



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES October 3, 2016 6:00 PM

PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

John Wilson, New London Resident
Rob Prohl, Budget Committee Chair
Rob Prohl, Budget Committee Chair
Bruce Hudson, Budget Committee Member
Jaclyn Goddette, *Argus Champion*

Ed Andersen, Police Chief
Peter Bianchi, New London Resident
Phyllis Piotrow, Budget Committee Member
Donna Larrow, Police Department Admin. Asst.
John Raby, *The Intertown Record*

Chair Helm opened the meeting at 6:00pm.

Public Comments

Peter Bianchi was curious as to the relationship between Center for the Arts and the Town and asked if they are a Town department, now that they have a sign up on Whipple Hall and he wondered about the situation. Ms. Hallquist said the Center for the Arts is not a Town entity but they do programming with the Recreation Department. Mr. Bianchi said the sign gives the impression that they are a Town entity. Ms. Hallquist said they do things in conjunction with the Recreation Department.

Old Business

Pleasant Lake Dam – Timing of Upgrade

Ms. Hallquist asked the Board for confirmation that they intend to seek funding in March for the Pleasant Lake Dam upgrades, noting that Dubois & King needs this information to time their work. The Selectmen agree that this is the intent. Ms. Hallquist noted that the project will then be able to go out to bid for construction in March, 2017 with construction in the summer of 2017. She said the project is anticipated to take 6-8 weeks and she does not believe the lake level will need to be lowered. They will do the project at the time they can get the best price. The work can be done in the summer of 2017 or 2018. It must be done by November 2018. Dr. Wilson said the lake is scheduled to be drawn down in 2018 so if it needed to be drawn down to do this work, they should wait to do it then instead of in 2017. Dr. Wilson asked that PLPA be included in the discussions on this issue.

Pay grades for Adoption

Chair Helm said he has been pushing to consolidate the pay grades as proposed in the Thornton & Associates salary study. He noted that he had a proposal that he would like the Board to consider adopting: he suggested the Board create two pay grades: grades 4 and 17; and he would like to eliminate grade 19. If grade 19 is eliminated, the Town Administrator position would be moved to grade 18 and the positions in grade 18 (Fire Chief, Police Chief and Public Works Director) would move to grade 17. Chair Helm asked that Selectmen Kidder and Rollins consider the issue and be ready to discuss it at the Board's next meeting.

Information about a salary step program had come in that day from Chief Andersen so they will consider this information for discussion at the next meeting.

Harry Snow Request for the Town of New London to Accept Roads in the Snowcrest Development

Ms. Hallquist said several years ago a public hearing was held to accept the roads but Mr. Snow changed his mind and did not want the Town to accept them. She suggests having Richard Lee inspect the roads for Town specifications and if all is in order, the Board will hold a public hearing on acceptance. She suggests doing this sooner than later so that plowing schedules and personnel can be planned for the winter season. If this creates an undue burden or the roads are not up to specifications, the Town does not have to accept them. She didn't see that there would be any reason not to accept the roads. Selectman Rollins asked that Mr. Lee provide information on the age of the road and how/when the different portions of the roads were constructed. She would also like to know the impact acceptance of the roads will have on the Public Works Department.

Mr. Hudson asked if the road includes the infrastructure underneath, or just the roads. Ms. Hallquist said just the roads. The ownership of the pipes and utilities under the road would remain unchanged. Ms. Hallquist recalled with Mr. Bianchi that the issue with the roads in the past was that if the Town took them over, Mr. Snow would need to pay a current use penalty, which is why he withdrew his request to turn them over some years ago. He has since paid the penalty and would like them accepted.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

The Board noted receipt of the CIP as prepared by the Planning Board. Chair noted that the Planning Board has been asked to attend the next Selectmen's meeting to discuss this document. Ms. Hallquist noted that the CIP is posted to the Planning Board section of the town website.

Budget Preparation: Administration, Finance, Election & Registration, Planning & Zoning, Assessing, Legal Administration: Ms. Hallquist was not recommending any huge changes in the executive section of the budget. The Selectmen's Discretionary Account has a reduction of \$80,000 due to the salary increases happening in FY2017. None of the salaries have changed for the upcoming fiscal year. Office supplies they have gone over every year so an increase is recommended. Ms. Hallquist stated that the overage in office supplies is due to several factors including new employees needing specific work station supplies, new equipment, and the use of paper for the copy machine. Selectman Rollins said the office should come up with a plan to keep the costs low. Ms. Hallquist said they have not seen any real ways to cut the costs in a meaningful way. They do what they can to reuse materials and cut down on paper.

Selectman Rollins asked why \$12,146.00 was spent from the Selectmen's Discretionary Account. Ms. Johnson said it was for the salary survey, which was \$11,000. Ms. Hallquist said this is where expenditures that the Board approves but where no specific line item exists, usually goes.

Tax Collector

There was discussion of Ms. Nicklos' budget. Ms. Nicklos was not able to be at the meeting due to an illness. Postage was discussed and Ms. Johnson had a discrepancy regarding the savings Ms. Nicklos estimated. She feels it is more like a \$300 savings and not a \$2,600 savings. Ms. Johnson said she would reconcile these postage figures with Ms. Nicklos. The tax bills will be outsourced after the next tax bills go out (the Town has enough pre-printed tax sheets to send them out for the next tax bill). Ms. Hallquist said it is not a savings of \$2,600; it is a reduction of the postage line by that much as there is a new line item that these costs will be placed under.

Selectman Rollins said she needs more clarity relative to this section of the budget. She had hoped that when coming forward with this information they would be synched.

By outsourcing the tax bills, there is savings in staff time and wear and tear/use of the copy machine. Selectman Rollins said it would be helpful to get information from other towns that use the outsourcing system Ms. Nicklos is planning to use.

Finance

Ms. Johnson said the audit budget was reduced by \$2,000. They will have an additional single audit this year due to spending on federal projects but they will not next year. She left the phone line item the same rate. There was talk of a new phone system; the current system is dated and it is something to think about.

The computer support budget of \$10,000 is for our contract with CCI Managed Services to monitor and support their systems and email programs. They didn't spend as much last year on advertising. Postage was reduced by \$1,000.

Chair Helm would like to get information on the value of a new phone system. Ms. Hallquist said she has a quote for a new basic system for \$7,000. They could get a more advanced system that would allow them to forward calls to other buildings, etc. She would get more quotes for other systems.

Assessors

New London's portion is a guess because the Tri-town assessing budget is based on a calendar year and therefore spans two of our fiscal years. Ms. Hallquist gave a best guess with a 1.6% increase.

The tax map update was kept the same as usual.

Legal

Ms. Hallquist said this has been at \$20,000 in the past recommends \$25,000 for FY2018. It is difficult to anticipate the needs in this area. Some years they go over and some they are under. Ms. Hallquist said they had some land purchases this year and this resulted in more legal fees. Ms. Hallquist noted that the average spent for the past three completed fiscal year budgets was \$32,536 so she believes that \$25,000 is prudent.

Animal Rescue Fees

The amount in the budget is \$500. This is to pay to house animals found on the street.

Personnel Administration

This line is to reimburse for the employees of Tracy Memorial Library. They don't have all their figures yet to get a firm number.

Leave-Time Buy Out

Ms. Hallquist said she is recommending a decrease of \$11,500 in this line to \$21,000.

Insurance Deductibles

Ms. Hallquist said the Town will pay a maximum of \$1,000 deductible towards the employee's out-of-pocket medical costs; she recommended level funding.

Tuition Reimbursement

Ms. Hallquist recommends funding this again for the employees who want to take advantage of it and recommended \$5,000 be budgeted.

Chair Helm suggests that submittals be turned in to the Board of Selectmen prior to budget preparation when someone wishes to take a class so they can be aware. Selectman Rollins said it would be good if they continue with the program and also provide information as to how the class would help them do their job better for the Town.

Planning and Zoning

Ms. St. John was absent due to illness. Her request was similar to last year. The Planning and Zoning members have been taking advantage of training, which has been pleasing to Ms. St. John. There was discussion of whether or not the Town should continue paying for the services of the Regional Planning Commission; they don't seem to use it. Perhaps they don't need it.

Chair Helm asked Rob Prohl if he could get the Library to expedite the figures for the Town. Mr. Prohl said he would try.

Report from Sewer Quarterly Meeting

Selectmen Rollins and Kidder attended the Sunapee Sewer Commission meeting. Based on the percentage of flows, New London (61.42%) agreed with Sunapee to use that number, less 2%. New London will be contributing 59.42% which is up over the past year. New London's contribution was 55.83% last year. Mr. Bianchi wonders if the pumping from the lagoons was included in this amount. Ms. Hallquist said it was and that the biggest month for New London was December, which is puzzling to them. January was also high. It was noted at the meeting that they may not be able to accept the flows from the lagoons in the future. It wasn't definitely no, but there is a chance that it won't be an option next year.

Selectman Rollins appreciates the work Dave Bailey does with the Commission in Sunapee. She doesn't understand the need for three Board of Selectmen to be present to discuss the percentage of flows and understand the technical processes. Additionally, she is surprised that they are relying on hand-written readings and a photo of the readings each month in this day and age. She is not an engineer or well-versed in sewage, and recommends the Board and Town find someone who can best represent the citizenry. It was suggested that Mr. Lee attend these meetings as he is versed in these issues. Selectman Kidder suggests Ms. Hallquist and Mr. Lee meet with Dave Bailey and Holly Leonard to go over the procedure they use to get the results. Ms. Hallquist said they have discussed this in the past and this method of keeping track of the readings wasn't part of the upgrade. There seems to be intermittent problems with the flow meters. She agrees that it seems odd that they are doing hand-written meter readings after an \$8 million dollar upgrade to the system.

Mr. Bianchi said the Town has a peer review engineer: Dave Mercier from Underwood Engineering. He recalls that the readings they get are done by two different systems. He finds it unbelievable that they are still getting hand-written readings. He finds it critical for the Town of Sunapee to upgrade their monitoring. They aren't engineers (the Selectmen) and find themselves at a loss at the meetings.

Ms. Hallquist said Dave Mercier has spoken to this issue. A couple of years ago Sunapee thought that New London was at 75% of the flows and he explained why it was unlikely. After a year it was monitored and proven that it was not 75%. Sunapee is not inclined to put in an automatic system and believe the way they are doing it is perfectly fine. Selectman Rollins hopes Mr. Mercier will be involved in this discussion to explain the efficacy of an automatic system versus hand-written readings.

Sunapee owns the plant and makes the decisions and New London has a 30 year inter-municipal agreement to participate in meetings and vote. New London can't force Sunapee to do anything. Chair Helm asked why the three of them have to go to the meetings. Ms. Hallquist said it is part of the agreement to meet quarterly. Mr. Bianchi said Dave Bailey is a very reasonable guy and has no intent of giving New London something that isn't their fair share. Selectman Rollins agrees wholeheartedly.

Town Administrator's Report – Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator

- Merrimack County Tax: \$3,317,109 for 2016, it is due on December 19th. This is up from \$3,260,232 in 2015. Ms. Hallquist noted that the Board wanted to meet with the County Commissioners in November and asked if they would like to set a date to attend one of their meetings to meet department heads and/or to have on Commissioner come to New London. The Board noted that they would like to see the Commissioners in December, potentially.
- Law Lecture on Code Enforcement: Planning & Zoning Administrator Lucy St. John attended this lecture, a copy of the lecture materials has been provided to each Board member. All 3 lectures (Code Enforcement, Developments in the Law and Conflicts of Interest) will be given on 1 day in Concord: October 15th, 9-4:30, interested Selectmen can sign up. Ms. Hallquist noted that she would be attending.
- Purchase of the Big Hilltop, LLC property: Clark Lookout property closed on Sept 26th, the warranty deed, conservation easement and annexation plan are all recorded. Purchase price of \$300,000 was paid. Bob Brown, Chair of the Conservation Commission reported that a volunteer mowed the field on the new purchased land and it looks great.
- Audit last week: Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer, did an excellent providing the auditors with all of the information needed as well as getting budget prepared to hand over on Friday. Having the budget submission and auditors in the same week was a lot for Ms. Johnson, but she did a great job and it was very much appreciated by Ms. Hallquist. The Board offered its appreciation of Ms. Johnson's efforts also.

Meetings

Planning Board

Selectman Kidder said the Planning Board met on September 20th. There were tree cuttings approved, an annexation, and a subdivision. Jane Smedley came before the Board because she wants to trade a portion of her property with the Town. The property is going to be surveyed and when it is done they will let people know the results.

Primex

Selectman Kidder went to a Primex workshop on September 22nd that focused on managing citizen input during public meetings.

Planning Board

Selectman Kidder said the Planning Board met on September 27th where a shoreland application was approved, they approved the CIP document, and discussed signage issues.

Wastewater Treatment Meeting

Selectman Kidder said she attended the wastewater meeting on September 29th.

Other

Selectman Rollins asked about the intended process of the subcommittee on accessory dwellings. Selectman Kidder said they are still working on this and have another meeting scheduled. Ms. St. John is working on recommendations on signs and they will have a combined public meeting on these issues.

Mr. Bianchi asked if the work at Bittersweet came before the Planning Board for a wetlands permit. They put in a very large drainage swale with stone and did work on a sidewalk. If they changed the drainage, which is next to the new Town property purchased to help protect the watershed of Pleasant Lake, they should need a wetlands approval to do the work. Selectman Kidder feels this has something to do with the Stahlman building and not Bittersweet.

When asked about implementing crossing guards in the morning right before school starts, Chief Andersen said they are using officers as best they can until they can find someone to come in and help. He said the representative of the college said it might be a good job for a college student. Selectman Rollins said in Concord they use senior citizens and it seems to be a win/win situation. Selectman Kidder suggests posting an ad at Lyon Brook or Hilltop. These people would be paid but not an officer's salary, which is what the Town is paying currently. Chief Andersen said the Town of Sunapee used to use retired police officers as crossing guards.

Chief Andersen said a crossing guard is only needed 20 minutes a day. Officers may need to leave if they are needed to go on a call. Donna Larrow said Sunapee also used to use a parent volunteer to serve as a crossing guard.

Approval of Minutes of September 19, 2016

**IT WAS MOVED (Rollins/Kidder) to approve as circulated.
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Upcoming Meetings and Special Events

- Next Regular Selectmen's Meeting – Monday, October 17th - 6:00 PM
- Recreation Commission – Tuesday, October 4th – 5:00 PM – Whipple Town Hall
- Planning Board – Tuesday, October 11th - 6:30PM
- Conservation Commission – Wednesday, October 19th – 8:30 AM
- Board of Selectmen's Meeting – Monday, October 31st – 6:00 PM
- Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting – Saturday, November 5th – 7:30AM
- Budget Committee – Wednesday, November 30th – 7:00PM – Start FY2018 Budget Prep

Solid Waste Committee – Request for Direction

Ms. Hallquist said Alison Seward of the Solid Waste Committee met with her the other day. She said they are feeling like they don't have a direction to go in and suggested the Selectmen indicate what they should be doing. Funds for a study were taken out of last year's budget by the Budget Committee and the Selectmen could put funds in this budget cycle to have the study done. Ms. Seward will get more information about what details they will get from this study versus the one that has been done from NRRA.

Ms. Hallquist said the committee plans to meet with other towns to discuss their procedures and gather information. In the meantime, they aren't entirely sure what they should be doing. The committee seems to be disappointed that the funds were not awarded by the Budget Committee. Chair Helm said he didn't see this come up on Mr. Lee's list of things that need to be done right away in the town. He thinks other than talking with other towns about what they do and the possibilities of working together, there wasn't much more they could do at this point in time. He didn't think they would do much with solid waste right now. Selectman Kidder said she feels a study is very important and thinks they need to get some ideas of what differences they could make to keep using that space or find if they need to move it to another space. They need money in the 2018 budget to have it studied and then address it in, perhaps, the 2020 budget cycle.

Selectman Rollins asked what NRRA did for the town in the past. Ms. Hallquist said they studied the facility when they were thinking about the single stream recycling program. Further study would be done by another group. Selectman Rollins feels it could be beneficial to look and see what other towns are doing. Ms. Hallquist said the committee isn't trying to lobby for more money; they want to know what they should be doing. Selectman Rollins feels they should just research the regionalization (towns of Wilmot and Andover) possibilities.

Items to be signed

- Pay Authorization Voucher dated 10/03/16 by Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

- Notice of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber—Hopkinton Forestry of Henniker, NH

Approved Sign Permits

- Temporary sign for “Holiday Fair” at Our Lady of Fatima Parish, 724 Main Street, NL. Sign is 2X3 ft. Sandwich Board at the Chamber of Commerce Information Booth starting September 27.
- Temporary sign for “Holiday Fair” at Our Lady of Fatima Parish, 724 Main Street, NL. Sign is 2X2 ft. Sandwich Board in the front of the church starting September 27.

Approved Building Permits

- Robert W. & Linda T. Ewing, 237 Sutton Road, TM 123-009-000. Add screened porch, two decks, storage room & master bath. Conversion of boiler from oil to propane.
BP 16-105 APPROVED 9/29/2016
- Jamie Mallinger & Liz Gatti, 318 Sugarhouse Road, TM 035-020-000. Construct new house that is approx. 3,000 SF.
BP 16-108 APPROVED 9/29/2016
- Michael Friedman, 80 Gay Farm Road, TM 070-036-000. Install 6.16Kw Solar PV System W/ 22 collectors on roof.
BP 16-109 APPROVED 9/29/2016
- Raoul & Karen LLC, 29 Boulder Point TM 115-002-000. Demo portion of deck and stone apron.
BP 16-110 APPROVED 9/29/2016
- Brent & Ann Kern, 58 Westside Drive. TM 055-012-003. Renovate basement & add a bulkhead.
BP 16-111 APPROVED 9/29/2016
- Jameson Snow, 14 Littlefield Lane, TM 074-017-000. DEMO of 3 bedroom ranch w/attached garage & fill in foundation basement.
BP 16-112 APPROVED 9/29/2016
- Eric & Wendy Miller, 253 Forest Acres Road. TM 118-012-000. Add a fireplace & chimney.
BP 16-116 APPROVED 9/29/2016

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London