



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES October 22, 2018 5:00 PM

PRESENT:

Nancy Rollins, Chairman
G. William Helm, Jr., Selectman
Janet Kidder, Selectman
Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator

ALSO PRESENT:

Will Gatchell, Harriman
Scott Blewitt, Recreation Director
Bob Harrinton, Department of Public Works Director
Jay Lyon, Fire Chief
Rob Prohl, Budget Committee Chair
Phyllis Piotrow, Budget Committee Member
Jerry Gold, New London Resident
Tom McEnrue, New London Resident
John Lewis, New London Resident
Minette McQueeney, *Intertown Record*

Chair Rollins called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

Buker Study

Will Gatchell attended the meeting to respond to the request of the Board of Selectman to view the project as more of a capital improvement project. Mr. Gatchell took the facilities sheet that was created early in the process and made a list of priorities based on all the items that had deficiencies or needs. The request was to allow the police to continue using the building for 2-3 years or a hypothetical generic office type use. Mr. Gatchell observed that these are fundamentally different uses so two columns were generated. One is business and the other is Police needs. The list includes what Harriman considers the most minimal amount of work to be done. Some items are expensive but are either code or site related issues, noting that the list follows the facilities summary and each line could be its own independent project so you could pick and choose which ones to do.

Mr. Gatchell reviewed sections that included Electrical, Lighting, Life Safety, Plumbing, Mechanical, Structure, Site, Building Exterior and Interior items. If all the items were adopted for a business use it would be \$1,461,000 for the project and for Police use it would cost \$1,829,275.

Selectman Helm stated the large numbers are concerning and even if the town does not do all the things recommended, or if some of the items are overpriced, it would still be close to a million dollars at a minimum. Mr. Gatchell agreed.

Rob Prohl commented that he has always favored tearing the Buker building down, using that space for parking and building somewhere else for the Police Department, and at the same time look for recreation space.

John Lewis stated it is time to move on and time to build the Police a brand-new building. He cautioned the town to not make a rash decision. He suggested two lots, one on Route 114 although he feels that is better suited for the recreation department. The other is the old middle school property. It is not being used and New London is part of the Kearsarge Regional School district. He thinks we should ask to buy it back and build the police a new facility on that property. Chair Rollins noted that the Board is also looking at other property. Mr. Lewis asked if the Recreation Department should be given first priority since the Police Department has a working facility. Chair Rollins responded that they need to look at all the options.

Selectman Helm asked Mr. Gatchell why the installation of an elevator was left out of the itemized list he presented. Mr. Gatchell responded that the request was limited to a more non-invasive series of recommendations as possible. This was for more of a short-term assessment and the proposed scope of work didn't include that. If all recommendations were selected, it would trigger the need for an elevator.

Chair Rollins stated this would need to be discussed further. Selectman Helm thanked Mr. Gatchell for doing this work as it completes the package of what they were looking for. Chair Rollins agrees and noted that all of the information has been thorough and helps with next steps.

Public Comment

Phyllis Piotrow commented that although this has been a long process and rather tedious, she is convinced that the right way to get it done is by looking at all the options in order to reach a good decision. She commended the Selectmen for their patience in this process and looking at all the options.

Transfer Station Survey

Selectman Helm reported that the Solid Waste Committee met earlier in the day and the Committee voted to recommend the proposal from Horizons Engineering to the Selectmen. This is for services related to delineating the wetlands on the Transfer Station property. Selectman Kidder asked if the scope of services was the same for both proposals. Selectman Helm stated the difference in the scope of the second proposal was they were going to do a certified survey and the Committee did not feel that was necessary. The town has had good experience with Horizons Engineering and the timing and price was reasonable. The plan is to have this done by December 10, 2018.

IT WAS MOVED (Bill Helm) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to accept the proposal from Horizons Engineering as contained in their letter of October 9, 2018. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Determine unreserved fund balance to be used to reduce the 2018 tax rate

Selectman Kidder stated that she would like to keep the tax rate comparable to last year and recommends either \$450,000 or \$500,000. Selectman Helm recommends \$450,000 and Chair Rollins concurs with this. Selectman Helm noted that he is happy the tax rate has been managed well and we are fortunate that taxes in New London have been kept flat or lower.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Bill Helm) to accept the unassigned fund balance of \$450,000 for a tax rate of \$4.34. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for FY2020

Selectman Helm noted that in a previous meeting he suggested a 2% COLA. A 1% COLA was done last year and he feels a 2% COLA would be appropriate for the FY2020 budget. Chair Rollins and Selectman Kidder agree.

IT WAS MOVED (Bill Helm) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to tentatively put a 2% COLA into the budget for employee wages for FY2020. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Health Insurance

Ms. Hallquist reported they have been given a “not to exceed” rate increase of 4.9%. The document Wendy Johnson prepared shows what was budgeted for FY2019 versus what will have to budget for FY2020. If everything is kept the same with a maximum not to exceed of 4.9% the budget request for FY2020 will be less than what was appropriated for FY2019. The reason is because last year we had a not to exceed of .6% and it actually came in at -6.6% so we budgeted more last year than we needed. We don’t know what the rates are until May. Ms. Hallquist recommends not making any changes to employee contributions or deductibles given that the insurance appropriation will be less in the upcoming budget. She noted that in future years, if there is a need to increase the appropriation, the Board can have a discussion with employees about how best to address the increases, which would likely include changes for the employees. Ms. Hallquist noted that even if no changes are made to the employee contribution this year, employees will be paying more as the rates are increasing.

Selectman Helm asked about the employee use of the deductible up to \$1,000. Ms. Hallquist stated they have never come anywhere near what was budgeted. She noted that although a majority of employees have not had to use the deductibles, all employees appreciate that the benefit is there if needed. Selectman Helm commented that this line item in the budget can be looked at and possibly reduced.

Pleasant Lake Dam

Selectman Kidder asked for an update on the Pleasant Lake Dam project. Bob Harrington stated due to the rain the water levels came back up, as soon as the level is low enough work will start which will include a new pipe being installed.

Recreation Department Space Analysis

Chair Rollins asked Ms. Hallquist to research space in town that would be appropriate for the Recreation department. Ms. Hallquist stated that she spoke with Scott Blewitt about various options. She also spoke with Dan Wolfe to get an idea of the retail rental market should the town decide to rent space. Mr. Wolf estimated the cost would be \$12 - \$14 per square foot plus heat, lights, etc. This would be about \$16,000 per year. For town buildings, the only reasonable one would be the town office building and it would require moving staff offices around. Ms. Hallquist concluded that the town office solution would also be the best as it would offer better visibility for the Recreation Department than some of the other town facilities.

Ms. Hallquist spoke to Todd Fluery, the Facilities Director at the school. They haven’t made any decisions with regards to their cafeteria but would like to work with us. There would be a cost associated with fixing up that space. Chair Rollins requested getting a cost estimate from the school. Ms. Hallquist looked at the Sawyer Center at Colby Sawyer College but it’s not appropriate due to the cost for fixing it up and won’t work logistically. Selectman Helm asked

about storage related to items used in recreation department programs. Mr. Blewitt stated he has various storage locations including the sewer department and the beaches. He noted the importance of having accessibility to these items. Selectman Helm doesn't feel we can solve the office space issue without knowing what programmatic issues will be created.

Rob Prohl asked if there was any space for storage on the lower level of Whipple Hall that could be utilized. Ms. Hallquist replied that the police department uses it but could ask Chief Andersen if he could free some space up. A short-term solution may be to buy a storage unit.

Chair Rollins recommended that the Board of Selectmen invite members of the Recreation Department to come in for a discussion regarding what is the future and needs of the Recreation Department in New London. Selectman Kidder thinks they would all agree that they would like to see a Community Center in town. Chair Rollins wants to discuss the direction the Town of New London should be going in and what the cost would be relative to that. Selectman Helm would like to schedule this sooner rather than later.

Tax Deed

Ms. Hallquist stated that there is a tax deed for the Board to accept for property owned by Audrey Taylor for non-payment of 2015 taxes. This property is located at 288 Wilmot Center Road. She noted that the deed will be recorded and the property included on the town's insurance coverage. The Board agreed.

Town Administrators Report

Ms. Hallquist provided the following report:

- Ms. Hallquist attended the Colby Sawyer College student government induction ceremony last week. She encouraged the students to get involved in town government.

Committee Meetings & Reports

- Selectman Helm and Ms. Hallquist attended the Scenic Byways Committee meeting last week. The important things going on include creating a logo and suggested adding a loop into Scytheville as part of the Scenic Byway. The Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission is looking into this. Phyllis Piotrow noted that the cyclists use the scenic byways and the bicycle shops should be encouraged to contribute and get involved in this.

Meeting Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (Bill Helm) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes from the October 8, 2018 meeting. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED.

Upcoming Meetings & Special Events

- Next Selectmen Meeting– Monday, October 29th – 6:00 PM
- Next Selectmen/Budget Committee Meeting – Monday, October 29th – 6:30 PM
- Planning Board – Tuesday, October 23rd – 6:30 PM @ Whipple Hall
- **State General Election Voting – Tuesday, November 6th – 7AM-7PM @ Whipple Hall**

Items to be signed

- Accounts Payable Voucher
- Payroll Authorization Voucher

- Acceptance of Tax Deed – Audrey V. Taylor, 288 Wilmot Center Road, TM 065-025-000
- Veteran’s Tax Credit

Applications Approved &/or Denied

Sign Permits

- Permanent Sign – ZeroCelsius Wealth Studio, 228 Main Street, TM 084-062-000.
APPROVED

Building Permits

- Richard & Judith Pevear, 490 Sugarhouse Road, TM 022-006-000. Demo existing house only. BP 18-099 APPROVED
- Risk & Reward, LLC, 228 Main Street, TM 084-062-000. Replace siding. BP 18-102 APPROVED
- Hoyt Family Trust, 96 Wellswood Road, TM 098-029-000. Build 10 x 12 shed. BP 18-104 APPROVED
- Layne & Barton Rev Trust, 129 Old Coach Road, TM 123-012-000. Enclose porch & add new porch. BP 18-106. APPROVED
- Lawrence & Rita Rees, 27 Edmunds Road, TM 095-023-000. BP 18-107. APPROVED

The Board of Selectmen meeting recessed at 6:20PM for the joint budget committee meeting. It resumed and adjourned at 8:03PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson, Recording Secretary
Town of New London