



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES May 13, 2013 Approved

PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Leigh Bosse, *The Messenger*
Minette Sweeney, *Intertown Record*
Michael Todd, Town Moderator
Jim Wheeler, New London Resident
Doug MacMichael, New London Resident
Scott Hilliard, Merrimack County Sheriff
Craig Saltmarsh, Chief Deputy/Director of Operations, Merrimack County Sheriff's Department
Ed Andersen, Acting Police Chief
Laura Lorio, New London Resident
Heather Wood, New London Dispatch

Chair Bianchi opened the meeting at 5:00pm.

IT WAS MOVED (Tina Helm) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to enter into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(a). THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Peter Bianchi: Yes, Tina Helm: Yes, Janet Kidder: Yes

The Board returned to the public session at 6:00 PM.

Scott Hilliard – Merrimack County Sheriff

Chair Bianchi introduced Sheriff Hilliard and said the Town would value his advice as a law enforcement expert with regard to reviewing the policies and procedures of the New London Police Department.

Sheriff Hilliard thanked the Selectmen for inviting him to the meeting and introduced his Chief Deputy Craig Saltmarsh. Sheriff Hilliard noted that he has spoken with Ms. Hallquist and has also met with Chief Ed Andersen, and believes that he understands what the Town is looking for in his review. Sheriff Hilliard said that he is on his fourth term as Sheriff and has been a police officer for 34 years, 12 of which he served as the Police Chief in Northfield, NH. He agreed with the Board's suggestion that it would be helpful to go over the current policies and procedures used within the New London Police Department to see if they needed updating. He explained that certain procedures and equipment help with insuring safety for all. Sheriff Hilliard envisioned sitting down with the Police Department employees and Chief Andersen to look at the policies already in place. The Sheriff's Department follows "Model Policy" which

is a set of nationally followed policies. He explained that the police department equipment (cameras/recording devices) piece of the puzzle is important because sometimes there are scenarios where a police officer can be one-on-one with a civilian that can pose a situation where it is one person's word against another.

Sheriff Hilliard informed the Board that this review is a service the Sheriff's Department can provide to the Town of New London. He noted that while they are not experts in the field of policies and procedures, they do conduct many internal investigations and can offer some valuable observations. He noted that they often work with smaller communities that have staffing issues. The review contemplated by the Town would be an administrative function of his department. He has two people in his office who are capable of helping with this review.

Chair Bianchi asked how long this review would take. Chief Deputy Saltmarsh said there are several factors so it varies from case to case. He understood that Chief Andersen wanted to move forward as soon as possible, so he thought the review would take a couple of weeks at the most.

Chair Bianchi asked if the Board should wait until the review was completed before they advertise for the position of Police Chief. Sheriff Hilliard said he did not believe that the review would interfere with the timing of beginning the process of hiring a permanent Police Chief. Chief Deputy Saltmarsh observed that a new chief will be appreciative of coming into a department that has recently been reviewed for updated policies and procedures so they know everything is going according to regulation.

Sheriff Hilliard said they would review the communications portion of the department (including recording devices) as part of the study. He added that investigations can affect the morale of the department and he has suggested to Chief Andersen that they open up a dialogue with the Department about the process.

Chair Bianchi wondered if they knew about how long it could take to hire a new chief. Sheriff Hilliard said that he is currently involved with the hiring of a new chief in his home town and they are two and a half months into the process. At this time, they are almost finished with the first round of interviews of 10 applicants.

Michael Todd asked how many candidates responded to their ad for chief. Sheriff Hilliard said that 57 people applied, which came from a New England search. He thought New London may get more applicants as it is a nice region and they will likely be offering more money.

Jim Wheeler asked if they would look at the communications center with the assumption that it will stay as it is now, whether it is the right fit or size, or if it should be outsourced. Chief Deputy Saltmarsh said that they would just look to see that it is running efficiently and effectively and that people can get the help they need.

Sheriff Hilliard said about seven years ago the County invited New London, Franklin and Bow to a regional dispatch meeting to see if these towns could go without having their own dispatch and switch to the County center in an effort to save money. Because of the geography and the number of communities New London dispatches for, it was determined that it would likely not

be in the interest of public safety for New London to abandon its dispatch center. Also, there would not be a substantial savings to do so. Chair Bianchi thought it would be nice to see a copy of the report that came of that meeting.

Chief Deputy Saltmarsh said he would report to Chief Andersen if the study was taking longer than he anticipated. He understood the time constraints on the Town as he is a Selectman himself in his own town.

The Select Board was in unanimous agreement that this study should move forward with the assistance of Sheriff Hilliard and his Department.

W. Michael Todd – Town Moderator

Mr. Todd met with the Board to discuss the upcoming election on Tuesday and town meeting on Wednesday. He said the Town Hall was organized and ready for the following day. Scott Ellison, Esq., has been sworn in as Assistant Moderator. In the unlikely event that the moderator cannot carry out the duties, the assistant moderator can step in. Polls would be open from 8am – 7pm. Mr. Todd added that voter ID would be required or voters will have to fill out an affidavit.

The Warrant and order of the meeting was reviewed. There were a couple of suggestions from Chair Bianchi regarding rules of the meeting.

Mr. Todd said he has received a request from Representative Dave Kidder to speak to Article 4 (\$10,000 to hold the 1941 Building). There was also a request from Laura Alexander to speak to Article 3 (\$25,000 for the Conservation Land Acquisition Capital Reserve Fund). Ms. Hallquist noted that procedurally, all articles should first be addressed by the Selectmen, to explain why they do or do not support them. She noted that there were several comments after last year's meeting that the Selectmen did not clearly state their positions. Chair Bianchi did not want it to appear as the Selectmen are preempting an argument. Ms. Hallquist said that as the governing body, the voters look to them to explain their position and then the proponents of the article will be better able to address the points raised by the Selectmen and will have the last word on the issue.

Police Department Updates – Chief Ed Andersen

Chief Andersen said he went back to Beltronics (the company that services the video equipment) to ask them for another quote after reducing the recording coverage to one interview room and the area where prisoners are kept. The base cost will be \$11,373. The main concern is that they will have to deal with extensive labor; they have to get the wires through the concrete and multiple tubes throughout the building to the dispatch center. The quote includes a four microphone system, a 16 DVR switcher, a DVR camera in the interview room, cables and installation. Chief Andersen added that after speaking with other departments, Beltronics was the preferred company and did the best work.

With regard to cruiser cameras, the quote Chief Andersen received is for a system that downloads the camera information when they pull into the Police Department. The cameras will record audio from two places at once for maximum detail. The medium line package Chief

Andersen described was just under \$10,000 for the three cars. That is down from between \$17,000 and \$19,000.

Chief Andersen said that another option was to use some old cameras provided by the Town of Sunapee, as they had upgraded their cameras. The Sunapee Police Department would give the New London Police Department two of their old cameras which are one step below the \$10,000 package Chief Andersen had mentioned earlier. It would cost another \$2,000 to \$3,000 to get them upgraded and working. Using two cameras would still leave one vehicle without a camera.

In summary, it would cost between \$21,000 and \$28,000 for the recording devices to be installed in the three rooms downstairs and one conference room upstairs, and the three cruiser cameras.

Chief Andersen added that Beltronics has maintenance packages that would manage the DVR systems, Com Log, all cameras, key pad systems and they would be on call for \$5,000/year. They would come twice/year (in the spring and fall) to check the systems. Beltronics will not offer this maintenance without the purchase of the \$18,000 package. The \$11,373 package would not have the option of this maintenance. Ms. Kidder wondered what the warranties were for the components. Chief Andersen said that it was a one year warranty that could be extended to five years. He said he would be happy with the \$11,373 system and the cruiser system that includes the auto downloading.

Chief Andersen said they just missed a deadline to acquire a public safety grant.

Ms. Hallquist advised the Board that they could transfer unused funds from the Recreation Department to the Police Department to acquire the equipment needed. She noted that she spoke with Interim Recreation Director Scott Blewitt about his upcoming budget expenses through June 30 (the end of the fiscal year) and she believes that approximately \$20,000 will be available for transfer.

Chief Andersen said the Police Department's server was on its last leg. The Town's computer support company, Systems Plus, keeps coming in and putting it back together. He has received an estimate of \$22,924 for a new server and upgrading the computers. Without new computers, the cost is between \$16,000 and \$18,000. Chief Andersen said the server is the same one being used by dispatch.

Ms. Johnson identified a non-lapsing fund called "Emergency Repair of Police Equipment Fund." There is currently \$15,000 in the fund, which is a five-year, non-lapsing fund. Ms. Hallquist thought it would be OK to spend this money on this expense. That, along with the \$20,000 from the Recreation Department, could take care of a large portion of what is needed at the Police Department.

It was noted by Mr. Wheeler that they should create a line item in the budget for servers as they are expensive and only last about five years.

Building Review of Bandstand Roof & the Academy Building – Jim Wheeler

Mr. Wheeler informed the Board that after an inspection of the bandstand, Mr. Anzalone came up with a spec for repairs to the bandstand's roof. He also recommended two specific builders to do the work as they had the skills to take the spec and run with it. Those builders were Craig Howe and Brian Carey.

Mr. Wheeler said Alex Azodi of Omega Structural Engineers in Newbury provided a proposal for the roof of the Academy Building (Town Office building). He passed out a spec for the hourly rates from this engineer. Mr. Wheeler noted that a preliminary inspection shows that the cupola is tilting and there is a pronounced bow to the roof. The engineer commented that the specific loading points were supported with wood instead of steel, which is what the specs had requested. The wood has shrunk and allowed the roof to drop and the cupola to tilt. It is a relatively inexpensive fix as long as the steel beams are still good. Mr. Wheeler recommended that an engineer spend a day or two to really look at everything more closely. It was determined that it would likely not be more than a couple thousand dollars for the engineering.

Mr. Wheeler observed that the plans they have of the Academy Building were acquired from Milestone, who did the upgrades in 1998. The Town did not seem to have any complete plans for the building or the upgrade.

Ms. Hallquist said there is almost \$2,000 in the Maintenance & Repair Fund for the Academy Building. Mr. Wheeler said he would call the engineer and have him contact Ms. Hallquist to discuss costs.

Ms. Helm wondered if they would be reviewing the Elkins Post Office as part of their building study. Mr. Wheeler said that they did not expect to do an in-depth review of that building. It was noted that there were bricks on the chimney that needed to be repaired. The lease was up soon and Ms. Kidder thought the next lease should include an increase to afford upgrading of the building.

Old/Pending Business

Complaint from Fred Sladen

Fred Sladen sent a letter to the Selectmen informing them that he is not happy with the noise at a house owned by the Barn Playhouse, where actors reside during the summer. Chief Andersen said there was no noise ordinance in town, but if there is bothersome noise from 11pm – 6am they check it out and declare it disorderly conduct. If the offenders do not stop the noise, they will be arrested. He recalled having to go to the house in question in the past. They do quiet down once warned by the Police Department. Ms. Kidder thought that the people who run the Barn Playhouse should be proactive in dealing with these kids. It should not be the problem of the Police Department. Ms. Hallquist said she would contact Tom DeMille and Mr. Sladen and hopefully have them sit down with her and Chief Andersen to discuss ways to alleviate this issue going forward.

Mr. Sladen's inquiry regarding sewer pipes will be discussed when Richard Lee is available to meet with the Selectmen.

Parking Tickets during Colby-Sawyer College Graduation

Ms. Helm said someone called her with a concern that the Police Department issued several parking tickets during the Colby-Sawyer College graduation. Chief Andersen said that generally only those that park in front of fire hydrants or who block intersections receive tickets. In this case, some of the less egregious infractions were also ticketed. There were a total of 48 tickets issued. A few people came in and he voided the tickets after he explained about the shuttle service and the parking area available to them. More people may come in to question their tickets and he would most likely void them, unless they were issued for hydrant violations or blocking streets. Chief Andersen noted that next year they will make sure there is better signage to inform all where parking is, and is not, allowed.

Letter from the Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Helm said the Chamber of Commerce sent the Town a letter about the possibility of having antique cars being parked around the Town Office during Hospital Days. Ms. Hallquist reported that she spoke with the Police, Fire and DPW departments and so long as the area is open for emergency vehicles, there were no objections. The Selectmen did not have a problem with this.

Town Administrator's Report

Ms. Hallquist noted the following:

- The financial audit has been completed for FY2012 (ending June 30, 2012). A copy of it was in their mailboxes and is posted to the Town's website.
- The Town was nominated by Colby-Sawyer College for an award by the "Campus Compact of New Hampshire" recognizing the partnership between the Town and College. The *Presidents' Community Partner Award* was awarded to the Town.
- Mr. Lee is on vacation until May 28th and will not be present at Town Meeting. She was confident that the Selectmen were prepared to field questions from the audience on DPW issues.
- The May 29th Selectmen's meeting was changed to 8:00am on Tuesday May 28th.
- The ADA requirements for the Bucklin Beach Bathhouse renovations have been confirmed by Chris Gaherty, the contractor completing the project.
- Mr. Lee has purchased new garbage cans for the Town Common and they are in place and look great.
- Winter Wild, a Recreation Department program lead by Chad Denning, cleared about \$4,600.
- Bruce King, President and CEO of New London Hospital, has requested that the Selectmen consider submitting a letter of support for the hospital's proposed affiliation with Dartmouth Hitchcock. The Board agreed to offer a letter of support for this effort.

Committee Reports

Ms. Kidder said that the Recreation Commission met the previous week. Paddle boards for Bucklin Beach and AEDs will be purchased for both beaches. There had been a request by Mr. Blewitt (Interim Recreation Director) to paint the gable ends of the Bucklin Beach Bathhouse green (instead of white) as part of the upgrades. Ms. Kidder said that the gable ends are where the new signs will go and since the signs are black, they would not show up well against a green background. She indicated that the entire building should remain white. The new signs are estimated to cost \$700 and they would not be getting gold leaf again this time.

Ms. Kidder shared that Mr. Blewitt wanted to have a concession stand at Bucklin Beach. He thinks they could net about \$1,000 over the summer. Chair Bianchi was concerned that the building could not have a change of use from it being a bathhouse to being somewhat retail. Ms. Hallquist said she would check into this. Ms. Helm said she had no problem with this idea. Chair Bianchi said there were restrictions as to what the building could be used for, both because of the terms of the gift to the town when it accepted the property and because of DES septic approval restrictions. Ms. Hallquist said she would check into it further.

Ms. Kidder said the Recreation Department's website was not user-friendly. She thought they needed to look into getting a new website for them.

Ms. Kidder noted that the signs at the beaches need to be repainted and suggested the cost should come from the operating budget. She said that if the budget is passed at Town Meeting for the Recreation Department, she would like to start advertising for the full time Recreation Director immediately. The Board agreed.

Town Meeting Warrant Article Designation

Chair Bianchi thought one of them should go through the important points from the budget before they begin reading through the articles. Ms. Johnson had a handout with a visual explanation of the articles. It was decided that this handout would be enough and further verbal explanation was not necessary. The Board assigned articles for explanation by each Selectman.

Ms. Hallquist noted that she received a telephone message from Joan Lamson asking that she be allowed to say a few words about Don Bent (retiring Health Officer) at Town Meeting, recognizing his work for the Town over the past 32 years. Dr. Bent would not be at Town Meeting. Ms. Lamson has known Dr. Bent for many years and feels that it would be appropriate to recognize his service to the Town. The Board agreed.

Approval of Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (Tina Helm) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes of April 29, 2013, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Tina Helm) to enter into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(a). THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Peter Bianchi: Yes, Tina Helm: Yes, Janet Kidder: Yes

The Board re-entered the public session at 9:35PM.

Application for Building Permit:

- Dan & Judy Ferreira, 153 S. Pleasant St. (Map & Lot 095-014-000) kitchen renovations – Permit #13-032 – Approved.
- Peter & Melissa Hamel, 50 Barrett Road (Map & Lot 084-040-000) build two story barn – Permit #13-033 – Approved.
- Rosanne Palmieri & Patricia Alves, 78 Wellswood Road (Map & Lot 098-030-000) add section onto existing deck – Permit #13-034 – Approved.
- Melody Cassista Revocable Trust, 856 Main Street (Map & Lot 109-020-000) and 427 Knights Hill Road (Map & Lot 095-045-000) install roof mounted solar panels on two properties – Permit #'s 13-035 & 13-036 – both Approved.
- Erno & Katherine Pongratz, 17 Elkins Road (Map & Lot 087-004-000) repair and rebuild structure – Permit #13-037 - DENIED

Application for sign permit:

- Summer Music Associates, sign at information booth – approved.
- Wilmot Learning Place, sign at information booth – approved.
- St. Andrews Church – sign at information booth for summer fair - approved

Application for use of all 3 Town Commons:

- New London Hospital, Hospital Days – set up Thursday 8/1 – take down Monday 8/5 – Approved.

Application for use of New London Inn Common:

- St. Andrews Church summer fair – set up 7-5-13 take down 7-7-13 – Approved.

Other Items to be signed:

- Disbursement voucher
- Notice of intent to cut – (Map & Lot 021-003-000) & warrant for same property in the amount of \$817.82
- Report of wood or timber cut (Map & Lot 029-001-000) & warrant for same property in the amount of \$1143.18
- Tax abatement form – (Map & Lot 106-011) in the amount of \$4476.16 - approved

With no other business, Chair Bianchi called for a motion to adjourn.

IT WAS MOVED (Tina Helm) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to adjourn the meeting of May 13, 2013. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary