



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES DECEMBER 1, 2008

PRESENT:

Mark Kaplan, Chair, Board of Selectman
Larry Ballin, Selectman
Tina Helm, Selectman
Jessie Levine, Town Administrator
Lauren Gifford, Valley News
Debbie Cross, Intertown Record

Chair Kaplan called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM.

A. MEETING MINUTES: Mr. Ballin moved to approve the Minutes of the November 17, 2008 meeting with the following corrections: under CAC, strike the words “meeting on” from the first paragraph. Under Use of MLS Listings, change the word “effect” to affect in the first paragraph, last line. Ms. Helm seconded the motion. The Minutes were approved. The Minutes of the November 19, 2008 meeting were approved as presented.

B. NEW BUSINESS:

Well/Dollars Health and Safety Grant: Ms. Levine reported that New London has received a 2009 Well/Dollars Health and Safety Grant of \$4000 to be spent over a two-year period. This grant, offered through the Local Government Center Health/Trust provides financial assistance for innovative health and safety-related programs for public employees. By NH law, towns are required to have an Employee Safety Committee. Amy Rankins, New London’s Land Use Coordinator, serves as the chair of this committee along with seven representatives from each of the Town’s departments. Through their own initiative, this committee has incorporated wellness into their mission for town employees, emphasizing the significance and benefits of healthy living. Ms. Levine reported that there has been good response and participation to these programs from employees throughout the various Town departments. This grant will enable the committee to implement further health and safety programs. There are no matching funds required. The Board joined with Ms. Levine in congratulating Ms. Rankins and this committee on their fine work.

Fire Department Pay Night Dinner: Ms. Levine referred to the invitation that the Selectmen received for the Pay Night Dinner and a letter from the Fire Chief asking for permission to serve alcohol in a public building pursuant to the Town’s alcohol policy. The Chief said that there will be a designated crew for the apparatus in the event that a call is received that evening. The dinner will be held on Monday, December 8, 2008 at the Fire Station. Mr. Ballin moved that the request by the Fire Department to serve alcohol at the Pay Night Dinner on December 8 be approved. The motion was seconded by Ms. Helm. The vote was unanimous. All members of the Board intend to be present at the dinner.

CAC: The CAC meeting will be held on Saturday, December 6, 2008. Ms. Levine suggested that the budget process might be discussed. Ms. Helm inquired whether or not their will be secretarial

coverage for this meeting. Ms. Levine said that, if either of the Town's recording secretaries were not able to attend, she would be there and could fill that function.

Set Selectmen's Meeting Schedule for January and February and CAC Annual Schedule: Chair Kaplan shared that he will be unavailable January 26 - February 8, and that he will miss the public hearing on zoning on January 27. Ms. Levine said that Monday, January 19 is Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and February 16 is President's Day, therefore there will be no meeting on either of those days. The Selectmen will meet on the following Mondays: January 5, 12, and 26; and February 2, 9, 23. She also mentioned that the Board will meet on March 2, 9, with Town Meeting March 11. Ms. Levine will work on the CAC meeting calendar for the next Board meeting.

Town Meeting Potluck: Since the elementary school cafeteria is no longer available due to fire code restrictions, as well as the fact that all tables have been removed from the cafeteria and it is currently being used for dead storage, the pot luck usually held prior to the Town Meeting cannot be held at the Middle School this year. Linda Jackman had suggested that the Boy Scouts could provide a spaghetti dinner that night as a fundraiser for their troop, to be held at the First Baptist Church. Mr. Ballin moved that this change be made. Ms. Helm seconded the motion. This change was unanimously approved by the Board. It was noted that chairs will need to be rented for the Town Meeting, along with microphones, and more tables. The platform will be provided by the elementary school.

Merrimack County Dispatch Update: Ms. Levine and Police Chief Seastrand attended the November 19, 2008 meeting in Concord. By way of background, Ms. Levine shared that Merrimack County has been considering the feasibility of a county-wide dispatch service and they invited towns that currently offer dispatch service to be part of the discussion. This discussion took place at the meeting on the 19th. Ms. Levine shared a copy of the November 21 letter that she sent to the agencies that use the New London Dispatch Center and reflects the Town's current thoughts on this issue. The letter indicated that New London will participate in the discussions, but at this point the Town does not believe it is the best solution for them. The Dispatch Center currently under consideration would only dispatch police, not fire, EMS, or public works, which would mean that New London would have to maintain a two-tiered system. This would also mean the Town's Dispatch would need to remain open regardless of what the County does. We also service some Sullivan County towns, and we use our Dispatch as a 24 x 7 front office. She said that without Dispatch staff, the Town would have to operate differently. The worst case scenario would be that the County would approve this regional dispatch service and New London's dispatch would remain open, in which case New London would be required to pay its portion (currently 7%) of that county budget and still operate our own dispatch service.

Ms. Helm asked if the Town would have a choice in participating in this regional effort. Ms. Levine stated that it would. Ms. Levine said that there would be a meeting on Thursday, December 4 at the Fire Station where she and Mr. Seastrand will provide information to our dispatch customers and provide a forum for discussion. Ms. Levine emphasized that if the regionalize dispatch service is implemented and the Merrimack County towns we serve transfer to that center, this could be a revenue loss for New London.

Sunapee Area Watershed Coalition: Ms. Levine shared with the Selectmen that June Fichter submitted a request to have an advisory town warrant article placed on the Town warrant in March 2009. The submitted warrant reads *"To see if the Town of New London will go on record in support of working with the other five town within the Sunapee Watershed to raise community awareness of important issues concerning the Lake Sunapee watershed and surrounding areas, to formulate clear guidelines for responsible, long-term stewardship of the water resources in these areas, to promise cooperation among Sunapee watershed towns in using those guidelines for the implementation of programs effective in addressing the salient issues to the common benefit of the area communities."*

Mr. Ballin asked if this had to be a petitioned warrant article, and Ms. Levine said that the Selectmen can place it on the warrant themselves, or it could be petitioned. Ms. Levine said that because this is not a financial article it does not have the language about whether or not it is supported by the Selectmen, and they can allow it to go onto the Warrant without any endorsement. It was decided that this warrant will go on the Town Warrant without a formal recommendation or non-recommendation.

C. OLD BUSINESS:

Whipple Basement Project: The bids are due December 3, 2008. Ms. Levine added that at her department head meeting last week, the Fire Department offered to work with the Police Department to provide manual labor in the hopes that might reduce the total cost. Ms. Levine told them that she would wait to see the bids, to see if there was any portion of the bids that the Town could carve out and do ourselves. Mr. Ballin asked Ms. Levine to thank Jay Lyon for that offer and for his “can do” attitude.

Roundabout: Ms. Helm moved to extend to Ms. Levine a huge thank you on behalf of the Town and from the Selectmen for all that she did to bring about the culmination of this project. She stated that Ms. Levine worked very hard on this project and she deserves public appreciation. Mr. Kaplan seconded the motion. The motion was passed.

Mr. Ballin inquired as to who was responsible for the maintenance of the new sidewalk in front of Nonni’s Restaurant. Ms. Levine responded that this was a private walkway and was to be maintained by the property owner. The Town is not responsible for the sidewalks inside the stone wall at the Shopping Center.

Stanley Farm Easement Revision: Beth McGuinn from Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust (ASLPT) provided some background by sharing that in 1989 the Stanley family granted two easements to the ASLPT covering approximately 31.5 acres located in four lots, three on or near Burpee Hill Road, and one on Newport Road. The Town of New London holds the back-up/executory interest in those easements. This left a 34-acre parcel of land unprotected by conservation easement. This land is currently owned by the Stanley Farm Association and they would like to place a conservation easement on all of the land. The easiest and most logical way to do this is to create an additional easement which is allowed by the original easement. Everything would then be combined into one easement. Ms. McGuinn explained that this would allow the language to be updated, eliminate rights that are no longer necessary, and update rights that were included in earlier easements. In order to accomplish this, the Selectmen would have to approve this easement revision. Ms. Levine reported that the Conservation Commission, at their last meeting had approved this Stanley Farm Easement revision. Ms. Levine said that she would have Town Counsel Bart Mayer review the easement prior to it being signed.

Ms. McGuinn said that the earlier easements allowed for the Stanley Family to grant septic easements to the adjacent land owners. Chair Kaplan stated that the map in Ms. McGuinn’s handout did not show the Stanley Point easement. Ms. McGuinn stated that was a separate easement and has nothing to do with the Stanley Farm Easement.

Mr. Ballin moved that the Board of Selectman accept the role of backup on the additional easement for the Stanley Farm Association property with the primary easement going through the ASLPT. Ms. Helm questioned Ms. Levine as to whether or not she should recuse herself given the role of husband Bill Helm on the Ausbon Sargent board. Ms. Levine did not think this was necessary since there was no personal gain to the Helm’s with this vote, but thought it appropriate that it was stated for the record. That being so, Ms. Helm seconded the motion. This motion passed unanimously. Ms. McGuinn stated that this would bring the total landing area in the Stanley Farm Easement to 64.5 acres.

D. COMMITTEE MEETING & REPORTS

Budget Committee (November 17): Ms. Helm stated that in the minutes Earl Chandler should be changed to Earl Blanchard. She also noted that there was significant cutting of various department budgets and suggested that for future meetings that departments that will be especially impacted by cuts should be represented. Ms. Levine noted that representatives from the Conservation Commission were not present at the last meeting but will be present at the next meeting and that they intend to make a presentation at that time.

Crockett's Corner/Route 11 (November 20): Ms. Helm and Ms. Levine attended this follow-up meeting. This meeting was to primarily show the abutters of Crockett's Corner and Seamans Road the State's proposal to eliminate the truck climbing lane and replace it with a two-way turning lane at Crockett's Corner and Seamans Road. This road modification was well received by the abutters and it was thought that they appreciated being included in this informational meeting. She noted that this modification will be incorporated into the State's road improvement plan. In summary, Ms. Levine praised the State for their cooperation with this project. Larry Ballin emphasized that the project will be completed at no cost to the Town of New London.

Joint Sewer Meeting with Sunapee (November 20): All three Selectmen attended this meeting, as well as Richard Lee and Jessie Levine, and it was reported that there is an intended \$3.8 million upgrade planned for the Sunapee Wastewater Treatment Facility. This upgrade is required by the new EPA operating permit which was issued last year. The plant currently does not meet these guidelines. New London's portion of that will be 65% by agreement. Ms. Levine suggested at that meeting that for ease of process Sunapee should be the one that bonds the project and New London repay Sunapee with annual maintenance payments, as we do already. Ms. Levine later called Bart Mayer who said that it was a good idea in theory, but the Town of New London would still be borrowing money so a 2/3 vote at Town Meeting would still have to take place. An alternative is to have both Sunapee and New London obtain individual bonds for the funding of this project. If this occurred, Ms. Levine considered the possibility of whether or not New London would be eligible for State aide. However, since it does not appear that the State will have any money for these types of improvements for the next few years, State funding would probably not be available. Ms. Levine stated that the initiation of this project would commence right after the vote, assuming this was approved. The next meeting will be held on December 18 to hear the conclusion of the upgrade report.

Ms. Levine said that the Selectmen also needed to consider whether the cost should be paid entirely by the users of the sewer system or shared, in part or in full, by the taxpayers. Ms. Levine noted that the entire Town benefits from a quality sewer system. She said that the original upgrade, done in the 1970's, was paid for by the entire Town (in addition to federal funds), and subsequent system needs have been paid for by the sewer users. Chair Kaplan said that since the entire Town paid for the original system, which would now be upgraded, this would still be a Town expense. However, he thought that the cost of operating the sewer system should then be borne by the sewer users. Ms. Levine shared that this suggestion regarding covering the cost will be difficult for some residents of the Town to accept, particularly those who are on the lake front, since most do not receive sewer services. She suggested that the Selectmen do some "grass roots" research to attempt to assess the thoughts of the Town for this proposal before a position is taken.

Chair Kaplan questioned the annual impact of a \$2.5 million bond on tax rates. Ms. Levine indicated that \$2.5 million at 4% annually would add up to about \$4 to 4.5 million over the life of the bond. This would be an increase of about \$200,000 per year to the Town. She calculated that this would result in about 20 cents on the tax rate but it would probably be a couple of dollars to the sewer rate.

Mr. Ballin suggested that it would be interesting to create a cost matrix that includes users because so many of the largest users of the system are not equitably taxed (i.e. the hospital and part of the college). He did not think it would be unfair to ask them to participate. Ms. Levine said that there are models that look at sewer cost that specifically look at loading or on gallons of use. Using a graduated cost system, the models reflect that the more gallons used, the greater the rate. She noted that the bigger users cost more to maintain and yet their rates do not reflect that added cost. She recommended that whoever attends the upcoming Budget meeting Thursday night mention during the Selectmen's Update that the BOS is looking into these options. Mr. Ballin suggested that this also be brought up at the next CAC meeting as well.

Planning Board (November 25): Mr. Ballin reported that this meeting approved some routine items. Woodcrest is making a few little changes to their buildings. Stanley Farm is annexing lots, which was discussed earlier. The zoning changes were reviewed and the Planning Board is heading towards having those finalized and public hearings in January.

Ms. Levine noted that the Planning Board approved the CIP budget as it was originally presented by the CIP committee. The Budget Committee's actions at their last meeting do not change the original CIP document. She noted that the CIP is a planning document and not a budget document and should reflect the plans the originally outlined in the planning document. Ms. Levine met with Ken Mc Williams and Karen Ebel to discuss the CIP process. She recommended to them that there be a Chair appointed for the CIP Sub-Committee. There are currently two members from the Planning Board, three from the Budget Committee and one Selectmen, plus staff. A chair, who should be from the Planning Board, would remind people who has the right to speak and who has the right to vote as well as be able to oversee the flow of the meetings. Mr. Ballin moved that the Selectmen recommended to the Planning Board that a Chair be appointed for the CIP subcommittee, and that chair be from the Planning Board. Ms. Helm seconded the motion. This motion passed unanimously.

E. UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS/MEETINGS

- C-5 Meeting: Wednesday, December 3 at 6:30PM at Hospital. Ms. Levine shared that members of our Police, Fire and Dispatch services will be honored for a recent CPR save in New London. They will all be receiving pins in recognition. Mr. Ballin and Ms. Helm will try and attend. Ms. Levine will attend and say a few words.
- Regional Dispatch Meeting: Thursday, December 4 at 5:00 PM at Fire Station
- Budget Committee: Thursday, December 4 at 7:00 PM at the Fire Station
- Citizens' Advisory Committee: Saturday, December 6 at 7:30 AM
- Fire Department Pay Night Dinner: Monday, December 8 at 6:00 PM
- Joint Sewer: Thursday, December 18 at 5:30 PM.

Applications for Building Permits:

- William Michael Maher & Marlena Schroeder, 77 Bunker Road (Map & Lot 061-010-000) replace 6x6 connecting porch to barn from shed w/6x18 porch on new foundation – Permit #08-143 – Approved.
- Jane & Jerry Barnes, 800 Lakeshore Drive (Map & Lot 051-005-000) addition to home – Permit #08-144 – Approved.
- Stanley Farm Association, Inc. 412 Burpee Hill Road (Map & Lot 057-004-000) convert from two-family to single family home – Permit #08-145 – Approved.
- Robert & Emily Foehl, 1028 Lakeshore Drive (Map & Lot 064-009-000) after the fact – addition to rear of garage along E property line Permit #08-146 – **DENIED**.

Application for Sydney Crook Room:

- Adventures in Learning – 5 sessions – Approved.

Tuesdays	1:15-3:45	4/14-5/26
Wednesdays	9:15-11:45	4/15-5/13
Wednesdays	1:15-3:45	4/15-5/27
Thursdays	9:45-2:15	4/16-5/14
Fridays	9:15-11:45	4/17-5/29

Application for Temporary Sign:

- Ladies Benevolent Soc. of Elkins, 2x2 sign at information booth, Holiday Fair Dec. 6th – Approved.

Other:

- Disbursement & payroll voucher week of 12-01-08 - Approved
- 2008 Merit Raises - Approved.
- USPS – Elkins Lease – Approved.
- Wastewater Tax Abatement Request for Edward Blanchard & Nancy Putnam, 154 Everett Park (Map & Lot 073-011-001) billed in error, house under construction \$194.50 (no funds to be returned, bill not paid – Approved.

F. NON-PUBLIC: The Board of Selectmen entered into a non-public session at 9:10 AM to discuss a personnel item pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (a). Upon returning to public session, the Selectmen adjourned the meeting at 9:45 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen K. Colby
Recording Secretary