



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES January 10, 2011

PRESENT:

Tina Helm, Chair, Board of Selectmen
Mark Kaplan, Selectman
Peter Bianchi, Selectman
Jessie Levine, Town Administrator

ALSO PRESENT:

Larry Ballin, New London resident
Michael Doheny, New London resident
Bob Lavoie, New London resident
Richard Lee, Public Works Director
Richard & Sue Little, New London residents
David Seastrand, Police Chief
Pat & Jack Sheehan, New London residents
Pat Trader, Intertown Record
Jim Wheeler, New London resident & Budget Committee
John Wilson, New London resident & Budget Committee

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

Newport Road Speed Limit: Chair Helm said that the Board of Selectmen received the data requested from the State of NH regarding the speed study on Newport Road, and she read aloud portions of a message from Alan Hanscom (District Engineer, District 2 of the State Department of Transportation) dated October 18, 2010, in which Mr. Hanscom reported that the speed study revealed that the 85th percentile of traffic travelled at 54 MPH, with an average speed of 49, and a range of 45-55, meaning that the highest percentage of vehicles should be within this range. Mr. Hanscom reported that speed limits should be within 5 MPH of the 85th percentile, which it is on Newport Road. In the State DOT's opinion, changing the speed limit in this area was unlikely to change the traffic pattern.

Ms. Levine said that the bottom line of the report from NHDOT is that State does not recommend lowering the speed limit from 50 MPH.

Dick Little said that the issue for him is between the Post Office and Great Pines, where the speed limit is 30 MPH but there is no sign.

Mr. Kaplan said that we are currently talking about Newport Road, but we also have Route 11, which is also an approach to the Town. In his mind, going out of Town towards 189 on Route 11 is similar to Newport Road, and yet there are no complaints from residents on that side of town. He asked Chief Seastrand what makes the two situations different. Chief Seastrand said the speed limits are similar, and the difference probably is that Route 11 is straight almost to the 35 MPH zone, whereas on Newport Road there are elevation changes. Also, when people pull out of the side streets onto Newport Road, they don't have the luxury that people on Brookside Drive do, for instance, where people can see the traffic in both

directions. Chief Seastrand said that we do not see vehicles over 55 MPH on Newport Road, but frequently see them exceeding the 30 MPH between the Post Office and the Bog. He repeated that Newport Road does not have the sight distance that Route 11 has.

Mr. Bianchi said he has read the NH DOT's report and received a lot of input from townspeople in the form of e-mails and letters, and he counted the number of "votes" for and against and it was roughly even. He did not -- in his unscientific analysis -- see a predominance of either opinion. He therefore concurred with NHDOT and said it seems like Newport Road is properly marked.

Chair Helm said that since this subject was originally presented in the fall, she has on multiple occasions consciously observed the flow of traffic in that area, even going into and out of Spruce and Checkerberry Lanes, and she is not aware of major issues. She had no issues making a left-hand turn from Spruce or Checkerberry, and said that Chief Seastrand and his officers monitoring the area has been making a difference. So, in her own unscientific observation, she does not see it as a major problem.

Sue Little said that it comes down to what is a reasonable speed, and the speed limit on Route 11 going up the hill towards Route 114 is 40 MPH, and she thinks of that as a highway compared to Newport Road, which has a higher speed limit. Her issue is trying to get into her street, not out of it. She has never been behind a car going 30 MPH, but she has been in front of people who want to go 50 when she is going 30, and they get on her tail and cross the double yellow line to pass her. To her, a speed limit of 40 MPH from the post office to Route 89 would be a reasonable speed. Dick Little said that the Selectmen are addressing a macro situation, whereas Great Pines is a micro situation that exists driving down the hill between the Post Office and Spruce Lane. People get right up on their bumper, honk at them, cross the double-yellow line, and accelerate away. He said that all it would take is another sign going down the hill on Newport Road. Chief Seastrand agreed that the 30 MPH sign at Hilltop blends in with the scenery, and thinks another sign beyond the Post Office, across from Fenwood, would be ideal. Mr. Bianchi agreed as well.

Pat Sheehan said that the situation is at its worst in July and August for Checkerberry Lane, and the remaining ten months of the year there is not a problem. They did not present this petition until September, so the study of coming in and out of the roads in the fall and winter months does not tell anything. Nonetheless, she has learned to deal with it. She thanked the Selectmen for their consideration and for the time put into it, and understands that they just have to learn to deal with the other drivers and be careful.

With respect to adding a sign, Chair Helm asked if there is a space restriction between signs. Ms. Levine said that the State sometimes gives the Town a hard time about new signs but if the context is that the speed limit will not be changed and only that a sign should be added, they might go along with it.

Mr. Little said that since this subject came up, there has been a lot more attention paid by the Police and he thanked Chief Seastrand for that. Chair Helm said she has noticed that as well and it is "part of the package" of improving the situation.

Mr. Bianchi moved to add one more 30 MPH sign at the Police Chief's and State DOT's direction and to keep the speed limit as posted. Second by Mr. Kaplan. No Discussion, approved 3-0.

Chair Helm repeated the thanks to the Police Department, particularly during the summer months. She also thanked those present for coming.

Minutes of December 27, 2010: Mr. Bianchi moved to accept both the public and non-public minutes of December 27, 2010. Second by Mr. Kaplan. One minor edit to the public minutes. Minutes approved 3-0.

Use of Town Commons: Mr. Kaplan thanked Ms. Levine for her memo and background on the history of the Town Commons guidelines. Ms. Levine said that the info came from Carla Marshall, who was the chair of the Commons Committee. Ms. Levine said that her review in the minutes of 1992 and 1993 did not reveal much discussion at the Board of Selectmen level; it appears that the Selectmen accepted the Commons Committee's recommendations, which led to the guidelines that are currently in place.

Chair Helm referred to the note that changes were made in 2007. Ms. Levine said that there were minor changes made to the form, partly because it added the New London Inn Common – but no substantive changes were made.

Mr. Kaplan said that our practices seem to be similar to other towns, referring to the background information attached to Ms. Levine's memo. Mr. Bianchi said it was interesting that some towns chose to document a priority list of who had first dibs of use of the land. Mr. Bianchi said the sum and substance of reading this stuff is that it seems to be more or less at the discretion of the Selectmen. He referred to the Committee's conclusion of allowing non-profits that are working in the best interests of the town and the citizens of New London, and said it could get nit-picky and he does not want to get involved in that. After having read the packet, and having brought it up in the first place, he does not know an easy solution. He does not know how to determine what is an equitable split between a non-profit and for-profit group.

Mr. Kaplan said that the biggest weekend is Hospital Days, and although he has not seen the figures, thousands of dollars are generated and the Hospital gets very little. In his eyes, that caused this whole discussion, and he asked how we have an event if it's for the benefit of someone or something else. Mr. Kaplan does not know how we can go to the people who generate the rides and ask for more money, and then they increase the price of the rides. He sees why people are upset, but on the other hand, he thinks it's a great enthusiastic community event and he would hate to see it stopped.

Ms. Levine said that this discussion did not arise from Hospital Days but from the Farmer's Market and the Car Show this fall. Mr. Bianchi brought it to her attention and asked for it to be addressed by the Selectmen. She noted that some of the other towns did allow commercial activity on Town property as long as there was a charge to cover the taxability of that use. She said that New London has not allowed commercial use of public property but it was interesting to see how other towns handled this.

Mr. Bianchi said he is not against the Farmer's Market but asked if it impinged on local businesses. Chair Helm said that she had actually heard from other businesses that they like the activity. Ms. Levine said that for the Garden Club Antiques Show, the money raised is not a share of the vendors' profits, but from space rental and ticket sales. Larry Ballin said that the Farmer's Market does not make a profit as a fundraiser but is good for the community. He added that Greg Berger said it still brings business to Spring Ledge Farm even though there is the appearance of competition. Mr. Ballin said that any of these events attract people to town and people will go to stores and restaurants and see the value of the town and maybe purchase property. The Garden Club makes money that it puts right back into the town, just as the Center for the Arts does. He said that the vendors might make a little bit of money but nobody's making a tremendous amount of money.

Mr. Bianchi said his general recommendation is to enforce the idea that it is New London-based organizations, which is the intent. When an application comes in where there is any question, we should

talk to the people and have a better understanding so if someone asks a question, we know what's going on and can talk about the benefits of letting someone use the property. He said we should prevent, for example, the Upper Valley Humane Society from using the property for a dog show. And then there is the problem of national groups with local affiliates. Ms. Levine asked if Mr. Bianchi's suggestion was that this subject should be on the Selectmen's agenda when it comes up, and he replied that yes, he'd like to have the applications that are beyond the norm be discussed at a meeting. Mr. Bianchi said the Sunapee student project did not benefit New London. Ms. Levine said that it depends on the definition of benefit; if an event brings people to town, that could benefit the businesses.

Chair Helm said it is disingenuous to be too black and white because events do bring people to the town and there's a benefit to the town. With respect to the use of the Town Common, she would feel more comfortable opening it up to New London-area non-profits, as we are part of a larger community. She said that when folks come into town for various events, the Town does benefit and the businesses benefit. Mr. Bianchi said he is less regional than Chair Helm.

Mr. Ballin said that it sounds like the genesis of this problem was a Sunapee High School student who used the Common, and asked if we're going to ban Kearsarge Regional High School students who don't live in New London from using it as well. Mr. Bianchi said that's possible. Mr. Ballin said he thinks that's less than neighborly. Mr. Bianchi said we have that policy with respect to other town services; just because someone lives in Sutton and goes to KRHS does not give them the right to use our beaches and other facilities. Ms. Levine said that's a private benefit, not a public one.

Mr. Bianchi said the bottom line is that those people were on the Common and showing cars. He posed that the people selling cars were using the non-profit guise to have a great venue to sell cars for free. Ms. Levine said that is likely true, but that the non-profit would benefit in the end. She suggested asking more questions on the application form regarding the nature of the event. Mr. Bianchi said to just ask "how are you raising money or benefitting the Town of New London by this activity?" If the present Board of Selectmen thinks it's a benefit, then so be it. He thinks it's a difficult problem and doesn't think there's a simple black and white answer.

Mr. Kaplan agreed with the suggestion of asking more questions on the application. Chair Helm said that she would hate to see the Town be more non-neighborly, as we collaborate with neighboring towns on numerous things, we're part of a regional school system, and all of us everyday cross the boundaries into other towns. She would hate to see us be too rigid and exclusive.

Ms. Levine said that last week the Board of Selectmen approved an application for the use of Whipple Memorial Town Hall for a fundraiser for the Sutton Central School. She said the funds raised would be going out of town, so the event would not meet the guidelines suggested by Mr. Bianchi. Mr. Bianchi said it would just need more scrutiny and might meet approval after some discussion. Mr. Bianchi said that he'd like to see Town properties being used for the benefit of Town organizations.

Pat Trader referred to Ms. Levine's summary that quoted the deed of the Town Common as allowing the Common to be used by the "the town, its citizens (including Colby-sawyer college), and their invitees." She suggested that the "invitee" language covered the grey area because someone using the Common could have been invited by a New London person or organization.

Mr. Kaplan recommended changing the application to include a few more questions. Mr. Bianchi said the Selectmen cannot change the Committee recommendations, and Ms. Levine replied that the Selectmen could change the guidelines.

Single Stream: Ms. Levine referred to her memo on single stream and added that she left off the background that Town Meeting in 2010 approved entering into a contract for single stream. She said that she, Richard Lee and the Transfer Station staff strongly recommend changing to single stream, so the question is what short and long-term arrangements should be made. Long-term, she recommends becoming a Recycling Facility Associate Member (RFAM) with the Concord Regional Solid Waste Coop.

Ms. Levine referred to an attachment that showed what towns had entered into an agreement with the Coop and what towns were pending a signed contract. New London is one of a few remaining towns that would allow the Coop to reach its minimum tonnage goal of 25,000 of recycled material.

Mr. Kaplan referred to the list of towns and noted that New London has 4372 people and is projected to collect 1200 tons of recycling, and no other town recycles at our level. Ms. Levine said the 1200 is a projection based on improving our current recycling levels of 800 tons. Mr. Kaplan noted that our revenue is going to go away, and he's okay with it if Richard Lee says it's better for the Town to do it. Mr. Kaplan will back him 100% but wants everyone to understand that we're giving up \$43,000 in revenue against what it costs us to run the Transfer Station, and if we go to pay-as-you-throw (PAYT) or single stream, people are going to get out of the habit of keeping materials separate, and once that happens we cannot go back.

Mr. Kaplan referred to the recycling figures from Laconia and Concord and thinks they should be generating much more. Chair Helm said that when Liz Bedard spoke to the Selectmen on this subject, she emphasized that the most important part is education. In addition, Chair Helm said, we have to think about our environment.

Mr. Bianchi asked the difference between a Coop member and an RFAM. Ms. Levine explained that Coop members actually bring their solid waste to the facility, which has a current tipping fee of \$69 compared to the \$48 we pay in Berlin. She explained that RFAMs are members of the recycling project who enter into a 15-year agreement and will be part of the budget discussion and have a vote regarding expenses and revenues. She said that many towns that have signed agreements to become RFAMs have already started single stream recycling through a short-term vendor, such as Merrimack and Bedford working with Empire Recycling.

Mr. Bianchi asked if there is a cost associated with changing to single stream. Ms. Levine said that there could be a cost to dispose of recycling if the bottom falls out of the market, and that cost would apply to everyone. She said that as far as our operations are concerned, there would be the cost of buying a compactor and making some changes to the Transfer Station, but they could be pushed to 2012 and would be minimal.

Mr. Bianchi asked what percentage do we recycle now. Richard Lee said we recycle 22-24% of our solid waste stream, not including scrap metal. He said this includes glass also, and we have the option of taking our glass to the Coop or not.

Chair Helm asked for Mr. Lee's sense on the potential market for selling processed glass. Mr. Lee said it is marketable product; the glass is being crushed right now and there is someone who might want to purchase some of it. He has set up a meeting with the Northeast Resource Recover Association (NRRRA) towards the end of this month to push them to help us get the glass back into the system. He said that 15 years ago the NH Department of Transportation told people that if they had enough glass in one area and it was crushed to 3/4"-minus, then it could be used in place of gravel. Now DOT is saying that wouldn't happen, and there's a discussion going on internally in the testing division about whether the product is

good for gravel replacement versus sand replacement. Chair Helm said there must be purchasers other than the DOT. Mr. Lee said there are but the big contractors and towns uses DOT's gravel specifications, so if it doesn't pass that specification, most engineers won't even look at it.

Mr. Bianchi asked if we used the glass for our in-town projects, and Ms. Levine said that we do but a little at a time. Mr. Lee said we could sell it by the yard, including the material that's coming in that's not ours.

Mr. Bianchi said that the RFAM agreement requires all acceptable recycled materials generated in the borders of or in control of the municipality. He asked if we accepted all recycled materials from everyone in town at the moment, specifically the College and the Hospital. Mr. Lee said we accept what people want to bring to us but there are some commercial businesses that do not bring their recyclables to us. It might be easier for the College and other businesses to bring their materials to us when we are single stream, as they will only need two dumpsters. We may see a bigger increase of recyclables with the commercials than with the individual people, because it will be easier to recycle. Ms. Levine said that some single stream product is already going out of town and the Town is losing that revenue.

Mr. Bianchi said that in April, Hopkinton and Webster withdrew from the Coop. He said that, he thinks New London does a "hell of a job" of recycling. Mr. Lee said we do too good a job, and we are busting at the seams and we've got to find some way to either put the place on a diet or buy bigger pants. Mr. Bianchi said if we do it too well, then we need better equipment to continue do it well. Mr. Lee said that if we go to PAYT, it will force more recycling and we can't take it the way we're operating right now. And if we wanted to add more plastics, which single stream allows us to do, then we don't have the capacity to do accommodate more storage and make the bigger bales.

Ms. Levine said that Michael Durfor, the executive director of NRRA, was discouraging about single stream. Ms. Levine made the case about the capacity of the Transfer Station. Mr. Durfor came on-site to look at it and immediately saw that we could not store more plastic.

Mr. Bianchi said it sounds like we may get revenue or pay money based on the market, and those fluctuations are the same in both recycling scenarios. Mr. Lee said that in 2010, we're going to take in \$54,000 in revenue, and in 2009 we took in \$23,290; that's how much the market changes year-to-year. If said that if you watch the recycling market, you know what the economy is doing.

Mr. Bianchi said that if a town or municipality did not have good recycling, then this is a way to get them to recycle. But after reading all of this stuff and talking to John Early at the Transfer Station, he think we do a good job -- in fact too good of a job -- and we could do better if we had better facilities and made alterations along the way. But he does not think the projected increases would apply, and he does not think we're going to see the same percentage increases that the other towns saw, and he is opposed to long-term deals with groups. He cited long-term deals with Sunapee for wastewater, with the school system, and said it always seems that they're the dog and we're the tail. He knows the benefits we would receive but it doesn't seem that the size of our population and the amount of votes we would get as an RFAM would be a strong contributing factor when voting against bigger towns. For those reasons, and although it may be a thing to do at some point, he cannot see just joining something that hasn't been built yet and capital costs are going up.

Ms. Levine said that there could be benefits of going to single stream even without becoming an RFAM, and she asked the Selectmen to consider the two decisions as separate.

Mr. Bianchi said that we've done such a good job that jumping on the bandwagon too early may not be in our best interests. He doesn't have facts to prove it but that's his gut feeling. Chair Helm disagreed, saying she thinks we could do a better job of recycling. She thinks we do a good job but not as good a job as we should be. For example, she takes all of her #5 plastics up to the Coop in Hanover because we don't recycle #5 here – we only do 1 & 2. She definitely thinks we would get that 25% increase if we changed to single stream.

Mr. Lee said that there are a couple of ways to get out of the contract, such as if the price gets up to a percentage of our tipping fee. He asked what we would do if we advertise and try to encourage more recycling, which we do on a fairly regular basis now, how would we handle it if we're busting at the seams now. In the summer, the traffic is backed up out the gate, and if we take on more of a percentage, he asked how we would handle that with the facilities we have. How do we increase recycling to cut New London's costs without building a new facility? If recycling increased by another 5-10%, what is he going to do with it? Mr. Bianchi said he is sympathetic to that.

Mr. Lee said he hears complaints about the length of time it takes people to get through the Transfer Station, and Chair Helm said she has heard that as well. Mr. Bianchi said that his name is still on the wall at the Transfer Station because they were involved when the Transfer Station was built and they heard grief from neighbors all the way down to Little Sunapee. He would feel more comfortable trying to solve those problems than to make a 15-year deal with a company that's charging \$21 more to tip the trash.

Mr. Ballin said that everyone is saying we're doing a good job and we can do better, and the economy is getting stronger so there will be more recycling, yet our facility is completely maxed out. So, he asked, how are we going to bite the bullet and solve the problem? He knows the Board of Selectmen has discussed this for awhile and single stream seemed like the right way to go. He is not as opposed as Mr. Bianchi is to joining the compact, and he thinks that the organization in Concord has a lot of good points worthy of consideration. If we do it on the spot market through a private vendor, that's fine too, but he thinks single stream is the way to go.

Jim Wheeler asked Richard Lee if the fact that we're busting out at the seams in storage affected if we opened the dump up for Sundays and if that would alleviate anything. Mr. Lee said we'd still have a storage problem and still have to have the capacity to collect the stuff to bale the product or store enough to ship it out to make money. We ship one trailer load of plastic per year right now, and we collect 8-10 "gaylord" boxes of plastic bottles to make one bale of plastic. Right now plastic is being handled eight times once it's brought to the Transfer Station: from barrel to boxes to baler to truck to DPW to storage facility and back to trailer.

Richard Lee said that right now commercial haulers come in on Fridays with their cardboard, so we get 4-5 bales of cardboard dumped in the driveway and it usually takes until noon to pick up and bale the cardboard. That's why only commercial haulers are allowed in on Fridays, because they can back in and dump their trash. If we went to single stream, we could open to the public for at least part of the day on Fridays.

Mr. Wheeler said he is impressed with this whole discussion and the thorough analysis, but last year when we were talking about single stream, we were tying PAYT as an inevitability. He asked if that is still the case. Ms. Levine said we can go to single stream without PAYT but not PAYT without single stream or some other added capacity to handle recycling. She said going to single stream does not automatically mean going to PAYT – that is an entirely separate discussion.

Mr. Bianchi asked if Town Meeting would have to vote on an agreement with the Coop. Ms. Levine said the vote in 2010 already authorized the Selectmen to enter into a contract. Mr. Bianchi asked if that approval goes on forever and Ms. Levine said that it does unless rescinded by Town Meeting.

Chair Helm asked for a motion to enter into an agreement with the Concord Regional Solid Waste Coop for a term of 15 years. Mr. Kaplan moved as such, seconded by Mr. Bianchi for discussion. No discussion. Motion passed 2-1 (Bianchi opposed).

Chair Helm for a motion to seek proposals from at least three vendors for single stream in the short term. Mr. Kaplan moved as such, seconded by Mr. Bianchi for discussion. Mr. Bianchi asked again if there is a cost to the budget in 2011. Ms. Levine said that there is no cost in 2011. We will make do in 2011 and it might not be as efficient in this year as it could be in the future.

Chair Helm encouraged having the conversation with Casella, which Ms. Levine said she planned to do as was referenced in her memo.

Chair Helm called for a vote on the motion to seek proposals from at least three vendors for single stream handling. Motion passed 2-1 (Bianchi opposed).

Mr. Bianchi asked when the Coop was going to break ground. Ms. Levine said they would break ground when they get 25,000 tons committed. Mr. Bianchi said that could be two-three years away, and in that time there is no way back out. Ms. Levine said it could be part of the contract discussion, to ask for an expiration clause if the shovel is not in the ground by a certain date. Mr. Bianchi also said we should have an escape clause if the capital cost gets beyond what anticipated. Ms. Levine agreed that should be part of the negotiation, such as if actual construction costs more than X% of the projected cost.

Mr. Wheeler asked who would be the Town's representative in terms of time commitment and meetings. This led to a discussion about the Recycling Facility Operating Committee and board positions. Ms. Levine said that ultimately it would be the Selectmen's decision about whom they would appoint.

Wastewater Proposal: Chair Helm referred to a memo from Richard Lee regarding wastewater issues.

Richard Lee said there were two issues. The first is the cost of the water meters, which has increased, and therefore the DPW needs to increase the cost of installing water meters to cover our costs.

The second is with respect to the real estate closing process. Mr. Lee said that have issues with the time it takes to generate a closing bill, so the question is whether we charge to do a closing bill and if we do, what we charge for the fee. The Town has administrative costs associated with the closing above and beyond the regular sewer fees collected, and he asked whether the Town should charge a small fee for that. Part of the problem, he said, is that some realtors call the DPW at 9:00 AM for a closing bill by 10:00 because they are closing on a property that day. Heather Weinstein (DPW Administrative Assistant) has to stop what she is doing to draw up a closing bill. He suggested charging \$25 and requiring 24-hour notice for a closing bill. He asked the Selectmen if they wanted to try to recoup some of the cost. Chair Helm said the message is that these should be part of the closing costs.

The second part of the question related to closing bills has to do with the water usage. When the Town took over and started to do the billing, we were told that anyone who uses 0-15,000 gallons receives a minimum charge for six months, so at our current rate that's \$187.50. Upon doing a closing statement, if a house is closed for four months and uses 0 gallons, it gets a bill for \$187.50, but if it's open for two months and uses 1000 gallons, they pay \$12.50. His recommendation is that when determining a closing

bill for a property that uses between 0-15,000 gallons of water, the minimum charge is prorated over the number of months in the billing cycle.

Mr. Lee said that currently, if a condo at Hilltop sells and has no usage, they get a bill for \$187.50. If the new owner goes into the house and uses 10,000 gallons of water before the end of the billing cycle, they get a bill for nothing because the previous owner has already paid for 15,000 gallons of water.

Ms. Levine said the minimum fee actually subsidizes the rest of the system because people pay the same for 0 gallons as they do for 15,000. In other words, it's revenue to the sewer fund but does not discourage water use. Mr. Bianchi said the Town cannot lose money unless they charge by the gallon; if there no minimum usage fee and everyone pays 12.50 per 1000 gallons, the Town would lose revenue.

Richard Lee recommended changing the closing statement for minimum usage to be based on months, not usage.

Mr. Wheeler said that the fee structure for closing costs will not change anyone's behavior, so he encouraged charging for the service. He added that when Eastman put in its water line, people paid whether or not the water line went by the house. Ms. Levine said that is how the Water Precinct works but people would be upset if there were a sewer pass-by fee.

Ms. Levine repeated that the recommendation is that for closing statements for minimum bills, the bill should be prorated based on the number of months of the billing cycle. This effectively splits the minimum fee between previous and future owners.

Mr. Kaplan asked if these changes would increase or decrease revenue. Mr. Lee said the charge to do closing bill would increase revenue, but the change to interim billing should keep the same amount of revenue in the six-month period.

Chair Helm asked for a motion to approve Richard Lee's recommendations related to fees for water meter charge and closing costs for sewer bills. Mr. Kaplan moved as such, and Mr. Bianchi seconded for discussion.

Mr. Bianchi asked a question about the rate of \$12.50. Ms. Levine said the rate is actually \$13 per 1000 gallons including capital costs. She noted that they are not asking the Selectmen to approve the rate, just to approve pro-rating the rate over six months for a closing bill. Richard Lee said that way when the rate changes, we don't have to redo the whole scheme.

Chair Helm called for a vote and the motion passed 3-0.

Town Report Dedication: The Board of Selectmen discussed the Town Report dedication. Chair Helm favored of one dedication (Alf Jacobson) and two memoriams (Sydney Crook and Anna Green). Mr. Kaplan and Mr. Bianchi concurred.

Bond Refinancing: Chair Helm recognized Finance Officer Carol Fraley, who reported that she had gone back to the banks and three came back with bids (Ledyard did not bid). Lake Sunapee came in at 2.7% for all bonds, including the two presently at Sugar River; Sugar River stayed at 3.25% for the two they presently have and 3% for the new one and did not bid on the longest bond; and Mascoma was 3.51% for the longest one and 2.8275% but only if we moved our primary bank account to them. Ms. Fraley pointed out that Sugar River had fees connected to their rates and Lake Sunapee Bank had no fees.

Mr. Kaplan said that over the life of the loans, the savings is \$63,930, and Ms. Fraley said that if we did not move those two bonds from Sugar River, it would be about \$62,000, so it would save about \$1700 to go to Lake Sunapee Bank, not including about \$600 in fees at Sugar River.

Mr. Bianchi said this is a sticky subject. He can't imagine us going back to refinance if rates go up, and it sets an interesting precedent. Ms. Levine said it's similar to refinancing a house, which is only done in times of lower interest rates. Mr. Kaplan said this is business. Mr. Bianchi said we are getting a better rate from Lake Sunapee because we do all of our banking there. It gets tricky that we have four banks and three chose to bid. Chair Helm said she understands where Mr. Bianchi is coming from, but as stewards of the Town funds she does not see how we can reject the Lake Sunapee proposal. Mr. Bianchi said that knowing there is only about \$1,000 difference, he would let the banks keep the loans where they are.

Ms. Levine said there is also an argument in favor of keeping the banks happy because we may need them when we negotiate the \$5 million bond for the sewer project.

Mr. Bianchi moved to refinance the loans from Lake Sunapee with Lake Sunapee's rate and Sugar River's loans with Sugar River's new rate. Chair Helm seconded the motion.

Ms. Levine said the effect of going out to bid is that Lake Sunapee rate went down by 0.1%, but Sugar River stayed at the same rate. She thought the Selectmen's hope was to get a better rate out of Sugar River, and instead Lake Sunapee lowered its rate. The Selectmen noted that.

Chair Helm called for a vote and it passed 2-1 (Kaplan opposed).

Ms. Fraley said that for the two bonds that are going to be taken out after this year's Town Meeting vote, they are in the budget at 2.5% and it's been recommended to estimate a 4% loan rate to cover ourselves for 2012, as the days of the lower interest rates are behind us.

Since the revised bond agreements were not ready for signature, the Selectmen agreed that they will sign them when they are prepared.

Volunteer Appointment Process: Chair Helm referred to the memorandum from Ms. Levine and asked if anything had to be done right now. Ms. Levine said that nothing has to be done right now, but this is the beginning of the process. Mr. Bianchi said that we should have a conversation with the chair of the boards to make sure that attendance requirements are being met. It has been more and more difficult to get a quorum on the boards and as a general rule, attendance should be considered.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

- Ambulance Study Subcommittee: Ms. Levine reported on subcommittee meeting of December 29 and the scope of work letter sent to Don Jutton of Municipal Resources, Inc., Bradford's interest in being included, and the decision to keep the size of the committee to eight (one representative from each of the seven towns plus one from the Hospital).
- Quicklink newsletter: Ms. Levine working on Quicklink newsletter to hit the mail this week. Chair Helm said that she is in the process of writing the Selectmen's 2010 year-end report for the Town Report that she will get to Ms. Levine, and asked the other two Selectmen for input on subjects that should be covered.

- Elkins Hydro RFP: Ms. Levine said the Request for Proposals had been posted for the study of micro-hydro in Elkins, which is covered by one of the Energy Efficiency Community Block Grants secured by the Energy Committee.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND REPORTS

Planning Board: Mr. Bianchi reported that the bulk of the meeting was the Lake Sunapee Protective association presentation on their watershed analysis, and there were two points: 1) culvert size, which is a no brainer; and 2) the concern about impervious surface and the concept coming down the pike. A lot of scientific work was done about peak flows, statistical analysis, and that was good information. With respect to impervious surface, New London takes that into account for site plan review and subdivisions, and now the question was brought up as to whether it should be extended to building permits, which would obviously add to the cost of developing a residential lot. This did not have as much to do with culvert size as it did water coming off land. It is the beginning of more long-term discussions about these concerns. He can see it affecting lot sizes, steep slope requirements, how much lawn someone could put on, etc. Ms. Levine agreed and said there were two outcomes: 1) Richard Lee, Peter Stanley and she will meet to discuss “low-hanging fruit” solutions; and 2) the four towns will possibly engage the regional planning commission to work with them to review comprehensive zoning regulations.

Mr. Bianchi reported that there were three zoning amendments discussed at the remainder of the meeting and there were no changes. The next meeting will include some discussion about a minor subdivision.

Citizen’s Advisory Committee: Mr. Bianchi reported that all four school board and MBC representatives showed up. It was a good discussion and showed how people come down on the subject of education. In the end, he was disappointed, as only three people from the CAC attended the Deliberative Session. Mr. Bianchi said citizens of New London and the District have to make a better effort to go to school board meetings and the deliberative session. He does not think that a \$1 million cut would change the delivery of education one bit.

UPCOMING MEETING & SPECIAL EVENTS

Bond Hearing will be on February 14 at 6:00 PM before the public hearing on the Budget.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Bianchi noted Fire Chief Jay Lyon’s accident and asked about the Town’s coverage for short- and long-term disability, as well as adequate back-up support within the Fire Department. Ms. Levine said that all is covered and accounted for.

Mr. Kaplan reported that he will be meeting with Senator Bob Odell and Pat Remick on Wednesday in Concord to figure out how to bring in more towns to get involved with the coalition and to get Senator Odell’s take on where the Governor is, etc.

Application for Building Permit:

- Harry M. Snow, 1471 King Hill Road (Map & Lot 129-008-000) - erect a 12 x 22 horse barn – Permit #11-001 – Approved.

Other items to be signed:

- Disbursement voucher and payroll for January 10, 2011
- Forest Fire Warden Appointments

Meeting adjourned at 10:50 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessie W. Levine
Town Administrator