



# TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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## JOINT BOARD OF SELECTMEN/BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES Wednesday, January 15, 2020 7:00 PM

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEMBERS PRESENT:** Nancy Rollins (Chair), Janet Kidder, John Cannon

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Rob Prohl (Chair), Joe Cardillo (Vice Chair), Jerry Coogan, Chris Lorio, John Raby, Michael Williams, Mark Christensen, Suzanne Jesseman

**STAFF PRESENT:** Kimberly Hallquist, Town Administrator, Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Public Works Director, Bob Harrington, Fire Chief, Jay Lyon, Bill Helm, Debbie Stanley, Mark Vernon, Donna Larrow.

Selectman Chair Rollins called the joint meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

### Reconciliation of Selectmen and Budget Committee Budgets:

The Boards reviewed the list of budget items where there is a disagreement between the boards:

	Selectmen	Budget Committee	Difference BOS to BC
Legal	\$20,750	\$15,750	-\$5,000
Cemetery	\$35,955	\$28,750	-\$7,205
Fire Dept	\$451,650	\$545,028	+\$93,378
Transfer to CRF	\$783,510	\$618,510	-\$165,000
Sidewalks -\$30,000			
Gravel Road Paving -\$100,000			
Town Building Maintenance -\$50,000			
Conservation Land +\$15,000			
Capital Outlay			
Vehicles	\$346,000	\$401,000	+55,000 (Fire Utility Truck)
Improvements	\$66,000	\$135,000	+69,000 (added gravel Road)

Chair Rollins noted that in order to proceed the above items needs to be discussed and reconciled.

Legal – Chair Prohl stated they discussed the likelihood of upcoming legal cases with Town Administrator Kim Hallquist and they felt they could lower the amount by \$5,000 and still be safe as there are currently no cases. Joe Cardillo recalled that they discussed that this was a revaluation year for the town and they haven't had any complaints come in so far so felt it would be fine to reduce the amount.

Cemetery – Chair Prohl stated they reduced this amount due to part time wages. The total was reduced based on past numbers and hours worked is largely weather dependent. Bob Harrington noted that historically they haven't come close to the number budgeted so was comfortable with this.

Fire Department – Chair Prohl stated they heard the presentation from Fire Chief Jay Lyon and the Firewards and felt that it is time to fund the Code Compliance Officer position. Chief Lyon has been frugal over the years and takes advantage of applying for grants whenever possible. The Budget Committee wanted to support him in this request.

Selectmen Kidder asked Chief Lyon how he determined the salary for this position and Chief Lyon responded it is based on the labor grade determined from the wage study done a few years ago. Having this as a part time position was discussed but would not be ideal.

Transfer to Capital Reserve Funds (CRF) – Chair Prohl stated that he and Joe Cardillo spent time looking at the Transportation Fund in an effort to get the budget increase down below 4%; the Transportation Fund is the result of a \$5.00 car registration fee. This fund balance is approximately at \$150,000.

Chair Prohl asked Mr. Cardillo to present the Budget Committee's position on the CRF. Mr. Cardillo explained that the \$165,000 difference between the Selectmen and Budget Committee budgets is comprised of four different areas that were addressed. The Budget Committee looked to the Transportation Fund which can only be used for transportation related projects such as roads, bridges and sidewalks. They decided if they accelerate the road paving projects that total \$135-\$150,000 worth of roads they could use these funds. The Selectmen could put an article on the warrant for this. This work can be subcontracted out and would not require the labor of our Public Works Department.

As a result of the plans to use these funds, funding for sidewalks (\$30,000) and gravel road paving (\$100,000) could be put off for a year. With regards to the Town Building Maintenance fund, most of the projects that have been done in recent years were done through bonding. It was felt that this was another area that could forgo funding for this year (\$50,000) since this account is in good shape.

A commitment was made to add \$15,000 to the Conservation Land Acquisition budgeted amount of \$10,000 for a total of \$25,000. They would like to fund this account each year moving forward.

#### Capital Outlay

The increase of \$55,000 was for the Fire Utility Truck. Chief Lyon commented that they originally scheduled this to be replaced this year but tried to push this back a year. Unfortunately, they have had mechanical issues with the vehicle so the department feels that the vehicle must be purchased in the upcoming budget instead of waiting. This is a vehicle they rely on.

Joe Cardillo asked about the car registration fee and if it can be increased to \$10 per car instead of \$5. Ms. Hallquist stated that she is aware that they tried to change the law to allow it to be increased as high as \$10 but does not believe that it became law. If it has changed, it can be put on the warrant

for town meeting. Mr. Cardillo noted that Wendy Johnson reported that the Transportation Fund generates approximately \$20,000 per year so by increasing the registration fee, road projects could get done quicker. Because it's on a car registration, the burden is not entirely on taxpayers, it falls on residents. Ms. Hallquist will research this further.

John Raby asked the Selectmen to take another look at the appropriation for the Land Conservation Fund. The original request was for \$50,000, the Selectmen appropriated \$10,000 and the Budget Committee agreed on \$25,000. At a January meeting Mr. Raby cited studies that would justify an increase related to global carbon emissions, climate change and a reduction in staple food crops. Since that time, he has been made aware of two additional studies that state within the next 60 years, the climate in the state will resemble the Carolina's and that winter heat waves have arrived and will happen year-round. He would like to grant the \$50,000 request. Chair Prohl noted they had a motion for \$50,000 and it failed. The \$25,000 motion passed.

Chris Lorio asked the Selectmen why they didn't vote to increase it and kept it at \$10,000. Selectmen Kidder stated she believes that if a piece of property that the Conservation Commission wants becomes available, the town would support it. Most of the land in town that the Conservation Commission has targeted is very expensive and a \$50,000 contribution isn't going to help much. The citizens of this town care about open space, conservation and agriculture. Chair Prohl felt the \$25,000 contribution was a compromise to show support.

Joe Cardillo asked about the change of current use land use tax. Ms. Hallquist responded that these funds go into the general fund and as a revenue, are used to reduce taxes Mr. Cardillo discussed the penalty when land is pulled out of current use and questioned if the land use change tax could be placed into the capital reserve fund for Conservation instead of the General fund. The more development there is, the more current use penalties there are. Mr. Cardillo would like to find ways to help Conservation and this would be a great source. Mr. Cardillo asked the Selectmen to adding an article on the warrant to allow the funds to go to the Conservation Fund.

Debbie Stanley stated it is important to have money in reserves as this is looked at favorably when applying for grant money. Mark Vernon stated the capital reserve fund is very important and likely one of many sources they would use to fund land purchases. He stated they need all the help they can get.

### **Computer Support**

Michael Williams provided a report regarding computer support. He went through invoices for the past twelve months for computer support and \$23,000 has been spent. Another \$27,000 was spent on support tickets. They have received proposals from the current provider and from another provider that Mr. Williams identified at the New Hampshire Municipal Association conference. They would be able to provide support for a flat fee. The Police Department asked for money for a flat fee contract this year, but the town administration did not. Mr. Williams feels there is a gap there. The vendor that Mr. Williams identified would be able to provide info security for an additional \$34,000 per year. Mr. Williams stressed that what we currently have budgeted is not sufficient. Whether or not to switch to a complete care package is still being decided as more research needs to be done. Selectman Kidder feels it's important to protect the town but it was decided to have Mr. Williams continue to work on this and report back at a later date.

**IT WAS MOVED (John Cannon) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the slate of proposals from the Budget Committee. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Board of Selectmen is in concurrence with the Budget Committee's recommendations. Chair Rollins thanked the Budget Committee for the work they have done.

**Next Meeting: Public Hearing, Wednesday, February 5, 2020 -**

The Public Hearing will be held on February 5, 2020 at 7:00 in the Sydney Crook Meeting Room.

**Other Business**

Kim Hallquist discussed the Park and Ride expansion. The State of New Hampshire DOT has applied for a \$700,000 grant to provide fifty more parking spaces at the Park and Ride. It is an 80/20 grant so the State is looking for help from the Town of New London towards the 20%. Dartmouth Coach has committed to 10% so that leaves the other 10% which is \$70,000. The DOT stated that they appreciate any funding that the town will give them as it demonstrates the town's support of the project. The Board of Selectmen sent a letter of support indicating that they would ask the Budget Committee for funding towards this project. It is not certain that the state will get the grant but if they do, construction is expected to start in 2021. There is no requirement for the town to help fund the expansion, but the State has been trying to get local funding for these kinds of projects. It was noted that the bus company plows the lot and mows the lawn and the Town of New London Police provide monitoring of the lot.

**IT WAS MOVED (Joe Cardillo) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to make a donation out of the unreserved fund balance in the amount of \$7,000. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Adjourn**

**IT WAS MOVED (Rob Prohl) AND SECONDED (Michael Williams) to adjourn the meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:14PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson,

Recording Secretary  
Town of New London