

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES**

March 27, 2006

PRESENT:

Mark Kaplan, Chair, Board of Selectmen
Douglas W. Lyon, Selectman
Ruth I. Clough, Selectman
Jessie Levine, Town Administrator

OTHERS PRESENT:

Bob and DJ Lavoie, New London residents
Debbie Cross, Intertown Record
Carolyn Dube, Argus Champion

Chair Lyon called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM and noted that the public hearing on the acceptance of gift funds for the Town Clock would begin at 9:00 AM.

Meeting Minutes: Ms. Clough moved to approve the minutes of March 20, 2006. Mr. Kaplan made corrections to portions of the minutes and then seconded the motion to approve. Minutes approved as amended 3-0. Ms. Lavoie commented that at the last meeting the Selectmen discussed who could initiate a secret ballot at Town Meeting. She said that it might be legal for the Selectmen to be among those who initiate the ballot, but she questioned the “ethical integrity” of such an action, as it contradicts the Selectmen’s mantra that the voters should drive decisions made at Town Meeting. She does not think that the Selectmen should force voters to use a secret ballot.

Chair Lyon agreed and said that since the last meeting, Ms. Levine had found information from the Local Government Center that stated that in addition to the law allowing five voters to make a written request, the moderator also has the authority to call for a secret ballot if she thinks one would be advisable. The context of the discussion at the last meeting was whether the moderator and/or Board of Selectmen could ask for a ballot if they sensed sensitivity related to a particular vote. Chair Lyon said that ultimately the moderator is in charge of Town Meeting, and he agrees that it is not the Selectmen’s place to initiate a secret ballot, although technically they could as registered voters.

Mr. Kaplan said he has no problem with using a secret ballot. The moderator often uses a hand count out of convenience and to move the meeting along faster, but in theory every item could be handled by a secret ballot.

Adelphia: Ms. Levine said that the group e-mail has not been working and the problem seems to be linked to Adelphia, which had classified the Town as a “residential” account even though the Town has a small business account. She is looking into ways around the problem.

Roundabout Link: Chair Lyon drafted text for a Quicklink on roundabouts. Ms. Levine asked the Selectmen if there were other topics that they wanted to include in the newsletter. The Selectmen said: introduction of the new Recreation Director; reminder about Transfer Station stickers and recycling efforts; reminder of larviciding; shoreline damage & repair requirements.

Recreation Director: Ms. Levine said that the new Recreation Director, Chad Denning, would start on Wednesday, March 29. She said that Jerry Coogan of the Recreation Commission had asked about plans for a "meet and greet" reception. Ms. Levine said she is inclined to wait until Chad has had time to get used to the position and prepare for the summer. The Selectmen agreed and suggested that Chad also be invited to a future Citizen's Advisory Committee meeting. Ms. Clough encouraged him to meet with the Sunapee-Ragged-Kearsarge Greenway folks and other hiking programs.

NH/VT Solid Waste: Ms. Levine noted that Marty Feins had resigned as New London's representative to the NH/VT Solid Waste Project, and he was also treasurer of the NH District. Mr. Kaplan said he will try to fill in and will check with Don McGuinness, the other representative. Ms. Levine said she can also fill in but will be away during the May 4th meeting. The Selectmen will give some thought as to who could serve until the project is closed in July 2007.

Audit: Ms. Levine said that the auditors had completed the 2005 audit and there appeared to be no problems. She said that she had received a quote from the auditor, Greg Colby, to begin compliance with GASB 34, although it will cost \$1500-2000 more than budgeted for the audit. She asked the Selectmen if they wanted to wait until 2007 to begin GASB compliance or overspend the audit line this year. This year's project would consist primarily of the narrative management summaries, although Carol Fraley, Finance Officer, will begin to use the fixed asset accounting software. The Selectmen discussed the requirements and voted to overspend the audit line. Chair Lyon described the history of GASB standards and Ms. Levine said that towns over 10,000 residents were supposed to comply by June 1, 2003, and towns under 10,000 had until June 1, 2004. Most towns New London's size have not taken any steps towards compliance; so far the only downside is a negative comment in the auditor's annual letter. However, since it is a federal requirement, she would like to begin compliance, and the Selectmen agreed.

Mosquito Control: The Selectmen discussed the Town Meeting vote approving expenditures for mosquito control, and asked Ms. Levine to coordinate a meeting among the Selectmen, Health Officer, Conservation Commission, and vendor, to discuss the treatment of town property and private property.

Regional Fiber Project: Ms. Levine said she will be part of a conference call today to outline a schedule for the regional fiber project. The project is moving forward although not all funds have been raised yet. Chair Lyon said there had been some communication about electric utilities and satellites and he asked for clarification. Ms. Levine said that the Northeast Electric Coop had an agreement with a satellite company for internet services, but it was just a volume agreement and was not the transmission of high speed internet over powerlines. Mr. Kaplan said there is a conflict between powerline transmission and ham radios, which is why it is not used.

Clock Fund: at 9:00 AM, Chair Lyon opened the public hearing on gift funds donated to the Town. He read the following notice that had been published in the Intertown Record and posted in public places:

Pursuant to RSA 31:95-b, the New London Board of Selectmen will hold a public hearing on the above date and time to receive public comment on the acceptance and expenditure of over \$5,000 in private donations to the Town of New London for the purpose of the repair, restoration and maintenance of the Town Clock located in the tower of First Baptist Church.

Ms. Levine said there is over \$6,000 in the fund as of March 23, 2006, in addition to a separate donation of \$10,000 to the First Baptist Church that will be used towards this project and towards repairs to the Church for safer access to the clock. She said that a public hearing is required to accept and expend funds over \$5,000. As a result of this public hearing, if approved, the Town will open a checking account for the gift funds (not including the \$10,000), which would be used towards repair and maintenance of the

town clock. She asked the Board of Selectmen for approval that would allow the expenditure of future gift receipts as well.

Chair Lyon invited public comment and none was offered. Chair Lyon moved to approve the acceptance of over \$5,000 in gift funds and to expend the funds on the repair, restoration and maintenance of the Town Clock located in the tower of First Baptist Church. The motion does not include the \$10,000 donated directly to the Church. Mr. Kaplan seconded the motion and it was approved 3-0.

Building Permits:

- Randolph G. Van Cise, 82 Little Brook Road (Map 035, Lot 045) permit to add 24' x 36' garage with bonus room upstairs – Approved (Permit 06-011)

Sign Permit Applications:

- Application for Permanent Sign Permit for New London Hospital Association at the corner of 273 County Road and Hospital Entrance for alteration to existing sign, no change in size or location stating "Member of Dartmouth – Hitchcock Alliance" - Approved

Other Items for Signature:

- Disbursement Voucher for the week of March 27, 2006 – Approved
- 2003 Homeland Security Grant Program for Fiscal Year 2003 Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program Non-Supplanting Certification - Approved
- Application for Current Use for the Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust on Soo Nipi Road (Map 136, Lot 009) – Approved
- Report of Appropriations Actually Voted (MS-2) for the Town of New London – Approved
- Appointment Card for Richard Lee of the Highway Department as Road Agent - Approved

There being no further business, the Board of Selectmen adjourned the meeting at 9:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessie W. Levine
Town Administrator