



# TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES April 2, 2012

### **PRESENT:**

Mark Kaplan, Chair, Board of Selectmen  
Tina Helm, Selectman  
Peter Bianchi, Selectman  
Kimberly Hallquist, Town Administrator

### **ALSO PRESENT:**

Chad Denning, Recreation Director  
Richard Lee, Public Works Director  
Linda Hardy, Town Clerk/Tax Collector  
Peter Stanley, Planning & Zoning Administrator  
Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer  
Jerry Gold, New London Resident  
Christine Walker, Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission

Chair Kaplan called the meeting to order at 8:00am.

### Richard Lee – Department of Public Works – Forest Acres Road

Mr. Lee met with the Board to discuss the letter from some of the residents of Forest Acres Road who asked for more work to be done to the road as they felt it was not in good condition. Mr. Lee thought it would be worthwhile to put a layer of hard pack put on it, as there was some money left in the salt and sand budget that could be used. He said while it isn't pavement, it is the next best thing. Ms. Helm thought Mr. Lee's proposal made a lot of sense. Mr. Bianchi thought hard-pack was the way to go but noted that Forest Acres wasn't on the 10-year plan for paving and if it was in that bad of shape, it should be on the list. He added that Mr. Lee had identified South Cove Road as the worst road this spring. Other roads that were reported as being bad were Quarry Road and Tucker Road.

Mr. Bianchi said that he was not in favor of taking \$20,000 and designating it to one road, just because there was money left over. He added that they still have three months left in the fiscal year and they might need that money for something else. He thought they should revisit this in the middle of June and at that point if there is anything left over, they could stockpile some bluestone to repair several roads instead of just one. Mr. Lee said that if they wait until June they wouldn't be able to put it out on the roads until September or October as their summer is very busy. Mr. Bianchi said he thought they could encumber \$10,000 for bluestone so they could at least have it but wouldn't need to put it out as soon as they get it. Ms. Helm opined that Mr. Bianchi made a good point about waiting until the fiscal year is close to over. Mr. Lee said that there are some drawbacks to getting the hard-pack on the road too late in the season as it doesn't get a chance to get packed down and they could end up plowing it up in the winter.

Mr. Lee said he would wait on this project and provide them with a printout in mid-June of what money is left in the account and how much stone they could purchase. He added that just because Forest Acres Road was not on the gravel roads list, it doesn't mean that it doesn't need things to be done to it.

Ms. Helm said she received a positive call from a resident on South Cove Road, who was very happy with the work Mr. Lee and the Public Works Department has done to the road.

Approval of Minutes

March 13, 2012

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Tina Helm) to approve the minutes of March 15, 2012, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Page 2: 8" of rain "fell" and not "feel."

March 19, 2012

**IT WAS MOVED (Tina Helm) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to approve the minutes of March 19, 2012. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Bianchi observed that he wanted to make it clear that the DARE program referenced on page 9, is a program that is provided to the entire school district, not just to New London.

Mr. Stanley suggested sending a copy of the minutes to the Dam Bureau to indicate their recent discussion on the dam.

Fee Structure for the Use of Whipple Hall

Chair Kaplan said that the Board would take up the issue of whether they will keep the current fee structure or if they will change it. Ms. Helm was surprised to re-read the current structure in light of the fact that the fee charged is always waived by the Board of Selectmen and returned to the user(s) of the building. She believed the Town should keep this fee instead of returning it and wasn't sure of the logic for charging and then returning the fee. Mr. Bianchi thought it would be nice to have the ability to waive the fee to an organization they deem worthy. Ms. Helm thought she would rather not waive fees for anyone and felt it was a slippery slope, pointing out that there are costs to the town for the use of Whipple Hall. Mr. Bianchi said he would still like to keep the option open to waive the fee should there be a good cause identified.

Ms. Helm wondered who was monitoring the condition of the facility after it is used. She noted that the groups that use the facility are routinely refunded their \$50 maintenance fee, but the requirement is that the facility has been cleaned and furniture put back as it was when they arrived. Ms. Helm noted that someone contacted her to complain that before using the facility it had to be cleaned by the group schedule to use it, as the last people to use it left it in such disarray. Chair Kaplan felt they should designate someone to monitor the facility's condition.

Ms. Helm said she spoke with Mr. Denning of the Recreation Department who proposed that his office be moved into Whipple Hall and that part of his job description would be that he was in charge of the hall's rental, maintenance and supervisory duties. Mr. Denning informed her that if this change is made, more recreation programs could also be run from that facility.

Mr. Bianchi thought they should increase the rental fee to \$50 for local organizations for 12 hours, \$75 for 13-24 hours, and for outside organizations charge \$75 for 12 hours and \$100 for 13-24 hours. The maintenance fee should remain the same, which is \$50. He stressed that he wasn't trying to make money by doing this, but thought that the Town should be reimbursed for the use of the building, as expenses are increasing, especially for heating and electricity costs. Ms. Helm noted that she had polled several members of the Garden Club, who thought it was perfectly reasonable to charge for the use of Whipple Hall.

Mr. Stanley said that they should require that the space be cleaned after use. They should either clean it themselves, or have the Town's cleaning service do it and be charged for this to be done.

Mr. Denning said that the Recreation Department has software for facility scheduling that could be utilized to rent out the town common, Whipple Hall, etc. In other towns, the Recreation Department is the scheduler of the town's buildings. He noted that his department makes a lot of use of Whipple Hall and it would make sense for them to keep track of the use of it.

Chair Kaplan said that their past rental methods (returning the rental fee) was done to encourage people to make use of the hall but has become burdensome and does actually incur an expense to the town. Ms. Hallquist noted that the cleaning of town office buildings, including Whipple Hall when needed, is currently being done five nights per week but that they will be cutting back at the start of the new fiscal year. Mr. Bianchi wondered if the cleaning crew, while cleaning the police department's space, could monitor the condition of the hall to see if it needed to be cleaned.

Ms. Helm wondered what was wrong with turning the supervisory role over to the Recreation Department, as they have the software already and it would seem to make sense. Mr. Bianchi said he would like to think on it a bit more. Currently they have Linda Jackman, Administrative Assistant, handling the rental scheduling. Ms. Helm said that Ms. Jackman wasn't able to go over to the building each day to check on the condition on the hall. Mr. Denning said that Ms. Jackman has access to the same software that he does but they currently keep track of the scheduling with a hand-written calendar. Mr. Denning said he would be happy to work together with Ms. Jackman on this and noted that with the use of the software, people could go online to see when the hall was being used and when it was available. Mr. Bianchi thought that Ms. Jackman should remain as the scheduler because with the exception of one scheduling error (the Garden Club use on Election Day) there have been no problems with the current system and he did not see a reason to change, noting "if it ain't broke, don't fix it". Ms. Hallquist said that if the issue is checking on the building to make sure groups leave it in good shape, the Board could add that task to Mr. Denning responsibilities immediately, as he has just offered to do. This way, he could start going to the hall every day to check on the hall, as he is running programs there each day, and he has indicated that he is happy to check on it. The issue of scheduling the building could be taken up at another time.

Ms. Helm was not an advocate of raising the fees to use Whipple Hall. She wanted to encourage the use of the building as she felt it was underused. She did feel that the fees people pay should be kept by the town and not returned.

Ms. Hallquist said that Ms. Jackman has gone through the form "Application for Use of Whipple Memorial Town Hall" updated it to take out references to use by the court, and to correct typo-s. What the Board is being asked to do is to address the issue of fees for use of the facility and the issue of routinely returning the maintenance deposit. Once these issues are resolved, the form can be updated for review and approval of the Board.

Ms. Helm wanted to ask that the rule about the preparation and serving of food in Whipple Hall be relaxed. Currently there is no food or beverage allowed. Mr. Bianchi wondered how much of an issue this was in the town. Ms. Helm said that she hasn't taken a poll, but if a meeting were to be held there, it would be nice to be able to have light refreshments and coffee. Mr. Bianchi thought that if food was allowed, that more should be added to the rental fee to account for more cleanup that could be necessary. Ms. Helm thought the maintenance fee could be increased to \$75 but that the rental fee should stay the same.

Ms. Hardy suggested removing the “food preparation” portion of the rule but allow the serving of food. Mr. Denning said the supervision part is key. He said that when they have a recreation program in the hall, the people clean up after themselves because they know there is oversight. He thought coffee and beverages were fine in the facility as long as it could be monitored to make sure there were no problems because of it.

Mr. Bianchi suggested leaving the maintenance fee at \$50 but adding a sentence saying “should \$50 not cover the maintenance, the organization would be billed for any additional cleaning.” Chair Kaplan thought they should charge the maintenance fee and not return it. Mr. Bianchi thought that would be too much to charge for the use of the hall.

Mr. Denning wondered if they could get some rental policies from surrounding towns to see what they do. Mr. Bianchi said that they have done this already but didn’t have it there.

**IT WAS MOVED (Tina Helm) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to delegate to Chad Denning, Recreation Department Director, to work in collaboration with Linda Jackman, Administrative Assistant, to tighten up the scheduling of the use of Whipple Hall by using an online scheduling program, to collect fees for the use of the hall, and for Mr. Denning to supervise and monitor the facility after it has been used.**

Mr. Bianchi wondered if Ms. Helm’s intent was to eliminate the ability for the Board of Selectmen to be able to waive fees, as they do currently. Ms. Helm said she thought this would have to be a second motion but would not be in favor of waiving fees. Mr. Bianchi said he had no problem with the Recreation Department overseeing the process, as well as Ms. Jackman’s collaboration with the use of the online software. He thought the way it was being done currently was fine, except for the one problem they had with the Garden Club’s event conflicting with elections, and didn’t see any benefit to changing the way it is being done.

Chair Kaplan called for a vote.

**THE MOTION WAS APPROVED. Mark Kaplan: Yes, Tina Helm: Yes, Peter Bianchi: No.**

Mr. Bianchi felt they needed to address the ability to waive fees. He also thought that if they didn’t change the fee structure, they wouldn’t end up with any change in the revenue that could come in.

Mr. Denning said that now people have to go to the Board of Selectmen to use the facility and it is a cumbersome process. He wondered if the process could be streamlined by allowing the Recreation Department to schedule the use of the facility. He would come once or twice/month to present the usage of the facility to the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Bianchi said he had no problem with Mr. Denning being able to do this. But come July 4<sup>th</sup> or other busy times in the summer, he didn’t think it was part of the Recreation Director’s job to schedule things like the Garden Club or the Boy Scouts to use the facility. Chair Kaplan said they need to have someone who is on hand, on the spot, checking things and who can report to them as that is what supervisors are supposed to do. Chair Kaplan observed that if Mr. Denning felt that he could handle this along with his other duties, then that was acceptable to him. Mr. Denning said that he is trying to streamline the process. Ms. Helm said she was perfectly comfortable with Mr. Denning overseeing the whole process and coming back to them once a month to report on who was using the facility. She has often felt it silly to sign permission for people to use the facility.

Mr. Bianchi felt that “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” He didn’t feel that they should change anything. From 8-4, five days/week gives people ample time to sign up to use the facility. He saw no problem with how it

was being run now but they could use the software if they liked. He didn't mind signing off on requests for use of the facility and liked to know who was using it.

**IT WAS MOVED (Tina Helm) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) that the Board of Selectmen delegate the Recreation Director to process the requests for use of Whipple Hall and once per month report back to the Selectmen as to what the usage has been, how much money has been collected and how maintenance is going.**

Mr. Bianchi didn't understand how the two motions made by Ms. Helm would work together. Ms. Hallquist suggested that Ms. Jackman and Mr. Denning get together and prepare, in writing, the procedure of exactly how the facility would be reserved, money collected, and how the maintenance was being taken care of. That document could then be reviewed by the Board for its approval. Mr. Denning agreed to work with Ms. Jackman to prepare the procedures.

Mr. Denning said that he hoped to do some marketing for the use of Whipple Hall so that more people would use it and bring in more revenue. Chair Kaplan said that his hope was that they could create just enough revenue to keep the hall in good shape. They are not interested in making lots of money by doing this. Mr. Denning said that he would not do any marketing per this notion expressed by Chair Kaplan. Mr. Bianchi repeated that he didn't think that there was a problem with the way reservations were being taken currently. Chair Kaplan said that there has been a problem with the supervisory portion of how it is being done.

Chair Kaplan called for a vote.

**THE MOTION PASSED. Mark Kaplan: Yes, Tina Helm: Yes, Peter Bianchi: No.**

Ms. Helm asked if they should remove the responsibility of the Board of Selectmen to waive fees for the use of the hall. Mr. Bianchi said that they were obviously making a decision to take the Board of Selectmen out of this process, so why not let Ms. Jackman and Mr. Denning make those decisions. Ms. Helm said that she did not want to waive fees at all. Mr. Bianchi felt this was micro-managing. He thought that the Board of Selectmen should be able to vote on waiving fees for some organizations. Ms. Helm said that this seemed to make things too confusing. Mr. Bianchi disagreed.

Mr. Denning said that currently, if renters of the hall want the fee waived, they are instructed to come to the Board of Selectmen. This process will remain.

Ms. Helm said that she has been in discussion from representatives from SKIT (drama club in the area) who would like to contribute to the purchase of darkening shades for Whipple Hall which will increase the usage possibilities for the facility. It was determined that this would be discussed at a later date.

Christine Walker – Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission

Ms. Walker is the Executive Director of the UVLSRPC and was there to talk about their recently completed housing needs assessment and their plan for a region-wide study over the next three years. The information was compiled into a 125-page document which is somewhat overwhelming for people to read. They are in the process of printing an executive summary of the full document which should encourage people to read it.

Ms. Walker explained that they are looking within this region (27 municipalities) and have found that 48% of households will have people over 65 by 2030. They are looking into smaller, one-story units for people of these demographics. There will also be less people between 25-34 years of age, which are the

first home-buyer population. There is also a large increase in the labor market in the Hanover/Lebanon area. It is not the same ratio of housing vs. labor in the region. She provided a brochure with maps that include data about the regions and what is happening in them. There was a large median home price differential between New London and the Lebanon area. This will dictate where more people will live in the area. They also looked at the average house size and number of people who live in them. Commuting times are longer and people are driving longer distances to get to work which will address transportation in the future. It is important to look at what is happening on the other side of the river (Vermont) so they are working closely with the Vermont RPC. They anticipate the need of 4,500 – 4,700 new units over the next ten years to be able to house the aging demographics in the region.

Chair Kaplan felt the information was very interesting. They are all aware of what their housing needs are but they end up being on an individual basis when people come and want to build a home. Very rarely do they have large areas where someone will come in and want to build 50-100 units. He didn't see how they, as officials, enter into the whole picture. It was possible that the college could put in a residential hall if their enrollment increased. Ms. Walker said that just knowing this information and knowing how to accommodate changes in their town regulations to allow for this kind of growth. It always comes back to their original regulations and what they want to see in their community.

Mr. Bianchi said they found out the Hanover/Lebanon area was in a different growth pattern than New London was. Ms. Walker said that New London would be ripe for growth opportunity, as it is between Concord and New London. Mr. Bianchi said that the town has been attracting more and older people. Ms. Walker said that this is happening everywhere and is exaggerated in New Hampshire.

Mr. Bianchi wondered what would happen as the older people die off. He wondered if that issue had been addressed. What would happen if young people don't move in as fast as the older people die? Ms. Walker said that they need to incorporate flexibility to allow usages to change over time. Chair Kaplan said that they have been flexible as half of their population is elderly and a good portion is from the college.

Mr. Stanley said that the town's zoning can't drive what happens in a community. There could be some changes in zoning around the college if they continue to grow as they are. One privately owned subdivision that has never been built is contemplating building two family rental units in thoughts of renting to college students. There are other opportunities for light industrial use at the old post office. Things are happening and opportunities present themselves as they change. When the older people die off, it will promote even more change. He said that they are trying to tweak their zoning all the time in order to work with the changes that are taking place. Their current goal is to focus development towards the center of town where all their town services are available (sewer and water). They have the fourth highest density population in the region but have hidden it very well and have retained their unique look by using careful planning.

Ms. Helm found it interesting that this was a New Hampshire issue in terms of age and they should realize that it isn't just an issue with the town of New London.

Ms. Walker handed out some information to the board. The nine regional planning commissions in the state got together and put in an application for a unique opportunity through HUD. They were successful and received \$3.4 million dollars to bring into the state. Now, they are required to create a regional plan for the next 10 years. The project started at a national level between the EPA, HUD and the DOT. They wanted a way to find out how effectively the money was being used throughout the state. Over the next three years they will be working to create a regional plan to use for the state's development plan. They want to be able to do a significant amount of public outreach to see what people want in their communities and have some difficult and large discussions on how the region wants to grow. She noted

that there was an agreement she would like them to sign saying that they would participate in the information-gathering for their study. They did not need to sign it that day, but wanted them to be aware that their input was valued and requested.

Ms. Walker said that the Nashua RPC will subcontract out to the other RPCs and there is no financial obligation to the towns. She said they want to find out if the communities will be engaged in their information finding for their study. Ms. Helm wondered if they would use New London's new Master Plan to gather information. Ms. Walker said they would. They would review state-wide documents as well as the master plans of the 27 municipalities in this region.

Ms. Helm recalled that Ms. Walker had noted that the RPC likes to attend town fairs/events to gather information on public interest in the region. She suggested that Market on the Green was an opportunity in which the RPC could participate to hand out information to people. Ms. Walker agreed that those types of events would be what their information gathering efforts would look to use, however no set decisions have been made on exactly which events would be focused on.

Mr. Stanley said that New London has the opportunity to have two appointees to the RPC. This would ideally be someone from the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen appoints these people. He was one of the appointees and felt another one should be named. He felt this should be pushed with the Planning Board to nominate another person.

#### Receipt for a Petition to Make Shaker Street a Scenic Road

Mr. Jerry Gold of 25 Shaker Street and Rick Flint met with the Board to discuss the petition they submitted for consideration at Town Meeting to declare Shaker Street a scenic road. Mr. Gold explained that the wholesale tree removal on Route 114 in North Sutton and Route 103A in Newbury has triggered their action to get the petition circulated and signed. They found great willingness of those on Shaker Street to sign the petition. There were about 40 potential voters on the street, and 23 signatures. The State RSA requires a minimum of 10 signatures. Six voters are out of town and a few are still considering. He felt that the saving grace is that the RSA is very explicit saying that the Road Agent may, without a hearing, do emergency work to the trees when they become a danger.

Mr. Gold said that the trees on the corner of Shaker Street are maples that are dying and are very old. Mr. Lee said he is familiar with these trees. They have taken a couple of them down over the years and there were two more that ought to come down. Mr. Lee explained that when a road is declared scenic, unless the trees are declared a nuisance, the Highway Department will have to come to a public hearing to cut them down. Most road agents see a scenic road designation as being cumbersome. They don't cut down trees unless they are dying or are coming down anyway. The trees in question belong to the homeowner, not the Town, and they won't cut them down unless they become a nuisance.

Mr. Bianchi wondered if they could trim trees on a scenic road at will. Mr. Lee said that trimming can't be done without approval from the Planning Board at a public hearing. PSNH has had to do this in the past. He said it was another layer they'd have to go through before they can do what needs to be done. Chair Kaplan asked Mr. Lee if they objected having Shaker Road become a scenic road. Mr. Lee said 9 out of 10 road agents would say they would object, but he personally did not object. Normal road maintenance, like ditching, can still be done on a scenic road. As long as everyone on the road knows this, it would make things easier when they have to do maintenance. He observed that sometimes people on a scenic road come out and complain to the highway department when work is being done on the road as they think that nothing can be done without a public hearing. This is not the case, public hearings are only held when tree trimming or removal is needed, unless the trees are declared a nuisance, in which case only Board of Selectmen approval is needed.

Mr. Gold said that Shaker Street is one of the oldest streets in the town, is much used by bicyclists, and they like the trees on the street. They have power lines that go through the upper branches of the healthy Oak trees. They don't want to wait and have PSNH come and take down the trees on the road. Mr. Lee said that the Town doesn't take many trees down and only trim trees as much as they have to. They spend three or four thousand dollars just pruning trees to get as much life out of them as possible.

Ms. Helm asked if PSNH has to come to the town before they trim. Ms. Hallquist said that they only need to get permission when trimming on a scenic road. Ms. Helm said that she wasn't impressed with the cutting that was done on the corner of Rowell Hill. Mr. Stanley said that the loggers did an awful job and had that been a scenic road, the Planning Board would have spelled out how they were to take care of the trees and the property before getting permission to proceed.

It was noted that to cut a tree on a scenic road, Mr. Lee would either need to go to the Board of Selectmen if the tree was declared a nuisance and needed immediate removal for safety reasons, the Planning Board, or the property owner to gain permission. Property owners on a scenic road can take their own trees down, should they wish, without any permission from the Town. Ms. Helm noted that they are not requesting this designation because of the manner in which the Town has taken down trees, but rather the way private owners and PSNH have done so. Mr. Gold agreed that this was the case.

This will be on the warrant as a petition article. The Board of Selectmen thanked the gentlemen for coming in.

#### TDS Telecom – Request for Franchise Agreement

The Board noted receipt of a draft cable franchise agreement as submitted by TDS Telecom to allow TDS to provide cable service within the Town. Ms. Hallquist offered that the Board could request that a representative of TDS appear before the Board to discuss the matter in more detail. Mr. Stanley said that TDS has put fiber optics all throughout the town but have not used it or promoted it at all but he assumed that they would use it eventually to compete with Comcast. He felt they had dragged their feet and hadn't been timely in pursuing this. Ms. Walker said that there would be a forum to discuss the telecommunications competition in the area. Ms. Hallquist said she would contact TDS to have a representative attend a meeting to discuss the matter further.

#### Agreement with Nobis Engineering – Monitoring and Post-Closing Reporting

Ms. Hallquist said that due to good results for ground water quality testing in the past, the State is requiring less reporting to be done in the landfill and the stump dump, and thus the budget for the work is lower than last year. Mr. Lee said that they tested last week at the land fill.

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Tina Helm) to approve the contract with Nobis Engineering in the amount of \$10,999. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### Estimate from Wright -Pierce for Changes in the Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

Ms. Hallquist said there are some changes needed to the Pleasant Lake Dam EAP as a result of the recent test and pages need to be re-done and re-submitted. Mr. Bianchi said they will charge the full \$27,000 for the study and felt it interesting that at the meeting Wright- Pierce told them they wouldn't go for reclassification of the dam, but in the proposal they accepted, even though reclassification was not possible they were charged for this effort. Mr. Lee said that this is because they actually did work towards reclassifying the dam but found that it was not possible.

**IT WAS MOVED (Tina Helm) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to approve the expenditure of \$500 to Wright- Pierce's for the amendments needed to the EAP.**

Mr. Bianchi said that this should be the last increase they would approve. He understood it wasn't that much money, but was concerned that additional charges keep coming up after the Board is lead to believe that the project is completed.

**THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Tax Rate Discussion

Chair Kaplan said that the tax rate of \$4.87 will be used for the first two quarterly tax billings of the 2012 tax year. This rate is adjusted to account for the additional 6 month budget that was included in the 2011 tax rate of \$5.86. Ms. Hallquist said this had been approved by the State Department of Revenue.

To clarify a previous discussion she had with Mr. Bianchi, Ms. Hardy explained that you can't compare the payment made in March with the payment made in July. Five payments were made in 2011. In 2012 the total tax bill will be similar but will be paid in four installments instead of five. Mr. Bianchi said that for those who are not part of the water precinct or the sewer department, April, July and October of 2011 bills were all the same figure. The tax bills for January and April were \$532 less. When he gets his bill in July it will be \$780 more than the January and April bills. He didn't think that the public would understand why this was the case. He was sure there was a reason, but the average person would not understand. Ms. Hardy noted that in her opinion the issue did not need to be explained any further and that previous attempts to clarify the issue actually made it more confusing for taxpayers.

Mr. Bianchi said he had to plead complete stupidity and when it came time to explain it he would defer it to someone else. He observed that people don't understand how they set a tax rate in October and go through the process, noting that Ms. Hardy and his colleagues understand it because they are paid to do so, but he did not understand it. He felt there would be confusion about it at Town Meeting and questions would be asked. Ms. Hardy said they were perfectly prepared to explain this and could answer people's questions.

Ms. Hardy said that the last letter that the selectmen sent out with the tax bills claiming that their tax bills would be lower only caused more calls and complaints from the public. It didn't mean anything about their overall taxes. Her plea was to not offer any written explanation in the future. Ms. Helm said that at Town Meeting, questions could be directed to Ms. Hardy to explain, as she was well versed in how it all worked.

Changes in 2013 Board of Selectmen's Budget

Ms. Hallquist said that the furnace in the Town Office was leaking water. They had Century Mechanical, ARC, and Miller Plumbing look at the furnace. Miller Plumbing advises that the Board should replace the furnace. Mr. Bianchi said that the furnace that they have now has been converted from oil to propane and keeps the water heated to 200 degrees every day of the year. The water that goes to the sinks is heated by an electric heating mechanism. When Miller looked at it, he said that they could take apart a section that is leaking, but it would cost more to fix it than what the entire boiler was worth. A newer boiler, with smaller BTUs, would be a better solution. Everything is plumbed already and only a replacement would be needed. Mr. Bianchi said that this was not a job that Miller would do as it is a bigger commercial project than they generally do. Mr. Bianchi suggested putting this out for bid proposals for replacement with a new propane boiler. Mr. Bianchi noted that there are funds available for this purpose.

Mr. Bianchi said that in the Town Report last year, Article 11 said that the town appropriated \$55,000 for building maintenance. Article 9 is for Town Building Maintenance Capital Reserve which they put in \$30,000. They had about \$39,000 in the account in the beginning of the year, making it equal to about \$70,000 after the last funding. There has been \$55,000 appropriated for repairs to the roof on the Academy Building as well as the new jail cell doors. Even if they spend all that was appropriated for these things, it would leave about \$15,000 in that account and they (the Board of Selectmen) are authorized to spend without Town Meeting approval. He said they need to make sure there is \$55,000 in the account for the other two projects before they take any money out for the boiler. Mr. Bianchi said that the money is in an existing capital reserve so they could use it now without having to ask for it the next year. He thought that this should cover the boiler replacement. Ms. Helm added that they should realize some savings from getting a new boiler as it would use less energy.

Chair Kaplan said they should send someone to look at the cupola at the Town Hall, as it is in terrible shape. He didn't know if it needed paint or repairs.

Ms. Hallquist said she would send out a request for proposal for the replacement of the boiler.

Ms. Hallquist asked the Board to review the list of items that will appear on the warrant to let the Budget Committee know what the Board of Selectmen is recommending or not recommending. Mr. Bianchi said he wanted to make a change to the contributions to the Recreation Capital Outlay. It was first at \$107,500 and was predicated on Mr. Denning's estimates to raise the roof and do a \$120,000 upgrade. This figure was later brought down to \$108,000 and now again decreased to \$79,000. Mr. Bianchi said he was asked by some Budget Committee members to bring them through the building at Bucklin Beach. He obtained a key and took them through the building along with a builder, Jim Granger. They weren't sure if the roof needed to be replaced, the windows can be replaced or re-glazed. A couple of the toilets may need to be replaced. Three low-flow toilets are in there now which were put in in 2008. The need for a separate entrance bathroom, to him, was not necessary. He suggested changing the amount from \$107,000 to \$15,000 to paint, fix the toilets and the roof. He felt this was a result of neglected maintenance to date. He crawled up in the attic and found that it is not a truss roof but is a standard roof. He thought they could clean up the building for \$15,000.

Chair Kaplan asked Mr. Bianchi if they had Mr. Denning with them when they walked through the building at Bucklin. Mr. Bianchi said that they did not as Mr. Denning was on vacation, and noted that Mr. Denning's presence was not needed there because he already had his presentation ready. Chair Kaplan opined that it was inappropriate for a tour of the building without the department head present. Mr. Bianchi noted that he did not set up the tour, he merely secured the key when asked by budget members who wanted to look at the building. Mr. Bianchi observed that he felt the amount Mr. Denning was asking for was not needed and would impact the capital reserve too greatly.

Ms. Helm said she had a long discussion with Mr. Wheeler and thought they should leave the budget the way it is and let the Budget Committee make this change if they see it appropriate. She was in favor of Mr. Bianchi's suggestion but was sorry that he didn't wait until Mr. Denning was present to accompany them on the site visit, as it would have been appropriate to have him included. Chair Kaplan said that he felt it was a mistake to exclude Mr. Denning in the walk-through because it was his area. Mr. Bianchi said that he only did this per the request of some members of the Budget Committee. Chair Kaplan said that Mr. Bianchi could have told them that they should wait until Mr. Denning was present. He felt it was inappropriate to go behind any department head's back this way. Ms. Helm said she would not vote for this change as a selectman but if the Budget Committee wants to make this change (to lower the amount from the selectmen's recommendation), she has no problem with it.

Ms. Hallquist noted that new information has been submitted by Mr. Denning since the Board of Selectmen prepared its budget. She said that when the Budget Committee reviews the new information and comments on it later that evening at its meeting, the Selectmen can decide if it will revise its recommendation to coincide with the Budget Committee. Mr. Denning would be giving the Budget Committee three options and then ask the Budget Committee what they wanted. It is possible that they could choose to fund one of the three options, come up with a new option or not recommend any funding at all.

Ms. Helm said she was sorry and disappointed that he and the Budget committee people went into the building without Mr. Denning. She felt that Mr. Bianchi could have said he didn't think it was appropriate. Also, she would like to leave this issue to the Budget Committee and would have no problem with them coming forward with another amount, such as \$15,000. Mr. Bianchi said they have always tried to have a united front on this. He asked if the Board of Selectmen would approve whatever the Budget Committee decides on the capital outlay for the Recreation Department. Chair Kaplan and Ms. Helm said they wanted to hear from Mr. Denning before they made any decisions.

Ms. Hallquist said after the Budget Committee meets that night, they would hopefully have just one public hearing. Once they get the warrant prepared, both the Budget Committee and Selectmen will have to decide what they will recommend or not recommend.

Mr. Bianchi suspected that there could be a problem with the Budget Committee approving the expenditure of \$860,000 for a new fire truck that evening. Chair Kaplan and Ms. Helm disagreed and felt that the money had been set aside for many years to enable this purchase, and that concerns had already been vetted. Mr. Bianchi said that some people of the Budget Committee had actually crawled underneath the truck and so this may make a difference in what their decision may be. He suggested that Chair Kaplan consult with the Budget Committee as to when this was done. Mr. Bianchi said that the Budget Committee and the Board of Selectmen have been told that the Town needs to get a new fire truck because the current truck has rusted out. He has learned that there is no rust on the engine. The issue is being stressed now is that the truck is not reliable.

Ms. Hallquist said that they should wait to see what happens at the meeting. If the Budget Committee recommends the purchase of the fire truck there will not be an issue with the 10% rule and the voters will be able to decide whether or not to purchase the fire truck (the 10% rule says that voters cannot increase expenditures by more than 10% of what the budget committee recommends. The cost of the fire truck exceeds that 10%, so if the budget committee declines to recommend it, the voters will not be able to vote to purchase it.)

It was decided to meet on Monday, April 9<sup>th</sup> at 8:00am to finalize their recommendations based in the Budget Committee's meeting.

Ms. Johnson said that if the Selectmen were going to adopt some or all of the changes the Budget Committee had made or if they would stand with their original budget. Chair Kaplan thought they should come to the town in agreement and would like the budgets to be the same. Ms. Johnson noted that there were few variations between the two budgets so far and noted she would make the necessary changes to coincide with the Budget Committee's changes to date.

Ms. Helm thought that for the \$30,000 for the insurance should be part of the operating budget because it is an operating expense. The \$25,000 for the Pleasant Lake Dam is a catastrophic expense. They hadn't anticipated it and she felt it was fine to take it out of surplus. Mr. Wheeler had thought that both of these expenses should be taken out of surplus, but Ms. Helm disagreed with this plan. Mr. Bianchi noted that

Ms. Helm had voted twice against addressing the \$30,000 by putting it in the operating budget. Ms. Helm agreed and said that she had thought a lot about it and had changed her mind. She didn't want them to change the vote but was comfortable taking it out of capital reserves but not from surplus.

Chair Kaplan didn't want people to think of surplus as a pool of cash that they can use for whatever they want. They use it to reduce the tax rate by the Board of Selectmen in October, period. Ms. Hallquist said that the town voters can take authority away from the selectmen by voting to use more of surplus to reduce taxes even more and that some towns routinely do so. It would, however, be a mistake for the taxpayers to reduce surplus to zero. Chair Kaplan felt it was a slippery slope to use surplus for things here and there. Before they know it, there will be no surplus left to use to reduce the taxes. Ms. Helm opined that everyone felt the same about the need for surplus and the manner in which they should use it, however this was a compromise she felt was appropriate.

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Tina Helm) that these two expenditures (\$30,000 and \$25,000) be included in the Selectmen's request to the budget they have presented on January 9, 2012. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

For Fiscal Year 2013, \$9,000 is being taken from the operating budget for sidewalks and will appear as a warrant article with funding to come from the Highway Fund – made up of the \$5 surcharge on car registrations.

Mr. Bianchi wondered if they should come up with a statement for how the Selectmen feel about the use of surplus for the \$55,000 expenditures. Ms. Helm didn't think there needed to be a motion but wanted to see how the conversation went that evening. She thought the idea was just thrown out by Mr. Wheeler and it could be moot at this point. Mr. Bianchi agreed but said that perhaps the consensus of the board on this issue could help the Budget Committee

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Tina Helm) to not recommend the use of surplus to pay for the \$30,000 and the \$25,000 capital reserve items. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### Ambulance Agreement

Ms. Hallquist said she was going to attend the scheduled meeting at the New London Hospital to discuss the agreement. Chief Lyon has been invited as well and will likely attend.

#### Committee Meeting Reports

Ms. Helm said that at the last Planning Board, there was a request by a homeowner to review a storm water management plan on their property. Also, the SAU is planning to remove their old building on Main Street by the end of April. There was also some discussion about Colby-Sawyer and their responsibilities to the water precinct for future expansion. Lastly, she noted that Cottage Lane, a subdivision owned by Harry Snow, may have some duplexes built on them for rent by Colby-Sawyer College students.

Mr. Bianchi observed that the Town is waiving all the fees to demolish the SAU building.

#### Application for Building Permits:

- Peter C. Bianchi & Hannah Houghton, 36 Job Seamans Acres (Map & Lot 074-007-000) new roof – interior renovations – Permit #12-019 – Approved.

- Maria Blanck, 906 Main Street (Map & Lot 109-019-000) extensive interior renovations – Permit #12-020 – Approved.
- Tracy Prescott/Brian Prescott Trust, 242 Elkins Road (Map & Lot 077-041-000) interior renovation – Permit #12-021 – Approved.
- Kearsarge Regional School District, 169 Main Street (Map & Lot 073-076-000) demolition of 2 story building & garage – Permit #12-022 – Approved.
- Slope 'N Shore Club, Inc., 836 Pleasant St. (Map & Lot 036-018-000) replace fencing and resurface court #3 – Permit #12-023 – Approved.
- Extension – Colby Sawyer College, 541 Main St. (Map & Lot 085-033-000) completion of renovation of Burpee & Abbey dorms – Permit #11-009 – Approved.
- Amendment – Todd & Ingrid Quillen, 295 Forest Acres Road (Map & Lot 118-015-000) 50' square foot entry addition – Permit 12-003 – Approved.

Application for use of Syd Crook Conf. Room:

Application for Sign Permit

- NLOC – 114 Cougar Court – sandwich board in front of information booth – Hoopfest – 4/14/2012 – Approved.

Application for use of the New London Town Commons:

- Elkins Fish & Game Club, fly fishing class, May 19<sup>th</sup>, (rain date 5/16) 10AM-2PM – Approved.

Other Items to be signed:

- Disbursement voucher
- 13 Veteran Credit Applications – approved
- Application for Current use, Paul & Linda Parker, 74 Little Briton Lane- approved
- NLPD applications for highway safety grants – approved.
- Yield Tax Levy, \$182.73 – Cassita, 856 Main St. (Map & Lot 109-020) approved.

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

The meeting adjourned at 11:50am.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary  
Town of New London