



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES January 5, 2015

PRESENT:

Janet Kidder, Chairman
Nancy Rollins, Selectman
Peter Bianchi, Selectman
Kimberly Hallquist, Town Administrator
Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

ALSO PRESENT:

Ed Andersen, Police Chief
Larry Dufault, Budget Committee Member
Richard Lee, Public Works Director
Phyllis Piotrow, Budget Committee Member
Minette Sweeney, The Intertown Record
Renate Kannler, New London Resident
Bruce Hudson, Budget Committee Member

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

Town Administrator's Report

Whipple Hall Plans

Ms. Hallquist said she spoke that day with Dennis Mires, PA, the architect working on Whipple Hall. He said he would email a draft of his plans that night and would have a final draft to her at some point that week.

Bob Andrews Memorial Skating Rink

Ms. Hallquist reported that the rink opened for the first time on New Year's Eve and thanked Richard Lee (Public Works Director) for keeping an eye on it to let her know when it was ready for use. She noted that soon after Christmas people had called or come into the office wanting to use the rink but it wasn't ready due to the recent warm temperatures. It was noted that the warming hut is in great shape and really is "warm" this year.

Nicholas Gilman Trust Lawsuit

Ms. Hallquist said she has learned recently from Town Counsel that the Nicholas Gilman Trust has filed in superior court because they don't agree with New London's 2014 assessment on their property. Because this just came about, she has yet to see the paperwork.

Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Review

Tracy Library – Sandra Licks, Library Director

Ms. Licks said she and the trustees made an effort to keep budget increases to a modest level. The appropriation request for the library's operating budget is up 1.7% from the previous year.

Chair Kidder asked about the price of cable increasing from \$100 per year to \$1,100. Ms. Licks said they decided to add another line for internet coming into the library to separate customer and staff use. They are being charged \$80 per month for the second line which accounts for the increase.

Ms. Licks noted that there is a separate cleaning contract for the library that is paid from Town funds that accounts for \$15,600.

Ms. Licks said they would like to make a Capital Reserve Request this year in the amount of \$35,000 to keep up with things like the library's ongoing projects, including the mechanical systems in the building. They have received three bids for work to be done with air handlers and a condenser so they feel they have an accurate estimate.

Ms. Licks explained that the trustees want to increase some salaries by as much as 4.5% and 3% for others. She said that some of the higher paid part timers are working fewer hours. Selectman Bianchi said they would discuss salaries and benefits after this first round of budgeting. He asked what the intent was as far as percentage of raises given to the library employees. Ms. Licks said the trustees wanted to go with at least a 3% raise even if the rest of the Town employees were given less.

Public Works Department – Richard Lee, Public Works Director

Mr. Lee referenced a memo he sent to the Selectmen outlining some amendments to his previous request.

Mr. Lee explained that about three years ago he agreed not to fill a full-time position to see if the department could manage with one less person. He agreed to try this for a period of time but said he was told he could come back to the Selectmen if he found that the new configuration was not working. Mr. Lee said he would like to re-fill the position in FY2016. He explained that his employees work best split up into two-person crews and now that they have an odd number of employees, making this difficult. Being down a full-time person makes it hard to get all the things done that are needed. For example, they didn't get all the leaves taken care of this fall because they didn't have the manpower and now some of the ditches are getting clogged up and are they are seeing problems with flooding. Additionally, they could have a fifth plow truck on the road if they had another employee and it would also cut down on overtime. Mr. Lee said he feels like being one person down is causing a lot of headaches and lost time and it didn't seem to be working out. He would like to hire a lower level maintenance worker so they could teach someone the ropes over the years.

Selectman Bianchi noticed that Mr. Lee's part-time hours hadn't decreased in his budget since this new request was added. Mr. Lee said they still have to pay the Facilities Manager's salary from that fund, as well as two days/week for an employee at the transfer station and some summertime help. He said he would reduce his part time hours a bit if he was able to hire another full-time employee.

Selectman Bianchi noted that the Highway Administration budget went up about \$33,000 which was 4%. He also pointed out that the budget would experience a \$28,000 savings due to decreases in health, dental and workman's compensation insurance. Mr. Lee said the increase in this budget was mostly for the full-time person.

Highway and Streets

Paving

Mr. Lee said the paving line increased by \$21,000. He wasn't sure if the price of asphalt would go down because the price of gasoline and diesel are going down; their prices often coincide. If the prices do keep declining, they may be able to pave about a half to three quarters of a mile more than planned.

Chair Kidder asked if the Highway Department could repair the pot holes on Seamans Road, in front of the Police Department as that road wasn't due to be paved again for several years. Mr. Lee said they did recently try to fill the pot holes with a premium material that was supposed to work well, but it didn't stick. He said they could fill the holes with gravel to get through the winter. He offered that drainage on Main Street needs to be addressed by the State before he could make improvements to Seamans Road. He said water from Main Street is breaking up the pavement on Seamans Road.

Gas & Diesel

Mr. Lee asked for a \$5,000 increase because they have almost reached their limit for this year. One or two weeks of winter storms could use up \$5,000 in fuel. He said the Town has a 2,000 gallon holding tank, which is topped off every week during the winter and every two weeks in the summer.

Salt

Mr. Lee said the price of salt went up this year. A trailer load is 32 tons and costs \$2,200. The Town has spent almost \$11,000 in salt already which is due to ice storms which require the application of more salt than if the storms were just snow.

Transfer Station

Grinding Brush

Mr. Lee said he decreased this line by \$8,000. This year they had a company come in and grind a pile of brush that had been accumulating for part of the year; after the invasive species of a beetle called the Emerald Ash Borer was found in Merrimack County, New London was not allowed to cross county lines to haul brush to be processed at Durgin & Crowell, located in Sullivan County. The company that came into New London ground all the brush in one day for a little under \$4,000 and took the chips away. Next year Mr. Lee estimates three days of grinding. He said they are accepting wood at the stump dump now and will be collecting it for an entire year. After some discussion between Mr. Lee and Selectman Bianchi over the actual number of grinding days needed and the amount of money already in the line, Mr. Lee said there was no way he could know exactly how much brush would be collected and therefore, how many grinding days they would need. He said he is just trying to make the best estimate possible with the information he has.

Conferences and Training

Mr. Lee said this line would decrease by \$300. The employees who work at the transfer station have to be certified and they will be taking advantage of free classes offered through the State.

Cemeteries

Grounds keeping Supplies

Mr. Lee said this line is increased by \$6,000 to pay to have the Old Main Street Cemetery surveyed and the wetlands delineated. It has been suggested to him that the cemetery needs to be expanded and one estimate he got to do this was \$65,000. Chair Kidder asked about the other cemeteries in town. Mr. Lee said West Part Cemetery is about 95% available and Elkins has approximately 100 spaces left. Old Main Street is not necessarily full, but the spaces are sold out. He hesitated to ask people to use the other cemeteries because he feared that they could then be in a position where they would need to expand more than one cemetery.

Selectman Bianchi said the Planning Board had a discussion with the Cemetery Committee about the burial alternatives people are choosing in recent years. There was some concern as to how much space they have versus what they actually needed. Over the next 20 years they don't know how the trend will go between cremation and traditional burial, the latter of which requires the most space.

Mr. Lee said the wetlands delineation and surveying will help them figure out how much space they do have and what parts of the land can be used.

Wastewater

Water

This line has an increase of \$50 due to the fact that they almost overspent the water line last year.

Building Maintenance

Mr. Lee said there would be some increases:

\$11,000 for a maintenance contract for the furnace and air conditioning

\$2,500 to build a platform at the pump station with a railing to access the air conditioning

\$2,000 to replace the trim around the windows

\$600 to paint

Selectman Bianchi said historically they have appropriated \$1,000 per year for this fund and then it jumped up to \$11,000. He thought this was because of deferred maintenance. Mr. Lee said they took over the building about four years ago so it is now his responsibility to take care of it. The estimate for the trim and platform is from Matt Grimes, Facilities Manager, who will also be doing the work.

Telephones and Pagers

Mr. Lee said the \$350 increase is to account for the alarm contract at the Georges Mills Pump Station. There have been some additions to what needs to be monitored, which causes an increase in the monitoring fee.

Equipment Maintenance & Repair

Mr. Lee said he is asking for an additional \$5,000 to do more camera work and smoke (infiltration) testing. They experience a flow influx when it rains, which occurs just four or five hours after it starts to rain. Water is coming into the system somehow and they are trying to narrow down the areas it is coming from to see how they can eliminate it. As much as \$400,000 to 1 million gallons of water can flow into the system per one inch of rain. He noted that disintegrating old clay pipe could also account for some of this leakage.

General Supplies

Mr. Lee said he added \$300 for the infiltration study to buy CDs for the man who runs the camera. Also, Granite State Waterworks supplies the smoke machine but the Town has to purchase the liquid that makes the smoke.

Payments to Sunapee

Mr. Lee said there would be an increase of \$94,500. They were over in payments last year and they aren't sure where negotiations will go for FY2016. Ms. Hallquist said Sunapee saw an increase of 4% and reminded those at the meeting that Sunapee was on the calendar year, not the fiscal year, which can make budgeting between the two towns tricky.

Selectman Bianchi said that in years 2012 – 2015, \$366,500 was appropriated. Last year they went over by about \$93,000. They are half way through the year and have used 57.58% of the appropriations. He wasn't sure where the same number came from over those previous years but said the amounts paid never reached that amount until last year when they went over by \$93,000. It was noted that New London's portion of the treatment plant is 65%. Selectman Bianchi said if they end up actually being accountable for just 59% or 60% (once more accurate readings are extracted from the new meters) they could go down in what they are asking for this line item. Mr. Lee said he would prefer to err on the side of caution and didn't want to decrease the appropriation request at this point.

Ms. Hallquist said they won't negotiate the sewer appropriations with Sunapee until September. Even if it does go down, the rates would still go up because of the bond payments coming due.

Solid Waste Cleanup

Mr. Lee said this line is increased by \$1,000. Many people are asking New London to offer more hazardous waste drives each year. They used to have them every couple of years but are seeing more requests for this kind of thing. If New London has their own collection day/site, New London residents can then participate in up to three other collection days/sites in the area. This will give New London residents four days to drop off hazardous materials.

Facilities

Whipple Hall/Police Station

Mr. Lee said he was asking for an increase of \$1,425 to pay for a heating and air conditioning maintenance contract for Whipple Hall. Additionally, he was asking for \$15,100 to paint the outside of the building, including the cupola, the trim and railings. It would also pay to have the wooden gutters cleaned and oiled. The cost did not include any repair work.

Academy Building

Mr. Lee included \$795 to pay for a maintenance contract for the furnace and AC systems. He also requested \$160,000 to have the siding and trim boards stripped off, Tyvek applied, and clapboards replaced with pre-primed clapboards with one coat of paint included. Another final coat of paint would be needed but it could be done the next year. Mr. Lee was quoted \$28,500 to just paint the building, which they have done in the past with little success with regards to longevity.

Selectman Rollins asked if an energy audit had ever been done of the Academy Building. Ms. Hallquist said one was done around 2009 by the Energy Committee. Recommendations she could recall were to add more insulation to portions of the building.

Transfer Station

Mr. Lee said he was adding \$515 for a HVAC contract.

Elkins Post Office

Mr. Lee said the building needed to be scraped and painted, which would cost \$5,500. He added that the skirting around the bottom of the building needed to be replaced, as well as a wall by the loading dock. This would cost \$500. To shingle the front section of the roof would cost \$6,500.

Equipment Replacement

Highway

Mr. Lee said he has added a 1 ton dump truck for \$80,000 and a Bobcat loader for the transfer station for \$38,000. He proposes to keep the existing Bobcat to deal with the slush from the Main Street that gets pushed onto the sidewalk from the State trucks. Snow blowers can't be used on this material but the Bobcat can. They'd like to find something else to use on the sidewalk but anything made specifically for sidewalks is upwards of \$80,000. Mr. Lee shared that standard snow blowers are not holding up today as they did 7 or 8 years ago. The State only plows the traveled lanes until the storm is over. The Town plows the parking lanes on Main Street to try to reduce the amount of slush that gets put on the sidewalks from the State trucks.

Wastewater

Mr. Lee said he added \$30,000 to replace the existing pick-up. The current pickup has a "skip" in it that the dealer can't identify. It is starting to rust out in places as well. He said they tried to put a new pickup off until 2016 but right now it has 63,000 miles on it now and if they keep it until 2016 it will have about 80,000. After 2016, it will be moved to the Highway Department for use there and he felt it was being kept a year too long before being replaced. He would like to replace the pickup for \$41,000.

Wastewater Abatement Requests

John Pesando – 54 Checkerberry Lane

Selectman Rollins asked how people are charged for water. Mr. Lee said they are either charged by a meter or by the amount of bedrooms they have. The fee goes up by the amount of bedrooms in their home.

Selectman Bianchi opined that Mr. Pesando was not very happy with the Town. Mr. Lee said that they have been dealing with this issue since 1990 and it doesn't seem to get resolved. Mr. Pesando maintains that he didn't receive the two letters Mr. Lee sent, but Mr. Lee said he signed them and they were sent. He added that Chris _____, who works in the wastewater department, said he spoke with Mr. Pesando on the 20th of October about his need for a meter. Prior to that time, the Town was under the assumption that a meter had been put in. Mr. _____ asked Mr. Pesando if he could read the meter and then discovered there wasn't one. Apparently the old home was demolished and Mr. Pesando doesn't know where the meter went. He has a new plumber who contacted the Town several weeks ago and was told what a new meter would cost. He was told that one would be ordered and it would be at the office to be picked up. It has been at the office for five weeks and they haven't heard from Mr. Pesando or his plumber since.

Mr. Lee said when someone buys a meter it belongs to them and the Town has no responsibilities towards making sure it is installed correctly or that it is in working order. He wasn't sure why a meter wasn't put into the new home. The Town will go in and put a reader on the meter, but that is all they do. He commented that many people put the meters in backwards.

Mr. Lee said this individual doesn't seem to respond until they send him a bill. He was asked to put the meter in by the end of January 2014 or the Town would bill him by bedroom, which is what they ended up doing.

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SEONDED (Peter Bianchi) to deny the abatement for John Pesando at 54 Checkerberry Lane.
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Additional Abatements

Mr. Lee suggested the abatement be approved for Sue Little at 4 Highland Ridge Road in the amount of \$337.50. It was noted that if approved, a corrected bill would be issued unless it has been paid in which case a check would be issued. He said although rare, some abatements are approved and the individuals are notified that it is a one-time arrangement and they need to take precautions to avoid an incorrect meter reading in the future.

Mr. Lee also suggested approving the abatements for Ann Harrison at 4 Hilltop Place, and Mary Sawyer at 231 Pleasant Street as well.

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SEONDED (Peter Bianchi) to approve the abatement requests for Sue Little, Ann Harrison, and Mary Sawyer.
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Septage Agreement – Winnepesaukee River Basin Program

Selectman Bianchi clarified that this was the plant in Franklin, NH where New London takes its septage. Mr. Lee said that with the new upgrades, the Sunapee Wastewater Treatment Plant will be able to accept New London's septage. He thought they should renew the agreement with the plant in Franklin, however, because the plant in Sunapee isn't up and running yet and in the event that Sunapee can't take the septage for some reason, they will still have a place to dump it.

It was noted that the last agreement the Town had with the Winnepesaukee River Basin Program was for a five year term. Ms. Hallquist said the new agreement would be indefinite unless rescinded.

The selectmen didn't have a problem with the renewal of this agreement.

New London Power Line Trail – Conservation Commission/New London Hospital

Selectmen Bianchi wondered why the Town would want to get involved in this trail. Ms. Hallquist said the Conservation Commission was simply looking for any comments or advice from the Selectmen on the project. Mr. Lee thought that at some point the Conservation Commission may come in to ask about using the sewer line right of way and possibly to request some money to build the trail. There were no reservations against this project at this time from the Selectmen.

Old/Pending Business

Vacancies on Town Boards

Ms. Hallquist said the chairs of the three boards that have spots to fill (Planning Board, Zoning Board and Conservation Commission) have spoken to some people about contacting the office to express their interest in filling a vacancy, but no one has come forward yet. She asked if the Selectmen wanted to advertise for the open positions or if they knew of any people they could suggest as possibly interested. Ms. Piotrow suggested inviting the people who had been previously rejected for these positions. Chair Kidder said people aren't generally rejected and they shouldn't take it that way if they were not chosen to serve on a board. Ms. Hallquist said the board chairs are currently trying to ask people who may be interested, some of which may have already submitted an application after last year's Town Meeting, when interest in volunteering for boards was high. If people are interested in a position, they can fill out an application.

Ms. Hallquist said the Conservation Commission is not in as dire shape as the Zoning Board is for members. Selectman Rollins said the attendance records for the Zoning Board should be considered, as one member hasn't attended the last eight meetings. Ms. Hallquist agreed that all alternates should go to all meetings. Selectmen Rollins said the Zoning Board members are responsible for absorbing a great amount of information and it is imperative that even alternates attend hearings so they know what is going on and can participate if needed.

Selectman Bianchi said the Planning Board seems to be good with numbers and the alternates come to meetings regularly.

Chair Kidder suggested that Minette Sweeney, reporter from the Intertown Record could put something in her article about the need to fill these vacancies. Ms. Sweeney said she would, as she did for the Town of Sunapee in the past.

Chair Kidder noted that there were also two new vacancies on the Recreation Commission but she believes they have the replacements ready to go.

Bruce Hudson said the website could be utilized to bring attention to the need for seats to be filled on various boards.

Recycling Committee

Ms. Hallquist noted that a recommendation came from the Single Stream Recycling Committee to establish a recycling committee. She said the Selectmen would need to determine if they wanted to appoint such a committee and if so, how many people they would like on it. It was noted that they should call the committee a “Solid Waste Review Committee” and they should get an outline of what the committee’s charge would be.

Chair Kidder thought appointing such a committee was a good idea as it could help determine how to make the transfer station better and safer and it could help them shape how they look at it for the future. Selectmen Rollins and Bianchi agreed that a committee was needed. Selectmen Bianchi said he would like to think more about what the charge of the Solid Waste Review Committee would be. This matter would be discussed at a future meeting.

Kearsarge Regional School District – Deliberative Session

Renate Kannler noted that the deliberative session of the school budget would be held at 10am on January 10th at the Kearsarge Regional High School. She wondered if the Town would be doing anything to get the word out to encourage attendance at the meeting. Chair Kidder said she feels it is the school’s responsibility to advertise and encourage people to come. People generally know about it and if they want to go they go. Ms. Hallquist said she could send a Streamsend email out, which reaches about 700 residents. It could also be put on the Town’s website.

Approval of Minutes

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to approve the minutes of December 22, 2014, as amended.
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Other Business

Recent Honor for New London Officers – Chief Andersen

Chief Andersen noted that the Selectmen were invited to the Town of Sunapee’s Selectmen’s meeting at the Sunapee Town Hall on January 13th around 6:35pm. Two of New London’s officers will be receiving a life-saving award for their roles in evacuating a sleeping resident from a home next to the Georges Mills General Store (aka “Jakes”), which caught fire and burned on the morning of January 5, 2015. They had to smash a window and move the person from her home, which was filling with smoke and could have led to her death by smoke inhalation.

Mount Sunapee Grant

Chief Andersen said he recently discovered that New London did not get accepted for the grant for the repeater on Mount Sunapee this time around. He would still be prepared with figures for equipment from Ossipee Mountain Electronics and Beltronics for the next Selectmen’s meeting on January 20, 2015.

Upcoming Meetings & Events

Recreation Commission Meeting – Monday, January 12th – 5pm at Whipple Hall
Planning Board – Tuesday, January 13th – 7:00 PM
Budget Subcommittee meeting on Capital Reserve Funds, Wednesday, January 14th, 6:00 PM
Selectmen’s Meeting – Tuesday, January 20th – 6:00 PM
Joint New London/Sunapee Wastewater Treatment Plant Meeting – January 22nd, 5:30pm – Sunapee Town Offices
Selectmen’s Meeting – Monday, January 26th – 6:00 PM
Selectmen’s Meeting – Monday, February 2nd – 6:00 PM
Martin Luther King Jr. Day – Monday, February 16th – Offices Closed
Selectmen’s Meeting – Tuesday, February 17th – 6:00 PM

Application for Building Permit:

Carol & Charles Foss, 128 Camp Sunapee Road (045-038-000) Install a 6.48kw rooftop solar electric array. - APPROVED

Application for Use of Syd Crook Conference Room

Adventures in Learning (AIL) 4/22, 29, 5/6, 13 from 1-4pm – APPROVED

Other Items to be Signed:

- DES Septage Agreement
- Employee Birthday Cards

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to adjourn the meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London

