

ALTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes

April 1, 2025

(Approved - April 22, 2025)

Chairman P. LaRochelle convened the meeting at 6:00 PM.

P. LaRochelle led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and a Moment of Silence. The following staff members were present:

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Paul LaRochelle, Chairman
N. Buonopane, Vice-Chairman
Andrew Morse, Selectman
Richard Shea, Selectman
Drew Carter, Selectmen
Ryan Heath, Town Administrator

Agenda Approval

P. LaRochelle made a motion to amend the agenda and move Public Participation before the Public Hearing and N. Buonopane seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Announcements

- The Public Participation Policy applies to all Selectmen meetings. A copy of it is on the back of each agenda, posted outside this meeting room, and on our website.
- The Alton Town Clerk/Tax Collector's Office will be closed on Wednesday, April 9, 2025, as the staff will be attending a Spring Workshop for the NH Tax Collectors' Association. The office will reopen on Thursday, April 10, 2025 at 7:00 am.
- There will be a rabies clinic for dogs and cats at the Alton Central Fire Station, 65 Frank C. Gilman Hwy. (Route 140) on Saturday, April 26, 2025 from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. The cost per shot is \$30.00 and microchip is \$50.00. New this year - dog licenses are available for Alton & New Durham residents as the respective Town Clerks will be in attendance.

Public Input I (limited to 3 minutes per person on agenda items only)

None

Public Hearing 6:05pm

Acceptance of FEMA Funds

P. LaRochelle opened the Public Hearing at 6:05 pm. R. Heath stated that these funds in the amount of \$177,732.69 are the last payment for the December 2023-July 2024 disaster funds for reconstruction. This is the last FEMA payment.

P. LaRochelle made a motion to accept the FEMA funds reimbursement for \$177,732.69 and N. Buonopane seconded with all in favor of the motion. R. Shea stated that he would like to recognize the Town staff that had to go through everything to qualify us for these funds.

P. LaRochelle closes the Public Hearing at 6:08 pm.

Reorganization of the Board

P. LaRochelle made a motion to nominate N. Buonopane for Chairman and A. Morse seconded with all in favor of the motion.

N. Buonopane made a motion to nominate P. LaRochelle for Vice-Chairman and A. Morse seconded with all in favor of the motion.

	2024	2025
Board of Selectmen, Chairman	Paul LaRochelle	Nick Buonopane
Board of Selectmen, Vice Chairman	Nick Buonopane	Paul LaRochelle

Budget Committee (Must vote the wishes of the Selectmen)	Drew Carter Andrew Morse, Alternate	Drew Carter Andrew Morse, Alternate
Capital Improvement Program (CIP)	Andrew Morse	Andrew Morse
Conservation Commission	Andrew Morse	Drew Carter
Cyanobacteria Mitigation Steering Committee (CMSC)	Drew Carter	Paul LaRochelle
Facility Committee	Richard Shea Paul LaRochelle, Alternate	Richard Shea Paul LaRochelle, Alternate
Household Hazardous Waste (HHW)	Richard Shea	Richard Shea
Master Plan Committee	Paul LaRochelle Nick Buonopane, Alternate	Paul LaRochelle Nick Buonopane, Alternate
Milfoil Committee	Drew Carter	Richard Shea
Old Home Week Committee	Paul LaRochelle	Paul LaRochelle
Parks & Recreation Commission	Andrew Morse	Andrew Morse
Planning Board	Nick Buonopane Drew Carter, Alternate	Nick Buonopane Drew Carter, Alternate
Water Bandstand Committee	Paul LaRochelle	Paul LaRochelle
Zoning & Ordinance Committee (ZAC)	Nick Buonopane Richard Shea, Alternate	Drew Carter Nick Buonopane, Alternate
Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA)	Paul LaRochelle	Paul LaRochelle

N. Buonopane made a motion to approve the Board Reorganization for 2025 and R. Shea seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Appointments

None

New Business

None

Old Business

2. Fish & Game Boat Ramp - Winter Operations and Port-A-Potties

R. Heath stated that there is an email chain on the table for the Board. It dates back to 2022 when he had a discussion about the construction at Downing's Landing. There were some issues where several complaints about the port-a-potties that back up to the Town Beach. Those complaints have continued. The representative from Fish and Game was not willing to move it or look at any new locations on their site further away from the beach. They were informed that we do offer public bathrooms directly

across the street. Recently he was visited by a representative of the Parks and Rec Commission. This is combined not only with the complaints of the port-a-potties but also some recent issues that Fish and Game has decided that there will be no winter operations out of that ramp. That has created some problems for the local fishing community and bob house entry and exit off of the lake. He is here tonight to get the Board's thoughts on this and if they want it taken further up the food chain. K. Roberts, Parks and Rec Commission, Chairman, approached the table. He stated that there is a place that they could put them. Over by the bridge on the left hand side. He was down for the fire on the beach that the Parks and Rec put on. He doesn't know how people sat there. The smell was so bad. They can do one of two things, they can move it or up their cleaning. They have to do something. The second part is cleaning it during the winter. If I am buying my license and paying for part of that. The person that I dealt with when we were installing the sidewalks is not a very good person. There was a lot of controversy between us. If this doesn't work for the Board he would like to put together a petition to go to the Governor. That is how upset he is about it. R. Heath stated that his recommendation for the Board is to reach out to the upper administration for Fish and Game first. P. LaRochelle agrees that it needs to go to a higher authority. D. Carter stated that one of the key arguments is to demonstrate what the usage a day is. It triggers a health concern. R. Shea stated that if we don't have good luck with that then go to one of our local representatives and have them bring some pressure. R. Heath stated that he will put together a draft letter.

1. Downtown Historical Discussion

R. Heath stated that if the Board has no objections, he has another individual that is on their way to speak to this item. He would like to push this down the agenda until she arrives. It is the consensus of the Board to allow this.

R. Heath stated that C. Painchaud had come to see him and they had a discussion about the downtown area here at Monument Square. He is the first one to admit that it was common knowledge that the Monument Square itself belong to the Historical Registry. He was not aware that there were 11 buildings documents around the square that are actually registered on the Historical Registry. The was an old Revitalization Committee years ago. The committee dissolved.

C. Painchaud arrived and approached the table. She recently purchased the building across the street in October of 2023. She has lived here since 2006. She saw that the building sat vacant for many years. Upon purchasing it she reached out to the Historical Society on how to properly preserve it. Learn it's history. Within the last 2 years she has joined the NH Preservation Alliance to learn how to properly do it. It doing all of this, that is how she learned about the Monument Square being on the Historical Registry. She said that she has gone to the square and looked for a placard indicating the historical data and never found one. It was listed on the registry March 15, 1984. She has reached out to all of the building owners to see if they could have a collective approach of doing this, if that means creating a committee, or piggy-backing on the Historical Society. She does not have the time to start something on her own. She said one thing that is simply is getting placards for the buildings. The State of NH has placards. It is simple and short term. She wanted to bring it to the attention of the community. She is even thinking that educational displays could work. P. LaRochelle asked if it was 12 buildings. C. Painchaud stated that it is 11 buildings all together. It is not one building in and of itself. It is called the Monument Square Historic District. It is on the National and State Registry. She has done some research on the RSA 79e. It is called the Revitalization Tax incentive. It is a Town incentive that towns can adopt locally. It gives property owners a tax incentive if they revitalize and preserve these properties. She would like to propose that the Town adopts this. P. LaRochelle suggested to reach out to the home owners and see if there is someone who would be interested in starting a committee to be able to get the ball rolling.

3. Budget Discussion

R. Heath stated that this was added on the agenda just so there was a chance to talk since the Town vote. We went to a second year Default in a row. The Board had concerns what the overall plan would be moving forward. He had a Department Head meeting and spoke with everyone. The reason that we made it through last year and the reason we will make it through this year is because is that we keep vacant positions. We have been able to manage if we hire out a position in 6 months or a year. One way we are able to maintain our current positions and staff is because there are some positions that are still open. If we hire out every position that we have we would not be able to make payroll. We would have to lay employees off. He explained how the benefit packages fit in with the hire of a new employees. P. LaRochelle suggested doing a hiring freeze. R. Heath stated that some of the open positions are still funded in the Default Budget. They are not funded to the full capacity. His recommendation would be that the Board hears each individual proposal and makes a decision at that point in time based on the Department's funding and the need.

4. DPW - 2025 Paving Extension Request

S. Garland, Public Works Director, approached the table. He reviewed the contract from the last time it went out to bid in 2022. He noticed that there was a section in there that allowed the Board if they so chose to extend for a few additional years which they did last year. The quality of last year was noted as excellent. GMI was very efficient to work with. He is looking to do around 6.8 miles of road. Mostly overlays. GMI was looking to extend the contract for one final year. They gave us a price of less than what was quoted for 2023. He is looking to saving approximately another \$23,000.00. A. Morse asked if they also helped out during the natural disasters that happened. S. Garland stated that they did.

R. Shea made a motion to authorize the Public Works Director to extend the contract for Town paving to GMI Asphalt in accordance with the terms and conditions with the existing contract as modified by their proposal of December 4, 2024 and A. Morse seconded with all in favor of the motion.

5. DPW - Purchasing Policy Waiver - Chip Seal

S. Garland remained at the table. He stated that this is the other portion of the road preservation that the Town performs. This is where they use a proprietary blend of rubber asphalt and crumb rubber from recycled tires. They apply a layer to the road and then roll the pretreated fractured stone into that extraction. It extends the life ideally 7-10 years. This is a proprietary product from Allstate. That is why he is asking for the waiver.

N. Buonopane made a motion to approve the 2025 Chip Sealing request for waiver to purchase policy to Allstate Construction in the amount of \$323,896.00 with the payment to come from the Highway Road Reconstruction Capital Reserve and A. Morse seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Selectmen Reports

D. Carter had nothing to report.

R. Shea stated that the Swap Shop is making great progress. The DPW is lined up to make repairs. He outlined the progress made so far.

A. Morse had nothing to report.

N. Buonopane stated that Thursday morning is the site walk for Cherry Valley for the Planning Board.

P. LaRochelle had nothing to report.

Town Administrator Report

R. Heath stated that he wanted to let the Board know that the Dredge and Fill Permit for Blueberry Lane came in. The Highway Department will be gearing up to make those repairs.

R. Heath stated that the other thing is on the table in front of them. There is an award letter from NH Lakes. This is for the Mills Pond Remediation. Originally it was called the 319 Grant through DES. This year NH Lakes had funding available. We were awarded a grant in the amount of \$100,000.00.

D. Carter made a motion to accept the grant of \$100,000.00 from NH Lakes and to permit the Town Administrator to distribute monies accordingly and sign and N. Buonopane seconded with all in favor.

Approval of Minutes

March 10, 2025 - Public Session

N. Buonopane made a motion to approve the minutes of March 10, 2025 - Public Session and D. Carter seconded with all in favor of the motion.

March 10, 2025 - Non-Public Session

N. Buonopane made a motion to approve the minutes of March 10, 2025 - Non-Public Session releasing none and A. Morse seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Consent Agenda Approval

R. Shea made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda for April 1, 2025 as presented and N. Buonopane seconded with all in favor of the motion.

1. Notice of Limitations/Road Waiver of Liability

36 Varney Road, Map 22 Lot 24, Richard Dame

2. Administration

Rescind - Alton Town Policy Prohibition of Firearms, Adopted April 21, 2014

3 Water Department

Jonathan Parker Trust 2019	Map 35/40	191 East Side Drive	\$339.69
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Karen Bradley	Map 28/34	36 Appleyard	\$110.00
Helane Shields Rev. Trust	Map 27/24	Acct. 723/561	\$71,964.00
Carol Sanborn	Map 27/3-2	Acct. 822/786	\$1,261.36
Rebecca and Dan Johnson	Map 29/10	Acct. 697/1247	\$222.00

4. **Finance Department**

Laura Parker, Deputy Treasurer, Expires March 2026

5. **Town Treasurer**

Delegation of Deposit Authority, Jennifer Collins, Town Clerk/Tax Collector

Discretionary Action on Requests for Appointments (No discussion, majority vote required to allow/not allow appointment)

Bonnie McAlary - Town Granted Access - Farmington Road/ Mount Major Snowmobile Club

N. Buonopane made a motion to allow the Appointment and D. Carter seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Public Input II (limited to 5 minutes per person on any Governmental/Town Business)

J. Houser approached the table. She congratulated the newly elected officials. She is a fledgling member of the Budget committee. She asked if it is time for Alton to hit the pause button on spending. It may be a good time to reconsider recent spending decision/direction on the stump grinding on Hidden Springs Road. She suggested the new Chairman read the Master Plan and take it slowly as it is dense. She doesn't understand why all 40 acres needs to be cut. A 5 or 6 acres spot would be sufficient. There could be a more sufficient way to come up with a new facility.

K. Sullivan approached the table. She congratulated and thanked the Board. The Fish and Game ramp is ridiculous. She appreciates that the Town is willing to go to bat for that. She thanked the Conservation Commission for going for the grant. She is not opposed to a new facility but if they can clear less of an area and maybe get a road in.

C. Painchaud approached the table. She wanted to share some correspondence that she had with Fish and Game in preparation for the Winter Carnival and the ABA. She pleaded to open the parking lot and plow it. It was a flat denial. She was appalled by the lack of assistance. The response was they would put barricades in front of it going forward. Maybe the Town could elevate it to the Governor. Their big concern was liability.

Non-Public Session

P. LaRochelle moved at 7:32 pm to enter nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A: 3, II, (b) hiring and I (legal advice). N. Buonopane seconded. Roll call vote:

P. LaRochelle - yes N. Buonopane III - yes
D. Carter - yes A. Morse - yes

R. Shea - yes
Roll call vote carried unanimously.

At 7:32 pm Chairman LaRochelle convened the nonpublic session with the following people present:

P. LaRochelle, Chairman
N. Buonopane III, Vice-chairman
R. Shea, Selectmen
A. Morse, Selectmen
D. Carter, Selectmen
R. Heath, Town Administrator
K. Troendle, Parks and Rec Director
J. Reinert, Fire Chief

Fire Chief J. Reinert waits in the hallway while K. Troendle presents.

Fire Chief J. Reinert enters the room and Parks and Recreation Director K. Troendle leaves.

Fire Chief J. Reinert leaves the room

P. LaRochelle moved at 8:44 pm to exit the nonpublic session. D. Carter seconded. Roll call vote:

P. LaRochelle - yes	N. Buonopane III - yes	R. Shea - yes
D. Carter - yes	A. Morse - yes	<u>Roll call vote carried unanimously.</u>

P. LaRochelle moved to 'not divulge' item two of the minutes because divulgence of the information likely would adversely affect the reputation of any person other than a member of this board or render the proposed action of the board ineffective. R. Shea seconded. Roll call vote:

P. LaRochelle - yes	N. Buonopane III - yes	R. Shea - yes
D. Carter - yes	A. Morse - yes	<u>Roll call vote carried unanimously.</u>

Public actions

D. Carter moves to hire Samuel Twining as the Parks and Recreation assistant at a rate of \$20.17 per hour with an official letter of acknowledgement regarding future funding. R. Shea seconded. Motion carried (3-2 with P. LaRochelle and N. Buonopane opposed).

N. Buonopane moves to hire Cody Griffin as a full-time firefighter / EMT-A at \$25.25 per hour and Matthew Krafton as a full-time firefighter / EMT at \$24.25 per hour with an official letter of acknowledgement regarding future funding. Motion carried.

Adjournment

N. Buonopane moved at 8:47 pm to adjourn. A. Morse seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stacy L. Bailey
Recoding Secretary