



# TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES October 21, 2019 6:00 PM

### PRESENT:

Nancy Rollins, Chairman  
Janet Kidder, Selectman  
John Cannon, Selectman  
Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator  
Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

### ALSO PRESENT:

Building and Facilities Committee members: Bob Bowers, Colin Beasley, Peter Bianchi, John Lewis, Rip Cross, Joe Cardillo, Michael Williams, Phil Sherman, Peter Hoglund

Budget Committee Members: Jerry Coogan, Suzanne Jesseman, John Raby, Rob Prohl

Steven Ensign, Chair, Board of Firewards  
Michael Todd, Moderator  
Jay Lyon, Fire Chief  
Emily Cobb, Lieutenant, Police Department  
Lou Botta, Emergency Management Director

John Ryan, Board of Firewards  
John Wilson, New London Resident  
Ed Andersen, Police Chief  
Donna Larrow, Administrative Assistant, PD  
Minette McQueeney, *Intertown Record*

Selectman Rollins called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

### **Bob Bowers, Chair, Buildings & Facilities Committee: Update on committee work**

Bob Bowers and members of the Building and Facilities Committee attended the meeting to present their report as it relates to the Police Department. The Board of Selectmen requested this report so they could identify items that would affect the budget. Mr. Bowers informed the Board that the Building and Facilities Committee has concluded there is no major issue at this time and therefore should not need any money for bonding or major actions. The only budget money they think they will need is for the recommended study for a conceptual plan for the Police Department to remain at the Buker building; this should be in the \$25,000-\$30,000 range. The Committee also thinks they should do this quickly if the Selectmen are in agreement. If there is money in town budget now it would be recommended to start as soon as possible. Mr. Bowers noted that the Committee was unanimous in its opinion that a new building is not the way to go, nor is taking no action the way to go.

Mr. Bowers explained that the main recommendation is to have a design firm, or other professionals, go in and look at the Police Department and see what their needs are. The space that the Recreation Department uses should be part of this review in an effort to try to solve the Police Department needs. A lot of time was taken to look at all of the issues. They reviewed the Mires report and the Harriman report and tried to determine what the building needs are. There is still a lot of work that needs to be done although North Branch Construction has already done some work; a list of outstanding issues was sent to the Town Administrator. Mr. Bowers noted that if the Police Department moved out, it is a big space that would be left empty. Recently, \$600,000 has been put

into the building which led the Committee to believe it is probably valuable to save it for use by the police. The next step would be to see what the police feel they need and compare it with what is there. The primary conclusion was that there isn't a huge difference from what is available and what Harriman was recommending. The Building and Facilities Committee felt the cost of renovation is substantially below the cost of building a new building. The Committee recommended hiring a professional to physically go in to look at the space and identify what the needs are and how they might be met. The next step would be to come up with a conceptual plan about what that might look like and then go to the Selectmen to say if it will work or won't work. The Building and Facilities Committee is confident if the right professional is working on it that space can be used for the Police Department for the foreseeable future and there is not a need to move. Other benefits include that it is in the center of town and has been there for decades and citizens know it is there. The professional that does the study should be familiar with Police Departments, how they operate and how they are constructed. Sunapee, Newbury and Bow have all recently had new facilities built or are in the process so we could find out who has done their design, engineering and architecture. The Building and Facilities Committee would like to be involved in this process as well. The Committee at this point, unanimously thinks a new building is the wrong way to go.

Chair Rollins asked about the parking as this was a challenging issue when the Harriman review was done. There was also conversation about purchasing the piece of property to the North. Mr. Bowers replied that the Committee discussed this but concluded that acquiring abutting land was not part of their charge; this is a Board of Selectmen issue. As far as parking, if parking is restricted in the front for Police only and the spaces near the town green that are now used by the public are restricted to police use only, there would be sufficient space for police personal vehicles and staff with existing spaces.

Selectman Cannon stated a lot of work and analysis has been done and the Committee felt that this is the most workable solution. This should serve their needs for a long time provided that the professional analysis shows that work can be done in the existing space. Selectman Cannon also felt some of the parking issues would be resolved when the Recreation Department moves out of that space. Mr. Bowers noted that a critical part to the Committee's recommendation is that the Recreation Department must be relocated to allow the police department to use that space, he offered the assistance of the Committee in assisting the Board with determining where Recreation will go.

Police Chief Ed Andersen stated he disagrees with the findings of the report and this recommendation. Chief Andersen noted that it is bothersome to him that although the group that is recommending this is made up of very educated members, the person that needs to be involved and providing input is the Police Department. He stated that in 1999 the police department outgrew this space. They were forced into this building (Baker) and at that time the building was constantly changed to save money. The Department feels this is happening again as they are being forced fit into square footage. The Committee is not looking at the safety of the officers. Sunapee and Bow both found a new piece of land and built and moved their Police Departments to a facility that is adequate for a Police Station. What the Committee has decided is that since there is the square footage, things can be moved around to make it fit to save money.

Chief Andersen stressed that it is unsafe to pull out on to Seaman's Road and is a safety hazard. This is not going to change. The community knows who is on duty because of where the cars are parked. The college students know when there is additional coverage on the weekends because they can count the cars. There is no secure parking. The police cruisers must be left running from December 1 – April 15 and are constantly idling because there is equipment and computers in them that have to stay temperature controlled. There is no place to park the cars.

Chief Andersen pointed out that there is no room for expansion so money is going to be spent on a building that can't be expanded if the department grows. The amount of calls has doubled since the 2001 town report and there are also more officers. A big concern is that the dispatch center is not in close proximity to the jail cells. An officer could get into trouble bringing a prisoner there and no one would know to help if it was needed. It is a different society now than it was in 2001 when the building was built. He agreed with comments about Bow and Sunapee and pointed out that they actually have police stations, New London has the Buker building which was not built or designed to be used as a police station. Chief Andersen questioned whether anyone has researched buying a piece of land and building a building to see what the cost would actually be. How many studies need to be done before we agree that we are force fitting something that doesn't fit and has never fit. Chief Andersen urged the Selectmen to look into purchasing a piece of property and seeing what it would cost to actually build a police department. By doing that, the town would be building a facility that has the opportunity to grow for the next fifty years. Chief Andersen feels it is important to look at what is appropriate for the taxpayers and plan for the future.

Colin Beasley disagrees with Chief Andersen and encouraged him to join them, noting that Chief Andersen has not been involved although he was invited to participate. Mr. Beasley feels that greater clarity can be realized with more detailed conversations. Getting more information from Harriman would be helpful. Understanding the economics associated with renovating the building within the square footage available versus building a new building, including buying land and preparing it for construction would be helpful. Phil Sherman commented that he agrees with all of the concerns that Chief Andersen has but he doesn't agree with the solution. He also doesn't think this proposal has eliminated any solution as long as it is proven. He prefers Police Departments to be on Main Street and there is a reason that they are located in the centers of many old New England towns.

Chair Rollins is concerned about why Harriman was not more forthcoming with details in their report particularly around their information as to where the standards were set forth or what exactly the standards are. Ms. Hallquist responded that she was not aware they weren't forthcoming and noted that the Selectmen were happy with their report. Will Gatchell from Harriman was asked for information from the committee and it was her understanding that he provided it.

Peter Bianchi wanted to clarify that the Police Chief took the Committee on a tour of the entire building so many questions were asked and answered and it was very informative. He didn't want it to seem that the Committee ignored the Police Chief as he was consulted. The Committee had all the information he wanted them to have. Bob Bowers stated that the Police Department has to be fully involved and willing to participate in it to find solutions within that building to say what works and what doesn't so there is a comparative. If the Selectmen decide to get estimates on the cost of a new building for comparison that would be fine.

Chair Rollins clarified that if they conclude that another conceptual study is done, it would be with the understanding that they would be looking to retrofit or renovation to the existing square footage that is there. Bob Bowers stated that is correct. Chair Rollins stated that the Chief's questions and concerns are legitimate and the work that the Committee has done has been thoughtful. Chair Rollins observed that on behalf of the taxpayers, we would be remiss if we did not do another plan to look at specifically retrofitting or rehabbing that footprint. Chair Rollins is unsure if there are funds to do this at this time. Wendy Johnson suggested using the Town Building Capital Reserve fund.

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) and SECONDED (John Cannon) to retain a professional to prepare a conceptual plan. The Building and Facilities Committee will work to develop the**

**scope for this plan and be involved in this process. It is also requested that the Chief of Police be involved in the development of that scope and conceptual plan.**

**DISCUSSION:**

Selectman Kidder reviewed the recommendation from Harriman with regard to the executive summary and it said based on the existing site and facility evaluation, it is strongly recommended that the town of New London focus its development efforts on designing and constructing a new stand-alone police facility and a new stand-alone recreation facility on a new site yet to be determined. It was her understanding that looking at the existing Police Department it was decided that it was not adequate, nor could it be made adequate for a Police Department. Selectman Kidder is opposed to spending more money to do something that Harriman already did. Chair Rollins appreciates this opinion but does not think Harriman did that. Chair Rollins spent time looking on the internet at whether or not there are police standards and what the recommendations are when designing police departments. She found that 70% of rural Police Departments are actually retrofitted into existing buildings. It doesn't mean it is correct, but it behooves us to conduct this conceptual plan.

**THE VOTE ON THE MOTION: Rollins: YES; Cannon: YES; Kidder: OPPOSED  
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED.**

The Board recessed its regular meeting at 6:45 PM to meet jointly with the Budget Committee to continue work on the FY2021 budget.

The Board reconvened its regular meeting at 8:30PM.

**Guaranteed maximum rate for employee health insurance for upcoming budget:**

Ms. Hallquist reported that they received information from the insurance carrier that the guaranteed maximum rate for employee health insurance is 0.9%. This is good news. The increase for Dental is 3.9%.

**Town Administrators Report**

Ms. Hallquist provided the following report:

- *Municipal Matters* went out today. There was an article about Twin Pines housing as they will be attending the next Citizen's Advisory Committee. Twin Pines is not looking to establish workforce housing in New London, but they have developed affordable housing and workforce housing in the Upper Valley so can share their experience.
- Main Street will be closing for trick or treating on Halloween.
- Information was distributed for tax rate setting. Once the Selectmen decide how much of the unreserved fund balance to be used to offset taxes, they can determine the tax rate. For taxes to not go up about \$600,000 of the unreserved fund balance would have to be used. Selectman Kidder suggested \$450,000 as was used last year.

**IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to recommend using \$450,000 of the unreserved fund balance. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- Michael Todd submitted a list of people for appointment as inspectors of elections: Laura Carl, Bill Helm, Marilyn Goodwin-Soper, Marsha Johnson, Jamie Hess and Kathleen Belco.

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to accept the slate that Michael Todd has recommended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- Ms. Hallquist discussed the purchase of chairs for Whipple Hall. She provided a handout of several samples but also suggested contacting interior designers that could make a recommendation. They need to be sturdy and be stackable. Ms. Hallquist will request samples of options 4 and 6 from the handout.

### **Committee Meetings & Reports**

Selectman Kidder attended a Planning Board meeting on October 8, 2019. They approved the final plan for Continuum Developers. They now will have 79 independent living apartments, 34 assisted living apartments, 20 memory care units and 24 independent living cottages for a total of 157 units.

They had two conditions added to the previous conditions that were placed on the development. They need to provide a final report from Underwood Engineering regarding public water and sewer systems so the increase in units can be adequately handled.

There was also a conceptual plan from Village Sports. They plan to renovate the building and were questioning if the parking they have was adequate. The Planning Board decided the parking is adequate.

Chair Rollins asked for an update regarding the Liquor Store and McKenna's. Selectman Kidder stated that Adam Ricker heard back from the property owners regarding the request that they increase windows in the building and provide additional landscaping but it wasn't acceptable.

### **Meeting Minutes**

**IT WAS MOVED (John Cannon) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes of October 7<sup>th</sup> Selectmen's Meeting. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED.**

### **Upcoming Meetings & Special Events**

- Joint Selectmen & Budget Committee – Monday, October 28<sup>th</sup> – 6:30 PM
- Next Regular Selectmen's Meeting – Monday, November 4<sup>th</sup> – 6:00 PM
- Planning Board – Tuesday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> – 6:30 PM
- Master Plan Committee – Thursday, October 31<sup>st</sup> – 8:30 AM
- Citizens Advisory Committee – Saturday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> – 7:30 AM

### **Other Business**

Kim Hallquist reported that the auditors were here last week to do the recommittal for the tax collector warrant; they don't have the numbers back yet but when they do the Board can sign the warrant and the appointment card so the position will go back to Linda Nicklos.

### **Items to be signed**

- Accounts Payable Voucher
- Update Investment Policy
- Birthday cards
- Raffle Permit by Elkins Fish & Game Club to generate funds for the club's charitable projects at 304 Main Street on Monday, October 7, 2020.
- Applications To Use Town Property

- ✓ NL Inn Common – On Thursday, October 31<sup>st</sup> from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm for Pete Buttigieg Campaign Table.
- ✓ Whipple Hall & conference room – From October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup>, Nov 2<sup>nd</sup> from 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm for a rehearsal for S.K.I.T.
- ✓ Whipple Hall – On Thursday, November 21<sup>st</sup> from 8:00 am to 10:00 am for general board meeting and affordable housing forum for Sunapee Region Board of Realtors.

### **Applications Approved &/or Denied**

#### Sign Permits – all approved

- Temporary Sign – By Kearsarge Community Band for a 3’x3’ signs at the Information Booth for a festival of NH community bands from October 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup>.
- Temporary Sign – By St. Andrews Church for a 2.5’x3.5’ sandwich board at the Information Booth for the St. Nicholas Fair from November 23<sup>rd</sup> to December 7<sup>th</sup>.

#### Building Permits

- Steve & Tracey Godin, 148 Fairway Lane, TM 124-006-0-0-0. Build 22x20 carport. BP 19-127 APPROVED
- Steven Root Trust, Morgan Hill Road, TM 021-007-0-0-0. Build new single family residence 6530 sq. ft. BP 19-139 APPROVED
- Robert Martin Carol Thrane, 133 Lighthouse View Road, TM 126-013-0-0-0. Rebuild deck, no change to footprint. BP 19-141 APPROVED
- John & Jill Schiffman, 72 High Pine Lane, TM 044-013-000-001-K01. Resurface deck, no change to footprint. BP 19-142 APPROVED
- Paul & Janice Ritter, 792 Sugarhouse Road, TM 034-011-0-0-0. Finish 475 sq. ft. of basement. BP- 19-143 APPROVED
- Paul & Janice Ritter, 792 Sugarhouse Road, TM 034-011-0-0-0. Build 28x30 garage. BP 19-144 APPROVED
- Cotton Cleveland Trust, 159 Birch Acres Road, TM 074-026-0-0-0. Roof mount solar array 9.75kw. BP 19-145 APPROVED
- Steven & Nancy Allenby, 28 Lamson Lane, TM 049-028-0-0-0. Roof mount solar array 7.15kw. BP 19-148 APPROVED
- Joshua Sattely & Eula Lee Kozma, 486 Pleasant Street, TM 061-015-0-0-0. Roof mount solar array 4.875. BP 19-149 APPROVED

**IT WAS MOVED (John Cannon) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to adjourn. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Trina Dawson  
Town of New London  
Recording Secretary