



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES October 5, 2015

PRESENT:

Nancy Rollins, Chairman
Peter Bianchi, Selectman
Janet Kidder, Selectman
Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator

ALSO PRESENT:

Ed Andersen, Police Chief
John Wilson, Budget Committee Vice-Chair
John Ellis, New London resident

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

Old Business

Nobis Engineering – Sewer Lagoon Closure Plan

Selectman Bianchi said he is extremely disappointed with the engineering study submitted by Nobis Engineering. In the proposal it said Nobis would do up to three samples of the sludge in the lagoons. They didn't do any at all. The report said after discussion with DES and to keep costs low, they decided not to take any samples. He said the Town hired Nobis Engineering to do the study and they should have done the testing. In the early 80's the lagoons were pumped out, cleaned, dried out, and the dried material was brought to the Shepherd Pit. There is no sewerage in the lagoons and he feels the black sludge that has been there for 35 years is just sludge from decaying leaves and isn't sewerage. The only way to determine this for sure is by testing, which wasn't done.

Selectman Bianchi read from a 2006 letter from Peter Stanley (previous Zoning Administrator). It said that "Mike Rainy led discussion from DES expressing the need to understand the contents of the sludge from each lagoon before a closure plan could be developed. A broad spectrum analysis was necessary." Testing was done on 11/30/06 from Eastern Analytical. Another letter from DES explains the results of the sampling which said the sludge did not exceed any limits for chemicals. Selectman Bianchi noted that the town has spent \$23,000+ on a closure plan and they don't know what they are closing because they haven't tested the lagoons. In Selectman Bianchi's opinion, the costs from Nobis are based on assumptions that are completely invalid.

Selectman Bianchi added that the Town paid for a survey to be done through Nobis. After speaking with Pierre Bedard, Selectman Bianchi obtained a survey that had already been done, by Mr. Bedard, from 1997. He feels the Town paid for this same survey twice since the work done by Nobis included a survey also.

Selectman Bianchi noted that Eastern Analytical had already done the testing and when he brought this up to the representative from Nobis, she said they had that information but it was old. He feels there is no problem that has been proven. He has spoken with many people who were involved in the initial closure of the lagoons and he noted that Peter Stanley did a great job following up with the plan.

Ms. Hallquist said the town has been saving since 2008 to close the lagoons. She understands that DES has been saying that New London has to close them, which is why the account was started. Selectman Bianchi said the reason the ditches and some lagoons were closed is because that is where the active treatment took place. The three that were not closed were kept open because there was some concern about the pump that pumps waste to the Sunapee Plant; the thought that if there was a failure, the remaining lagoons would be available to hold waste until repairs could be made. Ms. Hallquist asked Selectman Bianchi if he feels the lagoons need to be closed. She noted that in her years of employment she observed Peter Stanley trying hard to get money into the capital reserve fund so her conclusion was that closure was an important goal of the Town, based on the information available to the Town, including the test results of 2006. Ms. Hallquist observed that Selectman Bianchi's comments sounds as though the lagoons are not an issue and may not need to be closed.

Selectman Kidder said the Master Plan states the lagoons should be closed by 2005 and State officials said they needed to be closed and monitored for 30 years. Her understanding is that any water in the retention ponds is considered sewage because there was sewerage in it in the past. Additionally, the State said they would do the testing to determine what kinds of materials were in it and would do it for a low cost or for free. Ms. Hallquist assumes there to be some paperwork stating the test results of the prior removal; the Town does not have this information in the files. Selectman Kidder said the State is very relieved that the Town is moving towards closing the lagoons.

Selectman Bianchi said from the letters he has read from 2007, it didn't seem to him that it was necessary to do anything at all. Ms. Hallquist said the only issue she is aware of is that the State is saying the lagoons need to be closed; not that they are leaking, affecting ground water, or are dangerous. The State wants them closed according to their rules and the voters of New London apparently want them closed as well given that they established a capital reserve fund to do so. She agrees that they need to find out exactly what is in the lagoons.

Selectman Bianchi said Nobis Engineering is going on the assumption that the lagoons have hazardous materials in them. No testing was done by them so he doesn't understand how they can present a plan. Selectman Bianchi said he doesn't see that there has been any correspondence from DES since the letter in 2007 demanding the lagoons be closed. Ms. Hallquist said nothing from DES has come saying the town doesn't need to close the lagoons. Therefore, the letter in 2007 is the last notice, explaining that it needs to be done. She said Nobis did what they felt was necessary. They said in the proposal they wanted to test but it wasn't done and the Town didn't pay for testing. Selectman Bianchi said the proposal didn't have an option for testing; it was included and there was a price indicated for it.

Mr. Ellis asked if they have DES come in and close the lagoons and later find there is a contaminant would there be a fine? The Selectmen were unsure. It was noted that the State won't close the lagoons for the Town.

Selectman Kidder said after Nobis has submitted their plan and before the closure is started, the State will do the testing for a low fee or for free. Selectman Bianchi believes the testing should come first. Why would they hire Nobis to do a closure if it isn't needed or would need to be changed depending on what is found in the lagoons by the State's testing?

Selectman Kidder suggests Nobis come back into a meeting to answer their questions. Chair Rollins said she wasn't comfortable agreeing on a closure plan if they don't know what is in the lagoons. Ms. Hallquist said she would ask Nobis and DES to come to a meeting to discuss this issue. Chair Rollins

asked that Mr. Lee (Public Works Director) also be present. Selectman Kidder suggested Peter Stanley also be asked to come share his recollection of the situation.

Mr. Wilson said the \$4,300 to do the testing pales in comparison to the other costs in the plan; they ought to know what they are getting into.

Discussion of Re-naming Dump Road

Selectman Kidder said she was opposed to renaming Dump Road as people know where it is and would be confused if they changed it. Selectman Bianchi agreed. Chair Rollins agreed and thanked Mr. Ellis for coming forward with the idea.

New Business

Possible Creation of a Lieutenant Position within the Police Department

Ms. Hallquist said Chief Andersen provided a job description for a Lieutenant position on September 3rd. Chair Rollins said she didn't require another explanation of the background and history of the position. Selectman Bianchi said things seem to be working well the way they are and he isn't interested in adding another position within pay-grade 14 which will cost the Town a lot of money. He doesn't see the need and feels the two sergeants system works well.

Chief Andersen said they had two people with 18+ year of experience acting as sergeant previously. Since Sergeant Zuger left (to become Chief in Wilmot), the positions have changed. Sergeant Keith is a road sergeant but is not someone who can be left in charge of the department; only Tom Anderson has the experience to be in charge of the department in the Chief's absence. The department has 8 full time officers. One sergeant is going to retire in 10 months. The remaining sergeants and detectives have much less experience and he is trying to prepare the town for the future. Chief Andersen said he will be looking for a new person to hire in 10 months. With the hiring bonus he had suggested, he has four good candidates already. Chief Andersen explained that law enforcement is not a career people want to get into anymore, especially with how things are going in the media. It used to be a problem of having too many good candidates and worrying you will make the right choice. The candidates are not that promising anymore. He hoped he could get someone hired in 10 months after Tom Anderson retires who can possibly be the Town's future chief. He feels Tom Anderson is doing the job of a lieutenant and deserves the position. The position is necessary for the future of the department to attract capable officers.

Selectman Kidder thinks Chief Andersen's rationale makes sense. She feels it important to fill a position with the right person. Chair Rollins feels that the organizational structure Chief Andersen has proposed is the right way to go. The chain of command is important and differentiating the positions is important. It is the right thing to do in terms of succession planning. They have an incredibly demanding and tough job and the salaries are not commensurate with the salaries in other sectors. She was in support of Chief Andersen's recommendation.

Chief Andersen affirmed to Selectman Bianchi that this is an effort to restructure the hierarchy of the department and that yes, an 8-member department needs a chief, lieutenant, sergeant and detectives. This would not be an exempt position (it would be hourly, not salary).

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to establish the position of lieutenant in the police department. THE MOTION PASSED.

Peter Bianchi abstained from the vote.

Old Business

Mr. Ellis said the previous week he requested a trash can be put in at the bus station in New London. It hadn't been done yet. He was there with a bag of trash from the station. No can was there yet but he put up a bag for trash and people used it. Ms. Hallquist said she has a meeting with the bus company soon and will be discussing the entire bus situation. Chair Rollins said she appreciates Mr. Ellis' volunteerism but would like to have a discussion with the State before they put a can up. They need to decide who will service the trash can.

Town Administrator's Report

Ms. Hallquist said the outside lights at the Academy Building were fixed Wednesday but they still need a more permanent fix. She asked if anyone had any ideas on what they would like to do with the old windows from the Academy Building when they are removed. She noted that the construction people report that they are not sure the windows can be removed without breaking them. Selectman Kidder suggested contacting Habitat for Humanity. Selectman Bianchi said it is fine with him to give them away to anyone who wanted them; otherwise the windows will be disposed of.

Ms. Hallquist said a site view of the Daley property (269 Burpee Hill Road) scheduled for 8am on Friday, October 9th would help determine how much property is disqualified from current use. It is felt that the Selectmen will be able to determine this by looking at the property themselves.

Ms. Hallquist said the engineers in Elkins (working on the Elkins project) are asking for a water truck as there is a lot of dust in the area. The dam is functioning properly and is being checked daily.

Committee Meetings & Reports

Planning Board

Selectman Kidder reported that at the last Planning Board meeting there was a tree cutting application, a lot merger, and a subdivision in Sutton (Feins) which has closer access to New London for emergency assistance. They can't get emergency access from Sutton. There was discussion of the New London Outing Club snack shack, which was eventually dealt with by the Selectmen. There was discussion of the storage container at the shopping center and a letter was sent to ask for its removal. With regards to the possible requirement to have surveys done as part of a building permit, the Planning Board members will think about it and make a recommendation.

Dispatch Meeting with Sutton

Selectman Kidder reported on the meeting with the Sutton Selectmen to discuss dispatching: Sutton is happy with the plan for the future of dispatching as presented by herself, Chief Andersen and Chief Lyon. Sutton will send a letter supporting their continued participation with New London Dispatch. A meeting with Newbury is next and will be held November 2nd which conflicted with the next scheduled New London Selectmen's meeting. She thought perhaps they could change the date of their meeting in New London. Chair Rollins said she was going to be away the entire week of November 2nd and would like to perhaps change the meeting to October 26th at 6pm.

Selectman Kidder noted that she, Chief Andersen and Chief Lyon plan to meet with Croydon and Sunapee at some point to discuss dispatching.

Upcoming meetings for the Selectmen were determined to be: October 19, 26, November 9, 16, 30 (tentative), and December 7.

It was determined that the next CAC meeting would be held on November 7th at Whipple Hall. The topic would be Recreation.

Approval of Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to approve the minutes of September 28, 2015, as circulated. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED. Selectman Kidder abstained as she was not present at the meeting.

Upcoming Meetings & Special Events

- Next Regular Selectmen's Meeting – October 19th – 6:00 PM
- Planning Board – Tuesday, October 6th – 6:30PM
- Solid Waste Committee – Thursday, October 15th – 8:30 AM – Public Works Depart.
- Conservation Commission – Wednesday, October 21st – 8:30AM

Other Business

With regards to Kim Hallquist's evaluation it was noted that Ms. Hallquist will send the forms to the Selectmen. They will then have a subsequent conversation.

Selectman Kidder asked about the removal of the vegetation around the dam, as requested by the State. Ms. Hallquist said Mr. Lee would take care of it this month.

Selectman Kidder asked about the Breeds and whether they had their building permit yet for work done to their waterfront property. Ms. Hallquist said they did not. Mr. Breed has submitted it but it hasn't been approved by the State yet.

Selectman Kidder asked about the Schimberg property and whether they had planted trees according to their planting plan, after accidentally cutting a tree within the 50' buffer. Ms. Hallquist said they will follow-up. It was supposed to be 5" diameter tree.

Selectman Kidder asked when the Selectmen should ask for RFQs (requests for proposals) for engineering work to be done on the Pleasant Lake Dam. Ms. Hallquist recommended that the RFPs be sent out once the Selectmen have approval from Town Meeting voters to spend the money on the study. Selectman Bianchi said he would like the RFQs out prior to Town Meeting.

Application for Building Permit

- R. Peter & Kathleen Bianchi, 381 Bunker Road (062-023-000) Erect new 24'X20' garage. Erect 10'X12' shed. Permit 15-106 APPROVED

Requests to Use Town Property

- Sidney Crook Conference Rm by Mary Anne D'Alton at 86 Hilltop Place for New London Bridge Club. October 5, 12, & 19, 2015 @ 12:30 pm – 3:30 pm.

Sign Permit Application

- Our Lady of Fatima R.C. Church, 724 Main Street, by Caroline Scully
Sign # 1 in front of church November 9 – 14, 2015
Sign # 2 at information booth November 9 – 14, 2015

Other Items to be Signed

- Elkins Fish & Game Club Raffle, Held at Wilmot Public Library on September 7, 2016
- Employee birthday cards

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London