



TOWN OF  
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**January 4, 2016**

**6:00 PM**

**PRESENT:**

Nancy Rollins, Chair.  
Peter Bianchi, Selectman  
Janet Kidder, Selectman  
Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator  
Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Minette Sweeny, *Intertown Record*  
Phyllis Piotrow, Budget Committee Member  
Ruth White, Conservation Commission Member  
Scott Blewitt, Recreation Director  
Mike Gelcius, Conservation Commission Member  
Anita Gelcius, New London Resident  
Bill Helm, Planning Board Chair  
Bob Brown, Conservation Commission Chair

Chair Rollins called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. She apologized for not attending the last meeting due to an illness and thanked her colleagues for taking over for her in her absence.

Bob Brown – Conservation Commission Chair

Mr. Brown wanted to update the Selectmen about two projects they are considering moving forward on: Pleasant Street and Clark Lookout.

*Pleasant Street – two lots, east and west side of the road*

Mr. Brown explained that this project consists of two properties, on both sides of Pleasant Street, and has involved a lot of work, thought and research. Mr. Brown thanked those who have put their time into it. One parcel is Tax/Map #073-083-000 and is on the west side of Pleasant Street. It is beyond the Ice House and before Job Seamans Road. The parcel includes the Kidder-Cleveland-Clough hiking trail and the beaver family that lives there. The Conservation Commission has a good relationship with the current owners of the property who allow the Conservation Commission to do what is necessary to work on the issue of the beavers to control the flooding problems of the past. He feels that with the help of the “Beaver Deceiver” that has been installed, and regular monitoring, the beaver problem is being managed.

Mr. Brown said the Conservation Commission is interested in this acquisition for the protection of the watershed and for the expansion of the hiking trails that the properties offer. Mr. Brown pointed out that 80% of the west parcel is currently under a conservation easement. There is frontage along Pleasant Street that is not under easement; some is zoned commercial and there is potential for private development. The Conservation Commission would love this property but they don't feel it is worth a lot of money given that fact that there is an easement on it already that protects 80% of the property.

The Conservation Commission is more concerned with the property on the east side of the road, Tax/Map #074-047-000, which is about 27 acres in size. It is zoned R1, R2 and Commercial and the wetlands run under the road onto the east side and into Great Brook. Conservation Commission members believe it to be a good parcel because it is a water source. The parcel runs just beyond Bittersweet, behind Cottage Lane, behind the homes on Seamans Road, Birch Acres, and back out onto Pleasant Street. There is potential to continue the trail system to be able to walk between the college and Spring Ledge.

The properties are separate parcels but the owners want to sell them together. Over a month of communication has yielded a price of \$250,000 for both properties. It was offered at \$412,000 and is assessed at \$400,000. This can be considered a bargain sale. Mr. Brown asked that the Selectmen support this request for purchase and put it on the warrant at Town Meeting for vote.

Selectman Bianchi noted that he read the memo prepared by Mr. Brown in support of the purchase of the two parcels, however he can't support buying the parcel that is already 80% conserved and that already has trails on it. Mr. Brown said there is still work to be done on the land; every time they want to go onto the land to do something (trail work, beaver work) they have to get permission from the property owners to do so. If the Town owns the property, they can just go do what they need to do. He noted that the current owners are very cooperative and allow the Town to do things on the property as needed without any problem, but noted that a new owner might not be as willing to cooperate. Selectman Bianchi feels the Conservation Commission has done a lot of good work in that area, however he cannot support the Town owning the land. With regards to the other side of the road, part of the land is wetlands and part is not. Mr. Brown said it is approximately 1/3 wetlands noting that several of the Conservation Commission members have walked the property and know every inch of it. There is an entrance at a parking lot (Cottage Lane off of Seamans Road) that could be used to access a trail. Selectman Bianchi feels these are the kinds of things that need to be done (an agreement with the college for access from the parking lot) before they continue on to a Town Meeting vote. Mr. Brown said there are three other dead-end roads that abut the property which the Town owns which could also serve as entrances to the proposed trail so he does not feel that the lack of access from Seamans Road is a problem; however he feels it pretty unlikely that the college would be against the use of their parking lot to access the property in the future.

Mr. Brown said the current owners own to the edge of the Spring Ledge property. There is no trail there right now so permission would be required to cut a trail through there if the town wanted to extend the trail. Mr. Brown stressed that they are faced with a deadline for a warrant article for Town Meeting and the town may miss an opportunity if all of these details must be resolved before proceeding. Chair Rollins feels it worthwhile for the Town to have the properties as discussed and she would like to see them go forward to present a warrant article at Town Meeting.

Recreation Director Scott Blewitt said he was in favor of the acquisition of the land as there may be opportunities for recreation programming in the future. Phyllis Piotrow said on behalf of the COA Outdoor Recreation for Seniors (ORFS) group, she is in favor of this acquisition because it is a wonderful, large, level area for hiking and snowshoeing.

Selectman Kidder announced that she recused herself from voting on the matter due to her being an owner of the property. The remaining two voting Selectmen did not agree to put the issue on the warrant to purchase the property. Ms. Hallquist noted that members of the Conservation Commission could still draw up a petition warrant article and it could go on the warrant for a vote at Town Meeting; there would be no recommendation from the Selectmen since it appeared that there is one in favor and one against and one recusal.

Mr. Helm asked if permission was provided from the college and Mr. Snow (owner of Cottage Lane), would Selectman Bianchi be in favor of the purchase. Selectman Bianchi said he would like to know more about the wet land on the west side, noting that he felt strongly that the Town needs to know exactly what it is getting for the money.

Mr. Brown said they have discussed with the owners purchasing just the east side parcel. The owners were not in favor of this and he wasn't sure if this suggestion again would be a deal-breaker. They can certainly ask the question but he was not optimistic that the owners would be interested in selling the lots separately.

Chair Rollins asked Selectman Bianchi why not put this to the townspeople to vote on this. People have come forward to talk in favor about it in the past, it has Recreational uses, and they have negotiated a bargain price for both parcels. Selectman Bianchi feels it is the Selectmen's position to advise how the Town's money is spent and if he doesn't agree that it is a good use, he won't vote to put the article on the warrant. Mr. Brown understands what Selectman Bianchi is saying regarding not wanting to purchase a property with little chance of development, however the lot in question consists of four acres on Pleasant Street that could be developed.

Ms. White feels that it really looks like they need to take both parcels and doesn't think it would be possible, even at Town Meeting, to split them. Ms. Hallquist said Selectman Bianchi can state his disagreement with a petition warrant article at Town Meeting. This can still be put on the warrant by petition with the acquisition of 25 signatures, however if the Selectmen agree to put it on, Mr. Brown and Conservation Commission members will not be required to collect signatures.

Chair Rollins said she supports the initiative but Selectman Bianchi does not. She advised Mr. Brown to submit a petition warrant article with the 25 necessary signatures so it can be voted on at Town Meeting.

#### *Clark Lookout – Davis Hill Property*

Mr. Brown said there is also an ongoing discussion for acquisition of property on Davis Hill Road, at the trailhead for Clark Lookout. The Conservation Commission is not interested in the entire 40 acres, which is for sale at \$950,000 as they do not feel this is a proper price. The Conservation Commission has negotiated for two parcels on either side of the Clark Lookout trail; the Town currently has an

easement on the trail leading to the town owned property at the top: Clark Lookout. Mr. Brown noted that there is also a plan "b" which includes the two lots plus the land under trail leading to Clark Lookout, estimated to add another 1.5 acres. This would give the Town 9.5 acres: 2 lots that front Davis Hill Road and the trail that provides access to Clark Lookout (Clark Lookout is currently owned by the town). This purchase would eliminate the problems they have had in the past with the gate/trail being closed. The asking price was originally \$375,000. The Conservation Commission has negotiated a possible price of \$300,000. The assessors say that this price is about right for two house lots, which is being offered for sale. The plan is to proceed with that proposal. There are several details that have to be worked out including the need for the owners to subdivide the property in question. There is currently an easement in favor of Ausbon Sargent; if the land is purchased by the town steps will be taken to add it to the current easement, which they anticipate will be possible. The Conservation Commission would like approval at Town Meeting which would be conditional upon these details being worked out. The owners said they have another interested party and Mr. Brown fears if they wait another year on this, the Town will not be able to get the property.

The two parcels are four acres each; the property consisting of the trail to the top is about 1.5 acres for a total of just under 10 acres. The Clark Lookout property is five acres.

Selectman Bianchi said right now they already have access to Clark Lookout via the easement the town owns over the trail/access road. Mr. Brown said it is open to vehicular access only by handicapped people, and pedestrians. Those are the terms of the easement. Ms. Hallquist said if the Town owns the property, there will still be an easement on the trail as Ausbon Sargent also has an easement, so if the town ever sells the land in the future, it would be subject to the easement.

Ms. White said she doesn't believe any handicapped person could go up the road in a car. The road is blocked and they cannot get through with a car. To her, that is the most frustrating and difficult thing; this problem should have been solved months ago. If they get this land, they are avoiding a lot of lawyer fees because she doesn't think they are going to get handicapped people to be able to go up there.

Ms. Hallquist said the Town and Ausbon Sargent have different easements on the road. The Town's easement includes use by motorized vehicles for handicapped persons while Ausbon Sargent's easement is for pedestrian use only.

Mr. Brown said the present property owner does not maintain the trail and the Town could, if they wanted, repair some of the bad spots and make it easier to access. Ms. White said if they don't buy it and don't do anything, she urged the Town to meet with the owner and get the gate unlocked. Ms. Hallquist said the gate always needs to be locked to stop vehicles from entering, but the problem is the Town no longer has a key to unlock it.

Selectman Kidder asked about the small wedge of land that appears to be landlocked which is not included in the parcels for sale to the Town. Mr. Brown explained that the landlocked property had been included in the town purchase by the owners, but the owners will now take the same amount of property out from a different portion of the parcel. This was not the plan Mr. Brown had agreed to present and so they have not included it in the map, which had been distributed to the Selectmen earlier. This issue remains outstanding as the Conservation Commission awaits a reply from the property owners.

The owners will have to do the survey and subdivide the property. The Town's duty would be to do a title search and to get the easement amended to include the new parcels and the trail to the top. If the subdivision doesn't go through, the Conservation Commission won't be able to continue with this purchase.

Selectman Bianchi feels they are jumping the gun on this; it hasn't been subdivided yet. Mr. Brown said they have been working on this for three years. It could be an opportunity that could pass; if it wasn't they would say they could wait for next year.

Mr. Brown said they would request funding from the Mary Haddad fund to purchase this property. This would be another warrant article to accept the land. Selectman Bianchi said the Selectman can accept land as a gift but can't purchase land without approval at Town Meeting. Ms. Hallquist the warrant article will include the Mary Haddad funds in the explanation but it doesn't take a vote at Town Meeting to spend from that fund, only to accept the land as town property.

Selectman Kidder said the Conservation Commission, Recreation Commission and the Board of Selectmen need to have a 2/3 agreement to spend from the Haddad Fund. Each group has one vote.

**IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to authorize the Conservation Commission to go forward with the negotiations on the Big Hilltop LLC property and to put the question on the warrant for the next Town Meeting, pending certain issues being resolved.**

Mr. Brown said the entire parcel is for sale. If the town purchases the 9.5 acres, the remainder would still be for sale. The owners want the town to consider purchasing the rest at a later date but the Conservation Commission won't be entertaining this idea at this time. The owners don't want to spend the money to subdivide if the Conservation Commission decides it is not interested in acquiring the two parcels. Mr. Brown noted that this whole plan is being tailored for the town.

Selectman Bianchi wondered if the owners created six building lots into the existing portion of the property, would that change the nature of the area. Mr. Brown said it is hard to tell what they would do but it was felt that the portions carved out for the town would maintain the integrity of that place.

**THE MOTION PASSED. Selectman Bianchi was opposed.**

#### New Business

##### ***Status of the Bob Andrews Memorial Skating Rink***

Mr. Blewitt said the skating rink is open for business.

##### ***Receipt of Letter of Resignation from Linda Hardy, Town Clerk/Tax Collector***

Ms. Hallquist noted that February 12th is Linda Hardy's last day working for the Town.

Selectman Bianchi thinks they should advertise for the position of Town Clerk/Tax Collector. Ms. Hallquist said the Selectmen will need to appoint someone until March of 2017 when the position will

be up for election. Selectman Kidder said she thinks they should offer Linda Nicklos (Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector) the position; if they hire someone else, Ms. Nicklos will need to train the new person. Selectman Kidder pointed out that Ms. Nicklos is currently working in the office as deputy and has experience so appointing her to the position makes sense, and then the Board should advertise for the position of Deputy Town Clerk. Selectman Kidder pointed out that if someone else would like to run for the position in 2017 they can do so.

**IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to appoint Linda Nicklos to fill the vacancy of Town Clerk/Tax Collector, left by Linda Hardy upon her retirement until the 2017 elections. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Selectman Kidder said that Ms. Hardy had recommended hiring someone at least 32 hours/week for the deputy position because there will be, essentially, two new people working in that office. Ms. Nicklos is still learning and could benefit from someone with her more than the 25 hours per week she is currently working as Deputy.

Ms. Johnson said the positions of Town Clerk/Tax Collector and Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector is critical; they have got to have people who know what they are doing. The staff in the collector's office collect \$18 million dollars in property taxes each year, in addition to car registrations. It has to be done right. Ms. Hallquist said it is an issue trying to find someone for a part-time position because there are no benefits offered and in this case, the pool of people to draw from will be even smaller as the person has to be a resident of New London.

Chair Rollins suggested sending the ad out for the Deputy position at 32 hours per week to see what the response is from interested candidates.

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to advertise for a part-time Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector position at 32 hours/week. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Chair Rollins asked what the plan was for getting Ms. Nicklos up to speed. Ms. Hallquist said she would be going to more trainings, and there is help from the State of New Hampshire via phone when needed, as well as staff in other towns who are generally good resources for help. Ms. Hallquist noted that the office may be closed more often so Linda and a future employee can attend training. Ms. Nicklos will be encouraged to go to trainings and call people for help. Chair Rollins said they will need to inform the citizens that a change is being made and she will need support from the rest of the office.

Ms. Hallquist said she has given Ms. Hardy permission to have Ms. Nicklos work as much as possible to increase her training before Ms. Hardy leaves. Chair Rollins said they need to identify Ms. Nicklos' weaknesses and perhaps get targeted training from the State and from other towns' clerks. Ms. Hallquist said she is confident that Ms. Hardy will make sure that Ms. Nicklos is given the tools to learn or find answers before she leaves. Chair Rollins asked that Ms. Hardy provide a list of items that need attention and instructions on how Ms. Nicklos will be trained/mentored before she leaves.

***Request from Pine Hill Ski Club***

Ms. Hallquist said this is something that the Selectmen have approved for many years. It gives the Pine Hill Ski Club permission to run their cross country ski program over town-owned property. The property they plan to use this year is the same as in years past and the Club's new insurance policy has been submitted to the Town.

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the request of the Pine Hill Ski Club to use town-owned property for their ski program.  
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Town Administrator's Report – Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator

Ms. Hallquist noted that the report from the K-9 committee had been submitted to the Selectmen that day. The committee would be asked to come in for the January 19<sup>th</sup> Selectmen's meeting to discuss their findings.

Ms. Hallquist noted that Jim Perkins, Town Archivist, is still looking for flags to put up at Whipple Hall, which would replace the badly worn flags that used to hang there.

Ms. Hallquist reported that Frank Anzalone emailed her regarding the inspection of the cupola by Trumbull-Nelson at Whipple Hall. It wasn't entirely clear whether or not it would be tended to this winter or if it would be repaired in the spring. The initial report is that the cupola is not in serious disrepair.

Ms. Hallquist provided a draft of a letter that she suggests the Board send to Sunapee urging them to send it to Penta Corp asking them to pay \$7,500 of the \$15,000 fine from DES. If Penta pays \$7,500 for their part in the violation, the Towns of New London and Sunapee to each pay half of the remaining \$7,500. The fine from DES in the amount of \$15,000 came from a violation that occurred at the Wastewater Treatment Facility. The Board agreed that it was a good idea to send the letter to Sunapee and request that they send it to Penta.

Ms. Hallquist noted that Robin LaChance, employee at the Transfer Station, has retired effective December 31, 2015.

Selectman Bianchi asked if Trumbull-Nelson was done working on the Academy Building until next spring. Ms. Hallquist said the air exchanger would be installed soon and the second coat of paint would be applied in the spring. They would also be working on the bandstand in the spring. She wasn't sure about the cupola. When asked, Ms. Hallquist reported that to date, the Town has spent \$292,435.80 on the Academy Building project. They will still need to pay more for painting in the spring and the air exchanger. They will likely come close to the \$350,000 funding set aside for this project.

Ms. Hallquist said she will find out more about the cupola and if it will be delayed until spring.

Selectman Bianchi asked about the cost so far for the Elkins project. There is still work to be done in the spring. He wondered if there would be overage on the job. Ms. Hallquist said so far she is not aware of any change orders needed for the project, although with a project like this she would not be surprised to

have change orders. Any change orders are the responsibility of the Town at 100%. She is surprised there haven't been any yet.

The Request For Proposals (RFP) for the dam are due January 13<sup>th</sup>. The RFP for the wage study are due January 8<sup>th</sup>.

Chair Rollins asked what the procedure would be for the RFP's. Ms. Hallquist explained that the Selectmen can decide how they will review the proposals and select the firm to hire. In the case of the Pleasant lake dam proposals, the Board will need to put the engineering fees on the warrant for a vote at Town Meeting in March.

#### Committee Meetings and Reports

##### ***Sewer Lagoon***

Selectman Bianchi said a letter is being prepared to send to Mike Rainey to request a meeting with him. Paul Carrier is doing this. They hope to meet with Mr. Rainey within the next week. There should be a report on this at the next meeting.

##### ***Planning Board***

Selectman Kidder said the Planning Board had a site walk on Bog Road on Saturday. She feels it was successful.

Selectman Bianchi asked about the man who lives near the dam who was found to have a shed too close to the water, for which a building permit was not issued. Ms. Hallquist said Ms. St. John contacted the property owner and he responded saying the structure is portable; he didn't realize he needed a building permit and he is working with the Planning & Zoning Administrator to come into compliance.

#### Approval of Meeting Minutes

**IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to approve the minutes of December 21, 2015, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED. Nancy Rollins abstained as she was not present at the meeting.**

#### Upcoming Meetings & Special Events

Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting – January 9 – 7:30AM

Kearsarge Regional School District – Deliberative Session- January 9 – 9:00AM @ the Kearsarge Regional High School, North Road, N. Sutton

Budget Committee – Wednesday, January 13 – 6:30PM (note new time)

Planning Board – Public Hearing – Thursday, January 14 – 6:30PM

Town Offices will be closed on Monday, January 18 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Next Regular Selectmen's Meeting – Tuesday, January 19 at 6:00 PM

Conservation Commission – Wednesday, January 20 – 8:30PM

#### Other Business

The Selectmen voted to enter non-public session to discuss an employee matter.

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to go into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(c). THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY  
Janet Kidder: Yes, Nancy Rollins: Yes, Peter Bianchi: Yes**

The Board entered nonpublic session at 7:50pm.

The Board reentered the public session at 8:55pm.

Application for Building Permit

- Joan & Richard Aseltine, 25 Northwood Lane. (978-621-8230) Remove 3 interior walls, relocate laundry to include plumbing relocation. Replace flooring, minor electrical work. BP# 15-145  
APPROVED

Sign Permit Applications

- New London Hospital, 273 County Road, New London, 072-016-100, Temporary Sign for Hospital Days from August 3 to August 6, 2016. APPROVED
- New London Hospital, 273 County Road, New London, 072-016-100, Temporary Sign for Hospital Days race route from August 5 to August 7, 2016. APPROVED

Other Items to be Signed

- Equalization and Ratio Study Certificate from Normand G. Bernaiche, Chief Assessor, December 22, 2015
- Birthday Cards for eight New London Town Employees
- State of New Hampshire, Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund Program, Town of New London, New Hampshire (Project No. CS-330198-01) Supplemental Loan Agreement
- Intent to Cut – Gregory D. Steverson & Patricia L. Steverson, Trustees of PO Box 1406, New London for Carter Road, 071-002-000 APPROVED
- Warrant for Wastewater Charges, Town of New London, Public Works Department for 2nd half of 2015 in the amount of \$399,842.35

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to adjourn the meeting.  
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary  
Town of New London