



# TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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## **BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES Wednesday, December 19, 2018 7:00 PM**

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Rob Prohl (Chair), Joe Cardillo (Vice Chair), Phyllis Piotrow, Lauren Snow Chadwick, Suzanne Jesseman, Jerry Coogan, Mark Christensen, Chris Lorio, Bill Helm (Selectmen's Rep).

**STAFF PRESENT:** Kimberly Hallquist, Town Administrator; Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

### **OTHERS PRESENT:**

Lisa Cohen, CFO, New London Hospital  
Celeste Cook, Welfare Officer  
Deb Langner, Health Officer  
Sue Showalter, New London Garden Club  
Bob Harrington, Public Works Director

Chair Prohl called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

### **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

**IT WAS MOVED (Chris Lorio) AND SECONDED (Suzanne Jesseman) to approve the minutes from the December 12, 2018 meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED.**

### **Selectman's Report**

Selectman Bill Helm reported that at the last Board of Selectmen's meeting the Board acted on the following:

- It was decided to leave the Health Officer stipend at its current amount of \$3,000.
- It was decided that the Welfare Officer stipend should be increased to \$5,000.
- Capital Reserve Funds – It was decided to tentatively put \$10,000 in the Conservation Commission fund and reduce the amounts for the energy fund and gravel roads. Kim Hallquist and Bob Harrington were asked to do an analysis of the time table and cost for gravel roads over the next few years. This will be presented at the January 7, 2019 meeting.
- There was discussion about the Buker/Whipple Hall building. Bob Bowers made another presentation and the consensus is that the basic needs of the Buker building need to be met and Kim Hallquist was asked to come back to the January Board of Selectman meeting with a specific set of proposals for them. They also discussed space needs, land for a police station, the Academy building meeting room, the court area and recreation needs and strategy.

Jerry Coogan asked Selectman Helm if there is a desire on the part of the Board of Selectmen to reduce the overall budget by a certain number. Selectman Helm stated no, but he feels they have an obligation to the taxpayers, so he is constantly aware of the bottom line. Last year the operating budget was up 2.93% and 3.3% the year before.

Selectman Helm noted that the warrant articles being discussed are related to the Buker Building, land acquisition for the adjoining property to Whipple Hall, request money to acquire land for a future police station, remaining infrastructure projects (Goosehole Bridge, Brookside culvert, Pingree Road bridge and Elkins guardrails). A bond will be maturing in 2021 and Selectman Helm's position has always been to just roll it into another bond, pointing out that New London's debt is very low.

## **FY2020 Budget Preparation**

### **Health Agencies**

Lisa Cohen, CFO of New London Hospital, attended the meeting to present the ambulance budget request. She explained that the budget request is for \$175,329; this amount is needed to help offset losses they have sustained to run the ambulance service.

Phyllis Piotrow stated her concern is that there was an automatic 3% increase and it did not appear to be related to the number of calls, suggesting that any increases in expenses should be related to the number of calls. Ms. Cohen stated it's also related to staffing as there are minimal levels of staffing required at all times. Last year there was a decrease in overall volumes of about \$700,000 in gross revenue while expenses stayed the same.

The total amount for Health Agencies that includes CASA, Council on Aging and the VNA is \$223,395

**IT WAS MOVED (Joe Cardillo) AND SECONDED (Jerry Coogan) to accept the Health Agencies budget in the amount of \$223,395. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **Lake Protective Associations**

Milfoil - \$20,400

Care of Trees - \$4,000

Garden Club – \$1,000

**IT WAS MOVED (Chris Lorio) AND SECONDED (Suzanne Jesseman) to accept the Other Conservation budget in the amount of \$25,400. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **Health Officer Stipend**

It was noted that the Selectmen discussed this last week and did not agree on the requested increase for the Health Officer. Deb Langner attended the meeting and provided some history on the position. She has been in this position for five years, prior to her becoming health officer the stipend was \$5,000, but then cut to \$2,500 when she was appointed. There is no one else to handle the town's health issues if she is not available and there are many weeks that she puts in forty-hour weeks. Ms. Langner noted that she puts in a lot of time and does not feel the work is being acknowledged. She stated she will resign if not granted an increase.

Chris Lorio asked Selectman Helm what their rationale was for not approving the increase. Selectman Helm agrees that the septic work done by Ms. Langner is very important. The Selectmen discussed what else goes into that role because the data from other towns that don't have their Health officers do septic work pay in the range of \$500 - \$1,500 per year. It has been 6-7 years since any changes have been made to the fees so this needs to be reviewed. Ms. Langer stated it is \$20.00 for the test pit so she stated this brings in about \$1,000 per year. Selectman Helm stated according to the town figure, the

amount brought in is only \$450.00. Ms. Langner noted that also sits on the Emergency Management Committee, does daycare inspections and addresses rental concerns. She estimates she spends an average of 5-7 hours per week doing Health Officer work; three quarters of her time is spent doing septic work.

Selectman Helm suggested tabling this discussion for tonight. Chris Lorio disagreed and felt the group seemed to be leaning towards increasing the stipend to \$5,000.

**IT WAS MOVED (Chris Lorio) AND SECONDED (Suzanne Jesseman) to approve the budget in the amount of \$73,013 which includes the increase to \$5,000 for the Health Officer. The vote on the motion was 8-1 with Selectmen Helm voting no, representing the Selectmen's prior decision.**

#### **Health and Welfare Administration**

**IT WAS MOVED (Jerry Coogan) AND SECONDED (Chris Lorio) to accept the budget in the amount of \$12, 817. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **Inter Government Welfare**

**IT WAS MOVED (Phyllis Piotrow) AND SECONDED (Suzanne Jesseman) to accept the CAP budget in the amount of \$6,000. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**IT WAS MOVED (Joe Cardillo) AND SECONDED (Chris Lorio) to accept the Welfare Payment budget in the amount of \$16,000. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **General Governmental Buildings**

Joe Cardillo discussed the increase amount of \$5,600 which includes cleaning services for assorted town buildings and electric and oil increases. Ms. Hallquist noted that the cleaning services increased significantly recently so a request for proposals (RFP) will be issued in the spring to try to get a less expensive cleaning service.

**IT WAS MOVED (Joe Cardillo) AND SECONDED (Chris Lorio) to accept the General Government Building budget in the amount of \$192,750. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Cemeteries** – It was noted that the seasonal wages have increased due to the step increase and COLA increase in all staff wages. Chair Prohl asked if this was due to an increase in rate or is it more hours. Bob Harrington noted the employee is being used in other areas as well; the position is also weather dependent, so the budget is based on the anticipated number of hours he will work.

**IT WAS MOVED (Chris Lorio) AND SECONDED (Suzanne Jesseman) to accept the Cemeteries budget in the amount of \$33,108. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **Highway Administration**

This budget includes salaries, fees, telephones and uniforms.

**IT WAS MOVED (Joe Cardillo) AND SECONDED (Suzanne Jesseman) to accept the Highway Administration budget in the amount of \$875,975. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **Highways and Streets**

Joe Cardillo asked what falls into the upgrading gravel roads line item. Bob Harrington responded that this includes drainage issues and maintaining dirt roads; this isn't used to prepare roads for paving.

Mark Christensen observed that the sidewalk maintenance amount seems low given the condition of some of the town's sidewalks. Bob Harrington stated there are a lot of spots that need repair, however the issue is there are many other projects and there isn't time to do them, even if the sidewalk budget was increased. Mr. Harrington noted that the state will be redoing all the tip downs on Main Street so they are ADA compliant.

Phyllis Piotrow addressed signage. She stated signs are a safety issue and doesn't want to see this area cut back. It was noted the budget hadn't been cut and has been \$4,000 for the past few years. Bob Harrington stated they have replaced some faded signs and expects to spend this entire line item. He's unsure what they have for inventory on hand but will use that first. Mr. Harrington noted that more signs is not better, however replacing existing signs when needed is important.

**IT WAS MOVED (Phyllis Piotrow) AND SECONDED (Joe Cardillo) to accept the budget in the amount of \$497,300. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **Street Lighting**

**IT WAS MOVED (Chris Lorio) AND SECONDED (Joe Cardillo) to accept the street lighting budget in the amount of \$9,300. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **Transfer Station**

Bob Harrington recommended an increase to \$14,000 for brush grinding, explaining the company they have used in the past increased their price and took longer than usual so this budget line was overspent in FY2019. Mr. Harrington plans to look into other companies for a better rate.

**IT WAS MOVED (Joe Cardillo) AND SECONDED (Jerry Coogan) to accept the Transfer Station budget in the amount of \$405,763. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Landfill Monitoring/Special Waste - Landfill monitoring is required by the state.**

**IT WAS MOVED (Chris Lorio) AND SECONDED (Jerry Coogan) to accept the Landfill/Special Waste budget in the amount of \$18,000. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **Patriotic Purposes**

**IT WAS MOVED (Suzanne Jesseman) AND SECONDED (Phyllis Piotrow) to accept the Patriotic Purposes budget in the amount of \$300. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **Archives**

**IT WAS MOVED (Joe Cardillo) AND SECONDED (Suzanne Jesseman) to accept the Archives budget in the amount of \$1,000. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Next meeting:** Wednesday, January 2, 2019

**IT WAS MOVED (Phyllis Piotrow) AND SECONDED (Suzanne Jesseman) to adjourn the meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:41 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Trina Dawson, Recording Secretary  
Town of New London