

## **ALG Minutes June 18, 2015**

Present: Bart Wendell, Facilitator; Katie Green & Peter Berry, BoS; Kristina Rychlik & Paul Murphy, SC; Mike Majors & Margaret Busse, FC; Steve Ledoux, Glen Brand, Steve Barrett & Marie Altieri, staff.

Audience: Janet Adachi, BoS; Clare Jeannotte & Brian McMullen, staff; and Charlie Kadlec.

Extra Info: ALG Charter and Ground Rules; ALG plan & Feb. 16 Minutes

### **1. introductions**

### **2. Review of charter**

Bart noted that at the start of every ALG season, the members go over the charter and ground rules to ensure that all members understand and agree. The ground rules are the results of about 20 years plus years of meetings and every year there are some changes. The original organization was founded at a time when the boards were not getting along and had difficulty working together. There were overrides on a regular basis and they would not pass. The purpose of the ALG is to come up with proposals that each member takes back to and champions before their own group. "If you cannot champion a proposal, say so, there has to be agreement backing each proposal."

Are there any changes?

**P Berry** asked why the plan was called the 'three board plan'.

**S. Ledoux:** the ALG does the recommending and the three boards sign on

There was a general discussion on whether it was more appropriate to call the plan the three boards or the ALG. In the end, the ALG was adopted

Bart explained the needs for the quorum and no substitutes. All agreed. Bart also noted that the facilitator was not needed for the quorum.

### **3. Minutes of Feb 26<sup>th</sup> were OK'd**

### **4. Update on revenues and expenses for FY 16 and tear end FY 15**

**Glen:** nothing substantive; waiting for the state budget to pass

**Clare:** We are closing off FY 15 as reported to the school and finance committees. There are differences on the health insurance which we will discuss Thursday. There are two more warrants to sign off before the close of the year. We will see where we are then.

The cuts to regional transportation which were estimated at \$18M are now expected to be \$5M.

**Steve L:** Not much on FY 16. The budget group meets weekly. There was a problem of @\$300k with fire department overtime. We met with the unions and worked out the staffing levels. I think we will get through the year in decent shape. We have one more payroll.

**Steve B:** On the revenue side we have positive results in the area of local receipts. We estimated Motor Vehicle Excise tax at \$3M---we have already hit that number and expect 10% more. There has been an uptick in the number of permits and we expect a 10% increase over the \$1M estimate. State aid is on target and we have an awesome tax collection rate of 99.5%

## 5. Spreadsheet

**Steve L:** Last year we talked about getting a different format, something simpler

**Steve B:** noted that the plan was formatted to go into the warrant so people could understand it and all the back pages were part of an out-growth of the ALG members for clarity.

**Marie:** We need to simplify the front page and get rid of some of the back pages “I hate to take on another project but we do need to consider what info we need for this group and what we do not. Just getting to the regional assessment would take many pages.

**Bart:** Is there any disagreement to making it simpler? None.

[Marie and Steve B will try to get an example for the next meeting]

## 6. Discussion of three boards meeting

Mike Majors thought that the meeting of the three boards from last year was helpful as a means for the various members to get to know each other. The topic of that meeting was the finance committee’s long range plan. Mike thought a date in mid- to-late October would be good. He noted that the big issue was to get everyone together.

Krista: suggested that the meeting topic “school budget 101”. She thought it would be good to have this discussion before the budget cycle starts and that the Boxboro SC, BoS and FC should also be invited.

There was some discussion of having two meetings: one with just Acton people; the other with Boxboro. There was agreement that the fewer meetings, the better.

**Katie:** “before the agenda is set I think we need to figure out what it is we want to accomplish by such a meeting. All the boards should have a say in the topic. If we did the school budget, that would take the whole night and who is it useful for?”

**Bart:** How are we going to decide, should it be a smaller group?

**Mike:** It’s hard to come up with a specific date.

**Katie:** Before we set the date, I need to have the BoS discuss the idea; that will happen at our July 6<sup>th</sup> meeting

**Margaret:** I agree we need to take it back to the boards to discuss the agenda. She agreed to send out a Doodle Poll for possible meeting dates [it wasn’t clear if the poll would be sent to just Acton boards or would include those of Boxboro]

**Kristina:** noted that there was value in meeting on a social level just to get to know each other.

\*\*\*It was agreed that Beth and the superintendent's office would send out the poll and the board chairs, Town Manager and Superintendent would work on agenda. This agenda will be presented at the next ALG meeting

#### 7. ALG meeting dates

**Bart:** in the past the ALG has met on the third Thursday either at 7:30 AM or 5 PM in the winter months

\*\*\*It was agreed that 7:30 AM was the preferable time.

Kristina asked that the ALG meetings not happen on a morning when there was a school committee meeting in the evening.

Kristina had a list of the school committee dates

It was agreed to meet: August 20<sup>th</sup>; September 24<sup>th</sup>; October 29<sup>th</sup>; TUESDAY November 17<sup>th</sup>; December 10<sup>th</sup>; January 7<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>; [BoS budget Saturday is Jan 9<sup>th</sup>; SC is Jan. 23]; Tuesday February 9<sup>th</sup> & Thursday 24<sup>th</sup>; March 10<sup>th</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup>---the last being a back-up date

**Bart:** the agenda will have the three boards meeting

**Marie:** I have asked Peter Ashton to update the list of comparable towns. We will need to agree on the list (that will also be an agenda item).

Steve L's office will continue to do the agenda and post the meetings

#### 8. Public comment

**Mr. Kadlec** noted that he had never heard anyone who was concerned about the title of the spreadsheet as it appeared in the warrant

What is the meaning of consensus? The BoS takes their issues back to their board; the SC takes their issues back to their board. However, the FC looks at the entire budget and the difference is that the FC acts on the entire thing and they actually have discussions.

Public comment at the end of the meeting is a bad thing.

#### 9. Adjourn

8:45

Next Meeting August 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 AM

Ann Chang