



# TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES March 24, 2014

### PRESENT:

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

### ALSO PRESENT:

Leigh Bosse, *The Messenger*  
Bill Granger, Facilities Manager  
Frank Anzalone, New London Resident  
Casey Biuso, New London Community Center Board Member  
Mark Kaplan, New London Community Center Board Member  
Phyllis Piotrow, Budget Committee  
Bruce Hudson & Renate Kannler, New London Residents  
John Wilson, Budget Committee Chair  
Ed Andersen, Police Chief  
Sean Carroll, *Intertown Record*  
W. Michael Todd, Moderator  
John Lewis, New London Resident

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

She gave the floor over to the members of the New London Community Center (NLCC) who were there to give an update. Mark Kaplan said they are trying to get in touch with those who would like to give them money towards the project. They have some potential donors and need to make them a reality. They have met with Fred Downey and are attempting to get him involved so they don't leave anyone out.

Selectman Bianchi asked how much cash the group has in hand. Mr. Kaplan said they have \$13,500 in cash. The rest of the \$75,000 they have is in pledges. Selectman Bianchi asked if the \$150,000 they were trying to reach was going to be enough; that amount did not include the cost for a new roof. Ms. Biuso said they are trying to figure out how they can include the roof in their figures because they don't have a quote yet. Mr. Kaplan said he was told that the school was going to help with the roof expenses. Ms. Biuso said their first quote was for an entire re-build with a pitch. They are negotiating this still and the number could change.

Selectman Bianchi said he saw online that there were two different figures listed for phase one: \$214,000 and \$150,000; neither of which included a roof. Ms. Biuso said she would look at the website and try and figure it out. Selectman Bianchi asked if the NLCC group would withdraw their request if they didn't raise the \$150,000. Ms. Biuso said this was still their agreement. Mr. Kaplan said they were planning to

get at least \$150,000 in cash and in pledges for which, if necessary, they could borrow against from the bank. They weren't asking the Town for anything; if they don't have enough money raised, they won't ask the Town to borrow any money. The New London Community Center Inc. is a non-profit and would borrow this money themselves if necessary. If they don't have \$150,000 in pledges by Town Meeting, they will walk away from the project. If they get to \$150,000 they will open the doors July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Chair Helm asked what the timeline for pledges was. Ms. Biuso said they have been trying to get people to agree to give but the details haven't been hammered out yet. Mr. Kaplan said there would be varied pledges that would be spread over various time spans. This makes it ideal for them to be able to borrow from the bank against the pledges.

Selectman Bianchi asked who they planned to have contract for improvements to the building. Ms. Biuso said they would likely have it come before the Town. Selectman Bianchi said they would be required to go out for bid, which could elongate the timeline for getting the work done. Mr. Kaplan said the Selectmen also had the option of giving the job of contracting back to the NLCC to get the work done.

Selectman Bianchi asked if parking had been explored, cost-wise. Ms. Biuso said they are waiting on the lease as there is money in there for parking in phases. Selectman Bianchi said he didn't understand why this was dependent on the lease, unless they expect the Town to negotiate a lease that includes the roof to be done. Ms. Biuso said they have to make sure there is enough parking for the SAU in the back. They have money built in to make sure they have parking to meet their needs.

Selectman Bianchi noted a press release that came out March 19<sup>th</sup>. The 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph refers to a March 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting by the Selectmen. Ms. Biuso apologized for the wording; she understood that it was incorrect. Selectman Bianchi said they never talked about the lease, or said it was "not to exceed" \$75,000 and the warrant article they voted on was for the operating expense of the 1941 Building, not the operating expense of the community center. Ms. Biuso apologized for the misinformation again. Selectman Bianchi said there was no decision to put the Recreation Department in the building. It was disheartening to see a press release coming out that had incorrect information. Ms. Biuso apologized and took full responsibility for the misinformation.

Selectman Bianchi asked if they envisioned signing an agreement with the Town for the public/private partnership. Mr. Kaplan said they did. They would come up with a MOU (Memorandum of Understanding). The Town would be responsible for the lease, as far as the district is concerned. How the Town wants to handle the utilization is up to them, but the NLCC is there to help.

Selectman Bianchi said the pro forma online, as compared to the one they saw at a meeting, is different. There was a line item in the operating income for \$25,000 from the United Way. They have all seen the letter from the United Way saying they will not be giving them this money. Mr. Kaplan said they are meeting with the United Way on Wednesday about this. Selectman Bianchi said they are depending on \$25,000 from the United Way, and \$75,000 from the Town for operating costs. They also have \$35,000 from grants (which had been \$10,000 initially). Ms. Biuso said they are still in discussions with the United Way and are working hard on getting concrete numbers.

Ms. Biuso thanked Selectman Bianchi for his thoroughness. Chair Helm said if they don't have answers to their questions by the informational meeting on April 16<sup>th</sup>, it would be troubling to her. Mr. Kaplan and Ms. Biuso agreed whole-heartedly, noting that they recognize the importance of having this information available and are working towards getting it every day. Chair Helm said she believed the voters should have the final say as it was their money. The voters need to be brought up to speed and answers are needed.

Chair Helm said they received a confidential document from the Town's attorney with regards to moving forward with the lease. She was hopeful that things were moving in the right direction.

Ms. Piotrow wondered if a draft copy of the lease would be ready for the public meeting. Donors would appreciate seeing this before making up their mind to give. Chair Helm said it was her definite hope to have the lease available for the public meeting.

Mr. Hudson said he didn't read the press release that went out and wondered where it had been sent. Ms. Biuso said it was sent out online through some news organizations. He asked if someone could fix the mistakes so the public knew what really was said and done. Ms. Biuso said she would take care of this.

Selectman Bianchi said once the warrant is posted, they can't make any changes, so they won't be able to make their decision if they support the article or not until it is too late. He felt it was unfortunate about the timing.

Chair Helm said she put together a working document on a possible format for the two informational sessions. She thought they would discuss it while the members of the NLCC members were present. Selectman Bianchi said he'd like to look at the document before discussing it in a public meeting. It was decided to wait until the next meeting to discuss the format. Chair Helm said she envisioned the NLCC group making a 15 minute presentation and then someone from the opposition speak afterwards. She saw her document of the format of the meetings being a working document.

#### Request from Frank Anzalone – Whipple Hall

Chair Helm asked Mr. Anzalone to speak to his proposal for work to be done at Whipple Hall. Mr. Anzalone said there were some construction issues at Whipple Hall. They have already had a study started for the mechanical issues. This step is to go through the building from the basement to the cold water pipes in the attic to figure out why the walls are rotting, they are having temperature challenges, and why the roof is leaking. They will do a blower-door test with an infra-red scan. The building is set up so it has to be done in three pieces, which triples the cost. This test will identify missing insulation in the floors and walls and will identify why some rooms can't get above 55 degrees with multiple sources of heat. There will need to be multiple hours spent, reports, and recommendations made. This work would be done under his firm. The blower door test would be subcontracted to another vendor.

Chair Helm said \$2,800 was appropriated for the mechanical study of Whipple Hall. She asked if it was ongoing. Mr. Anzalone said the engineer has done the work and is writing up the report. Mr. Granger said he anticipated the report being dropped off on Thursday.

The cost for "part b" will come about when they learn what is wrong with the building and figure out how much the Town wants to address. Chair Helm asked if they had to appropriate money for this next step. Ms. Hallquist said it depended on what they wanted to do. Selectman Bianchi said they wanted to get other prices but it never really went out to bid. He didn't know if they wanted to go with one estimate. The total package had quite a large range in price. Mr. Anzalone said they would coordinate the work with the departments in the building, and could do the work on the weekends or at night. He noted that as a taxpayer, he would suggest going out to bid, however his estimate does include a discount in the price, as he is a taxpayer and wants to keep prices low.

Mr. Wilson asked if the bidders generally know what the other firms are bidding. Selectman Bianchi said not generally, but this is a public meeting. Mr. Wilson found this approach to be slightly flawed in this instance, as Mr. Anzalone's price was just discussed.

Ben Dulac – Receipt of letter for Request for Extension for Land Use Change Tax Penalty

Chair Helm read Mr. Dulac's letter aloud, which asked for an extension to pay the land use change tax penalty of \$2,025 which is due April 7<sup>th</sup>. He asked for a 3-month extension until July 7<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Hallquist noted that the Board could not extend the time to pay but it could abate the interest for good cause. Chair Helm recalled that they have denied abatement requests in the past so as not to set precedence. She asked how her colleagues felt.

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to deny the request for extension on the Land Use Change Tax Penalty for Ben Dulac.  
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Request from Jim Perkins – Keep Non-Lapsing Fund for Archives

Ms. Hallquist noted the non-lapsing fund for archives expires at the end of this year. Chair Helm said it is in the amount of \$3,000. Selectman Bianchi said they have had the fund for five years and it hasn't been used. Ms. Hallquist said it is good to have these funds available should something come up that they would like to purchase. Selectman Kidder said they sustained some damage from the bathroom leak. She wondered if they'd need additional funds to restore anything. Ms. Hallquist said she wasn't sure. These funds were for purchase only, not to restore. Ms. Johnson said if they do nothing, the \$3,000 goes back into the general fund. If it is put back on the warrant, the \$3,000 stays there as it is there already. The vote would extend the fund for five more years.

**IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to add an article to the warrant to extend the non-lapsing fund for Archives in the amount of \$3,000 for another five years.  
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Receipt of letter from the Sutton Police Chief

Chair Helm noted receipt of a letter sent to the Selectmen from Sutton Police Chief Korbet. There had been recent bomb threats at both Kearsarge Regional Middle and High Schools. Sutton Police Department received assistance from the New London Police Department and their officers were commended for their response, professionalism and help. Chief Andersen was commended for his decision-making and assistance.

Request from Chief Andersen

Chief Andersen said he would like to assign duties differently for employees at the Police Department. In the past, everything fell upon the Sergeant. During that time, a lot of work was done, but not done well. He would like to have two sergeants instead of one sergeant and one corporal. Chief Andersen said he would like to promote Detective Anderson and Corporal Zuger to Sergeant. Chief Andersen had a list of duties that he wished to impose on the Sergeants, which he read aloud. Part of this would be getting the department nationally certified which would have all policies and procedures reviewed to be sure they are followed, 100%. He said with having two sergeants, the multiple tasks that are the sergeant's purview, would be shared and completed in a timely and quality manner. He would like to keep a corporal position open for this time in the event that one of the sergeants was to retire. There would still be four officers. If promoted to sergeant, Corporal Zuger would be overseeing the officers, as many are new. He said the sergeants would still be patrolling.

Chief Andersen said they have someone in mind to hire for their 8<sup>th</sup> officer: Jamie MacKenna. Mr. MacKenna works for the Sunapee policedepartment part-time currently. He is certified part-time and would need to go to the police academy to become certified full-time. Mr. Lewis wondered if operating

with one sergeant was possible. Chief Andersen said from experience, it is difficult to get all that work done with one sergeant. Mr. Lewis said he liked Tom Anderson and was in favor of him being a Sergeant.

Chief Andersen noted Mr. Zuger would be given \$1 more/hour and he would be moving from grade 12-13. Tom Anderson would be given \$.25 more/hour, and he would remain in his current pay grade of 13. It was noted he was at the top of his pay grade. This increase would not put him over his pay grade.

Mr. Hudson asked if hiring a full-time police officer would downsize the part timers. Chief Andersen said getting part-time patrolmen is difficult because they have full-time jobs already. They are generally good for 1-2 shifts/month. Having this 8<sup>th</sup> position allowed for coverage for sick time or vacations. Selectman Bianchi noted they budgeted for a full department (8).

Chief Andersen said if someone retires and they could retain the retiree on a part-time basis, they may be willing to go down to seven full-time. This has worked well for him in Goshen over the last five years.

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve Chief Andersen's recommendations for promoting Dave Zuger and Tom Anderson to the position of Sergeant and to hire Jamie MacKenna as a full-time officer, contingent on completing the required background check. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### Town Administrator's Report

Ms. Hallquist said that Serv-Pro came in to look at the water damage from the toilet leak last week. Bill Granger, Facilities Manager, said the damage seemed to be located through the heat duct system and the sheet rock underneath it was damaged. They will take out a piece of dry wall to insure there was no problem in the walls. They would bring in some dehumidifiers and determine the next course of action. Mr. Granger said it should take a couple of days to dry the area out, depending on humidity levels.

Ms. Hallquist said the insurance adjuster would be in a couple days to take a look at the damage. Selectman Bianchi said they were lucky to have some things in plastic containers or up on 2x4's that kept things from sitting in the water. He thought they should try and put everything up on 2x4's for future floods that may occur. He added that the situation happened because the supply line to the toilet tank in the toilet broke. Chief Lyon was called because the water hit a detector and went off. He thought it wise to contact Capital Alarm to see if they could add some water pills and some spots in the basement so if there is a leak somewhere, it would send an alarm out before they got 6-8" of water.

Mr. Granger said there had been water damage in the archives area in the past and there is a monitor in one of the closets. He wasn't sure where the monitor calls in the event of flooding. Chair Helm said she would like to hear from Jim Perkins in Archives at some point to see how much damage was done and if anything needed to be replaced.

Ms. Hallquist said the Conservation Commission has requested *not* to include the article on the warrant that would allow them to retain unused funding from one year to the next. They have decided not to ask for it this year.

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to withdraw the warrant article previously requested by the Conservation Commission. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### Committee Reports

Selectman Bianchi said the public hearing of Planning Board would be held the following night. Zoning amendments would be discussed as well as some routine business, as time permits.

#### Approval of Minutes

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes of March 3, 2014, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Page 2, Belltronics was misspelled

Page 3, last paragraph: “she wanted these meetings to be informational forums to help the voters be informed for the vote in May.”

Page 5, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph: “push the budgeting” not “pushes”

Page 6, 5<sup>th</sup> paragraph: “2/3 of the calls for service” not “serve.”

Page 6, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph: the “election” would be better publicized, not the meeting.

Page 8, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph: he questioned “if” the selectmen were not willing to accept.

Ms. Hallquist...request from “the” Bandstand Committee.

**IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to approve the minutes of March 10, 2014, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Page 5, Recreation Commission Report: Dancing through the “Decades” not “Years.”

#### Upcoming Meetings

Planning Board – March 25 at 7:00pm

Recreation – April 1 at 5:00pm

Budget Hearing – April 2 at 7:00pm at Whipple Hall

Community Advisory Committee – April 5 at 7:30am

Board of Selectmen – Wednesday, April 9 at 8:00am

Budget Hearing – April 9 at 7:00pm at Whipple Hall (if needed)

#### Other Business

Mr. Lewis felt the condition of the jail cells in New London were very poor and noted there is only a cement bench on which to sit/lay down. He said former Chief Seastrand arrested him for being intoxicated and kindly gave him two blankets. No pillow. Chief Andersen said that there is a new policy that anyone needing to stay more than four hours will be transported to the Merrimack County Jail. In New London they also provide lunch or dinner to people in a holding cell if it is that time of day. They provide a pillow and two blankets but no mattress because it would be difficult to keep them clean and is also a place where contraband could be stored. Mr. Lewis thanked Chief Andersen for this information.

Ms. Hallquist informed the Board that she has received a request to unseal the minutes of January 29, 2014 when the Board interviewed police chief candidates and also information summarizing the Citizen’s Committee recommendations. Ms. Hallquist thought keeping minutes sealed when they include interviewing, which is a personnel function, was not unusual. The Board felt that Minutes should remain sealed as a personnel matter however those participating on the Citizen’s Committee could discuss the results with the Town Administrator.

#### *FY2015 Budget*

The Board discussed whether to present their original budget recommendations to the voters along with the Budget Committees. In the past, the Selectmen have adopted the Budget Committee’s recommendations so they are in agreement. Selectman Kidder thought they should leave their budget the way it was. Selectman Bianchi said the budget was the Budget Committee’s budget. They either agree or

disagree with what the Selectmen put together. Ms. Hallquist said at Town Meeting the voters can choose the Selectmen's or the Budget Committee's recommendations or make up a new one on the floor. Selectman Bianchi said they have never shown two budgets on the warrant in New London before. Selectman Kidder and Chair Helm thought this should be the year to do it. Ms. Hallquist said showing both budget recommendations was allowed by state law, and it is required to be shown on the State budget form which is posted with the Warrant.

Chair Helm said there were seven items the Budget Committee changed. She thought they should decide if they were OK with the changes or if they'd prefer to advocate for their own budget. Selectman Bianchi said he had no problems, one way or the other. He said the Budget Committee is nine additional sets of eyes to look at the budget and the department heads knew they wouldn't get everything they asked for to begin with.

The Board reviewed the areas where the Budget Committee did not agree with the Selectmen's recommendations:

Chair Helm said the locks at the Police Department were something she was concerned with; the Budget Committee cut \$17,000 from this initiative. Selectman Kidder thought \$5,500 should go back into Selectmen's Discretionary fund. It was noted that \$17,000 was taken out of the Police Department's budget for locks, \$3,000 was taken out for training for Planning and Zoning, and \$5,000 was taken from dispatch for part-time help.

Chair Helm wondered what would happen if the part-time dispatching budget was reduced by \$5,000 as recommended by the Budget Committee. Ms. Hallquist said it would likely mean more overtime in that department or less shifts with double coverage (two dispatchers), which was something the towns that get their dispatching service from New London have said is important to them.

The Board noted that they would also support their original request for transfers to capital reserve funds of \$10,000 for the sewer lagoon cleanup (the Budget Committee recommends zero) and \$125,000 for highway equipment replacement (the Budget Committee recommends \$115,000).

Ms. Hallquist read the list of recommendations that will go forward: (1) \$5,500 for employee bonuses in the discretionary account; (2) \$17,000 for locks at the P.D.; (3) \$3,000 for Planning and Zoning training; (4) \$5,000 for part-time dispatching salary; and (5) \$20,000 each transfers to CRF (\$10,000 to highway equipment and \$10,000 to sewer lagoons). The Board agreed that the list is complete.

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Tina Helm) to show one column for the Board of Selectmen's budget and one column for the Budget Committee's budget on the warrant. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED 2:1 (Peter Bianchi was opposed)**

Ms. Hallquist explained that each article would have two columns; most will have the same amount, however the line items as discussed above will be different. Voters, or the Selectman, can amend a line item on the floor when they get to the articles. They could approve the amount as recommended by the Budget Committee or amend that amount to match the Selectmen's amount, or come up with a new amount. Ms. Hallquist said the Budget Committee's budget will be the one the moderator will keep track of for the 10% rule. Selectman Bianchi said this approach would create an adversarial situation on each article that is different. Selectman Bianchi thought doing this would create more angst between the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee.

Selectman Kidder suggested that the only two articles that were reduced that the Selectmen should agree with is the \$6,000 from Highway Department and \$2,750 from the Recreation Department, as both departments were in favor of the reductions. The others should be shown on the budget form and on the warrant as the Selectmen's original recommendation. It was noted that Chief Lyon had said he was OK with the \$2,000 being taken from his budget. Selectman Kidder thought the aforementioned articles were OK to keep aligned with the Budget Committee's figures. She thought they should go to bat for dispatch, planning and zoning, the Police Department, and the \$20,000 that was to go into the capital reserve (\$10,000 for Highway Equipment Replacement Fund, \$10,000 for the Sewer Lagoons).

#### 1941 Building Lease

Ms. Hallquist indicated that Town Counsel would like to have a tour of the 1941 Building in order to better advise them on the lease negotiation. The Board asked that a tour be set up at the end of the week. It was noted that such a meeting with town counsel is not a meeting for purposes of RSA 91-A so it will not be posted and the public will not be able to attend.

Chair Helm went back to her document about the format for the informational sessions; her intent was for it not to become a "free for all." She said they need to think about how and who would publicize the event. Selectmen Bianchi asked who should pay for the advertising. Chair Helm thought the Board of Selectmen should pay to advertise this as they are hosting the forums. Selectman Bianchi wondered if the Selectmen would recommend the \$75,000 article or not. They needed to indicate if they recommend or not recommend it. Chair Helm said they don't have to say recommend or not but could make their case in their explanation of the article.

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Tina Helm) that the Selectmen should recommend or not recommend all the warrant articles.**

Chair Helm and Selectman Kidder said they were not ready to vote on this. Chair Helm thought this designation was just for special warrant articles. Ms. Hallquist said generally, voters look to the Selectmen to recommend or not recommend every article that contains an appropriation.

**A vote was called. THE MOTION FAILED. Peter: Yes, Tina: No, Kidder: No**

Ms. Hallquist said the Board of Selectmen might want to make recommendations for the articles at the public budget hearing on April 8<sup>th</sup>. They could schedule a short meeting after their consultation with Bart Mayer later that week.

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary  
Town of New London