

# MINUTES FROM 06/23/2021 ALBURGH SELECTBOARD MEETING

THE MEETING WAS HELD VIA ZOOM. THE RECORDING CAN BE FOUND BY CLICKING THE  
LINK HERE:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/hbZTUZqQZF0bUHAbfcUDkAdytg31VdTo2LhGpjHJKH0Rvrg-2fe9wbv1Y5PYju8s.6kfQ\\_bWsnJuXAElo](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/hbZTUZqQZF0bUHAbfcUDkAdytg31VdTo2LhGpjHJKH0Rvrg-2fe9wbv1Y5PYju8s.6kfQ_bWsnJuXAElo)

PRESENT (All in person): Vice-Chair, Russell Duchaine, Chuck Pease, Shawn Creller, Nicholas Palmer, Clerk, Donna L. Bohannon

**6:30pm: EXECUTIVE SESSION:** For the purpose of 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) The appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee.

*AT 6:30pm Lee Kimball made a motion to enter into executive session for the purpose of 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) The appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee – seconded by Nick Palmer – all in favor – Board in executive session.*

*At 7pm Chuck Pease made a motion to leave executive session – seconded by Nick Palmer – all in favor – Board out of executive session.*

Results of executive session were motioned and voted on later in the meeting.

**7:00pm - OPEN REGULAR MEETING:**

PRESENT: Chairman, Lee Kimball, Chuck Pease, Russell Duchaine, Shawn Creller, Nicholas Palmer, Clerk, Donna L. Bohannon

GUESTS (In person): Terry Tatro, Josie Henry, David Mahoney (*Vermont Connections Computer Services*), Jerid Creller, Carol Behrman, Alton Brusco, Elliot Knight, Mallory Ovitt, Damien Henry, Leo Henry, Bronwyn Proffit-Higgins, JR Cox, Michael Frett (*The Islander Newspaper*), Brian Tjelta, Neil Christopher, George Boutah, Gilbert Bohannon, Jeremiah Nichols, Raleigh Palmer

GUESTS (Via Zoom): Chris Lynch (*Matrix Systems*), Matthew Lavigne (*Green Mountain Fireworks*), Matthew LeFluer, Crystal Luciano, Jane Dwinell, Ken Millman, Shaun Robinson, Ashley Bowen, Bob Harnish, Alicia Surprise, Dee LeFluer, Danielle J. Choiniere, Micah, Megan Ladd, Jenn

- At 7pm Chairman, Lee Kimball opened the meeting.

ADJUST AGENDA (if needed):

- **ADJUSTMENT #1:** Move the Declaration for inclusion topic to the top of the agenda.

APPROVE THE FOLLOWING MEETING MINUTES:

- 06/09/2021 REGULAR SELECTBOARD MEETING
  - *Chuck Pease made a motion to approve the minutes from the 06/09/2021 Selectboard meeting as written – seconded by Lee Kimball – all in favor – motion carried.*
- **ADJUSTMENT #1:**Declaration for inclusion. Proposed declaration - Municipal Engagement for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - Governors Proclamation of Inclusion
  - Many people were present to talk about the topic of inclusion.
  - Bob Harnish, the gentleman that sent the information to the town, was present via Zoom.
  - Lee Kimball asked him to explain his reasons for asking the town to sign this document.
  - Mr. Harnish introduced himself and explained that other towns have adopted this declaration.
  - He also explained that the governor has designated the second week in May as inclusion week.
  - Lee asked Bob what the declaration does that Alburgh is not already doing.
  - Bob explained that there may be unintentional bias in the hiring practices or ordinances that may want to be addressed.
  - There were many valid points made by those who were eager to have it signed as well as those who did not see a need because they feel Alburgh is already inclusive.
  - Main points of discussion were:
    - There is already a state declaration to address the issue.
    - There has not been a problem identified for the Board to address.
    - It is simply a “feel good” statement
    - There is not any harm in signing it.
    - It shows support for inclusion.
    - Would set a precedent for other “feel good” documents.
    - Posting the governors proclamation on the town website with a statement that the town supports the governor’s proclamation.
    - It should go to a town vote if it that strongly debated.
    - Creating a petition to have it included on the March ballot.
    - Tabled until further notice.

VISITOR INPUT:

- Carol Behrman asked the new Selectboard members why they wanted to be on the Selectboard and if they wanted to see growth in Alburgh.

- o Russell Duchaine answered first and explained that he chose to be a Selectboard member because he wanted more “local Blood” on the Board that knew some of the history of the town and he would like to see Alburgh grow.
  - o Nick Palmer spoke to the question second and stated that he wanted to see improvements to the town, and he would like to see new business come in and existing business be sustained.
  - o Shawn Creller spoke last and stated that he also wanted to see more local people on the Board. He also wants to see growth in Alburgh
  - o Carol then asked them if they were willing to work with the Planning Board to which they all said they are.
  - o Raleigh Palmer raised his hand to be recognized and once recognized stated that he had two points he wanted to make.
  - o Point number one was that the town could offer tax incentives for businesses that chose to come to Alburgh.
  - o He used Rouses Point as an example of the growth that can take place if businesses are offered a tax break.
  - o He suggested that Alburgh could defer taxes for a set number of years if business chose to come to Alburgh.
  - o Point number two was that as people with primary jobs, limiting the amount of time they can spend outside those jobs, the Selectboard and the Town could benefit from hiring a Town Administrator.
  - o He explained that a T.A would work FOR the Selectboard and would take some of the tasks off their hand, report back to them and make recommendations to them on issues that they do not have an adequate amount of time to handle.
  - o He also explained that the right person could also write grants and would be a financial asset to the town.
  - o Josie Henry suggested that an economic development board would also be beneficial in bringing in and sustaining businesses.
- Terry Tatro asked the Board if they had received any driveway permit requests recently.
    - o He was informed that they have not received any requests recently.
  - Matthew Lavigne asked the Board if his letter or welcome to Green Mountain Fireworks could be extended past November.
    - o He explained that the past couple of years, the letter has been open ended, but that the current letter had an end date for the end of November.
    - o He also expressed that their company employs four Alburgh residents.

NEW / OLD BUSINESS UPDATES / TABLED TOPICS AND / OR WAITING RESULTS:

- Greta Brunswick - discuss contract extension with DWA
  - o Greta was not present
  - o Tabled until the next Selectboard meeting, currently scheduled for 07/14/2021.
- West Shore “junk” complaint – update –
  - o This property has been cleaned up and no new vehicles have been noticed.
  - o This will be removed from the agenda.

- I.T Service needed for the office – quote available – RFP needed?
  - David Mahoney was present to answer any questions that the Board might have about having an assessment done.
  - David submitted a quote of \$3,999 for an assessment of the needs of the town office.
  - Jeff Remillard from Visual Edge also sent a sample of what an assessment includes from his company and the cost is \$0.
  - The Board would like to review and compare the two before making a decision.
  - Tabled until the next Selectboard meeting, currently scheduled for 07/14/2021.
  - Donna will provide both quotes to the Selectboard members for their review.
- Declaration for inclusion – (moved to the top of the agenda)
- Electric Vehicle Charging Station [-EV Charging](#)
  - In 2019 the Planning Commission applied for a grant to receive electric vehicle charging stations but was denied.
  - Recently, the town received information from a 3<sup>rd</sup> party that the State will be issuing charging stations to several Vermont towns and Alburgh is one of them.
  - Companies must bid on the job and they must install the charging stations in all of the towns granted by the state.
- Fireworks permitting \_ update
  - The fire chief was not present to give an update.
  - Tabled until the next Selectboard meeting, currently scheduled for 07/14/2021.
- Center Bay Beach – complaint – update
  - The Listers have not finished establishing boundaries.
  - Tabled until the next Selectboard meeting, currently scheduled for 07/14/2021.
- Constable training and roles – update –
  - There was discussion with Jerid Creller as to whether or not he wanted to attend the police academy for training so his duties as town constable could be expanded.
  - He expressed an interest in doing that but was concerned that it would be a waste if he were not elected again in the spring.
  - It was suggested that the constable position be expanded to a three-year term.
  - It was also stated that he could be the enforcement officer for the current ordinances that the town has but has limited ability to enforce.
  - An outline of what duties the constable will be responsible for will be created and presented at the next Board meeting.
  - Jerid will contact the state to get his own ticket books.
  - Changing the constable position from a one-year to a three- year position will be added to the ballot in March. Proper language will be researched.

- o The town will send Jerid to the academy for training.
- o *Nick Palmer made a motion to get Jerid Creller into the academy for training, add increasing the position to a three-year term to the March ballot and get tickets books for Jerid to use for enforcing ordinances – seconded by Chuck Pease – all in favor – motion carried.*
- Garfield trailer in violation – update –
  - o Russell Duchaine visited the site and has not seen any progress.
  - o This may be handed over to Jerid Creller as constable.
  - o Tabled until the next Selectboard meeting, currently scheduled for 07/14/2021
- Matrix & Broad band – update –
  - o *Lee Kimball made a motion to “clean up” the red line version that the town received from Town attorney, David Rugh and release it to Chris Lynch of the Matrix group for his review – seconded by Nick Palmer – all in favor – motion carried.*
  - o Tabled until the next Selectboard meeting, currently scheduled for 07/14/2021
- Northwest Communications Union District (NW CUD) – Update-
  - o
- Transfer Station topics as needed –
  - o Free / ½ price “dump” day – set a date? –
    - *Nick Palmer made a motion to hold “free / ½ price dump day” on Saturday, July 31<sup>st</sup> – seconded by Lee Kimball – all in favor – motion carried.*
    - Lee will confirm what will be free and what will be ½ price based on previous years practices.
    - The free / ½ price is for Alburgh residents ONLY.
    - A resident sticker will be required to qualify for the reduced pricing. (Stickers for residents can be picked up at the Town office)
  - o There was some discussion about allowing Cody Martin to work on the weekends through the summer months.
    - *Nick Palmer made a motion to give Dillon Pearo a \$1 per hour raise and also to allow Cody Martin to work on the weekends through the end of August – seconded by Lee Kimball – four in favor – one opposed – motion carried.*
    - Shawn Creller will inform Dean of the changes.
- 4 Point of Tongue - Possible litigation –
  - o Donna L. Bohannon, treasurer explained the details of what lead up to the possible litigation.
  - o The property was sold in January...the seller thought the taxes had been paid but they had not.

- o They buyer's attorney asked, in January, if there were any delinquent taxes to which he was told there were not because in January they were not.
- o In April, they DID go delinquent, and penalty and interest were added.
- o The buyer and the seller both paid half the tax amount only, leaving the penalty and interest unpaid.
- o One of the attorneys involved in the sale contacted the town attorney and intimated that he would sue the town if they pursued collection of that amount.
- o *Nick Palmer made a motion to send the remaining amount owed to the abatement board - seconded by Lee Kimball - all in favor - motion carried.*
- o The amount still owed will be added to the list of abatements.
- o The date for the abatement hearing will be determined at a later date and warned appropriately.
- All-Terrain Vehicles in Bicentennial Park – allowed? – Signs needed?
  - o Donna reported that she has been informed by a couple of people that someone has been riding motor bikes (4 wheelers and/or dirt bikes) in the park behind the Islands in the Sun Senior Center.
  - o She recommended that it might be beneficial to place a couple of signs indicating that riding motorized vehicles in the park is prohibited.
  - o Russell Duchaine stated that he knows most of the people in that area that have dirt bikes and he will talk to them and explain that they are not allowed to ride in the park, rather than order signs.
  - o An update will be given at the next Selectboard meeting.
  - o Tabled until the next Selectboard meeting, currently scheduled for 07/14/2021.
- Pedestrian signs - Coon Point Rd –
  - o There was some discussion about the need for a sign on this road.
  - o It was determined that a sign would be ordered indicating that there are pedestrians on the road and it would be placed at the triangular intersection of Route 129 and Coon Point Road.
  - o Donna will relay the information to Jason Reynolds, Road Foreman.
- Speed limit / Children Playing sign – Vantine Ave
  - o There was some discussion about the need for a sign on this road.
  - o It was determined that a sign would be ordered indicating that there are children playing and it would be placed at the beginning of the road.
  - o Donna will relay the information to Jason Reynolds, Road Foreman and ask him to order and install the signs.
- Funding assistance for American Legion – new vet flags needed -
  - o This was decided at a previous meeting and will be removed from the agenda.
- Bookkeeping/financial matters – Reports to Selectboard

- o Lee explained to the new Board members the importance of the reports provided from the Treasurer (Donna).
- o He gave examples of what to look for and what questions to ask of her.
- o Lee asked about a couple of the amounts on the report and Donna said that she would research those and report back to the Board.
- o Tabled until the next Selectboard meeting, currently scheduled for 07/14/2021.
- Move to online banking – update –
  - o Donna reported that the scanner will be arriving by the week of 06/28/2021.
  - o This will be removed from the agenda.
- Open cleaning bids – (added 06/21/2021) -
  - o One bid was received from Wright Cut and Clean for \$85 per week.
  - o This bid is for fiscal year 2022 and 2023 (July 1, 2021, through June 30,2023)
  - o *Lee Kimball made a motion to accept the bid from Wright Cut and Clean for a two-year contract at the rate of \$85 per week – seconded by Shawn Creller – all in favor – motion carried.*
- Town owned properties – what to do with them?
  - o 317 South Main St. (Mr. Bells house) –
    - There was some discussion about whether the house should be put out to bid or used for a purpose in the town.
    - Originally, there was discussion about using it to house the equipment for the Matrix project, but it does not appear that it will be needed for that purpose.
    - Donna suggested that we try to get volunteers to clean up, at least the outside of the property as it is a town owned parcel and has become an eyesore.
    - Shawn Creller mowed some of the front of the property and reported that there is a lot of debris and “junk” around the grounds.
    - There were suggestions of putting it out to bid to have someone clean it up, tear down the buildings and make it a lot.
    - There were also suggestions of selling it “as is” or cleaning the outside and selling it after.
    - Josie Henry will visit the site and determine what it would take to make the outside presentable and a decision could be made after she reports back to the Board.
    - Tabled until the next Selectboard meeting, currently scheduled for 07/14/2021.
  - o 12 Brown Road – Alburgh Springs Community Hall –
    - Donna also reported that the Alburgh Springs Community Hall needs work done to it and as a town owned property, she feels it should be done.
    - This is a historic building, and much work has been done previously but the roof and other structural components need attention.

- Restoration estimates are needed to determine what the building needs.
- Tabled until the next Selectboard meeting, currently scheduled for 07/14/2021
- SIGNATURES NEEDED.
  - o No special documents at this meeting needing signatures.
- APPROVE INVOICES –
  - o All invoices approved and signed.

ADJOURN:

- *At 10PM Chuck Pease made a motion to adjourn – seconded by Lee Kimball – all in favor – motion carried – meeting adjourned.*

Respectfully submitted, Donna L. Bohannon Alburgh Town Clerk

Please note the above minutes HAVE NOT been approved. Approval or changes to the minutes will be addressed at the next regular meeting, currently scheduled for 07/14/2021.