



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES November 27, 2017 6:00 PM

PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Laura Lorio, New London Recreation Commission
Ed Andersen, Police Chief,
Richard Lee, Public Works Director
Jay Lyon, Fire Chief
Bruce Hudson, Budget Committee
Rob Prohl, Budget Committee Chair
Phyllis Piotrow, Budget Committee Vice-Chair
Lyndsay Lund, Budget Committee Member
Sandra Licks, Tracy Library Director
Frank Anzalone, Tracy Library Trustee
Annie Beck, Tracy Library Trustee
Donna Larrow, Police Dept. Admin. Assist.
Scott Blewitt, Recreation Director
Jaclyn Goddette, *Argus-Champion*
John Raby, *Intertown Record*

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

Public comments: There were none

FY2019 Budget preparation

Executive, \$296,971: Selectman Rollins asked for information on the insurance. Ms. Hallquist noted that health insurance rates are budgeted to go up a maximum of .6% and 2.9% dental, the executive budget includes the Town Administrator, Administrative Assistant (AA), and the Land Use & Assessing Coordinator. It was noted that the AA position is now full-time which accounts for the increase in the insurance budget.

Selectman Rollins asked for more information on travel and meals which has increased \$500 and conferences and training which has increased \$375. Ms. Hallquist noted that in the past she has not attended managers meetings and conferences but based on direction from the Board during the evaluation process, she intends to make an effort to attend. Selectman Rollins did not recall that as being the direction of the Board and felt that those two areas should not be increased as recommended. Selectman Rollins questioned the \$1,000 increase in office supplies, noting that in FY2017 only \$812 of \$2,000 was spent. Ms. Hallquist noted that with new employees there is often a need for additional office supplies so that is why the additional amount was requested. Selectman Rollins recommended the line be reduced by \$1,000. Selectman Rollins questioned the \$300 reference line item, Ms. Hallquist explained that this line item generally includes materials on land use and labor laws.

Election, Registration and Vital Statistics \$85,772: Chair Helm reminded all that the salaries for the Town Clerk/Tax Collector office are split between the Election & Registration budget and the Finance budget. The Board noted receipt of a memo from Linda Nicklos regarding a revised request for additional office help in the amount of \$5167.20. Chair Helm noted that at the previous meeting the Board discussed the original request of full-time help in the office and the Board did not support the change; the current request would allow for more than the 32 hours budgeted but would not be full-time with benefits. Ms. Hallquist noted that she spoke with Ms. Nicklos at length and she (Ms. Hallquist) continues to feel that 32 hours for the deputy is sufficient. The problem in the past has been a lack of trained staff in the office and Ms. Nicklos not being experienced, but now the part-time staff position is stable, and the person is getting up to speed and Ms. Nicklos is also more experienced. This should result in more efficient service and less time needed. The Board agreed and did not agree to include the additional funds.

Finance \$290,548: Chair Helm asked that the Equipment & Lease and Maintenance line be reduced by \$1,000 and have the color copies better managed. Ms. Johnson explained that the amount budgeted is for the lease payments for the postage meter and copy machine, which includes the estimated use of copies.

Reassessment of Property \$99,214: The town's assessing budget is billed by Newbury and since they are on a calendar year, New London must estimate 6 months of the budget year.

Legal \$25,500: Used mostly for tax appeals, it is difficult to estimate how many cases will be appealed and that will go to court. There is no known litigation at this time that would suggest a need to increase over the previous year.

Personnel Administration \$105,766: Chair Helm noted that this area includes payroll expenses that are reimbursed by the Library. Leave buyouts includes for funding for staff that are expected to leave employment in FY2019. Selectman Rollins questioned the tuition reimbursement line, noting that none of the \$5,000 budgeted has been expended in several years. Chair Helm noted that the Board will be discussing personnel policies in the coming weeks.

Planning and Zoning \$140,535: Chair Helm noted that the amount is overstated by about \$33,000 that will be reimbursed by Sunapee for their use of the Zoning Administrator.

Selectman Rollins noted that she added up the advertising lines in the various departments and it comes to \$9,350, she felt that it was a large amount of money and questioned whether there could be a better use of advertising to save money. Ms. Hallquist noted that some advertising is statutory, and newspapers must be used, but there are other areas like help wanted, town office closing and recreation where various media outlets could be used, some of which are free. She noted that the *Shopper* is a popular publication that many look to for such notices.

General Government Buildings \$179,240: Selectman Rollins pointed to Academy Building Maint and Repair and questioned whether \$2,000 could be removed from it. Richard Lee noted that he needs to replace door locks and crash bars but he did not have plans for any major projects, the appropriation is used for routine maintenance and if things like a compressor malfunction, it can be fixed. Other Town buildings includes things like the warming shed at the skating rink and the bandstand. Selectman Rollins asked about the Pleasant Lake Dam appropriation of \$3,000. Mr. Lee noted that the appropriation is for the probe on the gate, without it, the gate will not function. Ms. Hallquist noted that a reduction of \$1,000 would not be unreasonable.

Cemeteries \$31,587: No additional comments.

Insurance not otherwise allocated \$104,419: The bulk of the account includes the town property and liability insurance.

Advertising & Regional Association \$18,473: No additional comments.

Police \$1,187,329: Chair Helm noted that at the last meeting, he and Selectman Rollins expressed support for the ninth officer as requested, however wondered if the expense could be spread over two budget years. Chair Helm noted that Selectman Kidder was not at the meeting so no decision of the Board was made on the issue. Chief Andersen noted that he may retire in January 2019 and if he does, ideally he would like to hire the new officer by October 1, 2018, starting the advertising by July 1st, so that the new officer would be trained and on the road before a new Chief, if he did step down, came in. Chief Andersen noted that he reduced his part-time budget to reflect the 9th officer being on board. Selectman Kidder noted that she was in favor of the 9th officer for the safety of the other officers as it would allow for more two-officers on at the same time and she would like to see the new officer start on July 1st instead of waiting for October, given that the summer is the busiest time. It was noted that there is no money appropriated for Police Special Details as there is now a revolving fund for special duty.

Chair Helm noted that keeping an eye on the total budget, he wanted to suggest that the new officer not start on July 1st but consider October which will allow less than a full year's expense to be placed in the budget, noting that if someone good came along it is likely that the money could be found to do it sooner. He suggested taking $\frac{1}{4}$ of the budget request out. Selectman Rollins asked for confirmation that a 9th officer will likely result in less overtime, Chief Andersen agreed. Selectman Rollins questioned the new cruiser and why it is not in the capital reserve fund. Chief Andersen noted that it was put into the operating budget as it is an annual expense that has not met opposition at town meeting.

Fire \$407,138: Selectman Rollins asked for more information on the radios, noting that there is money in the operating budget and in the capital reserve budget and questioned the difference in radios. Chief Lyon noted that the portables will be replaced this year and that money was removed from the operating budget and it will come out of the capital reserve fund, which made sense. Chief Lyon described the radio needs of the new apparatus as well as the portables.

Firewards \$270: No additional comments.

Emergency Management \$5,040: It was noted that the \$5,000 reduction is from the one-time expense of a container that was budgeted in FY2018.

Dispatching \$412,855: Increases are the result of changes in employee insurance coverage plans.

Highway Administration \$917,978: Chair Helm asked if the placeholder of salary for the Public Works Director is enough. Selectman Rollins questioned where the estimate of \$83,200 came from, Ms. Johnson noted that it is the middle of the pay grade for that position. The Board determined that \$100,000 would be an appropriate amount to include in the budget.

Highways and Streets \$495,600: Mr. Lee noted that vehicle repairs get more costly as the vehicles age and the electronics in the vehicles are costly to repair. He noted that it is difficult to project the costs for sand, salt and pavement so far in advance.

Street Lighting \$8,500: Chair Helm noted the good savings from the energy project and hoped for more in the future.

Transfer Station \$397,010: Mr. Lee noted that he just spent \$6,600 on brush grinding due to the large amount of brush that is brought to the brush and metal facility. Selectman Rollins asked about the trash disposal costs and whether an increase is expected. Mr. Lee noted that the trash hauling and disposal contracts are in place and are stable but the recyclables are getting more costly to deal with.

Solid Waste Cleanup \$18,000: No additional comments.

Health Administration \$5,337: No additional comments.

Health Agencies \$218,278: No additional comments.

Welfare Administration \$3,349: No additional comments.

Intergovernmental Welfare \$6,000: No additional comments.

Welfare-Vendor Payments \$16,000: No additional comments.

Parks & Recreation \$185,609: Scott Blewitt, Recreation Director, explained that he originally requested a year-round administrative assistant to with program sign ups and general administration.

Chair Helm noted that his issue is that he was operating under the assumption that the programs would be vastly increased due to new facilities, and if so the revolving fund would have been helpful for seed money, however that seems less likely now. He noted that he would like to take a different tact and say that the operating budget pays for the beaches and the director expenses and the revolving fund takes care of everything else since he does not see a reason to keep \$30,000-\$40,000 in the revolving fund.

Selectman Rollins noted that in the past she has questioned the beach equipment and lifeguard supplies coming out of the revolving fund. She also questioned what would happen if the college were to end its summer camp and how the town might be able to handle that. Mr. Blewitt noted that he was not aware of any such plans. Chair Helm noted that the comments about the college day camp came from discussions by the college at another meeting.

Laura Lorio noted that the Commission would love to have a new facility however she does not think that the facility has anything to do with the revolving fund, and the idea of seed money is nothing that she has ever heard about or socking away money in the revolving fund for that purpose. She questioned whether they should get rid of the revolving fund, since the concept seems to be a problem for some. Chair Helm noted that he was the one who was thinking that the revolving fund would be helpful should the facilities be expanded and it was not a subject that was discussed in detail with the Board.

Lyndsay Lund noted that she is clear on the direction the Board is suggesting here as it appears that Chair Helm has reached a conclusion about a new facility, but she is not sure that the rest of the town has reached the same conclusion. She felt that the plan being suggested punishes Scott and his ability to expand his programming. Chair Helm stressed that his suggestion should not be seen as a punishment only recognition of the reality of the situation that programming will likely not expand too much given the facilities are not being expanded.

Selectman Kidder questioned the connection between the revolving fund and a new facility as she did not see that fund as being used for that purpose. Chair Helm stressed that he was not thinking of the fund for the "brick & mortar" of the facility, only the expanded programming that would result from a new facility, and that if it's not likely in the near future, then having the money in the revolving fund is not necessary at this time, so it could be used for other items that are currently being funded in the operating budget.

Chris Lorio questioned comments about the number of programs and how there is not much movement, he questioned what the Board is looking for. He stressed that he feels that the more than 100 programs is a large number of programs for one person. He also noted that getting a part-time person for 3 months during the busy season is very difficult to do and pointed out that training someone and then letting them go after 3 months and maybe not getting them back is not a good use of funds. Chair Helm noted his comments about doing more were related to recognition that the existing facilities cannot take more programming. He pointed to the comments about what would happen if the college did discontinue their day camp program, how would the town take it on, Chair Helm suggested that the town, with its current facilities, likely could not take it on, stressing that his dream is to have a facility that could allow more programs.

Mr. Lorio suggested that there should be a vision for the revolving fund and a statement of where it should be month-to-month so that Scott would have some direction. He felt that this is an area that gets a lot of attention each year, unlike other departments. All agreed that the revolving fund is a difficult discussion whenever it is raised. Mr. Lorio does not disagree that more items might be better to be paid

out of the fund, he is just saying that without stated direction for Scott, it is difficult to consider whether expenses should be paid out of the revolving fund.

Ms. Lorio noted that she understands that concept that it would be difficult to add many more new programs using the existing facilities, but her concern is that if the Selectmen require more and more things be paid out of the revolving fund, then they may find themselves in a position where there is not enough money in the fund for programming. She noted that tying the revolving fund to a new facility is difficult to understand.

Chair Helm stressed that his position on the connection is only in programming, not the building itself.

Chair Helm stated that his position is that the beaches should be paid out of the operating fund and non-beach activities should come out of the revolving fund with some understanding of what the base of the revolving fund should be. Mr. Blewitt noted that the potential for new programs is unlimited, but depends on staffing – how much can you get out of one person. He noted that the number of programs and the diversity of the New London Recreation Department surpasses that of other towns and organizations and he felt that it gets discouraging when people feel otherwise. Chair Helm noted that he is not suggesting any reductions to the Recreation Department.

Selectman Rollins feels that the office assistant, beach equipment and life guard supplies should come out of the Recreation Revolving Fund. Chair Helm felt that the life guard and swim supplies should stay in the operating budget as they are related to life guard activities. The Board noted that the office administrator (\$18,200), Bucklin & Elkins Beach Equip. (\$6,250), Lifeguard & Swim Supplies (\$1,500) will be considered for removal from the operating budget during its final budget review.

Library \$540,670: The Board noted that it would like to review the salary portion of the budget and asked information be submitted to them showing how the salary numbers in the budget request were arrived at. Ms. Licks agreed to provide it. With regard to the capital reserve fund, Ms. Licks reviewed the upcoming projects and noted that they are taking a breather from doing any large programs using the capital reserve funds, given how much they have completed in the recent past. She stressed that the library is a \$2 million dollar building that is aging and suggested that perhaps the town buildings fund is under-funded as opposed to the library being over-funded.

Selectman Rollins questioned the Friends of the Library group (the Friends) and questioned whether that group could be helpful in some of the building projects to help with some of the significant capital projects of the library. Ms. Licks noted that the Friends group does not help with routine maintenance projects but with capital projects. Selectman Rollins asked her to have the conversation with the Friends to see if they could help with those types of projects, noting that non-profits routinely fund such projects.

Patriotic purposes \$300: No additional comments.

Archives: \$1,000: Chair Helm asked if additional funds would be needed for the Whipple Centennial. Selectman Kidder noted that she did not think so; it was pointed out that expenses related to the celebration would come from the Selectmen's portion of the budget.

Conservation \$16,306: No additional comments.

Energy Committee \$450: No additional comments.

Other conservation \$24,400: No additional comments.

Bonded Debt Principle (\$328,203) and Bonded Debt Interest (\$83,730): No additional comments.

Transfer to Capital Reserves:

- Fire Department Vehicle: Chief Lyon noted that he felt that \$75,000 would be acceptable, understanding that future years would have to be larger to enable the next purchase.

- **Recreation Facilities:** Mr. Blewitt suggested that although he has no immediate plans for facilities, he believes it is important to keep the capital reserve fund in place, noting that unexpected issues in facilities could be addressed as the selectmen are named agents to expend. The Board agreed to keep the fund, but not add to it in FY2019.

Other: Chair Helm noted that at the last meeting, the Board suggested a 1% COLA so the budget being reviewed includes that increase with the associated changes in employee taxes and retirement. Selectman Kidder agreed, Selectman Rollins noted her continued agreement.

Revenues \$2,953,915: Chair Helm asked where the \$33,000 from Sunapee was located; Ms. Johnson noted it is located on page 3: 01-3401-620 Zoning Department. Chair Helm questioned dispatching revenues of \$164,000. Chief Andersen explained that the revenues depend on the calls for service from the member towns. Ms. Johnson will look at the amount listed to see if it is accurate.

Chair Helm asked for updated budget sheets reflecting the changes proposed at the meeting, and noted that there would be more discussion on the Recreation budget and to be prepared to discuss the proposal of moving the money with the revolving fund and the question of life guard salaries that would allow the beaches to stay open later and also to keep them until the end of the summer. Selectmen Rollins asked that he consider staggering hours so there is more staff during peak. Mr. Blewitt noted that he currently staggers staff to cover busy times.

Fees for Use of Town Facilities:

Ms Johnson noted that the \$4,000 income suggested at the last meeting was much higher than actual last year, which was in the range of \$900. Chair Helm noted that his thought is to discontinue charging for groups, especially since the library does not. Selectmen Kidder and Rollins agreed. The Board will charge for extended periods of usage. Selectman Rollins asked for some clarity on how many days could be used before a charge would be due. Ms. Hallquist will provide suggestions or consideration at the next meeting.

2018 Dispatching Fees:

The Board reviewed the proposed 2018 dispatching fees, based on the calls for service from 2017. The formula used will be the same that has been used for the past several years.

IT WAS MOVED (Bill Helm) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the 2018 dispatching fees as presented. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Lake Sunapee Protective Association Board

Chair Helm noted that Mark Kaplan would like to resign his position on the Lake Sunapee Protective Association Board and recommends the appointment of Tom Cottrill to fill the vacant position.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to accept the resignation of Mark Kaplan and to appoint Tom Cottrill to the Lake Sunapee Protection Association Board. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Planning Board and Conservation Commission openings

Chair Helm suggested that an ad be placed to encourage citizens to apply for appointment to the various town boards with Recreation and Planning as a focus for a more immediate need.

“Guidelines for Municipal Appropriations to Social Services Agencies.”

The Board noted that the guideline will be used to consider requests for funding from social service agencies, those that provide a service to the town that the town might otherwise have to provide.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Bill Helm) to adopt the guidelines as presented. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Town Administrators Report:

Ms. Hallquist noted the updated project list as submitted by Mr. Lee. Chair Helm questioned where painting the highway garage would come from. Ms. Hallquist noted that the Board could decide, depending on the total cost, whether it would be included in the operating budget or from a capital reserve fund. He noted that the Board should consider adopting a policy in the future to deal with those types of expenses.

Planning Board report:

Selectman Kidder noted that Casey Biuso has resigned from the Planning Board; Frank Anzalone and Steve Ensign attended to discuss a possible zoning district change for the Barn Playhouse to be called an Institutional Theater District. This change will allow them to avoid going to the Zoning Board for all changes to the building but they will still have to go before the Planning Board for site plan review

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to enter into nonpublic session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(d): consideration of the acquisition, sale or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community. Roll call vote: Bill Helm: Yes, Janet Kidder: Yes, Nancy Rollins: Yes

The Board entered nonpublic session at 8:16 PM.

The Board reentered the public session at 8:30 PM.

IT WAS MOVED (Bill Helm) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to seal the nonpublic session meeting minutes. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Items to be signed

- Payroll Authorization Voucher
- Accounts Payable Voucher
- Certificates of Recognition

Building Permits

- William & Susan Kenney, 115 Lamson Lane, TM 049-016-000. Demo & construct 3 bedroom house. BP 17-128 APPROVED 11/21/17
- Kahn Family Trust, 101 Summit View Road, TM 138-004-000. Replace coal stove with propane stove-decorative. BP 17-141 NOT REQUIRED. 11/21/17
- Alexander & Sharon Blain, 101 Forest Acres Road, TM 105-011-000. Replacing wood/coal stove with decorative gas stove. BP 17-142 NOT REQUIRED. 11/21/17
- George Quackenbos Trust, 157 Poor Road, TM 091-011-000. Interior renovation of kitchen. BP 17-140 APPROVED 11/21/17

The Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Hallquist,
Town Administrator