



TOWN OF
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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NEW LONDON BUDGET COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
September 27, 2017
7:00 PM

PRESENT:

Nancy Rollins, Selectman
Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer
Richard Lee, Public Works Department
Ed Andersen, Chief of Police
Jay Lyon, Fire Chief
Donna Larrow, PD Administrative Assistant
Sandra Licks, Library Director
Budget Committee Members: Joe Cardillo, Colin Campbell, Rob Prohl, Chris Lorio, Tyler Beck, Phyllis Piotrow, Suzanne Jesseman, Bruce Hudson, Lyndsay Lund

Chair Robert Prohl called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Meeting Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (Phyllis Piotrow) AND SECONDED (Suzanne Jesseman) to approve the minutes from the May 17, 2017 meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Selectmen's Report: Review of major FY2018 decisions and expenditures since May 2017

Selectmen Rollins stated that it has been a busy time. One area where there have been significant changes is in staffing. The decision was made to take two-part time positions in the Selectmen's Office and make one full time administrative assistant position. The Land Use Coordinator position has been posted and Deputy town clerk/tax collector position that was vacant has been filled.

A decision was made to split out the functions of Planning and Zoning Administrator. Adam Ricker from the Upper Valley Planning Commission is doing the planning function, meeting with the Planning Board, etc. This will be tried for a period of time.

For the Zoning Administrator position, we have entered into an inter-municipal agreement with the Town of Sunapee. Together we will jointly hire a full-time position but it would be split between Sunapee and New London. We would try this for 6-12 months. There were concerns expressed that the zoning rules and regulations are different in the two communities but felt there are enough similarities and we both surround the same lake. The tri town assessing process has worked very well.

The Land Use and Assessing Coordinator position also needs to be filled. This position previously has supported Norm Bernaiche in the assessor position as well as the Zoning Board. This job is posted on the Town website.

Gisela Rogers has been hired as a deputy tax collector.

After all of these changes, the savings in FY2018 will be approximately \$13,770.

A review has been done of the Personnel Policies. This is still in process. Health Insurance is of significance and a thorough review is being done.

The updated dashboard contains the status of all the significant projects that have been going on.

In the state legislature, an appropriation was made in the amount of \$116,424.76 as a result of Senate bill 38 and this is to address roads, bridges and transportation related matters. We have designated \$78,000 of that to grade and pave Fieldstone, White Pine Lane and Little Cove roads. \$56,000 has been designated to shim half of Burpee Hill from County Road to the top of the hill. That brings us to a total of \$134,000 and Mr. Lee was able to combine \$18,000 from an existing paving line to complete those projects. The projects had to be new projects so couldn't be any that we had already agreed on and appropriated funds for.

House bill 121 was sent to committee. This bill would allow an increase of \$5 on car registrations to \$10. We have invested those funds into fixing roads. A letter was sent to Senator Ward, who is on that committee. The way the legislation reads is that the town MAY elect to increase this so if the bill passed, the proposal would be sent to Town meeting to see whether the town has any interest. This fund has helped us fix roads, bridges and culverts.

Selectmen Rollins distributed a 10-year tax rate history. The Board of Selectmen met with the county delegation for a meet and greet to learn what they are currently doing with the nursing home and prison. They discussed controlling costs since significant portions of our tax bill goes to both the county and the school board.

Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer, reported that the unofficial results for FY2017 show that 97.4% of the operating budget was spent, leaving \$271,000 unspent. There was also about \$200,000 in excess revenue. Phyllis Piotrow asked if the unspent money was a result of anything important not getting done. Selectmen Rollins responded that no, not on the list of projects that were identified.

FY2019 Budget Requests

Chair Prohl stated that all members should have received the FY2019 Budget Requests. In speaking with Board of Selectmen Chair Bill Helm last week, he wanted to make sure it was understood this came from the Department Heads and that no cuts or revisions had been made by Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator.

Phyllis Piotrow just wanted to comment that she would like the format to be more consistent in the way they are written up by each department.

Lyndsey Lund would like to propose that due to the amount of money that is paid to the school district that we have a better understanding of where this money is going and what its purpose is. She would like to have a subcommittee of the budget committee to review and get an in depth look at the amount of money given to the district. Fifty percent of the town's property tax goes to the school and it is rarely questioned.

She feels that as a community and town we need to be better informed. The dialogue between the communities and the district could be better unified with better communication. She recently asked the superintendent if he would be willing to come to a meeting. She feels we should be more invested.

Mr. Cardillo commented that there may already be a forum to bring this to. He feels that as a budget committee we have no authority, other than as personal citizens, to make decisions. Ms. Lund feels as the budget committee we should bring this to our meeting so we can get a synopsis presented. We should want information that pertains to our community itself, facilities, playgrounds etc. There are communication gaps and it needs to be improved.

Selectmen Rollins stated that in the past we have had our school board representatives come to meetings or we have met with them to find out the hot topics or big budget items. The deliberative session is critical to that because it is clear that how much they have labored to keep things under control but a substantial part is the teachers union and salaries and this can't be negotiated. They try hard to keep costs down. She feels it may be helpful to have our town representatives come speak with us. It could be inviting them to speak to a small group of the budget committee or to a joint session with a board of Selectmen to hear what our concerns and questions are.

Bruce Hudson does not feel that this is the purview of the budget committee. We oversee the funding of the tax collected dollars but it is for the operating budget for the town of New London. It is the purview of the board of Selectmen and the MBC with the School Board. We can however, ask the representatives to attend a meeting.

Visits to Departments – Subcommittees

At the budget committee meeting in May, it was discussed that if somebody wanted to visit a department to ask questions, they would schedule this and then put it out to the group to see if anyone else wanted to go. Because of the way we are doing the budget with the department heads this year, Chair Prohl would like to know if we would like to continue to do this as there may not be a need. Contact Chair Prohl if you are interested, send him an email and he can coordinate this.

Schedule and Procedure of Joints Meetings with Selectmen to Hear Department Heads

This is a new process this year and will be an opportunity for the budget committee to hear the presentations from the department heads at the same time they are being presented to the Selectmen. This will be a chance to get information and ask questions. Selectman Rollins stated that this is an effort to save time for the department heads. It is not to take the place of the deliberative process of the budget committee. The upcoming meetings will take place on Monday nights. The Selectmen will start their meeting at 6:00pm and will pause to start the budget meeting at 6:30 and will resume any remaining business once the budget meeting is over.

Capital Reserve Subcommittee Meetings

In the past, the budget chair and the Selectmen representatives go over capital reserve funds. The next meeting will be held on November 20, 2017. Chair Prohl asked if there should be a meeting prior to that date. Selectmen Rollins felt that the initial discussion should be done together. Any dates for reconciliation meetings will be decided later.

Draft Schedule for Budge Committee Deliberations

There are three dates proposed for December – the 6th, 13 and 20th. It was noted that if the Committee can get

enough done on the 6th and 13th, an assessment will be taken to determine whether a meeting will be held on the 20th and if additional meetings will be needed.

Proposed Dates for Public Hearings

The proposed dates for public hearings are February 7th and 8th, 2018. The town meeting will be held on March 14, 2018.

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Suzanne Jesseman) to adjourn.
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson, Recording Secretary
Town of New London