



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES January 9, 2017 6:00 PM

PRESENT:

G. William Helm, Jr., Chair
Nancy Rollins, Selectman
Janet Kidder, Selectman
Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator
Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

ALSO PRESENT:

Richard Lee, Public Works Director
Donna Larrow, Police Department Administrative Assistant
Edward Andersen, Police Chief
Amy Rankins, Land Use and Assessing Coordinator
Jamie MacKenna, Police Department
Kim Lavin, New London Dispatch
Phyllis Piotrow, Budget Committee
Sandra Licks, Library Director
Lucy St. John, Planning & Zoning Administrator
Rob Prohl, Budget Committee Chair
Heidi Dunlap, New London Dispatch
Jay Lyon, Fire Chief
Yari McKeon, Fire Department
Andy Guptill, Public Works Department
Emily Cobb, Police Department
Josh Fischer, Police Department
Steve Ensign, Board of Firewards
Carolyn Fraley, New London resident and retired employee
Jamie Beland and Terri McNeil, CGI Business Solutions
Alison Seward and John Manaras, Solid Waste Committee members

Chair Helm opened the meeting at 6:00pm.

Health Insurance Presentation – CGI Business Solutions: Jamie Beland and Terri McNeil

Ms. Beland gave an overview of CGI Business Solutions and explained that they have offices in NH, MA, ME and VT. They help with all facets of implementing programs including consultation, administration, technology solutions, Wellness programming, retirement plan consulting, health and property and casualty insurance.

Ms. Beland explained that after researching, she found that Harvard Pilgrim seemed to be the best carrier for the Town. It is a regional company and offers HMO, PPO and Exclusive Network options. They offer a program called “ElevateHealth” which limits members to a specific group of providers. It is an HMO plan so PCP referrals are required. Nineteen of the twenty-three hospitals in the state are included in the network. Their “Options”

network is new and just began in 2017. Those 19 hospitals and all the providers associated with them are considered a “Tier 1” provider. Anyone else in the Harvard Pilgrim network is considered “Tier 2” providers. Customers should make every attempt to use Tier 1 providers but can go to Tier 2 providers at an increased cost. Local hospitals that are part of the network are New London Hospital, Alice Peck Day, Concord Hospital, and DHMC. Outpatient surgeries will cost less if they are done in specified locations – only a \$150 co-pay. Concord Ambulatory Surgery Center was the closest facility for outpatient surgery. Any other hospital chosen will be subject to the employee’s deductible. Andy Guptill asked if Franklin Hospital is included in the network; Ms. Beland responded that Franklin and Lakes Region Hospitals are not part of the network, thus using either facility would be considered Tier 2, subject to deductible.

Ms. Beland compared some benefits of the Harvard Pilgrim ElevateHealth program versus the current program the Town uses (Health Trust). Tier 1 deductible is \$1,000 per individual and a max of \$2,000 per family. Office-based visits are covered at a co-pay level as they are now. \$5,500 is the annual out-of-pocket maximum (anything paid out of pocket, prescriptions, emergency room visits, etc.) compared to \$5,000 for the current health insurance plan.

It was noted that an ambulance transport would be subject to the deductible and the amounts vary depending on the tier being used. All emergency rooms are covered under the same level. Out of state emergencies are covered under Tier 1. Boston Children’s Hospital access is available under tier 1 if it is deemed necessary by a health director. Otherwise it would be considered Tier 2 and subject to the deductible.

Eye exams would be subject to a \$20 co-pay; currently there is no co-pay with the Health Trust program. Lab work is covered in full if a tier 1 facility is used. Urgent care centers are charged the \$40 specialist co-pay. Another difference pointed out was for therapies such as PT, speech, OT which would go from 60 per person to 20 per person.

A listing of the comparisons between the two programs was distributed.

Prescription drug coverage was discussed. Ms. Beland noted that this is the area of most significant changes between the two plans. She explained that some drugs are not included in the ElevateHealth plan. Most that are not covered have a lower cost alternative that is part of the formulary plan (covered). There are different tiers in drug coverage: tiers 3, 4 and 5. Users are responsible for 30%, 35% and 40% respectively. Harvard Pilgrim pays the remainder (co-insurance). The maximum anyone would need to pay per prescription is \$550. Harvard Pilgrim will pay the remainder. Mail Order is an option and it provides a 90-day supply.

Ms. Larrow asked if a doctor requires a specific brand is there any leeway for it to be covered. Ms. Beland said there is an appeals process. If a doctor submits a request to Harvard Pilgrim they are allowed to use the medication that is not on the list. These instances are reviewed on a case by case basis to make sure there is a medical necessity to do so.

It was noted that the Harvard Pilgrim website is open for all to look at, which has details on the medications and what is covered. Price ranges for procedures such as mammograms and colonoscopies were shown for a 30 mile radius of New London.

Ms. Rankins said Health Trust has “Smart Shopper” to encourage people to use specific providers. Ms. Beland said they offer something similar. Chief Andersen asked what the average increase Harvard Pilgrim experiences each year. Ms. Beland said Harvard Pilgrim runs in the 10-12% increase each year in their plans. This is a wild-card, however as some groups increase more, some not so much. There is not a lot of flexibility in negotiation.

Chief Andersen asked what other Police Departments were covered with this insurance. Ms. Beland said the City of Concord is and she would check to see which towns of similar size to New London are covered and get back to him. She noted that the rates for Concord are very different because they are a larger sized group, so it would be better to look at towns close to New London's size.

Mr. Lee asked about retirement plans. It was noted that they put retirees in the Medicare enhanced program. Fully retired employees have to be enrolled in Medicare A and B. The Town will need to select which options to provide. A plan hasn't been chosen yet so she couldn't specify the benefits.

Ms. Beland noted that with this program, rates are assigned by member, depending on their age.

Chair Helm said they will need to keep an eye on what happens in healthcare in the state and country. The Board needs to continue to consider the details and determine what is best for the Town.

It was noted that there is a recommendation from the Employee Committee to keep the same program with Health Trust but pay more out of pocket to keep it. He wonders if all the employees were aware of this. They were not. Ms. Larrow said the Employee Committee did not meet with the employees to discuss this. Ms. Hallquist noted that the Employee Committee recommended singles go from 4%-6%, 2-person and family go from 10%-12% . The newer employees are now contributing 15% and that would not change.

Selectman Kidder observed that the member bill method of setting rates is based on the age of those participating in the program, which would encourage towns to hire younger employees. Ms. Beland said a chart she had provided shows that every year above 19 years of age, the insured employee pays more. Chair Helm said with Health Trust they get a blended average of all the employees in the state.

Selectman Rollins proposes supporting the Employee Committee to educate the employees as consumers of healthcare and to ask more representatives to come in and discuss the plans and ask questions. She thanked the Employee Committee for what they have done so far. Selectman Kidder suggested that the Board allow part-time employees to join the town's insurance program; it may be a savings to them.

Public Comments

There were none.

Old Business

Bonding and Capital Reserve Fund Contributions FY2018

The Board discussed possible town projects that could be included in a bond. Chair Helm said \$900,000 is the sum for projects he would suggest the Board consider to include in a bond. There are some projects, such as the Pleasant Lake Dam and the Lagoons that are not yet finalized. Some numbers they are considering for work on the roof/heat exchanger at the Academy Building are estimates, not bids. The Goosehole Road bridge engineering is estimated at \$70,000 - \$80,000. The Elkins Bridge Railing is an estimate at \$45,000. Mr. Lee wonders if they can take the funds from the Transportation Enhancement Fund; there is \$193,000 available. Chair Helm said they still need to decide what to do about Whipple Hall, the Police Department and the Recreation Department and suggested that the Board put some money aside to study these things, to assist the Board in making decisions.

Selectman Kidder feels they need to approach the college and have a conversation with them about possible buildings they have that might be available to the Town. She thinks it would be a good idea at future meetings with the Citizen's Advisory Committee to ask people what they feel are the priorities for the town pointing out that some departments do need more space but it would be interesting to see what residents feel are priorities.

Chair Helm said the Planning Board is planning to have a major discussion about town priorities. Selectman Rollins said they need to move forward and to do that they need to put some money aside to do a study, adding that they have invested too much into the area and into dispatch equipment to have something happen in the building to damage it. Mr. Lee said they need to address the roof and the heat exchanger at Whipple Hall. He suggested that if the Board could find space to move Recreation to, they could consider moving dispatch into the recreation department part of the building. Selectman Kidder said she would not propose reassigning recreation to the old middle school; she would not like to look at relocating Recreation in that area. She feels the Recreation Commission may be in favor of moving to some other place within the Buker Building instead. The general consensus is to leave a number in the budget for a study. Chair Helm said they will not lock in numbers for the things in the bonds so they can be flexible; some things may cost more than they anticipate and some may cost less.

Mr. Prohl asked how much the Board is considering to spend on a facilities study; Chair Helm said \$35,000.

Mr. Lee informed the Board that he is seeking a third bid for the Whipple Hall roof; he added that the town should install some emergency lighting outside the building as well.

With regards to a sweeper, Mr. Lee said that a new one is \$210,000 with no trade. They won't give a quote for their used sweeper until they know the town is ready to move forward. A used one is \$140,000. Mr. Lee said a new one would last a long time and they would be able to sweep for two other surrounding towns, possibly the college and the hospital. There is potential to cover the costs of the equipment by providing sweeping services. Mr. Lee doesn't want to get to the point of wearing out the equipment working for other towns. He also noted that an employee will be unavailable for town projects if they are out sweeping for someone else. March/April/May is not a very busy time so it would be a good time for an employee to be away. The Public Works Department tries to get everything done and cleaned up for Memorial Day weekend. In the past, when the town used a contractor for the sweeping, the sweeping didn't get done until the end of June and it was about \$20,000 and the contractor swept only about half the streets the town does now with its own sweeper.

Solid Waste Study

John Maneras and Alison Seward, members of the Solid Waste Committee, met with the Board to discuss an appropriation to have a study done for transfer station options. The Committee recommends an appropriation of up to \$25,000 from the Transfer Station Improvement Fund. The Selectmen are not agents to expend so there would need to be a warrant article at Town Meeting. Ms. Seward said the scope of work includes a look at the current transfer station and what is the most they can get from the site and what is the cost to renovate the site. The second task is to give what the requirements are if they started from scratch. If desired, they could add \$10,000 and include a study of a multi-town approach to solid waste disposal. The Solid Waste Committee feels the \$10,000 is a little high which is why they didn't include it in their request for \$25,000. They are requesting up to \$25,000 for the study.

Selectman Kidder thinks the residents of New London would like to keep the transfer station in town if at all possible. She feels the \$25,000 is an appropriate number and they could forego the regional portion of a study.

Sewer Collection System Asset Management Program

The Board reviewed information as provided by Dave Mercier, Underwood Engineers, regarding a State Revolving Loan Fund (SRLF) program that will allow the town to complete an asset management plan for its sewer collection system, with up to \$30,000 of the loan forgiven. Mr. Lee informed the Board that some of the items in the plan will soon be required of the town, as the Town is now a subpermittee of the Sunapee Wastewater Treatment Plant. The town of Sunapee will have to do exactly the same work. Chair Helm asked that this topic be added to the next joint meeting of New London and the Sunapee Sewer Commission. Mr. Mercier suggests that

the town seek approval for \$50,000 at Town Meeting, \$30,000 will be forgiven if the SRLF application is approved.

Sidewalk Construction - Seamans Road to Cottage Lane

Mr. Lee said they have talked in the past about a sidewalk between Seamans Road to Cottage Lane. They have an old estimate for \$45,000. He wonders if they can take \$50,000 from the Transportation Enhancement Fund to get the sidewalk done. Chair Helm recalls the discussion of asking the College to help with this. Mr. Lee said if they do this stretch of sidewalk, the Town could have a discussion with the college to do the sidewalk around the back of the fields.

Ms. Hallquist suggested that while they are in the area, it makes sense to repair the sidewalk from Main Street to Gould Road, noting she has observed cars parking on the sidewalk, likely not realizing they are on the sidewalk. Mr. Lee said he would cost out doing Main Street to Gould Road. He thought it would be about \$65,000. Chief Andersen said he would be in favor of this sidewalk in front of the Police Station as he has also observed cars parking on the sidewalk; he also pointed out that the foot traffic in this area is plentiful and people are hard to see; the students walk in the road, wear dark clothing and the lighting is bad.

The Board noted that there has been interest from residents in repairing, and extending, the sidewalk on Parkside. Chair Helm noted that they would like this issue to be considered when the entire sidewalk, Parkside to County Road, is considered in the future. This project could have financial contribution from the hospital, as it would benefit from the sidewalk also.

Appropriate Additional Funding for Public Works Director Departure

Chair Helm asked if they should consider some possible overlap of staffing at the end of Mr. Lee's position. Mr. Lee hoped to have someone working with him one or two months before he leaves. An appropriation would be needed for the salary, retirement, and health benefits during this period of overlap. Chair Helm suggests putting a placeholder in; perhaps \$20,000. Selectman Rollins asked Ms. Hallquist and Ms. Johnson to look into this and come to a firm number. They would have an amount ready for the Budget meeting on Wednesday.

Mr. Lee informed the Board that he is mildly concerned with the amount of sand he has used so far this winter, noting that he has used more than half his budget for sand due to the amount of ice they have had. He can take money from his paving line if necessary.

Town Administrator's Report – Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator

Ms. Hallquist said the New London Hospital Trustees and Bruce King have invited the Selectmen to breakfast on February 13th from 8-9:30am at the Helm conference room.

She noted that the Board has received a letter from Parkside Road resident Thomas Zacaroli requesting that the town construct a sidewalk on Parkside Road. Mr. Zacaroli suggests the town use funds from the Transportation Enhancement Fund to pay for the sidewalk.

Ms. Hallquist noted that the New London Police Department is conducting a "Civilian Response to an Active Shooter" event on February 2nd from 5-7pm at Colby-Sawyer College – members of the public are encouraged to attend.

Ms. Hallquist said that Gerry Gold will be speaking with the Conservation Commission about reserving the right to build a park on the town property next to Bittersweet, if an easement is placed on the land. Ms. Hallquist noted that she understood that the Conservation Commission may ask Town Meeting to place a conservation easement on the land. Chair Helm said he would discourage this. Selectman Kidder said consideration of an easement should go before the Planning Board to get their input.

Ms. Hallquist informed the Board that the Gilman Trust suit is scheduled for a trial the week of July 17th. This is the case where the property owner feels that the town is improperly directing water from the road onto their property.

Selectman Kidder asked if it was OK with David Bailey, Sunapee Wastewater Plant Director, about taking the water from the lagoons at the Sunapee wastewater facility, as was done last summer. Ms. Hallquist said she hasn't heard they had any problems with doing this. The Board will double check at the next sewer meeting. Selectman Kidder asked if the plan to have the sand and gravel delivered to the site by the Public Works Department was OK with Mr. Lee. Ms. Hallquist said it was.

Ms. Hallquist said the Park and Ride video issue is still going on; the Office of the Attorney General has not yet responded to the Board's letter of August 29th. She has had conversations with Steve Labonte, from the AG's Office and with Karen Ebel, State Representative; Chief Andersen has also had discussions with state officials on this topic. The Selectmen should decide a course of action if they continue to hear no response soon.

Ms. Hallquist asked that the Board be prepared at its next meeting to review and discuss expenditures to date and loan balances from the \$460,000 loan. She noted that in addition to the sand budget mentioned by Mr. Lee earlier, the legal expense line is also over expended.

At the next Selectmen's meeting on January 23rd New London will receive the "Heartsafe Community Award"; attendees will include New London Hospital staff, Heart Association and State Bureau of EMS .

Committee Meetings and Reports

Selectman Kidder said she and Chiefs Andersen and Lyon attended their final dispatch meeting with Sunapee. They were well received by the Selectmen and Chiefs Cahill and Ruggles. Sunapee is pleased with the training and improvements made to the dispatching service. Selectman Kidder said Chiefs Andersen and Lyon are really impressive at the meetings; they know what they are talking about and are well-respected in the different communities. The town should be proud of them.

December 28th is the final sign subcommittee meeting for the Planning Board. Selectman Kidder said that at the Planning Board meeting they made some changes to the warrant articles regarding Accessory Dwelling Units and signs.

Selectman Kidder reported that at the January 3rd Recreation meeting the poles for the skating rink fence were discussed. The poles are being fabricated and will not be going up this year because the ground is now frozen. There have been no hockey puck complaints this year so far.

Selectman Rollins reported that at the last Budget Meeting the non-profit organizations were reviewed.

Review of Minutes – December 19th

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes of December 19, 2016, as circulated. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Upcoming Meetings & Special Events

- Next Regular Selectmen's Meeting – To Be Determined
- Budget Committee – Wednesday, January 11th – 7:00PM
- Planning Board – **PUBLIC HEARING on Zoning Amendments**, Monday, January 23rd - 6:30PM – Whipple Memorial Town Hall

- Conservation Commission – Wednesday, January 18th - 8:30 AM
- Recreation Commission – Tuesday, February 7th – 5:00 PM – Whipple Town Hall
- **Town Offices will be CLOSED on Monday, January 16th**

Items to be signed

- Raffle Permit for Charitable Organization by Michael Gelcius for the Elkins Fish & Game Club at Pleasant Lake, Elkins Rd. on July 2, 2017. To generate funds for the Club's charitable projects.
- Pay Authorization Voucher by Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer
- Accounts Payable Voucher by Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer
- Birthday cards for employees
- Warrant for Wastewater Charges - Town of New London
- Arbor Day Proclamation for September 16, 2016

Approved Building Permits

- Kendall Webb & Don Kendall, 111 Sunset Shores, TM 091-015-000. Demo & rebuild garage with connector 2300 sq. ft. BP16-146. **APPROVED 12/21/16.**
- Paul Christman, 881 Morgan Hill Road, TM 006-002-000. Install 11.7kw PV array on roof. BP16-150. **APPROVED 1/2/2017.**
- Matthew & Kathryn Bemis, 10 Buker Way, TM111-032-000. Relocate & update siding/roofing for two existing buildings & increase garage roof space to 1152 SF. BP16-147. **APPROVED 1/5/2017.**

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

**IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to adjourn the meeting.
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London