



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

August 15, 2016

6:00 PM

PRESENT:

G. William Helm, Chair
Nancy Rollins, Selectman
Janet Kidder, Selectman
Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator
Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

ALSO PRESENT:

John Wilson, New London Resident
Yari Mckee, New London Fire Department
Jason Lyon, Fire Chief
Rob Prohl, Budget Committee Chair
Lucy St. John, Planning & Zoning Administrator
Richard Lee, Public Works Director
Ed Andersen, Police Chief
Peter Bianchi, New London Resident
Jud Donaghy, New London Resident
Chandler Engle and Jeff Tucker, Engineers for Dubois & King
Scott Blewitt, Recreation Director
Leigh Bosse, *The Messenger*
Jaclyn Goddette, *Argus Champion*
John Raby, *The Intertown Record*
Bruce Hudson, Budget Committee

Chair Helm opened the meeting at 6:00pm.

Chief Lyon introduced Yari Mckee, new full-time hire in the Fire Department, who has been working for the town for the last six weeks.

Dubois & King – Chandler Engle and Jeff Tucker, Engineers

Mr. Engle showed two renderings of the alternatives the Town was interested in seeing for the Pleasant Lake Dam. Alternative #1 includes a parapet wall. He explained the details of the wall which show no significant modifications to the grassy area around the dam. Alternative #2 is an “armoring” plan which limits the visible changes to the dam. Underneath, there would be articulated concrete/granite blocks cabled together and material would be backfilled over that. The changes to the dam are significant but they are not visible. There would be more riprap in this version to prevent erosion should flows go over the dam.

Dr. Wilson asked about grouted riprap, which was mentioned at an earlier meeting. Mr. Engle said the use of this will depend on their modeling and used if it is necessary. The use of this material will likely not change the appearance as it is material that will be covered over.

Peter Bianchi asked how high the wall in Alternative 1 was. Mr. Engle said the exact height would be determined after their modeling, but the rendering shows it to be about 2' high. Mr. Bianchi suggests that Alternative 2, without the parapet wall, looks the most like the dam looks now and he was in favor of this design.

Mr. Engle said the Selectmen had asked them to put together a proposal for an IDF study and they have done this. Mr. Donaghy, who works in the field of dam engineering, said the proposal was thorough: Dubois & King staff routed the flood down five miles to where they think it would end. Dubois & King staff discussed the probability of the design being successful and what the savings would be if they could model the dam for IDF standards instead of what the state is now requiring: two-times a hundred year storm. Mr. Donaghy suggests that as much as \$200,000 could be saved by using IDF standards. He added that during this process he has learned that if the town does use the IDF process and does not fortify the dam as otherwise required, and the dam fails, the town could be exposed to lawsuits from downstream owners affected by the flood waters. Additionally, the state could change its rules or new buildings could be added to the area which would change circumstances and the town could be required to fortify the dam at a later date, bringing the town back to where we are now. For these reasons, Mr. Donaghy suggests that the Selectmen don't go down the IDF road but rather to finalize the design the Town would prefer, adding that he felt that they needed to explore the possibility because the savings would be substantial but he doesn't feel it is worth it at this point.

Mr. Engle agreed with Mr. Donaghy's recommendation not to go forward with the IDF study, as it is very expensive and may end up showing that the initial standards required by the State would have to be adhered to.

Mr. Tucker said they are working with the State Dam Safety Bureau with regards to the details of the dam which may come out to cost less than they first thought.

Selectman Kidder feels the study was comprehensive and can't imagine it would be wise to go ahead with the IDF, hoping the State would agree to their alternative standards from the \$30,000 study. Selectman Rollins agreed with Selectman Kidder's sentiment. She feels the maps were telling with regards to potential damage and would like to err on the side of caution. She feels it prudent to forego the IDF study. Chair Helm agreed and looks forward to seeing refinements and possible savings that come from their work with the dam bureau, nothing that he understands the Board can come back to the table on this later if they wish.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to accept Alternative 2 for the renovations to the Pleasant Lake Dam.

Dr. Wilson said there are two ways to protect against dam failure: build a wall higher, or allow the water to go over the top but not erode the dam. The height of the dam can change as the State recognizes other probable maximum flood events. If they armor the dam, this may be the longest-term outlook. He is in favor of Alternative 2.

THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Engle agreed that the Town is not locked into an amount for the construction of this project. He will update the Town as numbers are formulated and changed.

Public Comment

There was none.

Old Business

Employee Compensation for 2017

IT WAS MOVED (Bill Helm) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the rates of pay for Town employees shown on the August 9, 2016 spreadsheet column “BOS Recommendation Rate of Pay/hr”, which, with associated costs related to pay, which results in a total additional annual cost of approximately \$131,079.78; and establish the effective date for the rates of pay to be that date which results in a total of approximately \$80,000 additional expense in FY17.

Selectman Rollins explained that none of this work has been done lightly. From the beginning when they requested a study be done, they were looking to have salaries that would be competitive with surrounding communities and would result in fairness and equity to their employees that was the philosophy that the Board approached this process with. The Board has spent an enormous amount of time on this and have been judicious. They were looking at median, relative to the quartiles that came out in the Thornton study to get them in the competitive range, not the high end and not the low end. The work will continue and they are going to look at the entire compensation package which will include looking at the costs for insurance, vacation time, etc. They will also look to see if they are organized in the most appropriate fashion to get the job done. To that point, Selectman Rollins noted that Selectman Kidder recommended reconstituting the group she was once a part of with New London Hospital, Colby-Sawyer College, and Dartmouth Hitchcock to revisit the study and discuss the entire compensation package; Selectmen Rollins agreed with this recommendation and will contact Rob Prohl and Kim Hallquist to get this setup. They will also institute performance evaluations. Selectman Rollins concluded by noting that this comes with a lot of other residual things behind it, so she wanted to be clear with staff and with members of the public as to where the Board is headed with this process.

Chair Helm said to clarify, the Board is considering approval of the rates of pay; more discussion will carry on with regards to the pay grades and total compensation details.

Mr. Bianchi said last year the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee agreed to set aside \$80,000 for pay raises for the 2017 fiscal year. Therefore, he doesn't understand the \$130,000+ in the motion. Chair Helm said the raises come to \$131,079.78. For the fiscal year 2017, raises will be given at the amount of \$80,000; the remainder \$51,000 will impact the FY2018 budget. Mr. Bianchi questioned whether the Board could vote to commit an additional \$51,000 in the FY2018 budget. Selectman Rollins said for this fiscal year they will work with the \$80,000 to bring employees to a competitive level. Chair Helm said they will work together to determine what the total expenses of the town will be. They are now setting the rates of pay for employees to competitive rates. When the Board of Selectmen went into this study they didn't know what it was going to come out to be to get the employees to this place. Right now they know it will be \$131,000, and not just the \$80,000 that was set aside. Mr. Bianchi observed that it appears that the Selectmen have started the FY2018 budget process with this vote. Chair Helm noted that the budget process starts right after town meeting. He concluded by noting that these salary rates are what is fair to the employees, who have been underpaid for some time now.

Selectman Rollins said they are going to remain competitive. They need to look at what this means for taxpayers which is why they are going to look at things like the total compensation packages. For certain positions, the employees have not been fairly compensated. Mr. Prohl said as they look at the budget, they always need to look for ways they can reduce, that will be the tension in the system this year. Chair Helm said they need to honor their commitment to the employees to offer competitive pay to them. They have gone through this person by person in a very careful process, some were underpaid by not all were underpaid.

Mr. Hudson asked about performance evaluations. Have the evaluations been done yet? Selectman Rollins said going forward they will keep with the employee committee to look towards a more state of the art evaluation system. She noted that many compensation systems are moving away from the evaluation system as a means to determine compensation. Chair Helm said not only did they look at competitive salaries with regards to the marketplace, but consulted with Ms. Hallquist on the performance of the employees.

THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Consider Approval of Joint Use Agreement and Trail License for the Power Line Trail

Ms. Hallquist explained that the Conservation Commission has been working hard for several years with New London Hospital and Eversource on this trail that will go on New London Hospital property and goes under a power line, in part. Attorneys from the three entities have come up with a joint use agreement. There is also a trail agreement that has had some additional language added that needs to be signed. The Conservation Commission has approved this, as has Town Counsel. If the Selectmen agree that the trail should be in that area, she encouraged them to sign off on both agreements.

Ms. Hallquist noted that the Public Works Department is going to help build the trail. As soon as the Conservation Commission can get the money to build the trail, they will start construction; it is thought it will take between 12-18 months to complete.

Selectman Kidder noted some items in the agreement that need to be discussed:

#11 says "no construction" on this trail. She cautioned that foot bridges are needed so this should be resolved to make sure it is OK to do this on the trail.

Selectman Kidder asked if Eversource will continue to pay taxes on the poles (#15). Ms. Hallquist said they would. Selectman Kidder said this should be made clear.

Selectman Kidder said if the trail needs to be relocated, it would need to be done at the Town's expense. This concerns her. They will spend a lot of money to create this trail and moving it will cost even more.

Selectman Kidder noted that the word "Direction" in one instance should be "Discretion" (page2).

Selectman Kidder wonders what happens if the hospital wants the land back. Ms. Hallquist said the hospital will still own the land and can give 30 days' notice to discontinue use of the trail. This is always the way it is with any property owner who has a trail on their property.

Selectman Kidder asked if they will they need more insurance to have this trail (#6). Ms. Hallquist said they will not.

Selectman Kidder asked if the amount they are requesting to indemnify is reasonable. Ms. Hallquist said it was.

Selectman Kidder noted that the Conservation Commission is recommending the funds for the trail come from the Haddad fund. Selectman Kidder said the Recreation Commission has more questions on this; they may not be approved by the Recreation Commission until their questions are answered with regards to the funding source.

Ms. Hallquist clarified what is before the Board by noting that the documents (Joint Use Agreement and Trail Agreement) are separate from the issue of whether money from the Haddad Trust will be spent on the trails; the Recreation Commission is not involved with approving the trail license agreement or establishing a trail, only whether it will vote to use Haddad Trust funds for establishment of the trail at some point in the future. She noted that there is already a trail license between the town and hospital in place, the one before the Board now will replace the existing license as it includes language that the hospital would now like to add. The Chair announced that Selectmen will not sign off on the agreements at this time because of the concerns raised by Selectman Kidder.

1941 Building

Chair Helm reviewed the status of the 1941 building discussion by pointing out that Ms. Hallquist had met with the superintendent to discuss a possible lease and there does not seem to be opposition to continuing those discussions and moving forward with the Town and a lease of the 1941 building. Chair Helm feels they need to have a town wide review of what it is they want to do with the building and felt that the Board should commit to complete such a review in the coming months. This goes beyond talking about the 1941 building but what they want to do with arts and recreation in the Town. He suggests hiring an outside source to conduct a study to find out what the Town wants. Lucy St. John has researched and found “Plan NH” as a viable option. Chair Helm noted that during his time on the RPC he has learned that the three major initiatives the RPC sees for the Upper Valley and Lake Sunapee region for the next 10 years is: (1) health care; (2) manufacturing in Sullivan County and (3) Arts, Recreation, and Entertainment. He stressed that instead of focusing on the 1941 building alone, the Board should expand the discussion to include what is going on in the downtown area, from the college to Spring Ledge. He noted that “Plan NH” has worked with 60 other towns and he feels they could help gather a positive outcome in the town.

Ms. St. John said “Plan NH” is a nonprofit organization that works with communities, their local residents, engineers, etc to complete a charrette for the town. They don’t look at a single building, they look at the big picture and attempt to address the question: what is the community trying to accomplish? There is an application process and the community is engaged to draw interest and see what people want. She participated in one of their projects years ago and feels it is a great opportunity to bring people together to get input, concerns and ideas. It would be great to get this done before Town Meeting in March.

Chair Helm suggests that engaging the town in this discussion at this point in time would be more beneficial than bringing it up at Town Meeting and having a discussion on the floor that evening.

Selectman Rollins said Plan NH is a non-profit but their membership is professional architectural firms and builders, etc. She appreciates this and what they bring to the table. She struggles with the proposal process; she doesn’t see them being able to pull it all together in five months. The 1941 building is being swept up in a year + discussion. She feels there is a broader agenda that needs to be considered to find out where they are going. She isn’t sure what more could come out from this study that they have been working on in part over the past several years. She feels it needs much more than five months to get a product that would be meaningful to the Town. Selectman Kidder said this is how she felt when she first heard this suggestion and wonders if they could put it together quickly. Her recommendation is that Chair Helm spearhead a proposal just for the 1941 building and come back to the Board with the information for consideration, noting that she felt that whatever is proposed to the town should be voted on by the people.

Mr. Prohl shares the concerns with Selectman Rollins. Also, the school district still owns the building and we need to make sure they are still with us on our plans. Chair Helm said there seems to be support on behalf of the School Board.

Mr. Bianchi agrees with Selectmen Rollins and Kidder. He asked if they would they still be looking for a charrette from “Plan NH” today if the 1941 building had been torn down as this has not been something the Town has wanted in the past. Chair Helm observed that they always need a catalyst to get something going. Ms. St. John said even if the building wasn’t there, she feels it would be a good opportunity for the Town to bring their long-range plans together to figure out where they should go. From a planning perspective she feels it would be a worthwhile effort to consider.

Selectman Rollins suggests that Selectman Kidder go to the Planning Board with Ms. St. John to express this idea for the future to look at the broader view. Chair Helm will follow-up as recommended by Selectman Kidder and report back to the Board.

Consider FY2016 Transfer Appropriation for Additional Bandstand Repairs of \$19,000

Ms. Johnson said the funds could come from FY2016 Operating Budget or the Capital Reserve Fund for Buildings. Selectmen Rollins and Kidder feel it should come from the Capital Reserve Buildings Fund.

Mr. Bianchi questioned how the Board could encumber the money for the repairs without specifically saying where in the operating budget the funds would come from. Ms. Johnson noted that these funds will not be encumbered as they have already been spent within the FY2016 budget period.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to take \$19,000 for repairs to the bandstand from the Capital Reserve Buildings Fund. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

New Business

NHMA – Legislative Policy Discussion

Selectman Rollins said the policies will be voted on in September. She asked if there were any comments on the 11 pages of policies. There were none. Selectman Rollins will report back to the Town on how the voting goes.

Discuss August 17th Meeting with New Colby-Sawyer College President

Chair Helm said he feels they should have some points of discussion ready. He feels the sidewalk issue should be discussed, as well as the position of the college in the town, the zero sort program (which the college has been using) and the desire to have a positive ongoing relationship with the college, cooperation between law enforcement, fire department. Selectman Kidder suggesting adding a discussion of students and off-campus residences and parties, and also students walking off-campus wearing non-reflective clothing at night which is dangerous.

Consider 2015 Abatement Request Recommendations by Norm Bernaiche, Chief Assessor

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the abatement requests from Norm Bernaiche, as written. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Abatement of sewer charges request by Novak Family

Ms. Hallquist explained that the property owner requested an abatement of their sewer bill saying that their hose was left on when they went away on vacation. The town bills the sewer charges based on what is used for water. Richard Lee, Public Works Director, agrees the amount of water used (174,000 gallons) far exceeded their usual usage of 45,000 gallons. He recommends abating half of the overage, which is \$1,239.37. Mr. Lee observed that there is no proof how the overage of water occurred (whether it went into the sewer system or whether it just rain on the ground) and observed that some responsibility has to be assumed by the owner.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to accept the proposal by Richard Lee to abate half the sewer cost for the Novaks. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Appoint John Manaras to the Solid Waste Committee

It was noted that at the last non-resident taxpayer meeting, non-resident John Manaras expressed interest in being appointed to the Solid Waste Committee.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to appoint John Manaras to the Solid Waste Committee. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Town Administrator's Report – Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator

Ms. Hallquist reported that the 92nd Hospital Days were a success and was well-run/maintained. She also added that the Syd Crook Conference Room is now open; the mapping project is on its way. The numerous plans from town properties have been scanned and are in the possession of Cartographics.

Ms. Hallquist explained that sometime on or before August 5th, the Pleasant Lake Dam gate malfunctioned. It will continue to be manually operated until it can be repaired. Given the low level of the lake, it will likely remain closed for some time.

Ms. Hallquist reported that Charlie Hanson of Resource Management (RMI) said the sludge from the lagoon came back with low numbers, meeting criteria for beneficial use. Once DES approves the tests, RMI will work with Richard Lee to talk about mixing the material so it can be reused.

With regards to employee tuition reimbursement, Ms. Hallquist anticipates that two employees will ask to take advantage of this benefit in FY17. The personnel policy allows for employees to take two classes per year with a maximum cost of \$1,000 per class, assuming a final grade of 3.7 to 4.0. For FY 2017 the account has just \$100 in it. This account has decreased dramatically over time. The amount budgeted in 2009 was \$10,000. The Board of Selectmen can grant the requests if money is transferred from another account. If applications are submitted, the issue will be brought to the Selectmen for a decision on a transfer of funds.

Ms. Hallquist said a Pressey Court resident expressed concerns about how dangerous it can be to exit Pressey Court onto Main Street due to the cars parked along Main Street. She has discussed this with Chief Andersen and Richard Lee they plan to look at the parking areas in town to see how parking should be modified; Chief Lyon will be included on the tour as well. Mr. Lee did put up a sign asking people not to park right up to the corner of the Pressey Court intersection to help the situation during this review.

Chair Helm asked about the “no parking” signs on Main Street that were put up at the houses near the Barn Playhouse. Chief Andersen said they are there to prohibit people from blocking residents in their homes, which had been happening during show times. The same signs have been put up on Pressey Court.

Ms. Hallquist said the Clark Lookout purchase is almost complete. The annexation has been approved by the Planning Board and the AG has agreed to the conservation easement amendment that will include the newly purchased land. .

Ms. Hallquist submitted a proposed budget schedule to the Selectmen outlining dates for the FY2018 budget review. The Board agreed to the dates as submitted.

Meeting Updates & Reports

Recreation

Selectman Kidder said the Recreation Commission met on August 2nd. Mark Vernon of the Conservation Commission and a representative from New London Hospital were present to talk about the proposed powerline trail. The Recreation Commission has questions about this. Mr. Blewitt is getting a landscaping proposal for Bucklin to see if there is anything that can be done to repair some erosion. The Elkins parking lot has been paved. A member of the Recreation Commission is looking into the cost for a fence for the ice skating rink. Selectman Rollins asked about the possibility of using the land behind the 1941 building for a hockey rink. Selectman Kidder said there is still some discussion to be had on this and Scott will work with the Outing Club on this.

Mr. Lee asked about putting a hockey rink beside the generator behind the Town Office. It is close to the other rink. Fencing would still be needed. Selectman Kidder noted that this option could be discussed by the recreation Commission as well.

Planning Board

Selectman Kidder said Mr. Lee took them on a tour of the areas of the town that will need repairs/updates in the future. They looked at the lagoons, the railing in Elkins, Brookside Drive bridge, Otterville bridge, and the Pleasant Street bridge. On the 9th of August the Planning Board met and approved the Stahlman building site plan with conditions. They approved the addition of offices for LSRVNA. They heard a conceptual discussion for a business located across from the cleaners on Newport Road. They also heard a conceptual discussion for the Edgewood Inn, which is a medical spa over Peter Christian's Tavern.

Regional Planning Commission

Chair Helm said there was discussion on how to cover \$59,000 and a surtax on the towns was brought up. This was not a popular choice and this will be a major issue.

Review of Meeting Minutes

July 27, 2016

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes of July 27, 2016, as circulated. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

August 1, 2016

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes of August 1, 2016, as circulated. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Upcoming Meetings and Special Events

- Next Regular Selectmen's Meeting – Wednesday, September 7th - 6:00 PM
- **Town Offices CLOSED on Monday, September 5th – Labor Day**
- Recreation Commission – Tuesday, September 6th – 5:00 PM – Whipple Town Hall
- Planning Board – Tuesday, September 20th - 6:30PM
- Conservation Commission – Wednesday, September 17th – 8:30 AM

NH Primary Assignments

Helm – 7am – 12pm

Kidder – 12pm – 4pm

Rollins - 4pm – 7pm

Signatures

- 2015 Tax Abatement Requests x 4 for August 15, 2016
- 2016 Tax Exempt Properties x 16 for tax year 2015
- Investment Policy, Town of New London, August 2016
- Disbursement and Pay Authorization Voucher dated 8/15/16 by Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer
- Pay Authorization Voucher dated 8/15/16 by Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

Approved Building Permits

- Dennis & Elaine Lambert - Trustee, 1667 King Hill Road. TM 128-002-000. Build 12' x 20' (240SF) shed. BP# 16-090 **APPROVED 8/11/16.**
- Rebecca Evans, Oakmont Road, TM 094-004-000. New 3 bedroom, 2 car garage house. BP# 16-091 **APPROVED 8/11/16.**
- Paul & Marcia Kayle, 14 Conifer Lane, TM 045-027-002. Adding 14'x14' deck. BP# 16-092 **APPROVED 8/11/16.**
- Bob & Paula Minaert, 144 Barrett Road, TM 084-036-000. Installation of 29 solar electric rooftop panels. BP# 16-094 **APPROVED 8/12/16.**

- Waldemar & Elzbieta Fryckowski, 45 Little Sunapee Road, TM 060-004-000. Extension of Building Permit 15-086. **APPROVED 8/12/16.**

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to enter nonpublic session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a), the compensation of any public employee.

Roll call vote: Kidder: yes, Rollins: yes, Helm: yes

The Board entered nonpublic session at 7:50 PM

The Board returned to the public session at 8:06PM

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to seal the minutes pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, III.

**IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to adjourn.
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:06PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London