



# TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN AUGUST 4, 2008

### PRESENT:

Mark Kaplan, Selectman  
Brian Prescott, Selectman  
Larry Ballin, Selectman  
Jessie Levine, Town Administrator  
Jerry Frew, KRSD Superintendent  
Russ Miles, PSNH  
Sue Blothenberg, PSNH  
Laura James, Recreation Commissioner  
D.J. and Bob Lavoie, Residents  
Debbie Cross, *InterTown Record*

Mark Kaplan opened the meeting at 8 a.m., and the Board addressed 10 areas of business during the meeting.

### PSNH Voltage Upgrade

Russ Miles explained that due to growth in New London, PSNH's current infrastructure is no longer adequate to efficiently serve all the needs of its customers. PSNH plans to upgrade its substation on South Pleasant Street by replacing the aging and over-loaded transformers there with a single larger three phase unit operating at higher delivery voltage, and replacing the aging circuit breaker with a modern recloser and electronic control. This means that part of the circuit within Town that is the lighter voltage will be rebuilt to accommodate the new higher delivery voltage. That includes lines that come out from Main Street—from Seamans Road to Little Sunapee Road.

Brian Prescott said the Selectmen's concern is with the new poles the company plans for Main Street in front of the common. Russ Miles explained that the college equipment cannot handle the change in voltage that the company is about to initiate (and there is no plan for the college to change its own equipment). Thus the company cannot bring its new higher voltage lines as far as the campus, so they must place the three "step-down" transformer poles somewhere near the corner of Seamans and Main. If they go beyond the Common, those poles with heavy transformers at the top will be right in front of the Baptist church. Mark Kaplan asked if they could put them around the corner where the police station is. Russ Miles said no, because the line of poles on Main Street goes straight ahead. Mark Kaplan asked if another option would be to put the step-down transformers on the opposite side of Main Street. Russ Miles said that is an option but that would involve more lines, taking the lines across the street, more cutting (trees) to be done. Mark Kaplan asked if the cost would be a problem in doing that. Would it be possible to work up some numbers for that? Russ Miles referred to the history of people on that part of Main Street objecting to the company doing too much cutting. Jessie Levine said that would not really solve the problem of the visual impact this will have anyway. Larry Ballin said that from a visual standpoint, PSNH could not have picked a worse place -- the Common or in front of the Baptist church. He suggested PSNH's engineers rethink this. Russ Miles said they have though it out as much as they can. Electrically, there are no alternatives. Jessie Levine reminded him that earlier in his discussions with her, there was some consideration of going into Cougar Court. Russ Miles agreed, but said that would cut

the whole project down in size -- to the point that they may as well not do it. He added that basically, this project is meant to help New London continue its growth on Main Street.

Larry Ballin asked what if they ran the new line up on the college campus. Russ Miles said the college cannot (does not wish to) change its voltage, and the company cannot force the college to do that. Mark Kaplan said the problem then is how to extend the regular poles so that the step-down transformers can be relocated further down Main Street. Russ Miles said (as far as extension goes) the best possible place would be in front of the college itself (on Main St.), but right now there are already too many poles and preexisting structures there. There is no room for step-down transformers. As far as going across the street there goes, he said that safety standards dictate a minimum pole size, and he reiterated that since he began with the company in the 70's, there have been ongoing problems with people not wanting too much trimming along the road there. He said there has to be some give and take somewhere.

Mark Kaplan said the Selectmen are not trying to dictate to PSNH, and they understand that PSNH is not trying to dictate to them. He asked again about the possibility of going to the other side of the street. Russ Miles said he would not say that anything is impossible. The question is, is it feasible? Would they get permission to change what is pre-existing there? Would the Town be willing to talk to the people on that side of the street? Mark Kaplan asked if the Selectmen could discuss this with PSNH's engineer, somebody who could run the numbers. Jessie Levine said that option would not really address the problem of the visual impact to Main Street. The Town has a long term plan for improvements to Main Street.

Brian Prescott asked how much they would lose if they ran the line behind this building, and put the poles with the step-down transformers there (behind this building). He said he was just thinking of where those step-down transformers could be hidden. Russ Miles said they did consider running them up Pleasant Street and then Gould Road, but that would involve three different phases for customers. Brian Prescott said he's not talking about Gould Road, but behind this building. Russ Miles said they have got to have a continuous loop. They would have to run more poles behind this building and then back out with three wires on them.

Larry Ballin asked if he sees any technology coming down the road that would minimize this visual impact. Russ Miles said no. Laura James asked how other towns have dealt with this. Russ Miles said every town is different.

Larry Ballin asked about schedule. Russ Miles said they do not have a firm project timeline yet, but would like to have the substation upgraded by 2009, with a starting date in spring, and completion date in fall. The majority of the conversion should be completed by spring of '09. (Does he mean 2010?)

Larry Ballin asked if he could create a schematic to show how this would look. Russ Miles said for comparison they could look at the step-down transformers that are located at Georges Mills, on the right side just as you head up Rogers Hill, going toward Sunapee. He pointed out that the transformer poles must be at least 20-feet apart. Jessie Levine said that Kelsie Lee may be able to use Photoshop to overlay a picture of that on a picture of the Common. Selectmen suggested that if that could be done, it then be shown to PSNH for an opinion on how closely it resembles what the scene will look like when the poles are put in front of the Common.

Jessie Levine said another consideration is that the Town might want to bury the lines on Main Street at some point in the future. Russ Miles said that from PSNH's point of view, it would be problematic to bury lines with what is there now. Every time someone wanted to add something or the system needed to be upgraded, there would be a great deal of digging up. Burying lines would also require cabinets or large

boxes on the outside. He said burying lines is okay as long as nothing ever needs to be changed. He said that towns that have that, have a different infrastructure. They have almost an entire city underground, and they are able to access the system at any point.

He went on to say that additional work that PSNH has coming up includes putting a pole with a step-down transformer at the corner of Bog Road and Old Main Street, a step-down transformer at Little Sunapee Road and one at Lakeside Road. Also, in doing the work they are likely to find that some poles will need to be replaced.

Mark Kaplan asked if there is anyone else the Town can talk to about this. Russ Miles said the engineers are the ones who dictate what will happen and where.

Bob Lavoie asked if they are proposing a specific location between Pleasant St and Seamans. Russ Miles said anywhere in that space, but the company feels the two sections at the end of the Common would have the least impact.

### **Jerry Frew, KRSD Superintendent**

Jerry Frew introduced himself to the Board of Selectmen, and said he comes with 30 years of experience in education in New Hampshire -- in Concord, Londonderry and Exeter. He said that since coming, he has spent a great deal of time listening to what the School Board would like to see happen to make KRSD a great school system. He said they are in the process of hiring an assistant superintendent. Right now, he is trying to visit all the Boards of Selectmen in the district. He added that his phone lines are open, and he welcomes people's thoughts and questions.

Larry Ballin opened some discussion about the Community Center that is planned for the old middle school. Jerry Frew said he feels the schools should serve as community gathering places. He went on to say that the elementary school auditorium faces some challenges and they would like to upgrade the high school now. In the meantime, it may be possible to redirect some activities to the new middle school. Larry Ballin asked if he sees any major costs down the road. Jerry Frew said that when Tom Brennan left, his assessment was that the facilities are in decent shape for the next three to five years. There is some question about what to do with the SAU office.

Mark Kaplan asked how the Selectmen can help him. Jerry Frew said they can call with any problems or questions. He said he would like to address rumors before they become infernos. He said he feels it is important to communicate even if people disagree.

Brain Prescott asked if they have had any feedback about the time change. Jerry Frew said they have not had a lot of calls on that. Once the bus routes are published, people will see that they are shorter routes with fewer transfers. He said the school district has tried to accommodate parents by having its door open and providing supervision at 7:30 a.m.

Larry Ballin asked if they have considered going to a four day week. Jerry Frew said there has not been discussion of that locally. He is aware that there has been some discussion of that on the Superintendent level. He said he needs to be convinced that there would be a dramatic savings in doing that. He said there would be an impact on learning, and on families. He pointed out that Deerfield tried a four day week for a year, but found that the fifth day was too difficult for parents, and they went back to a five day week. Larry Ballin said it would be interesting to see some numbers. Jerry Frew said he appreciates the budget challenges, but feels that the learning experience is first and foremost in importance.

**Crockett's Corner**: The next focus group meeting will be on the 14<sup>th</sup> at 4p.m., at the fire station. After that, a public meeting will be scheduled.

**Kearsarge Community Center**: Selectmen understand that the KCC group continues to host invitation-only fundraisers at New London Inn. In addition, Jessie Levine is meeting with other Boards of Selectmen in the school district to discuss New London's decision to contribute. At this meeting, Selectmen agreed that the KCC group will be discouraged from asking other towns to contribute. Jessie Levine agreed but said she feels she needs to assure the other towns that although the building is in New London and New London has agreed to contribute a part of the community center's cost, this will not be a New London-only community center.

**Elkins Charette**: This has been scheduled for August 19 from 12:30 to 4:30 PM at the Masonic Lodge.

**July 23, 2008 Minutes**: Larry Ballin moved to accept. Brian Prescott seconded. No further discussion. Motion unanimously approved.

**Schultz Land**: Jessie Levine said the conservation commission will hold a meeting tomorrow at 1 p.m., to discuss the new appraisal of the Schultz land--\$200,000.

### **Committee Reports**

- Selectmen agreed that since the Town has received two building permit applications for windmills, it would be a good idea for the Energy Committee and the Planning Board to get together. Larry Ballin said that recent state legislation has made clear that a town's building height restriction is not the standard for windmills. Jessie Levine said that is wind turbines. As it is, windmills are allowed in the ARR zone in New London by special exception. She said that a subcommittee is about to set to work drafting a local ordinance for wind turbines. Otherwise, they would be permitted by variance, and that would make the ZBA the interpreter. Mark Kaplan said his concern is that if the ZBA grants a variance for a windmill, that will set precedent. It was agreed that a variance is not precedent setting.
- The CIP committee met on July 24 with the Recreation, Police and Public Works Departments.
- The Budget Committee toured the recreation department facilities and the library on the 30<sup>th</sup>, and will tour public works on August 19<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately, that does conflict with the Elkins charette. Jessie Levine reported that John Wilson has suggested that the Kearsarge Community Center group meet with the Budget Committee. At this meeting, it was agreed that that could be scheduled either for August 19 after the Public Works tour, or at 6 p.m. on September 15, just before the regular Budget Committee meeting.
- The Joint Sunapee/New London Sewer Commission met on July 31, and agreed to hire Wright-Pearce to conduct an engineering study of the facility. Also, at that meeting, the joint board agreed to use 70% for calculating New London's flow to the plant (see minutes July 23, p. 4). Jessie Levine said she has forwarded a draft of the modified agreement to that effect to Town Counsel for review.
- She reported that the round-about contractors will finish the water work today. Round-about construction will start tomorrow. This week they will be working on the north side of Newport Road, and so both lanes of traffic will be rerouted over to the south side. She reported that the police will still have a presence on the site, though the budget for police detail on this project has been expended. She reported that a bigger concern now is the increase in fuel costs that will affect the asphalt prices.

There could be as much as a \$30,000 impact on this project. The round about constitutes \$20,000 of that, and the balance is spread over the hospital's and New London Public Works Department's portions. She has asked the State if it will increase the grant, and if it will not, what would they approve removing from the project. She suggested something like landscaping could be removed.

- She said the issues of fuel consumption and employee leave policy will be on the agenda for the Selectmen's August 18 meeting. Larry Ballin suggested that at some point the Recreation Department, Outing Club and Selectmen ought to get together, and it was agreed to schedule that at the next meeting as well. The issues to discuss are duplication of services (how to avoid), cooperation, and how the community center will come into play for these groups.

At 9:10, in accordance with NH RSA91-A:3 II (a and b), Selectmen moved, seconded and unanimously approved a motion to enter non-public session to discuss two personnel matters.

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### Signatures

At 9:20, Selectmen reentered public session to complete the signature portion of the meeting.

### Applications for Building Permits:

- Extension: Robert & Sandra Schroff, 1781 Little Sunapee Rd. (Map & Lot 043-020-000) complete vinyl siding – Permit #07-072 – Approved.
- Extension: Richard & Margaret Anderson, 129 Little Brook Rd. (Map & Lot 035-036-000) complete trim/stain/roofing – Permit #07-088 – Approved.
- Amendment: Caroline & Robert Newkirk, Jr., 71 Old Main St. (Map & Lot 095-037-000) continue improvements on home – Permit #08-051 – Approved.
- John & Carol Richters, 213 Woodland Trace, (Map & Lot 094-012-000) install 2 solar panels on roof for passive solar hot water – Permit #08-091 – Approved.
- NEW HOME: Nancy Putnam & Ed Blanchard, 154 Everett Park Road (Map & Lot 073-011-000) construct new 3700sf single family residence with attached 2 stall garage – Permit #08-092 – Approved.
- John & Christa Hill, 183 Little Sunapee Rd. (Map & Lot 059-039-000) renovate bedrooms/bathrooms/living area/add windows sliding door, deck patio replace shed – Permit #08-093 – Approved.
- Peter & Harriet Messer, 997 King Hill Road (Map & Lot 131-006-000) erect 106' tall wind turbine – 1.8kw unit – Permit #08-094 **DENIED**.
- Pamela Sanborn, 180 Burpee Hill Road (Map & Lot 071-025-000) chimney, wood shed, 2 solar panels – Permit #08-095 – Approved.

### Applications for Permanent Signs:

- Permanent signs: The Wire Whisk, property owner Bicknor Wilmot Inc. 207/209 Main St. (Map & Lot 073-080-000) 1 sign attached to front of building, 1 sign on post in front of Jack's – Approved.
- Permanent sign: Colby Real Estate, 11 Pleasant St. Kidder Building (Map & Lot 084-073-000) 1 sign on bracket – Approved.

Application for use of Whipple Hall:

- League of Women Voters of the Kearsarge Sunapee Area, Candidates' Forum – October 2, 2008 6:30 pm – 10:00 pm – Approved.

Wastewater Tax Abatement Requests

- Barron & Sandy Lambert, 2 Murray Pond Road (Map & Lot 045-020-000) billed for 6 months wastewater, property owner did not move in until ½ way through billing cycle – Amount due: \$248.50 – Approved.
- Margaret Andrews, 145 Parkside Road, (Map & Lot 072-001-000) water usage was high due to broken pipe – Amount due: \$1756.54 – Approved.
- Dale Dewispelaere, 554 Otterville Road (Map & Lot 041-003-000) meter reading entered wrong in computer system – Amount due: \$163.20 – Approved.

Other

- Disbursement & payroll voucher week of 8/4/08 - Approved.
- Request for Certificate of Occupancy, New London Mini Mart (Map & Lot 084-002-000) Approved.
- Application for Sewer Connection, Building Expansion and/or Service, Nancy Putnam & Ed Blanchard, 154 Everett Park Road (Map & Lot 073-119-000) Approved.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah A. Denz  
Recording Secretary