

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
**Town of Alford**  
**Annual Town Meeting Minutes**  
**May 10, 2022**

The Moderator, Mr. Michael Wilcox, called the meeting to order at 6:05PM. Mr. Wilcox read a land acknowledgement which was prepared and given to the voters. Mr. Wilcox swore in Ms. Kathy Chretien, in as Assistant Town Clerk. Mr. Wilcox welcomed Town Counsel Mr. Adam Costa, Police Chief Mr. Tim Roy, Tree Warden Mr. Monty Greene, Town Accountant Lauren Sartori-Hobgood Health Agent Jayne Smith, Highway Superintendent TJ Horrigan, & Town Clerk Mrs. Peggy Henden-Wilson. Mr. Wilcox stated that voters were given yellow and red voter cards, to raise the red voter card if you wish to speak and the yellow to raise to cast your vote.

Moderator Mr. Wilcox stated that warrant was duly posted by the Town Constable. Ms. Joan Rogers, Finance Committee Chair extend gratitude to all the people who keep the Town running, they complete all the work and are dedicated employees. Ms. Rogers mentioned that raises are included in this budget to stay competitive with the job force, and the total budget increase is 3.8%.

The following is a true copy of the vote taken at the Alford Annual Town Meeting, held May 10, 2022, as certified by me. There were 45 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 1.** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Health to appoint any member of the Board of Selectmen and any member of the Board of Health, respectively, to another office or position for the term provided by law, if any, otherwise for a term not to exceed one year, in accordance with Section 4A of Chapter 41 of the General Laws; or to take any other action relative thereto.

**A motion was made, seconded and so voted unanimously to approve Article #1 as presented.**

**ARTICLE 2.** To see if the Town will vote to accept any and all funds being provided by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Transportation (Mass DOT), under the provisions of Chapter 90 of the General Laws, to pay for such costs as allowed by appropriate legislation in connection with the maintenance, repair, and construction of Town ways and bridges, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**A motion was made, seconded and so voted unanimously to approve Article #2 as presented.**

**ARTICLE 3.** To see if the Town will vote to fix the maximum amount that may be spent during fiscal year 2023, beginning on July 1, 2022, for the revolving funds established in the Town's by-laws for certain departments, boards, committees, agencies and officers in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 53E1/2, as follows, or take any other action relative thereto.

<b>Revolving Fund</b>	<b>Department, Board, Committee, Agency or Officer</b>	<b>FY 2023 Spending Limit</b>
Inspectional Services	Fire Inspector	\$10,000
	Sanitation Inspector	\$10,000
	Electrical Inspector	\$10,000
	Plumbing Inspector	\$10,000

**A motion was made, seconded and so voted unanimously to approve Article #3 as presented.**

**ARTICLE 4.** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds \$150,000.00, or any other sum of money, to pay costs of repairs and improvements to

Alford Highways, and for payment of all other costs incidental and related thereto; or to take any other action relative thereto.

**A motion was made to raise and appropriate \$150,000 and seconded. A voter inquired on inquired on how does this amount related to the amount the State provides in Chapter 91 Funds. Mr. TJ Horrigan, Highway Superintendent, mentioned that this amount is in addition to the State Funds. After discussion Article #4 was approved as presented.**

**ARTICLE 5.** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds \$9,500.00, or any other sum of money, to pay costs of purchasing a new 52 inch commercial walk behind lawn mower, and for payment of all other costs incidental and related thereto; or to take any other action relative thereto.

**A motion was made to transfer \$9,500 from free cash, seconded and so voted to approve Article #5 as presented.**

**ARTICLE 6.** To see if the Town will vote to transfer \$40,000.00 from available funds to the Stabilization Fund, in accordance with the provisions of Section 5B of Chapter 40 of the General Laws; or to take any other action relative thereto.

**A motion was made to transfer \$40,000 from free cash, seconded and so voted to approve Article #6 as presented.**

**ARTICLE 7.** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds \$ 50,000.00 to the pay the cost of debt service on the 7 Alford Road Property or to take any other action relative thereto.

**A motion was made to transfer \$50,000 from free cash and seconded. A voter inquired why pay down the debt early. Mrs. Roxanne Germain, Treasurer, stated that the State requires that you make sizable payments. After discussion Article #7 was approved as presented.**

**ARTICLE 8.** To see if the Town will vote to transfer \$25,000.00 from Retained Earnings of the Alford Link Enterprise Fund to the Alford Link Enterprise Stabilization Fund in accordance with the provisions of Section 5B of Chapter 40 of the General Laws; or to take any other action relative thereto.

**A motion was made, seconded and so voted approve Article #8 as presented.**

**ARTICLE 9.** To see if the Town will vote to transfer \$29,100.00 from Retained Earnings of the Alford Link Enterprise Fund to pay the cost of debt service on the Alford Link Broadband borrowing; or to take any other action relative thereto.

**A motion was made, seconded. Ms. Joan Rogers mentioned that the loan should be paid off in 2026. After discussion Article #9 was approved as presented.**

**ARTICLE 10.** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from receipts of Alford Link the following sums to operate the Alford Link Enterprise fund; or to take any other action relative thereto.

	Alford Link Enterprise Fund	FY 2022	FY 2023
1	ISP Subscription Fees	160,000	160,000
2	Salaries	10,000	10,000
3	Repairs, Maintenance	40,000	40,000
4	Contracted Services	32,400	45,000
5	CAF II Fees	1,500	1,500
6	Poles Fees	10,000	10,000
7	Insurance	10,000	25,000
8	Debt Service	110,000	95,000
9	Capital Replacement/Improvements	14,000	20,000
10	Reserve Fund	20,000	20,000
	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>407,900</b>	<b>426,500</b>

A motion was made, seconded. A voter inquired on if inflation is the reason for the increase. Mr. Tim Ortwein mentioned that new equipment is need, and that there is currently 300 scribers. After discussion Article #10 was approved as presented. ARTICLE 11. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the following sums to defray the charges and expenses of the Town as described in the Feature Accounts on these Pages, including the salaries of the Town Officers and Employees for fiscal year 2023; or to take any other action relative thereto.

		FY2022	FY2023
1	SBRSD-Operating/Transp.	430,713	432,854
2	SBRSD-Capital	8,873	8,360
3	SBRSD-bond	8,952	8,390
4	Insurance	40,000	40,000
5	Community Health Program	1,000	1,000
6	Berkshire Mental Health	177	177
7	Public Health	625	625
8	Debt Service	122,000	120,500
9	Veteran's Service	1,880	2,026
10	Berkshire Regional Retirement	44,004	54,991
11	Berkshire Regional Planning	894	894
12	Veteran's Benefits	4,800	4,800
13	Insect Pest Control	1,000	1,000
14	Emergency Reserve	16,000	16,000
15	Town Buildings	60,000	70,000
16	Street Lighting	450	500
17	Sanitation	60,000	60,000
18	Overtime-Highway	15,000	20,000
19	Public Works Highway	65,000	75,000
20	Seekonk Marsh Trail Maint		5,000
21	Rd. Superintendent Salary (1)	70,667	68,250
22	Employee Benefits	114,115	106,000
23	Public Works Employee (2)	53,729	52,830
24	Public Works Employee (3)	45,760	48,250
25	Public Works Snow & Ice	60,000	60,000
26	Machinery & Maintenance	15,000	20,000
27	Fire Department	15,500	15,500
28	Alford firefighter stipends	18,000	18,000
29	Fire Chief Expense	300	300
30	Police Department	31,000	25,000
31	Emergency MGMT Coordinator	1,000	1,000
32	Board of Health Agent Salary	5,760	5,760
33	Board of Health Expense		1,500
34	911	9,501	9,786
35	Reverse 911	2,500	2,500
36	Medicare	5,500	6,000
37	Division of Employment	4,000	1,000
38	Eagle Fund	1,000	1,000
39	Grant Writer	2,000	2,000
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,336,700</b>	<b>1,366,793</b>
		<b>FY 2022</b>	<b>FY 2023</b>
	<b>GENERAL GOVERNMENT</b>		
40	Assessor's Expense	22,815	22,815
41	Assessor's Clerk Salary	10,600	12,000

42	Selectmen's Expense	5,000	5,000
43	Admin Assts. Salaries	31,076	33,530
44	Accountant's Expense	1,000	1,000
45	Tax Collector's Expense	3,000	3,050
46	Town Clerk's Expense	2,200	3,000
47	Treasurer Expense	2,000	2,050
48	Board of Registration Expense	2,000	2,200
49	Board of Appeals Expense	300	500
50	Planning Board Expense	2,000	2,500
51	Moderator's Expense	50	50
52	SBRSD-Rep Expense	800	800
53	Council on Aging Expense	950	950
54	Building Inspector Expense	2,470	2,470
55	Conservation Agent Salary		4,500
56	Conservation Commission expense	2,000	2,000
57	Library Trustee's Expense	700	700
58	Hazardous Waste Center	1,070	1,050
59	Town Counsel Expense	1,500	1,500
60	Town Counsel Salary	11,000	15,000
61	Animal Control Officer Salary	3,000	3,000
62	Animal Control Officer Expense	500	500
63	Finance Committee	150	150
64	Tree Warden Salary	3,500	3,500
65	Tree Warden's Expense	10,000	15,000
66	Historic Commission	8,050	8,050
67	GB-Library	1,700	1,900
68	IT Maintenance	26,285	27,000
69	Senior Services	5,136	5,000
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>160,852</b>	<b>180,765</b>
		<b>FY 2022</b>	<b>FY 2023</b>
	<b>TOWN OFFICER'S SALARY</b>		
70	Assessor	2,800	3,100
71	Assessor	2,800	3,100
72	Assessor	2,800	3,100
73	Animal Inspector	2,000	2,000
74	Building Inspector Salary	15,355	15,816
75	Alternate Building Insp.	500	500
76	Constable	250	250
77	Librarian Salary	815	815
78	Moderator's Salary	200	200
79	Clerk of Registrars Salary	200	300
80	Selectmen. Chair	4,000	4,400
81	Selectmen	2,200	2,450
82	Selectmen	2,200	2,450
83	Accountant's Salary	11,395	12,000
84	Tax Collector /Treasurer	19,200	24,000
85	Town Clerk	9,600	12,000
86	Asst. Town Clerk	1,400	1,600
87	Police Chief	3,445	3,645
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>81,160</b>	<b>91,726</b>
	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,578,712</b>	<b>1,639,284</b>

Moderator, Mr. Wilcox stated that lines 1-3 will be discussed together and voted on first.  
Dr. Beth Regalbuto, Superintendent of Schools mentioned that she hopes all

residents/voters have received the newsletters. Dr. Regulbuto also stated that they tried to keep the budget at 2% increase, and that more programs are being offered. A voter inquired on how many students are in the District from Alford. Dr. Regulbuto stated 18.5. Another voter inquired on how things are developing with joining districts. Dr. Regulbuto said that it's a long process, with lots of work to be accomplished. Ms. Lucy Frashker, Chair of the SBRSD 8 Town Planning Board mentioned that votes should know how much the increase is. Dr. Regulbuto stated the budgeted increase is 3.82%. Mr. Charles Ketchen, Chair of the Board of Selectmen mentioned that \$700,000.00 was taken out of the EDD Account and \$700,000.00 out of the school budget – wants going to happen next year. Dr. Regulbuto mentioned that she believes the school should be expecting \$500,000.00 and currently have \$360,000.00. Mrs. Peggy Henden-Wilson inquired on the transportation bids – didn't the bids go out twice. Dr. Regulbuto mentioned that yes the bids went out twice, received one bid from Gregg Massini Bus Company that is valid for 5 years. Mrs. Peggy Henden-Wilson inquired when the marshmallow buses used for are. Dr. Regulbuto mentioned that the marshmallow buses are not for regular transportation they are under D7 requirements, and are used by staff for trips, etc. After discussion lines 1-3 were unanimously approved.

Moderator, Mr. Wilcox read lines 4 -87. A hold was placed on lines #18, #26, & #64. A voter inquired if the new tax rate has been approved yet. Ms. Joan Rogers mentioned that the new rate hasn't been set yet. Mr. Ketchen mentioned that the new rate should be close to \$5.41 per a thousand, which should be set in August. A voter inquired on when does properties get assessed. It was stated that every 3 years properties are assessed and was just done last year. A voter inquired if the increase is for winter storm clearing line #18. Mr. TJ Horrigan mentioned that this amount covers 95% of winter storm clearing and the 5% balance for any other overtime hours. A voter inquired what is the amount used for in line #26. Mr. TJ Horrigan stated that the Town now has three vehicles in use, for the first time and need enough funds to cover and maintenance or repairs. A voter inquired on the amount in line #64 is used for. Mr. Charles Ketchen mentioned that the amount includes salaries and the fuel costs. After discussion lines 4-87 were approved as presented.

**ARTICLE 12.** To see if the Town will raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds \$25,000 for the purpose of and to be expended on researching, accumulating, preserving and digitizing the records of the Town of Alford; or to take any other action relative thereto. A motion was made to transfer \$25,000 from free cash, seconded and so voted to approve Article #12 as presented.

**ARTICLE 13.** To see if the Town will vote to amend the General Bylaws of the Town of Alford by adding a new Bylaw entitled "Hunting," as follows:

Hunting

1. No person shall hunt on any town owned or private property which is legally posted in the town without written permission of the owner of the land upon which hunting will take place, obtained in advance. The written permission must be carried on one's person while hunting; and, further, shall be renewed on an annual basis.
2. For failure to comply with the foregoing requirement a violator shall be subject to a fine for the first offense of \$100.00, and, for the second and each subsequent offense, \$200.00 each day that a violation continues shall be deemed a separate offense.
3. This Bylaw shall be enforced by state and local police departments and such other local enforcement officials as may be designated by these departments from time to time, and shall be administered in accordance with M.G.L. c.40, §21D."

A motion was made, seconded. An amendment motion was made, seconded to delete town owned in the first sentence and to add in the first sentence which is legally posted after private property. There was much discussion that occurred, some voters were inquiring why Alford needs this bylaw since we are a small community. Mr. Peter Puciloski, member of the Board of Selectmen stated that he has received complaints about hunters on their properties and this bylaw was very similar to Sheffield's. After discussing the amendment motion was defeated. A voter inquired on why we are considering to approve this article, how many people complained, and how many times. Mr. Puciloski mentioned that he has received 3 complaints. A voter who is a hunter stated that if an area is posted then you don't enter the property, why penalize the hunter. Another voter mentioned that at times it is hard to get written permission from land owners. Another voter stated that is bylaw will not stop hunters from entering properties and feels like we are going overboard and

that we need to take a look at what we are doing. Mr. Ketchen made a motion to table this article till another Town Meeting.

A motion was made, seconded as so voted to dissolve at 7:30PM.

*Attest a True Copy,*

  
Peggy Rae Henden-Wilson, Town Clerk

  
Katherine Chretien, Assistant Town Clerk

