



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES February 9, 2009

PRESENT:

Mark Kaplan, Chair
Larry Ballin, Selectman
Tina Helm, Selectman
Jessie Levine, Town Administrator

Application for Permanent Sign:

- Kelly Lee Gale, 292 Main St. (Map & Lot 084-055-000) KLG ARCHITECTURE PLCC on brackets of front porch – Approved.

Other:

- Disbursement voucher week of 2-9-09 - Approved.
- Town Planning Services Agreement between Kenneth McWilliams & Associates LLC and the Town of New London in the amount of \$20,600 – Approved.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kaplan at 8:00 A.M.

MINUTES:

The minutes of the 2/2/2009 meeting were amended as follows: page 6, second paragraph, line 2, the word sate was changes to State. There being no further corrections, the minutes were accepted as presented.

NEW BUSINESS:

Review Draft Town Meeting Warrant: Ms. Levine suggested that the Selectmen review the warrant article by article and assign each article to a Selectman who will then present that article to Town Meeting. She said she will prepare a brief explanation for each article which the Selectmen could read, refer to, or elaborate on in their presentation as they see fit. She noted that the warrant articles must be posted by February 23 so will be presented to the Selectmen for their signature on February 19.

The articles were assigned as follows:

Article 1-A. Ms. Levine will fill in the slate of candidates for this year.

1-B. 1-9. Ms. Levine will fill in each of the zoning amendments that will be considered this year.

Article 2. Ms. Levine said that this is a boilerplate article that suspends the reading of the articles. Town Moderator Cotton Cleveland usually reads this article to assembled voters.

Article 3. Chair Kaplan. This is the warrant article approving a \$385,000 bond for the engineering and design of the Sunapee Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade. Ms. Levine said that Carol Fraley, Town Finance Officer, had checked with a local bank to determine a payment schedule for this bond, should it be approved. She also noted that this would go out for bid to banks should it be approved. For a 10 year bond, the payment starts at about \$53,000 per year and declines each year as the interest payments

decrease. For a 15-year bond, it starts at about \$40,000. The difference between the 10- and the 15 year bond, in terms of interest paid is about \$30,000 over the life of the bond. Ms. Helm asked if there were a penalty if the bond were to be paid off early. Ms. Levine said that depends on the bank's requirement, but in the past there has not been the ability to pay off early (nor does the town usually have extra cash to enable an early payment of a bond). Ms. Levine noted that this bond request does not take into account any federal stimulus or state program funds that may become available. If federal stimulus money goes through sewer revolving fund, as it potentially will, then it is possible to borrow from the State at 1% interest.

Article 4- Mr. Ballin
Article 5- Ms. Helm
Article 6- Chair Kaplan
Article 7- Mr. Ballin

Article 8- Ms. Helm. Ms. Helm asked about the line item "Other Culture, History and Archives." Ms. Levine responded that this was the Archives Committee budget and they are asking for a new Apple computer in order to digitize a number of their holdings. Ms. Helm then referred to Article 23 where \$3000 was being appropriated to purchase historical items and other ephemera by the Archives Committee. Ms. Levine said that this line item was originated six years ago when a resident had passed away and her estate was selling these items but the Archives Committee had no money to make any purchases. Some of the ephemera was eventually purchased by a private citizen and then donated to the Town, but since then, the Archives Committee has wanted to have some funds set aside to make these types of purchases, should an occasion arise again. These dollars would come from Town surplus and will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until December 31, 2014. There will be no impact on the 2009 tax rate.

Article 9- Mr. Ballin
Article 10- Chair Kaplan

Article 11- Ms. Helm. Ms. Levine noted that the purpose of this article is to combine all the capital reserve funds into one fund called the Police and Dispatch Department Equipment Purchase and Replacement Capital Reserve Fund. This was a suggestion put forth at a CIP Subcommittee meeting. This article does not appropriate anything; it just combines the separate funds, but will need 2/3 approval in order to pass. Mr. Ballin suggested that this article be reorganized to list the combined total value in the explanation paragraph.

Article 12- Ms. Helm. Ms. Levine noted that she would need to ask Bart Mayer what would happen if Article 11 failed to get approval since Article 12 is dependent on Article 11. She thought this article will need to be reworded.

Article 13- Chair Kaplan. Ms. Levine said that Mr. Lee is concerned about this article due to the amount of equipment he is requesting. Mr. Ballin said it would be helpful if the Budget Committee spoke in support of this article. Ms. Levine noted that these purchases are coming out of the capital reserve funds.

Article 14- Ms. Helm
Article 15- Mr. Ballin
Article 16- Mr. Kaplan
Article 17- Ms. Helm
Article 18- Mr. Ballin
Article 19- Chair Kaplan
Article 20- Mr. Ballin

Article 21- Ms. Helm

Article 22- Chair Kaplan

Article 23- Mr. Ballin. Ms. Levine said that the explanation for this Article and Article 24 can be combined.

Article 24- Mr. Ballin

Article 25- Ms. Helm. Ms. Levine noted that this article changed the net income level of the elderly from \$40,800 to \$45,000.

Article 26- Ms. Helm. Ms. Levine noted that currently the Town has the optional tax credit of \$500 for a veteran or surviving spouse of a veteran, and a \$2000 tax credit to a veteran who was permanently injured in the line of duty. Although the Town gives a \$2000 credit to the surviving spouse of any person who was killed or died while on active duty in the armed services, it does not appear that the Town has ever formally adopted that credit at Town Meeting. This warrant article is therefore housekeeping to close the loop on that credit.

Article 27- Chair Kaplan. Mr. Ballin suggested that the wording, 90 acres, be changed to 90 acres +/- . This was approved.

Article 28- Mr. Ballin

Article 29- Ms. Cleveland.

Ms. Levine said that the Selectmen will meet with Cotton Cleveland on March 2 to review the warrant one more time before Town Meeting. At this point Ms. Levine said that she did not expect any other articles to be added to the warrant. She said that the Selectmen were welcome to meet with individual department heads prior to Town Meeting to get more detailed information on those articles that they would be presenting.

Town Meeting Preparation: A brief discussion then followed concerning the placement of chairs for the Town Meeting, noting that 100 more chairs will need to be rented in addition to the 100 provided by the Outing Club. The Boy Scouts will be doing a spaghetti dinner at the First Baptist Church prior to the Town Meeting, and they are responsible for their own publicity regarding this dinner. Ms. Levine said that on Tuesday, Town Election Day, there will need to be a Selectman available at all times while the polls are open. It was decided that Mr. Ballin will be there from 8:00 A.M. until noon, Mr. Kaplan will be available from noon till 4:00 P.M. and Ms. Helm will be available from 4:00 P.M. until 7:00 P.M. Ms. Levine reminded those Selectmen who are running for office that they are not to handle the ballots. Mr. Ballin said that he will be available to cover if needed

Mr. Ballin noted that Peg Moreland, of the Archives Committee, was retiring as chair and he wondered what the Town was going to do to recognize her many years of service. He thought that perhaps she should be recognized in the Town Report. Ms. Levine suggested that she could prepare a "decree" and on Wednesday morning, 2/11/2009 at 10:30 A.M. the Selectmen who were available could come into the Archives and present this to Ms. Moreland in appreciation for her many years of service. Mr. Ballin suggested that the family be contacted to see if they would like to attend, but not to schedule the presentation around them. Ms. Levine said that Jim Perkins will assume her responsibilities and will ensure a smooth transition.

Henderson: Sewer Abatement Request to Waive Interest: Ms. Levine reviewed a 1/20/09 letter sent to the New London Tax Collector by Mrs. David Henderson requesting an abatement of the interest on her

residential sewer tax bill. After a review of the letter, Mr. Ballin moved that the request of the abatement of the interest on the residential tax bill be denied. Ms. Helm seconded this motion. There being no further discussion, the vote by the Selectmen was unanimous.

OLB BUSINESS:

2009 Planning/Priorities: Mr. Kaplan said that when this was discussed, he would like to bring up the issue of changing the date of the Town Meeting. Ms. Levine said that this would mean changing the fiscal year, along with multiple other changes that would be impacted by this decision. Chair Kaplan said he recognized this and agreed but would still like to have this considered at a future discussion. A full discussion of the 2009 priorities was tabled for a future meeting.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS:

Budget Committee Meeting, February 9 at 7:00PM at Whipple Town Hall: Mr. Ballin reminded the Selectmen that they will be seated at the table with the members of the Budget Committee, but Mr. Wilson will run the meeting.

NON-PUBLIC: The Board of Selectmen was joined by Police Chief David Seastrand at 9:06 AM. Larry Ballin moved to enter into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (c), seconded by Tina Helm and passed 3-0. David Seastrand and Jessie Levine were invited to participate in the non-public meeting.

The Selectmen returned to public meeting 9:25 AM.

Red Cross Shelter Training, Tuesday, February 17 from 9:00 AM-noon at Fire Station: Ms. Levine related to the Selectmen that there would be a Red Cross shelter training session at the Fire Station on February 17. Tina Helm asked for a briefing on the interaction between Red Cross and the Town during the ice storm. Jessie Levine said she was very disappointed with the lack of support by the Red Cross. She said that during the storm, Dan Brennan, head of the Concord Chapter of the Red Cross, was contacted for assistance and was told that they could open a shelter but they would be on their own. She noted that in the fall she and Emergency Management Director Peter Berthiaume had met with Mr. Brennan to discuss shelter training and renewing the memorandum of understanding for the Red Cross Shelter Agreement with the elementary school. When the ice storm occurred she called Mr. Brennan at 8:30 Friday morning, notifying him that New London was probably going to open a shelter. His response was that if you do, you are on your own, and we will not be able to help you. At the time Mr. Berthiaume and Ms. Levine had been trained in WEB EOC (Web Based Emergency Operations Center) which was supposed to be a way that the Town could communicate with the State and other towns. This web site was to be a place to post the need for resources, what roads were open, etc. Her posting to the website about the shelter was changed by someone at the State EOC, presumably Mr. Brennan.

Ms. Levine said she had called Mr. Brennan several times during the ice storm to keep him apprised of the shelter specifics. The Red Cross offered New London nothing in support of the shelter. Then, after the storm, one of Mr. Brennan's subordinates called to say that they wanted to enter into a new Red Cross agreement with New London, sending a 20-page contract in which they wanted New London to be a community-based shelter with Red Cross support. In this contract, a community-based shelter is to be financially supported by the Red Cross. Since this is what they designated New London's shelter to be during the recent ice storm, Ms. Levine believes they should have provided financial support. Basically it appears that they want their name attached to what New London does, but is not willing to pay for anything.

About a month ago she was contacted about holding training in New London, which she has supported, thus the training session which is to be held on February 17. It will be interesting to see if the training is

useful. Larry Ballin commented that the folks who volunteered at the shelter did a remarkable job, even without training.

Public Hearing- February 19, 2009 Thursday at 8:00A.M. Ms. Levine shared the notice that went into the newspaper to notify residents of the public hearing. This hearing will focus on the bond and the motor vehicle fee. She noted that there will be no Selectmen meetings on Monday February 16 or 23.

Scenic Byway Meeting: Ms. Levine said that the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission included New London in their grant for scenic byway funds. This is the section of 103A between Route 11 and Newbury. They had scheduled a meeting for February 23 but it was rescheduled to March 4. She had suggested that the meeting be held after Town Meeting since there did not appear to be any urgency involved. As of yet, she is not aware that any date has been set for this meeting.

CAC: February 28, 2009: Ms. Levine said that she will not be here for this meeting. Since this is usually the meeting when a dry run is done of Town Meeting, if the Selectmen would prefer, this meeting can be changed to Saturday, March 7. The Selectmen agreed to go forward with the original schedule date of February 28. The Selectmen briefly discussed the Dunkin Donuts order for February 28.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Motor Vehicle Registration Fee: Mr. Ballin shared his concerns about a recent message that the Selectmen had received from John Wilson, Budget Committee Chair, about the proposed \$5.00 registration fee. Dr. Wilson reported that the Selectmen seemed to “respond with glee to the opportunities to remove money from the taxpayers”, and then went on to mention the hard work that the Budget Committee had done during this budget process. Mr. Ballin noted that the three major areas that have been put forth to reduce the budget this year were not initiated by the Budget Committee: one was reducing the capital reserve deposits, led by Chair Kaplan; another was the individual department budget reductions, lead by the department heads and brought back to the Budget Committee; and the third area was the reduction in employee raises, which was lead by the Selectmen. He said he was a little offended that Dr. Wilson implied that the Selectmen were spending money willy-nilly when actually it was the work of the Selectmen and the department heads that has made this task much easier for the Budget Committee. The Selectmen agreed that they have been pro-active and tried to be creative throughout this budget process.

The public meeting was adjourned at 9:45 A.M.

NON-PUBLIC: Larry Ballin made a motion to return to non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (a), employee compensation. Seconded by Ms. Helm and approved 3-0.

The Selectmen returned from public session at 10:10 AM and adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen K. Colby
Recording secretary