

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Town of Alford
Special Town Meeting Minutes
February 18, 2020**

The Moderator Mr. Michael Wilcox called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. Mr. Wilcox reviewed the rules and procedures of this meeting. Mr. Wilcox read a land acknowledgment which he prepared. Mr. Wilcox swore in Ms. Kathy Chretien in as Assistant Town Clerk.

That the following is a true copy of the vote taken at the Alford special town meeting, held on February 18, 2020, as certified by me. There were 48 registered voters present. I, Peggy R. Henden-Wilson, hereby certify that I hold the office of Town Clerk of the Town of Alford in the county of Berkshire and:

ARTICLE 4. To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$2100.00 to pay the Assistant Town Clerk or take any other action relative thereto.

MOTION for Article 4. I move that the Town approve a transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$2100.00 to pay the Assistant Town Clerk.

Mr. Michael Wilcox, the Town Moderator, read the article as written; a motion was made by Mr. Tim Ortwein and seconded by Mr. Carl Stewart; no discussion ensued and the motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

ARTICLE 3. To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum \$500.00 to pay the Alternate Building Inspector or take any other action relative thereto.

MOTION for Article 3. I move that the Town approve a transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$500.00 to pay the Alternate Building Inspector.

Mr. Wilcox read the article as written; a motion was made by Mr. Tim Ortwein and seconded by Mr. Carl Stewart; no discussion ensued and the motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

ARTICLE 2. To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum \$812.00 to Highway 2 Salary, and the sum \$7588.00 to Highway 3 Salary to pay for an increase hours or take any other action relative thereto.

MOTION for Article 2. I move that the Town approve a transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$812.00 to the Highway 2 Salary account, to pay for an increase in hours.

Mr. Wilcox read the article as written; a motion made by Mr. Tim Ortwein and seconded by Mr. Carl Stewart; a voter inquired as to why have this article. Mrs. Roxanne Germain, Treasurer stated that an employee was out on medical leave and they had to move another employee up in position which included an increase of pay. After the brief discussion the motion passed unanimously by a voice vote.

ARTICLE 1. To see if the Town will authorize the Board of Selectmen to purchase, for the purpose of expanding town facilities, on such terms and conditions as the Selectboard deem to be in the best interest of the Town, the land and structure located at 7 Alford Center Road, and to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer the sum of \$235,000.00. or some other sum, for the consideration for such purchase and all costs associated there with, or take any other action relative thereto.

MOTION FOR Article 1. I move that the Town authorize the Select Board to purchase, for the purpose of expanding town facilities, on such terms and conditions as they deem to be in the best interest of the Town, the land and structure located at 7 Alford Center Road, and to be authorized to borrow up to the sum of \$235,000.00, for the consideration for such purchase and all costs associated therewith.

Mr. Wilcox read the article as written; motion was made by Ms. Joan Rogers, seconded by Mr. Carl Stewart. Ms. Alice Halsted, member of the Historical Commission stated that the Commission voted In favor of purchasing the property for a lot of reasons, protecting the property is one of them, another is making sure it maintains the Integrity. Ms. Joan Rogers, member of the Finance Committee mentioned that the Committee voted In favor of purchasing the property and one of the benefits of purchasing the property is a working septic system, other benefits Include storage space and it's affordable. Mr. Charles Ketchen, Chair of the Board of Selectmen stated that the Selectboard voted unanimously to purchase the property. Mrs. Roxanne Germain, Treasurer stated that there is currently \$302,357.00 in free cash and currently \$264,000.00 In Stabilization, Mrs. Germain also mentioned that a possible estimate could be \$30,000.00 to \$50,000.00 for a septic system to be installed. A voter Inquired on what maintenance cost are occurring. Mrs. Germain mentioned that she had spoken with the Town's Insurance agent and the estimate to insure the property would be \$1,500.00. A voter mentioned that the Town has been seeking to purchase property for some time, and feels that the Town should purchase the property. It was noted that the house on the property has no water, no heat, gutted down to studs and has been on the market for many years. Mr. Peter Tucker, member of the Conservation Commission stated that he has walked the property on his on and there is wetlands on the property, probably less than 5% of wetlands in the back. Mr. Carl Stewart, member of the Finance Committee made an amendment motion to purchase the property up to \$212,500.00, seconded by Mr. Jeff Blaugrund. After discussion the second and the amendment were withdrawn. A voter Inquired on how long is the current septic system good at Town Hall. Mr. Ketchen stated It Is a steel tank that is rusted at the bottom and has had drainage running down the driveway. A voter mentioned that if the septic system is failing then it is a priority. Mr. Gadd made an amendment motion to purchase the land and structure for initial renovation, seconded by Mr. Jeff Blaugrund. A voter inquired if the Historic District Commission would have a say on what could possibly happen with the house on the property. Answer was yes, the Historic District Commission would have a say. It was mentioned that there's no Interesting things In Town, such as a general store, etc. and it's an opportunity so why not purchase the property, it would be a long time Investment. After discussion request to all the question. Moderator Wilcox called for a voice vote and stated that the amendment vote failed. Voters challenged the Moderator decision, after the Moderator explain the challenge procedure. Moderator Wilcox then proceeded with another vote by hand count in which the amendment motion failed 16 yes, 32 no. Another amendment motion was made, and seconded to purchase the property up to 200,000. After a brief discussion the amendment motion failed by a voice count. Mr. Wilcox called for a paper vote of the original motion to purchase the property at 7 Alford Center Road up to \$235,000.00. Motion was approved by paper ballot by 36 yes to 12 no; to borrow up to \$235,000.00. This has met the requirement of a 2/3 majority when borrowing is involved.

The meeting was dissolved at 8:40 PM by the moderator, Michael Wilcox.

I hereby depose and say that I am the town clerk for the town of Alford, County of Berkshire, and Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The foregoing is a true copy of record on file in the office of town clerk in the town of Alford.

Witness my hand and seal of said town on the 22nd day of February, 2020.

Attest a True copy,



Peggy R. Henden-Wilson, Town Clerk



Kathy Chretien, Assistant Town Clerk CMMC/CMC