comments from anyone.

- Judith “Trem” asked if there was a plan to help people pay for disposing of recyclables, such as paper and plastics, now that there is a charge for them. She explained that it is cheaper to dispose of them in the trash than to recycle them.
- Lee Kimball answered by explaining that the cost to handle the recyclables was intended to be offset with the revenue from those items, but there is not any money to be made with them now so the cost to handle has to be generated by charging.
- He also explained that they will go back to free recycling if possible.

Moderator Tatro asked again if there were any questions or comments from anyone.

- Ron Kumetz asked if the Board thought it would be feasible to charge a local option tax.
- Lee Kimball stated that it would be worth exploring and would be appropriate to bring that to a regular Selectboard meeting.

Moderator Tatro asked again if there were any questions or comments from anyone.

- Matthew LeFluer informed the Board that he sent an email to the Town office about autonomous vehicles and asked that the Board consider this as well.
- Lee stated that this too was worth exploring and would be suitable for a regular Selectboard meeting.

Moderator Tatro asked again if there were any questions or comments from anyone.

- John Chesarek stated that he liked the Town report but asked what the money for AIDI (Alburgh Industrial Development Corp.) was used for.
- Terry explained that the money in the AIDI “account” is for infrastructure repairs that may be needed for the pump station on Industrial Park Road.
- John also wanted to know why Terry Tatro is not paid for any of the positions that he holds.
- Terry explained that some of the positions are simply a title and they don’t involve doing anything.
- Terry also explained that the 8% penalty that the collects on behalf of the Town for delinquent taxes is his pay.

Moderator Tatro asked again if there were any questions or comments from anyone.

- Matthew LeFluer asked if COVID plays into taxes at all and he was informed that the biggest impact to the Town that COVID has is not being able to attend meetings in person.

Moderator Tatro asked again if there were any questions or comments from anyone.

- There were no more questions or comments, so the meeting ended at 7:55pm

APPROVED BY:

Terry A. Tatro – Moderator \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Lee Kimball – Selectboard \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

RESULTS OF BALLOT VOTING ON 03/02/2021

[2021 LOCAL ELECTION RESULTS](#)