



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES August 27, 2012

PRESENT:

Peter Bianchi, Chair
Tina Helm, Selectman
Janet Kidder, Selectman
Kimberly Hallquist, Town Administrator
Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

ALSO PRESENT:

Doug MacMichael, New London Resident
Jim Wheeler, Budget Committee Chair

Chair Bianchi called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Budget Committee Proposed Schedule of Meetings – Jim Wheeler

Mr. Wheeler said that this year they would like to hold their meetings on Wednesday nights to keep from conflicts with the Board of Selectmen's meetings on Monday nights. Additionally, he would like to get more work done quicker by having one meeting each week in February. There would be no meetings in March as that is typically a vacation month for many people. There is one meeting date in April (the 3rd). The public hearing will be held on April 9th and if needed, a second could occur on the 11th. These dates were set to so they would comply with the deadlines as set forth by state statute.

Mr. Wheeler said that he would like to receive the Board of Selectmen's budget by January 16th, which is about a week later than last year. The Budget Committee has until April 24th to hand over the budget to the Board of Selectmen. May 15th is the date of Town Meeting (elections are on May 14th).

Ms. Helm said she struggled with the January deadline and wanted to propose an alternative. She pointed out that they won't have 6-month actuals until January. If they do the majority of their deliberation in October, November, and December, the figures may need to be changed during the process. She proposed pushing the date the Selectmen hand over their budget to February 11th. She didn't feel the Budget Committee should take the whole month of March off as it is the prime time when the Budget Committee has to do its work and there should be at least one meeting scheduled during that month. Chair Wheeler said he would like to try not having a meeting in March and wanted to complete the budget in four weeks. Ms. Helm said that this schedule puts a lot of pressure on the Board of Selectmen. She was worried that they would not be working with as many facts and actuals to complete their work by January 16th. Mr. Wheeler said that Ms. Johnson could run off actuals as of November and they can project what the next month would be using past budget information. Ms. Helm said that as elected officials, she felt it was wrong not to meet for an entire month. She asked if Mr. Wheeler knew if many of the Budget Committee members would be away during March. Mr. Wheeler said he didn't know of anyone who was going away, but thought this schedule might allow for people to go away if they wished during that time.

Chair Bianchi said that there are always changes that need to be made to the budget as they are going through the budgeting process due to not having the actuals. He didn't feel it was a big problem.

Mr. Wheeler said the primary reason he'd like to try this schedule is because he'd like to try and keep the Budget Committee focused for a month so that they can get the budget done in 30 days. In past years, several weeks would pass between meetings and it seemed as though the committee wasn't as focused.

Ms. Helm said that the Board of Selectmen could still hand in their budget a little later if the Budget Committee was willing to hold a meeting in the beginning of March. Mr. Wheeler said that he would be away on January 23rd but that they could present the budget to the Budget Committee at that time, which would give one week more. Ms. Johnson said that this change would help her as she would be gone during the week of January 7th. That one extra week would be helpful to her as she has a lot of work to do to pull the budget together.

It was decided that the Selectmen would present their budget to the Budget Committee on Wednesday, January 23rd. Chair Bianchi said that the Board of Selectmen set their schedule and the Budget Committee sets theirs. Ms. Helm said she would like to invite the members of the Budget Committee who would be interested, to come to the Board of Selectmen's deliberative meetings. She felt there was value in those members hearing what brings the selectmen to certain decisions. Mr. Wheeler said that if Budget Committee members are invited and come to the meetings, they are opening up the ability for discussion from Budget Committee members. Ms. Helm said that last year she felt that Budget Committee members were staying away on purpose and she felt that when coming up with an appropriate budget for their small town, they could certainly come together. She said that she was cognizant about taking time from their department heads, especially Ms. Hallquist and Ms. Johnson, and thought it would be best to consolidate the efforts. Chair Bianchi said that the Budget Committee is intended to serve as a second set of eyes to come up with a fair budget for the town. Mr. Wheeler and Ms. Helm agreed with this remark.

Ms. Kidder and Chair Bianchi said they had no problem with Budget Committee members attending the meetings. Chair Bianchi said that it will still be the Board of Selectmen's budget. Ms. Helm thought perhaps this would help cut down on the time needed to be spent with the department heads between the selectmen and the Budget Committee. Chair Bianchi thought that having the Budget Committee members there could set them up for bad feelings if their suggestions are not taken by the Board of Selectmen at their meetings. Mr. Wheeler and Ms. Helm disagreed and felt that the members of the Committee and Selectmen could work together. Mr. Wheeler said that when the Selectmen present their budget, he would like to hear the rationale behind the numbers as he felt this would cut down on questions later on.

Ms. Hallquist liked the idea of consolidating meetings to keep the total number of meetings at a reasonable number and having the budget process completed early to give plenty of time for publication of the annual report. Ms. Johnson had no issues with any of the planning.

Mr. Wheeler said he could have a meeting March 13th instead of April 3rd but would discuss this with the Budget Committee members to see if anyone would be away during that time. Ms. Helm felt this was the prime negotiation period and it didn't sit right with her to not have any meetings for the entire month.

Mr. Wheeler said that he and Doug Homan will serve as the two members of the Budget Committee who are assigned to collaborate, but not vote, with the Planning Board during the CIP process. He felt it was hard in the past to get the Planning Board to set the schedule and plan meetings. He observed that the Board of Selectmen will need the CIP from the Planning Board before the Budget Committee would, so he suggested that the selectmen encourage the Planning Board to begin the process soon. Tom Cottrill (Planning Board Chair) will need to schedule subcommittee meetings in November/December if the CIP is to be completed in time for the selectmen to consider it during their budget preparation. Ms. Helm said she would bring this up to Mr. Cottrill at the Planning Board meeting the following evening.

It was decided that the Board of Selectmen would present their budget to the Budget Committee on January 23rd. They would also relay the request to the Planning Board for CIP subcommittee meetings to be planned. The CIP would be requested from the Planning Board by the Board of Selectmen by December 18th. They would also need to set the date by which the Department Heads would need to submit their budgets to the Selectmen. Chair Bianchi said he felt they were lucky that the Department Heads were well-versed in the budgetary process.

Mr. Wheeler invited Ms. Kidder to accompany the subcommittees on the department head tours if she felt it would be helpful to her. Ms. Kidder agreed that this would be helpful to her. Ms. Hallquist said she would come up with a schedule of when the Department Heads could come in to meet with them. Chair Bianchi said that last year the selectmen offered the Department Heads a guideline for maximum increase in their budgets.

Approval of Minutes
August 20, 2012

IT WAS MOVED (Tina Helm) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes of August 20, 2012, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

There were a few errors identified in the minutes, which would be amended.

July 7, 2012

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Tina Helm) to approve the Citizen Advisory Committee minutes of July 7, 2012, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

There were a few errors identified in the minutes, which would be amended.

Old/Pending Business
Easement

Ms. Hallquist said she met with Andy Deegan (representing Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust) regarding the Phillips Preserve Conservation Easement discussed at the last meeting. Discussions are ongoing, and will be brought back before the Board when the issues are fully discussed.

Town Office Furnace

Ms. Hallquist said Ms. Jackman received an email from Huckleberry informing her that they will provide references but she doesn't have them yet. They have references from Partridge already. A memo was provided to the Board of Selectmen members with information that was available. There was no explanation of the BTU ranges given in the quotes, as was requested. Ms. Hallquist said that it was a complicated explanation and that an email would be coming in from Partridge with more information. It was decided that the Board of Selectmen will give the companies until the next selectmen's meeting to provide the outstanding information. They would make a decision at the next meeting on which company to go with.

New Hire for the Public Works Department

Hallquist said that Richard Lee believes that he has found the person to hire for the full-time position but there has been not definite hiring yet as she hasn't seen any paperwork or a start date. Interviews for the part-time position are continuing.

New Business

Chair Bianchi said that he got a call from a resident in Elkins who noted that there are some maintenance issues that needed attention. He said that there are bridge railings that are broken. He went down and checked them out and found it was a legitimate concern. The bridge is at the end of Sherman Street and there is an aluminum 1.5" hand rail that is broken at the base of the concrete. He thought it should be fixed. Also, across from the cove, a wooden pedestrian foot bridge that lies next to the road is still standing but very rickety. The deck is fine but it should be fixed and the hand rails are not secure. Chair Bianchi said that once they have been alerted to a deficiency like this, they should take steps to address the issue to lessen the potential liability to the town should someone were to get hurt. They need to at least have a plan put in place to address these issues.

Chair Bianchi said that the question has risen as to who fixes these types of things in the town. He feels they should have someone designated to take care of these sorts of things. He wondered if the part-time employee Mr. Lee will hire could help with these sorts of things. Ms. Hallquist said it was her impression that Mr. Lee didn't feel these sorts of things fell under his department's duties because of comments made in the past that gave him that impression. She felt there was some confusion as to who takes care of these things.

Ms. Helm summarized the discussion by noting that there are two sites in Elkins that need to be repaired sooner than later. Also, there is a question about who can be called to help when town buildings and structures need to be repaired. They have talked about a maintenance supervisor-type person in the past and felt that this should be part of the Board of Selectmen's discussion with the department heads when they go over the budget. There seems to be a need for someone of this sort who would surely have plenty of work to do. Ms. Hallquist said there should be someone who is monitoring the buildings and town grounds so that most issues are picked-up on before being alerted to these problems by citizens.

Chair Bianchi said that Mr. Lee should look into the two projects and see if he can give advice or have them repaired. Ms. Hallquist said she would ask him about the footbridge and the rail.

Town Administrator's Report

Pathways Engineering and the Elkins Project

Ms. Hallquist said she had a good meeting with Peter Goodrich, one of the owners of Pathways, and Rod Finley, PE. She noted that she was pretty frank in her discussion with them, explaining the issues the town saw with their firm. Pathways feel that the shortcomings the Town saw could be corrected if they would be allowed to hold on to the job. Ms. Hallquist told them that she would relay this information to the Board of Selectmen. The Selectmen can either standby their decision to discontinue working with Pathways or allow them to come in and plead their case to the Board directly. She said she didn't have a strong feeling either way. She noted that they answered every question or problem she brought to them during their meeting to discuss the dismissal. The owner expressed that he was appalled at being dismissed from the project as this was the very kind of project his firm excels at.

Chair Bianchi thought that Pathways had presented themselves fully but to ward off the perception that they didn't give them a fair chance, he wouldn't mind having them come in one more time. Ms. Helm agreed. She said that it was important that Ms. Hallquist and Mr. Lee feel they can work with whomever they hire. She'd like to invite them back to plead their case and the Board should listen hard to see if the questions they have are answered. She added that she felt strongly that the engineer they hire should be the one to come to the town with "what-ifs" and be the ones to ask questions. The Town shouldn't have to ask questions about things such as widening the road. The engineers should have the knowledge to guide the project.

Chair Bianchi said that Mr. Doug Homan, who is a savvy businessman, hired Pathways for a job in Lebanon and couldn't speak higher of them. Mr. Homan feels they are competent. Ms. Kidder wondered if it would be helpful to have Maureen Prohl at the meeting as well. Ms. Hallquist said she would definitely be invited to the meeting. Pathways would be invited to come in to the next Selectmen's meeting, on September 10th.

Lake Sunapee Protective Association

Ms. Hallquist said that Mark Kaplan has agreed to serve on the Lake Sunapee Protective Association (LSPA) Board, as recommended by the LSPA. Mr. Kaplan wanted to be sure that the New London Board of Selectmen agreed with this placement. The Selectmen agreed that this would be fine and gave the go-ahead for Mr. Kaplan to serve on the LSPA Board representing the Town.

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Topic

Ms. Helm said that Ms. Hallquist had mentioned earlier about being willing to give a talk on town government and she suggested a discussion of elections and voting. Ms. Kidder suggested Ms. Hallquist discuss the new Voter ID Law. Ms. Hallquist said that she could also talk about the combining of the districts. The Board agreed that voting issues would be the topic for the next CAC to be held on September 8th.

Colby-Sawyer Crosswalks

Ms. Hallquist said that a letter was received from the college requesting cross-walks on Seamans Road and on Main Street. She will have Police Chief Dave Seastrand take a look at it, as well as the parking suggestions for the exit of Hogan Center, as was sent in by a citizen. She would also alert Tom Galligan (President of Colby-Sawyer College) about how he would feel about the possible loss of parking spaces on Main Street for his input.

RPC Representative

Ms. Hallquist asked Ms. Helm to ask the Planning Board for recommendations for appointment of a representative from New London to the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission Board. The Planning Board recommends candidates and the Selectmen appoint.

Harry Snow Repeal

Ms. Hallquist said that Harry Snow file a request for a re-hearing of his Appeal of Administrative Decision before the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Mr. Snow's appeal concerns the zoning requirement limiting the occupancy of a dwelling unit to 5 unrelated people, plus "domestic servants" of any number. Town Counsel has been alerted to provide guidance.

New London-Sunapee Waste Water Treatment Inter-Municipal Agreement

Additional language is required and this is being reviewed.

Ambulance Agreement

Ms. Hallquist said that that Wednesday she will meet at New London Hospital with Sunapee and Newbury to talk to Terri LeBlanc about the ambulance agreement with regard to how the financials were arrived at and what happens should a town decide to get ambulance service elsewhere.

Upcoming Meetings and Special Events

Planning Board – Ms. Helm said that they will meet the following evening. On the agenda are three tree-cutting requests, a request for merging two lots on Pilot House Road, a Site Plan Review Waiver request for adding a 3' x 13' shed in front of the building. Additionally, a wind turbine person will come to discuss putting a wind turbine up at Colby-Sawyer College.

Board of Selectmen will meet on September 10th at 6pm.

Chair Bianchi suggested that the Board of Selectmen members take a look at town buildings while they are out and about to see if anything needs to be done. He thought the Town Office could be painted as it was showing age in some places.

Chair Bianchi felt that the proposals that will come in for the Bucklin Beach project may come in higher than what town meeting appropriated to spend on the project. Ms. Hallquist said she would provide the Selectmen a list of the contractors who were sent a request for proposals, asking them if they know of other capable contractors to add the name and the proposal information will be sent out to the contractor.

Application for Building Permit:

- Nathaniel & Melanie Cook, 71 Edmunds Road (Map & Lot 095-026-000) shed in back yard – no foundation – Permit #12-088 – Approved.

Application for use of Syd Crook Conference room:

- Adventures in Learning – Instructor meetings – 1/9, 3/20, 4/4, 6/20, 9:30-12 - Approved.
- New London Garden Club – July 27, 2013 – Approved.

Application to use New London Inn Common:

- St. Andrews Church, 52 Gould Road – Blessing of Animals, October 6th, 2012 9AM – 12 – Approved.

Application to use Town Common, Bandstand, & New London Inn Common:

- New London Garden Club – Antique show – set up 7/25/2013 – take down 7/28/2013 – Approved.

Other Items to be signed:

- Disbursement voucher

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London