



TOWN OF  
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MEETING MINUTES  
December 21, 2015  
6:00 PM**

**PRESENT:**

Peter Bianchi, Selectman  
Janet Kidder, Selectman  
Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator  
Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Minette Sweeney, *Intertown Record*  
Winfried Feneberg, Superintendent of Schools  
Ken Bartholomew, School Board Chair  
Carter Bascom, School Board Member – New London  
Mark Kaplan – New London resident  
Bill Helm – New London resident  
Ed Andersen – Police Chief  
Linda Hardy, Town Clerk/Tax Collector  
Bill Hardy – New London resident  
Steve Ensign – Board of Firewards Chair

In the absence of Chair Rollins, Selectman Bianchi chaired the meeting. He called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Public Hearing: Consideration of a Gift from the Police Benevolent Association – Computer System for Police Cruiser

Chief Andersen said they just outfitted their new vehicle with a new system, guaranteed for six years, including upgrades. It is not a laptop system but is two separate pieces mounted in the car. The Benevolent Association would like to purchase one to make it so all three patrol cars have the same system in it.

Selectman Bianchi asked if there were questions or comments from the public; there were none.

**IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to accept the gift from the Police Benevolent Association of one computer system for one cruiser. THE MOTION PASSED.**

Old Business

**Discuss New London's Share of \$15,000 EPA Fine at the Sunapee Wastewater Facility**

Selectman Bianchi said there had been an issue at the plant within the last year that got the attention of state and local authorities. Sunapee received a letter from the EPA that threatened over \$180,000 in fines. The EPA agreed to settle for \$15,000. This settlement was a result of the joint boards' agreement. Selectman Kidder said the lawyer Sunapee used charged them \$6,000, so the total cost of this instance is \$21,000. She said she believed the fee would be paid by the sewer users. Selectman Bianchi said the fees to the lawyer were worthwhile because engaging the lawyer very well could have been the reason the EPA agreed to settle. New London pays 55% of the costs at the wastewater facility so will be paying a little more than half of the \$15,000 fee. Ms. Hallquist noted that at the recent Budget Committee meeting, Selectman Bianchi reported that the issue of who would be paying the fine: sewer users or all New London taxpayers, had not been resolved. Selectman Kidder noted that she felt the fine should be paid by sewer users only; Selectman Bianchi agreed.

### **1941 Building Discussion**

Selectman Bianchi said Mr. Helm and Mr. Kaplan were charged by the Selectmen with the task to discuss the possible purchase or acquisition by the Town of the 1941 Building and a portion of the site for town use. Carter Bascom, New London Representative on the School Board, Winfried Feneberg, Superintendent, and Ken Bartholomew, Chair of the School Board, were present at the meeting.

Mr. Bartholomew said he was ill and unable to attend the recent meeting the School Board and Mr. Kaplan and Mr. Helm to discuss the 1941 building issue. He apologized for how the meeting turned out as it seems to have been cut short when that was not the intention of School Board members. Mr. Bartholomew explained that the School Board is seeking a number for demolition of the 1941 Building but haven't decided to take this route. Nothing has been put in the 2016/2017 budgets for anything to be done to the building. The School Board feels the use of the building should be compatible with the needs of the SAU as a neighbor, and board members are sensitive to the traffic and safety issues with having the elementary school next door. If the Town doesn't have detailed plans for the use of the building and how it may affect the traffic patterns and their status as a neighbor, he isn't sure that the School Board would be interested. From the prior School Board meeting, it seemed to be a "chicken and the egg" discussion with ownership of the building having to be necessary before the building/space can be used.

Mr. Helm said he and Mr. Kaplan went to the School Board under the context that the Town realizes its need for more space. The logical space is the 1941 Building. He and Mr. Kaplan proposed that the School Board and the Town carve out a space of about two acres in such a way that the Town would gain control of that piece of land. The carve-out would be done in such a way so the existing driveway in and out of the school district on Main Street would remain. The two acre parcel would not include this driveway. There is a curb cut beyond where the old SAU was that could be utilized to access the cut-out parcel of land. This could also be a right of way for the Outing Club and school to get to the fields behind the 1941 Building and to the James House area.

Mr. Helm said they suggested to the School Board that the Town take control of the property at the beginning of the new fiscal year (July 1, 2016) and would then be responsible for the costs associated with it. The Town would then go through a further planning process to determine the usage of the property and how it would evolve. They will need to determine the costs associated with the plans they have in mind.

Mr. Helm said he and Mr. Kaplan walked away from the meeting with the feeling that the School Board was not interested in having a discussion with the Town at all. Something that kept coming up was a concern about parking. There was talk about a possible 200-seat meeting room near the cafeteria, but this sized meeting room would require much more parking to be created. He feels that the School Board was not interested in moving forward with anything having to do with the Town's ideas.

Mr. Feneberg said there was conversation after Mr. Helm and Mr. Kaplan left the meeting. Mr. Feneberg stressed that he didn't want to leave the impression that the School Board was closing the discussion with the Town; the School Board wants to relay the message that if a viable plan were presented, taking into consideration the enormity of the renovation necessary to use the building, they would be interested in the discussion. The Town taking possession of the building as of June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016 and maintaining the status of the building as it is now, is not something the Board is interested in. A lack of a plan could result in further deterioration or possible demolition of the building which may or may not be advantageous to the School District. Mr. Feneberg said the School Board is interested in further development of the area if a thought-out plan is presented.

Mr. Helm said he agrees that the "chicken and the egg" scenario is a real one; however, the Town's position is that it doesn't make sense to make plans for the space and get the taxpayers on board only to have the School Board deny the use to the Town. Mr. Feneberg noted his understanding of this remark.

Mr. Bascom said looking back at the minutes from the Town, the reason he abstained from the vote at the earlier meeting is because he knows there are taxpayers that want to tear the 1941 Building down but there are others who want to keep the building. If there was a clear position of the New London Board of Selectmen, he would be better able to voice his opinion at meetings of the School Board. He recognizes the needs of the School District but there are also needs of his constituents of the Town.

Mr. Bartholomew said it would be too late to put disposition of land on the warrant for the next annual meeting. Mr. Helm understands this.

Mr. Helm said the new piece of information they are trying to convey is that there is a need of the Town for more space. Mr. Feneberg cautioned about the costs of the 1941 Building to maintain. Mr. Helm said if the School Board is interested in discussing the possibilities, the Town may be interested in picking up the costs for maintenance as of July 1<sup>st</sup> as sort of a down-payment. Mr. Bartholomew said the School Board had been in favor of the Community Center idea in the past. He encouraged that the process continue between the Town and the School Board.

Mr. Feneberg said there was a group that wanted to explore the opportunity to use the building for affordable housing. They are open to any use that would be beneficial to both parties. Mr. Helm said he understands that these people are still interested in this use in conjunction with the Town.

Selectman Bianchi said behind the old gym there are 28 parking spaces. He is all for the functions of the neighboring entity being a complement to the School District; he wondered if the School District could provide a list of things that they do *not* want going into the space beside of them. Selectman Bianchi questioned how much any entity will be willing to spend on plans that may not be acceptable to the School District. Selectman Bianchi said he understands why the School District feels the way they do.

Mr. Feneberg said the movement of children in front of the SAU, by the gym and behind the building has to be considered; it limits the use of the 1941 Building dramatically. To make the cafeteria space usable they will be putting a new roof on it. He sees the new space as being one that could be used by the Town and other organizations for meetings, etc. Most of the parking available is being used right now, by the SAU employees.

Selectman Bianchi said when considering what used to be there at the 1941 Building site (high school, elementary school and middle school), he wasn't concerned with the egress of the area. Mr. Bascom said the District's master plan ends in 2017 and they are working on the future plan. This is part of why the people at the last meeting were unsure of where to go or how to vote in the discussion about the town and the 1941 Building.

Mr. Kaplan said he is happy to hear what the School Board had to say. Mr. Helm and he are willing to work together with the School Board to continue a dialogue to come up with a plan that will be satisfactory to the district, the Town and can be presented. Once costs are factored in, they may decide they can't continue or may find a way to break the costs up to pay for them over time.

Selectman Bianchi noted that one reason Mr. Kaplan and Mr. Helm were asked to meet with the School Board about the property is because the Selectmen were not in agreement of what should be done with the building. His personal opinion is that he would only be interested in the site if the 1941 Building was not there. Selectman Bianchi said it must be considered that the plans they come up with won't go through. Mr. Kaplan agrees with this sentiment.

Mr. Helm thanked Mr. Feneberg, Mr. Bartholomew and Mr. Bascom for attending the meeting. Selectman Kidder suggests that Mr. Bascom be involved in discussions regarding this issue as they are more in tune to the Town and the varying issues. Mr. Bartholomew said both Mr. Bascom and Mr. Kevin Johnson (the other New London School Board Representative) will be included when the 1941 ad hoc committee is reconvened.

#### Linda Hardy's Intentions to Retire – Discuss plans to fill the open position

The Board noted receipt of a letter from Town Clerk and Tax Collector Linda Hardy that informed them of her intention to retire; February 12, 2016 will be her last day. Selectman Bianchi thanked Ms. Hardy for all her hard work and noted that her job is one of the most difficult ones to do. Selectman Bianchi noted that the Board will need to fill the vacancy by appointment until March 2017 when the opening will be on the ballot for election. Selectman Kidder suggests waiting until Chair Rollins was there to discuss this issue further, noting that the logical person to be appointed is Linda Nicklos, Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector as she has been working hard to get up to speed. Ms. Hardy said she has recommended appointing Ms. Nicklos to the position and suggested that the Board may want to consider going back to having two full-time people in the office. Ms. Hardy explained that the lack of experience between two new people may make having two full-time people necessary. An employee can't learn if they aren't in the office and if they don't attend trainings. If full-time isn't an option, just under full-time (32 hours) would be better than part-time. The Board will take up this issue again at its next meeting.

Receipt of Letter from Nate Walker, Walker Automotive re: the condition of the Recreation Van

It was noted in the letter that the vehicle is very rusty. Mr. Blewitt, Recreation Director, feels this information is helpful to the Town in preparation of the discussion of purchasing a new van.

Filing Period for Town Elections – January 20-29, 2016

The Board reviewed a list of town offices that will appear on the ballot for election in March. Ms. Hardy said this will be published in the Kearsarge Shopper, the Intertown Record, and on the website.

Budget Preparations – Revised Totals to Include Shift Differentials for Dispatch

The Board discussed the line item for shift differentials in dispatching. This line item was inadvertently left off the budget sheets as previously approved by the Selectmen. It was noted that the Budget Committee has these figures already, and the line was approved when the Budget Committee reviewed the dispatching budget. The line item is an additional \$2,920.

**IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to approve the additional \$2,920 for shift differentials in the Dispatch Department. THE MOTION PASSED.**

Withdrawal of Planning Board Enforcement Officer Position – Bill Helm, Planning Board Chair

Mr. Helm asked to withdraw the budget request for the enforcement officer position for the 2017 budget. He is still in favor of the position but has heard the concerns about the budget and about how the current staff is functioning. Selectman Kidder disagrees with Mr. Helm's withdrawal. She is still in favor of the enforcement officer position. Mr. Helm feels further discussion is needed about how the role would be carried out; it is becoming an unnecessary "lightning rod" at this point. In fairness to those involved, he wants to wait until a future budget cycle. Selectman Bianchi said he would make note of this.

Town Administrator's Report

Ms. Hallquist explained that the cupola at Whipple Hall was scheduled to be looked at that day, she is awaiting the report from Frank Anzalone. Ms. Hallquist noted that Trumbull-Nelson has done a good job with the Academy Building and many people have commented on the quality workmanship from Trumbull-Nelson. All of the fencing, equipment and work trailer should be removed on Wednesday.

Ms. Hallquist reported that Steve Columbia came in to the office to meet with her and Ms. St John regarding the Chapin property on Lamson Lane. Mr. Columbia expressed his remorse at the actions he took that were in violation of the zoning ordinance (building without a permit and disturbing land within the 50-foot buffer zone). Mr. Columbia stated that he didn't know he was in violation until Ms. St. John's visit to the property. He has talked to his father in law (Hugh Chapin) and has assured town staff that he won't do anything else without permission from the Town. Selectman Bianchi said he spoke with Mr. Columbia directly about this issue and he (Selectman Bianchi) understand there is a family dispute that he got in the middle of by trying to contact Hugh Chapin regarding a neighbor complaint about work being done to his property.

Selectman Kidder said when Ms. St. John went to the site and asked them to do what they were supposed to do, she later found that they hadn't done as she had asked. Selectman Bianchi said he understands this was the case. He said he wasn't trying to tell people they were doing something wrong; he thought the issue would be tended to in the spring. He hopes the issue has taken care of itself.

Selectman Bianchi said the home next to the dam in Elkins has an outbuilding that is within 50' of the lake. Ms. St. John has sent a letter to the owner. This is the same property owner who initially wanted to put a dug-in boat house on his property. It was noted there was no building permit issued and after examination, was clearly too close to the lake.

Ms. Hallquist said January 13<sup>th</sup> is the new date the RFP's are due for the Elkins Dam. An addendum was issued extending the time for submission of proposals and also an addition regarding considering Elkins Beach as possible over-flow area as suggested by Jud Donaghy (a resident of Elkins with experience in dams, who reviewed the RFP at the request of Selectman Bianchi).

Ms. Hallquist said that the RFP's for the salary study is out and proposals are due on January 8<sup>th</sup>.

#### Committee Meetings & Reports

Last Monday night Selectman Kidder, Chief Andersen and the Sunapee Selectmen met to discuss dispatch. The Selectmen were pleased to have them at the meeting. Chiefs Cahill and Ruggles said they appreciate the improvements in equipment and training New London has made. Selectman Kidder reported that the Sunapee Board will not only sign the contract for dispatching services in 2016, they will also send a letter of support.

Tuesday during the day, Selectman Kidder, Ms. Hallquist, Chiefs Andersen and Lyon, and Steve Ensign met to discuss Dispatch; she reported that the Chiefs are working together to increase the areas that need to be reviewed and improved and are working well together on this.

Tuesday evening Selectman Kidder attended the Planning Board meeting, which went over three hours. The Dorr Family Farms were discussed. A conceptual came forth, and Zoning Amendments were discussed.

Wednesday evening Selectman Kidder attended the Budget Committee meeting to support the Recreation Commission, which was on the agenda. Thursday evening Selectman Kidder attended the Sunapee Wastewater Treatment meeting. Friday, Selectman Kidder went on a site walk at the Bucklin Property, now the Dorr property.

Selectman Bianchi said he attended the Budget Committee meeting which went smoothly. Some discussion was had about setting a goal for increases in the tax rate. He feels it is an even split between those who do and do not want to set a goal. They discussed the Recreation van. He thought the \$15,000 the Selectmen voted to put in the Recreation Department for the van was the beginning of a fund to purchase a new van; from some of the ladies on the Recreation Commission, they seemed to want the money immediately to purchase the vehicle.

The longest discussion was about Streets and Roads. \$21,000 was trimmed from that budget coming from various line items.

The next meeting will be on January 13<sup>th</sup> and the January 6<sup>th</sup> meeting has been cancelled.

Selectman Kidder asked when the Sewer Lagoon Subcommittee would be ready with a figure for possible inclusion in the budget. Selectman Bianchi said he is waiting to hear back from Paul Currier to see if he has met with Mike Rainey from DES. He hopes to have a better idea of the future plans in January.

Approval of Minutes

November 30, 2015

**IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to approve the minutes of November 30, 2015, as amended. THE MOTION PASSED.**

December 7, 2015

**IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to approve the minutes of December 7, 2015, as amended. THE MOTION PASSED.**

Upcoming Meetings and Special Events:

- Town Offices and Public Works will be CLOSED at 1:00PM on Christmas Eve and will be closed Christmas Day and on New Year's Day.
- Next Regular Selectmen's Meeting – January 4th - 6:00 PM
- Budget Committee – Wednesday, January 13th – 6:30PM (note new time)
- Planning Board – Public Hearing – Thursday, January 14th – 6:30PM
- Conservation Commission – Wednesday, January 20th – 8:30 AM

Requests to Use Town Property

- Whipple Town Hall by Matt Moroney of 20 Washington Place, Bedford, NH 03110 on – Monday, December 21, 2015 from 5:30pm to 7:30pm (set-up starting at 1:30pm) for *Christie for President Campaign*. This is an "After the Fact" approval.

Sign Permit Application

- 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 Business

Selectman Bianchi said the library seems to be going the wrong way with the salaries, noting that at the recent Budget Committee meeting when the question was asked if the Library would go with the same raises the Selectmen give to other town employees, there was no commitment to do so, as has been the practice in the past. Ms. Hallquist reminded the Board that the Library Trustees are not required to give the same raises as the Selectmen approve for town employees; the Library Trustees are up front about this issue every year.

Selectman Kidder commented that the sudden snow on Saturday created traffic problems in the area. Ms. Hallquist agreed and noted that she got updates from Chief Lyon and Public Works Director Lee and it appears that the town response was excellent; Chief Lyon thanked Mr. Lee for the quick and

capable response by the Highway Department. Ms. Hallquist noted that the quick arrival of snow created icing resulting in Interstate 89 being closed for a short time with cars off the roadway; the diverted traffic on town roads were skidding off the roadways, keeping the Fire Department and Police Department busy while the Highway Department applied sand to the roads. No serious injuries were reported.

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary  
Town of New London