



# TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES September 19, 2016 6:00 PM

### **PRESENT:**

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

### **ALSO PRESENT:**

Mark Kaplan, New London Resident  
Jason Lyon, Fire Chief  
Steve Ensign, Chair, Board of Firewards  
Rob Prohl, Budget Committee Chair  
Phyllis Piotrow, Budget Committee Member  
Lyndsay Lund, Budget Committee Member  
Ed Andersen, Police Chief  
Jaclyn Goddette, *Argus Champion*  
John Raby, *Intertown Record*  
Bruce Hudson, Budget Committee  
Renate Kannler, New London Resident

Chair Helm opened the meeting at 6:00pm.

### Public Comments

There were none.

### 1941 Building Report

Chair Helm began his report on the 1941 building by explaining that at the last meeting he was asked by his colleagues on the Board for an update on the 1941 Building. He reported that he and Town Administrator Hallquist attended a School Board meeting last Thursday evening; it was a joint meeting with the Municipal Budget Committee (MBC). Chair Helm summarized the meeting:

There was a discussion of their budget, and under the capital budget there was a discussion of the Kearsarge Learning Center; that part of the old middle school beyond the school and the SAU offices that includes the old library, cafeteria and 1941 building. The administration has proposed to put \$130,000 in the 2017/2018 capital budget to demolish the 1941 building. They

are also putting in \$20,000 for “cafeteria area clean-up” which does not include public toilets or other upgrades which they believe will cost about \$250,000 or twice the cost of the demolition. There was an extended discussion of the 1941 building with questions coming from the MBC: the asbestos has been removed from the 1941 building at a cost of \$25,000; the roof over the middle area of the building was replaced at a cost of \$100,000; the area under the gym is so moldy that breathing apparatus is needed. There was a discussion of what would be done with the \$130,000 if the building is not demolished – there was a clear desire on the part of the MBC not to spend the \$130,000 on other needs without a clear plan being in place.

Chair Helm continued by noting that Superintendent Feneberg discussed the concept of a professional development center for the cafeteria for 100-150 people. There has been no engineering yet, and the funds will likely not be considered until the 2018/2019 budget. Superintendent Feneberg’s vision is probably 2-3 years out. The Superintendent made it clear that the District has no use for the 1941 building. At this point Chair Helm and Ms. Hallquist left the meeting and had a brief discussion in the hallway with Facilities Subcommittee members Andrew Pinard (Bradford) and Emilio Cancio-Bello (Sutton) who stressed that they would never be in favor of any plan to allow New London to use the 1941 building and even if the School Board did vote to allow New London to use the 1941 building, that any such use would have to be after 3pm, when school lets out each day, as the Outing Club is similarly restricted. These two School Board members stressed that they do not want the full Board to vote on whether the School Board will lease the building to New London until New London votes at Town Meeting on whether they want the building.

Rob Prohl suggested that going to Town Meeting without knowing if the School Board would agree to a long-term lease could present a problem. Chair Helm agreed that this could be an issue. Mark Kaplan noted that it is important to remember that these two Board members are part of the Facilities Subcommittee not the full School Board. Chair Helm agreed and noted that there was a vote last spring by the Facilities Committee to recommend to the School Board to demolish the building and to cease all discussions with the Town; that recommendation failed 4-4 by the School Board. Chair Helm noted that he has heard informally that there may not be 5 votes to agree to enter into a lease.

Chair Helm read from his prepared notes:

#### 1941 Building Status

1. Reason(s) for Town interest: need for additional space for municipal purposes identified in CIP process; existing building in excellent location with historical value
2. Demolition of building by KRSD delayed until March 2017 at earliest
3. KRSD continues to be reluctant to retain building for Town use and has not agreed to lease or sale of site to the Town:
  - Town can continue to develop a proposal to be considered by Town voters at 2017 Town Meeting without KRSD agreement on transfer of control (lease)
  - Town could ask KRSD Board for a vote on possible lease prior to Town Meeting, but such vote is likely to be defeated

### Review of Town needs

1. Agreement on importance of vacating Recreation use from Whipple/Buker to allow for Police/Dispatch use of Buker space, to provide appropriate facility for Recreation use, and to focus on future uses of Whipple prior to refurbishing Whipple.
2. Identified Town space needs:
  - a. Recreation Department: offices and programs (see Appendix A to June 2016 proposal for “Wellness Center”). In addition, note requests for gym and ice facilities.
  - b. Meeting space adequate for larger groups than Crook Room.
  - c. Consolidation of Emergency Management equipment and possible space for shelter.
  - d. Storage: records, archives, equipment.
  - e. Election site.
3. Possible solutions identified (in central location with adequate parking possible):
  - a. 1941 Building/site
  - b. Old Middle School cafeteria and library
  - c. Outing Club site on Parkside Road
  - d. Pleasant Street land acquired by Town in 2016
  - e. New site to be identified/acquired

### Action

- a. Reaffirm desire to take 1941 proposal to Town Meeting, or not
- b. With or without affirmation re 1941, consider interest in working with KRSD on cooperative use of old cafeteria and library
- c. If do not reaffirm 1941 plan, consider possible options

Selectman Rollins, referring the document handed out by Chair Helm, noted that she is confused about the town space needs as identified at #2, a-e and the list of possible solutions identified at #3 a-e and questioned whether the all of the needs could be met by a single solution. Chair Helm noted that that was not his intention; if the 1941 site could not be used, those needs would have to be met by several different pieces of the solutions listed. Chair Helm asked his colleagues whether they are still on Board to bring this issue to the Town Meeting.

Selectman Rollins appreciated the work and commitment demonstrated by many on this topic, and the feelings behind it. She noted that she is concerned that there is still no solid proposal for what the Town would use the 1941 building for. She pointed out that there is no financial sustainability in place for the operation of the building; she would be concerned that not only would the Town need the capital expenditure to renovate the building, operating expenses would need to be considered, including personnel to coordinate the use of the building and someone to maintain it. Select Rollins observed that having listened to the School Department on this issue, she agrees with them that since the 1941 building is attached to the SAU Office and it is in proximity to the elementary school that it poses a safety issue because the School cannot assume its responsibility of *in loco parentis* because they would have no control over who comes and goes in that building, and even if the town simulated what the Outing Club does by using the

property after school hours, that would put further limitation on the town's plans to use the building. She concluded that for those reasons she is not in favor of pursuing the 1941 building, however she is in favor of pursuing getting an agreement with the School District to use other space in the building to move the town's Recreation Department and also to work with the Outing Club to use the back fields for recreational uses. Selectman Rollins also suggested that making the front entire area a parking lot would not be desirable, but instead having a plan to incorporate the necessary parking in a way that would fit in with the area. She also suggested adding basketball courts as currently the town has no basketball courts. Selectman Rollins concluded by noting further discussion on the other town needs should be held.

Selectman Kidder noted that she was recently in Chatham, MA and viewed a former school building that is twice the size of the 1941 building. The building was renovated and is being used by those residents very effectively. She feels strongly that if the building is torn down without the voters of New London having an opportunity to say whether they want to spend the money to renovate it and repurpose the building will cause problems. She also noted that she did not think it a problem to go to Town Meeting without a firm commitment from the School Board on the lease issue. If the voters say yes to the lease and the amount needed to renovate the building, and the School Board votes to demolish it anyway, then there will likely be some hard feelings. Selectman Rollins asked if the school in Chatham was free standing; Selectman Kidder confirmed that it is.

Mr. Prohl suggested that the Selectmen should bring a proposal to the School Board before Town Meeting so that voters would know what they are voting on and know that the School Board would approve it. Phyllis Piotrow suggested that the roles of the Recreation Department and Outing Club are crucial to this discussion and suggested that the Recreation Commission should submit specifics on what they need and how the 1941 building would address those needs.

Mark Kaplan suggested that going to the voters before hearing from the School Board is the best way to go. He noted that the Town would be in a better position if the voters say they want it and will pay for it, the School Board would be in a difficult position to say no. He stressed that the School Board continually points out that in the past, the Town hasn't had a vote from Town Meeting with the money needed before going to the School Board.

Lyndsay Lund noted that she agrees with Selectman Kidder and she feels that the town should continue on in trying to get the building. She pointed out that she is frustrated with the position of the two of the School Board members that serve on the Facilities Subcommittee. Turning to the issue of the Recreation Department needs, she noted that the Recreation Department has the need for more space. She stressed that the Recreation Department and Outing Club are two different organizations and should not be lumped together – both organizations have programming that they operate, but they are two separate organizations. She noted that the Outing Club has not indicated an interest in interacting with the Recreation Department. Ms. Lund pointed out that the Outing Club doesn't need to interact with the Recreation Department as they can operate their programs with their existing facilities.

Chair Helm concluded by noting that he is troubled by where the Board is at this time in the process, but he is not ready to quit. He noted that Selectman Rollins has raised some very strong

points and he feels that more discussions are needed with the School Administration regarding their ideas for a conceptual plan for other areas for possible cooperation to meet some of the town's needs. He suggested one month more to investigate further and to report back to the Board. Selectman Rollins noted that there are two different conversations: the first, that she fully supports, is the continued discussion with the SAU on the renovation of the cafeteria and other areas for possible use by the town and Recreation Department offices and a separate discussion is the 1941 building.

Selectman Kidder noted that she felt that the issue will never be laid to rest if the voters don't get a chance to have a say in this and the only way to do that is to put it on the warrant for a vote in March. Mark Kaplan asked for confirmation that the Town could go to a bank for funding if the Town vote was conditional on first getting a lease from the School Board. Chair Helm noted that if the vote passed, the Board would seek bids from banks on terms to borrow the money so voted. Rob Prohl noted that he felt that there is a major issue that is not being discussed and that is where the 1941 building fits in the town's priorities. He stressed that the Town has not had the discussion yet as to what needs the 1941 building it will serve and are people in favor of spending the money. Chair Helm noted that the committee of Mark Kaplan and Doug Lyon did that when they offered the information on the Wellness Center, a skeleton plan, on how the town could use the building. Mr. Prohl asked if that was a higher priority than the transfer station or other projects. Ms. Lund pointed out that acquiring the building is the most economical way to get the amount of space it offers because the building is already built.

Ms. Lund suggested that that there will be upset people if the building is taken down and made a parking lot. She pointed out that she is on the school property often and does NOT see an issue with the parking. Selectman Rollins noted that she believed parking could be designed in such a way to make it look good, however there is still the issue of the building being attached to the school and the safety issues presented. Ms. Lund noted that she did not see it as a safety concern.

Chair Helm noted that he would take the next 3 to 4 weeks to solidify his position on this matter.

Phyllis Piotrow noted that there should be a stronger proposal for the use of the building and the Recreation Commission should come forth with more specifics on their proposed uses. Chair Helm suggested that it was not all on the shoulders of the Recreation Commission. She agreed but she did not see much support for the Wellness Center and felt that the Recreation Department and others should strengthen their proposals. Ms. Lund suggested that it should be called a municipal building or community center if wellness center is not palatable.

Selectman Rollins noted that for a town of this size, she thinks that the Recreation Commission should be able to have a conversation and needs to have a conversation with the Outing Club, to be in synch and to have some kind of partnership and to say that the Outing Club doesn't want to work with the town is untenable, for such a small town. She observed that it is likely that children participate in both Recreation and Outing Club activities and it would be beneficial for the two groups to work together. Ms. Lund agreed and noted that her children participate in programs with both organizations, however the Outing Club, at least at this time, has not been interested in working with the town's Recreation Department.

Steve Ensign noted that someone needs to go first and he advocated a vote at Town Meeting authorizing the Selectmen to negotiate the lease with the School Board. He felt with a positive vote from the Town, the School Board may have a different feeling about it.

Chair Helm, noting that he is now following up the issue of the 1941 building on behalf of the Board, proposed disbanding the subcommittee of Mr. Lyon and Mr. Kaplan.

**IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to disband the Selectmen's Subcommittee on the 1941 Building. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Chair Helm noted that he would report back to the Board on October 17<sup>th</sup>, he suggested Ms. Lund discuss this issue with the Recreation Commission at its next meeting, she agreed.

#### FY2018 Budget

Chair Helm asked for clarification as to how salaries are to be presented in the upcoming budget; he asked if the Department Heads recommend salaries for their employees or does the Town Administrator recommend salary increases. Ms. Hallquist noted that in the past she would recommend across the board increases and then more recently she has asked the Department Heads to offer salary recommendations when they felt that either their staff, or their own, salaries needed attention. She asked for direction as to how the Board would like to see salary discussions this year. Chair Helm noted that he would not like to see anything over the \$50,000 imbedded in the budget as he does not think the discussion of how the Board will proceed with compensation going forward has been completed. He wanted to see the salaries uncoupled from the rest of the budget. Selectman Rollins agreed and noted that she would like to see the Board address the \$50,000 and finish the work relative to the salary levels and thinks that the Board should forgo in the next calendar year any across the board increases or expectations from staff; noting that the Board needs to finish the work it set out to do with the salary study to get the Town to a competitive baseline and continue the discussion relative to future years what that will look like: steps or other kinds of things that people may want to bring to the Board's attention, as well as looking at the full compensation package. Selectman Kidder concurred.

Chief Andersen asked if the Board was saying the next budget cycle would flat-line salary increases, pointing out that if that is the case, he felt that the progress made with the recent adjustments would stall for a full year. Chair Helm disagreed that flat-lining salaries was what is being proposed, and noted that if there is a compelling reason, the department head should come forward with it, but do not include that in the budget that will be submitted soon. The Board is not shutting the door, but there needs to be a compelling reason; there won't be across the Board raises. Chair Helm noted that there may be a compelling reason for all employees to get a raise, he doesn't know at his point. Chief Andersen cautioned the Board that discussions to hold the line will look like stalling to some employees and to older employees it will look like what happened the last time a salary study was done. He stressed that he understands how hard the Board worked on the salary study but observed that he felt that some of police officers will look to other agencies if there is a feeling that the salary issue does not go forward. Chair Helm noted that Selectman Rollins is working on all aspects of the compensation package and the

Board only said not to include across the Board increases, but the Board is not closing the door on increases in the upcoming budget.

Steve Ensign, Chair of the Firewards, asked if the median is the current goal. The Board confirmed that it is. Mr. Ensign noted that the Firewards look at Chief Lyon's salary at the median and confirmed that his salary would be set for the remaining year and questioned if that salary will be included in the budget. The Board agreed that that was the proper way to present the budget, with the salary recently approved by the Board effective in November included. Selectman Rollins noted that the Board can't say right now how raises will be determined in the future, that is still under consideration and discussion. Chair Helm noted that Selectman Rollins has been assigned that task on behalf of the Board. Mr. Ensign observed that the salary issue is truly a work in progress. Selectman Rollins elaborated her position by noting that governments sometimes say that there will be no increases in a particular year, and noted that social security is flat-lined; she felt that the Board has to look at the entire picture: the entire employee salary and compensation package and the burden on the taxpayer, stressing that it is a balancing act. Selectman Rollins noted that the Board must be thoughtful in this process and fair. She noted that the work already done, raising the base and getting people to the median, is substantial.

Ms. Hallquist asked if the position of the Board is that they do not want to see across the board raises or individual increases within the budget requests or during the presentation of budget presentations. The Board agreed. Chair Helm asked that the discussion of the consideration of the proposed pay grades as presented in the study be discussed at the next meeting. Chair Helm asked Selectman Rollins to be prepared to speak to the issue of steps as recommended by Chief Andersen. She agreed and noted that she is waiting for information from Chief Andersen on what he is recommending. (When Chief Andersen re-entered the meeting room, Selectman Rollins asked him to submit his proposal on a step plan if he had one).

#### Consider list of encumbrances

Wendy Johnson explained that the list includes items that were purchased but not paid for prior to the end of FY2016, June 30<sup>th</sup>. The total is approximately \$53,000. Chair Helm noted that the largest amount was the street light conversion project.

**IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to approve the list of encumbrances as presented. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### Town Administrator's Report:

1. *Salt & Sand shed at Public Works* – Work has begun on this project and should be completed in October.
2. *Purchase of Clark Lookout access road and land*– From Big Hilltop, LLC , town is awaiting signed paperwork from the sellers. Town counsel has the town's signed docs and \$300,000 to close on the deal.
3. *Street light conversion project:* The LED street lights will start to go up this week, and should, weather permitting, be installed by the end of this month.

4. *Whipple Cupola* – Arch Weathers reports that more work than he anticipated needs to be done, so he has rescheduled his surgery until December so that he can finish up the work by the end of October.
5. *Hospital Days 2016 wrap-up meeting*: Was held on Friday and all in attendance feel that hospital days was a great success – none of the town departments participating had any issues. The hospital very much appreciates all of the groups that come together to make it happen.
6. *Sewer lagoons*: Dennis Thompson was contacted about the Board’s decision to commit up to \$3,000 for work on the buried lagoon this fall. Dennis agreed that using town equipment and staff to do the excavation would save money. He will arrange the date with Richard and Charley Hanson.
7. *Budget workshop*: Ms. Hallquist and Ms. Johnson will attend the budget workshop on September 27th in Bartlett, along with Budget Committee member Lyndsay Lund. Selectman Rollins will be attending the Manchester workshop the following day (Tuesday). There will be an in-house budget workshop for budget committee members on Saturday, November 12th. Selectmen are invited to attend as well.
8. *Budget requests*: Will be available to the Selectmen and Budget Committee by the end of the day on Friday.
9. *Auditors in Town today* – Selectmen should feel free to stop by and meet them and ask any questions they may have. Ms. Johnson noted that they are beginning their review of internal controls and starting tomorrow will have the full group of auditors.
10. *Municipal Matters* – Staff published an issue today, it is on the town website now and will be emailed to the group list tomorrow.
11. *Crossing guards at Pleasant Street and Main and at Parkside and Main*: Selectman Kidder has been contacted by parents asking for guards at each location, in the morning and afternoon. Chief Andersen has a difficult time ensuring that an officer can do it each day both morning and evening, so we wonder if the Board would like to hire a person who can be trained to do it on a routine basis. Ms. Hallquist questioned what the Board would like to do to address this issue. Chief Andersen explained that the timing of the crossing occurs during the change of shifts for the police officers, which is difficult as the incoming officer needs to hear from the outgoing officer what happened on the shift. He suggested that the best way to handle the issue would be to hire someone like Sunapee does for their crossing guard. Ms. Lund noted that it is a 30 minute window in the morning for actual crossing. Chief Andersen could schedule an officer to come in a half hour early at overtime rates to be there when needed, if necessary. Chair Helm noted he would be interested in knowing what the head count is, pointing out that if there is zero, then a person should not be paid to be there. Chief Andersen noted that the School District would like to have an officer present to help the school buses get onto Main Street. Ms. Lund noted that it is not necessarily a pedestrian issue, it’s a vehicle issue. She noted that at Parkside with the buses trying to come out and the kids trying to cross to Parkside, she has seen kids dashing across the street. Chief Andersen stressed that his officers are not complaining about the duty, they enjoy interacting with the kids, it is more about timing at shift change and the need to pass on information. Chair Helm suggested that Chief Andersen look into options and report back.

Committee Meetings:

Selectman Rollins reported that the Budget Committee held an organizational meeting, set dates for meetings and for members to meet with various department heads.

Chair Helm noted that the inauguration of the new Colby-Sawyer President will be on October 14<sup>th</sup> and he has been asked to speak at it.

Review of Minutes of September 7, 2016

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes of September 7, 2016 as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Upcoming Meetings and Special Events:

- Next Regular Selectmen's Meeting – Monday, October 3rd - 6:00 PM
- Joint Meeting of the New London-Sunapee Sewer Meeting – Thursday, September 29<sup>th</sup> in Sunapee at 5:30 PM
- Planning Board – Tuesday, September 20th - 6:30PM
- Conservation Commission – Wednesday, September 21st – 8:30 AM- Lake Sunapee Bank Community Room – Newport Road
- Recreation Commission – Tuesday, October 4th – 5:00 PM – Whipple Town Hall

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to enter into non-public session to discuss a personnel issue pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a).**

**Roll call vote: Helm: Yes; Kidder: Yes; Rollins: Yes.**

The Board entered nonpublic session at 7:28pm

The Board returned to the public session at 7:55pm

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

Items to be signed

- Raffle Permit for Charitable Organization by Michael Gelcius for the Elkins Fish and Game Club at Wilmot Public Library on Sept. 6, 2017. To generate funds for the Club's charitable projects.
- Raffle Permit for Charitable Organization by Michael Gelcius for the Elkins Fish and Game Club at Wilmot Public Library on October 4, 2017. To generate funds to provide sponsorships to Barry Conservation Camp.
- Raffle Permit for Charitable Organization by Michael Gelcius for the Elkins Fish and Game Club at Wilmot Public Library on October 4, 2017. To generate funds for the Club's charitable projects.
- Pay Authorization Voucher dated 9/19/16 by Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer
- Employee Birthday Cards

Requests to Use Town Property

- Town Common by Sue Jaggard for NL Garden Club – Antique Show, on Thursday to Sunday, July 20 to 23, 2017 from 6:00am to 5:00pm. AND Sydney Crook Conference Room on Saturday, July 22, 2017.
- Whipple Memorial Town Hall by Patricia Rodgers of 28 Hilltop Place for the League of Women Voters on October 27, 2016 from 6 to 9 PM.

Approved Building Permits

- Ruth Littlefield & Robert Pugliese, 373 Pleasant Street, TM 061-005-000. Build 140 sq. ft. garden shed. BP# 16-097 **APPROVED 9/14/16.**
- Simply White/Fernanda Bourlot Trustee of 38 County Road, TM 059-019-000. Renovate existing garage & existing breezeway. BP# 16-106. **APPROVED 9/7/16**

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Hallquist  
Town Administrator