



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES November 26, 2018 6:00 PM

PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Bob Brown, Conservation Commission Chair
Ed Andersen, Police Chief
Jay Lyon, Fire Chief
Rob Prohl, Budget Committee Chair
Lauren Snow Chadwick, Budget Committee

Scott Blewitt, Recreation Director
Donna Larrow, Police A.A.
Joe Cardillo, Budget Committee
Phyllis Piotrow, Budget Committee

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

Appointments

Conservation Commission update on Logging Operation

Bob Brown, Chair of the Conservation Commission, attended the meeting to give an update on the forestry project on Mountain Road. Mr. Brown reported that the project is going well so far. The first of the two parcels which borders the Wilmot town line (lot 101-003) is almost complete. This 30-acre parcel produced white pine as well as hard wood and pine pulp wood. The pine logs brought a fair market price which was more than expected. The job was done professionally and selectively and there is a well-balanced forest as a result. The cut to length process doesn't take the whole tree away so there are tree tops left and crushed into the ground. A check was presented to the Selectmen in the amount of \$5,432.00

The second parcel (112-006) is 53.3 acres but the harvest involves only about 30 acres. This is on the west side of the access road heading into Shepard Pit. The weather has not helped and has slowed things down. Both parcels have a lot of sand so they drain well. The amount of profit on this parcel is expected to be about the same but it depends on the quality of the wood. The last step is to submit applications for tree farm certification on these two parcels. Chair Rollins asked what this certification means. Chair Brown responded that it is a large organization that focuses on the quality of the forest and they do inspections about every five years. Mills will take wood from tree farms first and usually give a better price. There is no charge for this certification.

Selectman Helm thanked Chair Brown for all the work he does for the Conservation Commission.

Chair Brown discussed two warrant articles that the Conservation Commission would like to have included in the warrant for town meeting. One warrant article proposes to share the funds that come in from the forestry harvest projects that currently goes into the general fund. The warrant article would ask voters to support a plan where 50% of the net profit would go to the Conservation Commission and 50% would go into the general fund. The money would be put in the Conservation fund which can be used, for conservation purposes, without a vote of town meeting or approval of the Selectmen, although expenditures would be discussed prior to anything being done. This fund would allow for a deposit on a piece of land if one became available. There is currently \$13,000 in this account. Chair Brown didn't hear any objections from the Selectmen when it was proposed at the last meeting. He would like to confirm that he has the Board of Selectmen's approval before he presents it to the Budget Committee and the Planning Board to get their support as well.

Selectman Helm noted that the money that is currently being generated by the forest harvest would not apply to this because this would not take effect until July of next year. The Selectmen are unanimously in support of this.

The second warrant article is related to the land acquisition contribution fund. In the past 16 years, there have been 7 contributions and 9 years of no contributions. This fund is a reserve for buying important conservation land subject to approval at town meeting. The concern is that although the fund has over \$200,000 in it, many of the properties on the desirable lands list are very expensive. The Conservation Commission is sensitive to the fact that money is tight and there are many important projects going on but would like to ask for a lesser amount to set a level amount of funding each year, stressing that it is important to be adding to the fund on a regular basis than has been the case in the past.

Selectman Helm stated they need to review the budget and all the requests before they can make any decisions.

Selectman Kidder added that for most of the property they are trying to acquire, it won't matter if small amounts are contributed to the fund each year because they would have to go to town meeting to ask if the town wanted to raise and appropriate the money to make the purchase.

Chair Brown noted that it is the same as any of the CRF funds that put a certain amount of money away each year. He would like to have a contribution and stated they really don't want to have to do a petitioned warrant article and would like to avoid that if possible. Chair Rollins thanked Chair Brown and noted there are a lot of items to consider in the budget.

Selectmen's FY2020 Budget Preparation

Selectman Helm addressed the four items he had previously raised in a memo to Chair Rollins and Selectman Kidder:

1. Stipends for Selectmen and other town officials
2. Advertising across all accounts. Selectman Helm questions whether we are following through on our goal from last year to reduce these costs by using social media more etc. Ms. Hallquist noted that office staff have reduced the use of advertising when possible, pointing to the recent opening in the Land Use/Assessing Coordinator position as one where only free advertising of the position was used. She asked if the Board could point to an ad they saw where they felt that the ad should not have been placed.

3. Cleaning Services – Chair Rollins would like to see an analysis of what the possibilities of an RFP might be. Kim Hallquist stated they have used the current cleaning service for the past five years. The company did not increase the price for several years but when they did increase it, it was a big increase. The contract includes cleaning the Town Hall building, Whipple Hall/Buker and the Library. Options would be to put out an RFP to get a better price or hire a town employee. Hiring an employee incurs other expenses such as paying insurance benefits and vehicle expenses. The last time an RFP was sent out there wasn't a great response. Deep cleaning for these buildings is a separate contract.
4. Electricity – in some parts of the budget it is flat and other areas it has increased. Chair Rollins stated that yes, they have heard from the Energy Committee but there is no concrete strategic plan as to how to move forward. Going through the budget, these are best guesstimates based on history. A strategic plan would need to be implemented before there would be a significant impact on the budget in the future. The increased use of Whipple Hall also needs to be taken into account.

Town Administrators Report

Ms. Hallquist provided the following report:

- The Pleasant Lake Dam gate was closed today; the scheduled repairs cannot be made due to the rainy fall, the lake never got low enough to make the repairs. Ms. Hallquist emailed the Pleasant Lake Protective Association to let them know this and to also let them know there will be a discussion in the coming months to decide whether to lower the lake next fall to make the repairs or wait so that there are not two consecutive years of drawdown.
- The Fire Department has requested permission to serve alcohol on town property on Monday evening for their annual Pay Night Dinner. The Board agreed.

Upcoming Meetings & Special Events

- Next Selectmen/Budget Committee Meeting – Monday, December 10th - 6 PM
- Zoning Board of Adjustment – Tuesday, December 4th – 6:30 PM
- Planning Board – Tuesday, December 4th – 6:30 PM @ Whipple Hall
- Recreation Commission – Wednesday, December 5th – 10 AM @ Whipple Hall
- Energy Committee – Wednesday, December 5th – 5 PM
- Budget Committee – Wednesday, December 5th – 7 PM
- *Christmas Day - Town Offices Closed – Tuesday, December 25th*

Applications Approved &/or Denied

Temporary Event/Sale Permits

- St. Nicholas Christmas Fair by St. Andrew's Church, at 52 Gould Road, Saturday, December 8th from 9am to 2 pm. APPROVED

Building Permits

- David Brewster & Oleanna Klein, Owls Nest Road, TM 135-001-001. Demo garage, build new Single Family residence. BP 18-116 APPROVED
- Mark & Elizabeth Pensgen, 47 Snow Lane, TM 055-012-008. Add roof mount solar array - 4.96kw. BP 18-117 APPROVED

- Harold Oberkotter, 104 Checkerberry Lane, TM 044-017-000. Demo existing house. BP 18-119 APPROVED
- John & Martha Cassidy, 122 Andover Road, TM 110-010-000. New roof, windows, doors & 3 season room. BP 18-120 APPROVED

The Board opened the joint meeting with the Budget Committee at 6:30 PM.

IT WAS MOVED (Bill Helm) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to adjourn. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The joint Board of Selectman/Budget Committee meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson, Recording Secretary
Town of New London