



# TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES December 5, 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:**

Jay Lyon, Fire Chief  
Ed Andersen, Police Chief  
Bruce Hudson, Budget Committee  
Rob Prohl, Budget Committee Chair  
Phyllis Piotrow, Budget Committee Vice-Chair  
Donna Larrow, Police Dept. Admin. Assist.  
Scott Blewitt, Recreation Director  
Jaelyn Goddette, *Argus-Champion*  
John Raby, *Intertown Record*

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

Chair Helm announced that the appointment with Sue Stuebner, President, Colby-Sawyer College, was cancelled.

Public comments: There were none.

### **FY2019 Budget**

Chair Helm informed those present that the intent of the Board is to finalize the budget to turn it over to the Budget Committee, and asked his colleagues how they wanted to proceed: line-by-line or just take up budgets that are of concern. The Board agreed that it would take up only the issues that needed further discussion.

#### *Recreation Department*

Selectman Rollins noted that the Recreation Department needed further discussion. Chair Helm acknowledged receipt of memo from Scott Blewitt to reduce the waterfront staff line from \$60,510 to \$59,313. Selectman Rollins inquired about rate paid for lifeguards and Mr. Blewitt replied \$10/hour but a senior lifeguard who is returning earns \$10.50/hour. An experienced lifeguard will earn \$11/hour. The head lifeguard will earn \$15/hour and that is determined by his previous experience and ability to repair items that are directly associated with his duties. This might include fixing a dock. Mr. Blewitt stated job descriptions would be posted for each pay scale. Chair Helm reviewed the corrections to the budget from the previous Board meeting and asked if Board members were still in favor of the adjustments. Selectman Rollins and Kidder agreed.

Phyllis Piotrow asked about the appointment of new members to the Recreation Commission and it was stated this had been done several weeks ago with the appointment of Joy Kubit and Carol Kinzler.

*Library*

Chair Helm asked to go on the record to urge the Budget Committee to further investigate the question of the library salaries. Chair Helm wondered if the library salaries are being handled with the same degree of fairness as the salaries for the rest of the town. Although he does not have the information from the study that was done, he sensed the implementation of the program, supposedly similar to the implementation for the rest of the town, does not seem to be happening. Selectman Rollins concurred with Chair Helm but stated she had only just received the information on the salaries.

*Town buildings*

Selectman Kidder asked for a total of maintenance costs for the various buildings in town in response to a question from a resident. Chair Helm asked that the Board come back to that issue at another time, after Wendy Johnson and Kim Hallquist could gather this information and provide to the Board. He noted that Sandra Licks, Library Director, made an interesting point in saying that perhaps the town buildings budget is too low, as opposed to the library being too high. Ms. Johnson added the figures and noted that the operating budget is about \$31,000 plus \$50,000 in the capital reserve fund; the library operating budget is \$30,000 plus \$35,000 capital reserve fund.

Chair Helm clarified that the changes seen in the budget was from the 1% COLA that was applied to salaries, plus the associated payroll costs that result from the increased in salaries. Ms. Johnson agreed.

Wendy Johnson stated the total operating including transfers and capital reserves will be \$7,205,377. This is an increase of \$205,236 over last year minus \$33,000 from the income from Sunapee for a total increase of \$172,236. This represents a 2.46% increase over the 2018 operating budget. The Board reviewed the list of capital reserve funds. Chair Helm asked for information on the Master Plan funding, whether money would be needed in FY2019 or whether additional money should be added to the CRF. Ms. Johnson informed the Board that the Selectmen are not agents to expend so any expenditure will need town meeting approval, or request that the board be named as agents.

Chair Helm clarified that the money for a part-time administrative assistant has been removed from the Recreation budget. This in response to question from Rob Prohl.

Chair Helm asked if the Budget Committee will be meeting with the Selectmen at a “reconciliation meeting” as has been done in the past. Budget Committee Chair Rob Prohl agreed that that is the plan at this time. Chair Helm reviewed that the next step is for the Selectmen to vote on budget and then present it to the Budget Committee. Then sometime in January the Budget Committee can come back to the Selectmen and discuss any differences that may exist. The final budget will then be placed on the Warrant for Town Meeting.

Selectman Rollins asked for a discussion as to how much money will be left and shared her belief that \$10,000 should be accurate.

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the Selectmen’s FY2019 budget for submission to the budget committee as outlined in the comparative budget with a slight change in the Recreation Department budget. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Review policy for user fees for town facilities**

Town Administrator Kim Hallquist asked for a discussion as to how many days any particular group would be allowed to use a town facility without being charged a fee. This language will be added to the agreement. Selectman Rollins said based on her own participation in activities that have gone on, she thought the timeframe should be more like four days in a calendar month, these days could be consecutive. Selectman Kidder agreed this was very reasonable and it was agreed to revisit the matter in June of 2018. Rental fees are to remain the same for groups using the facility more than four times per month.

**IT WAS MOVED (Bill Helm) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to amend the policy to charging for use of town facilities to use that is 4 times per month of less will have rental fees waived; policy to be reviewed in June 2018. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Review proposed changes to personnel policies**

Town Administrator Hallquist stated her recommendations for changes are based on input from the Employee Committee presentation in July. One area that she disagreed with was the issue of counting sick, vacation and leave time as time worked for purposes of calculating overtime; that issue is not settled as it requires more data on the overtime question.

Ms. Hallquist is in agreement with the committee on the issue of outside employment, nepotism, leave time, and the experience that employees bring to the town. There is no recommendation for a change to sick leave. The sick time bank or a cash payout for sick time can be considered when there is discussion about changes to the health insurance when that time comes.

*Sick Leave*

Chair Helm pointed out (C-1) the recommended change appears to include dental care and he felt that dental should not be counted for tallying sick leave. Ms. Hallquist stated dental is considered medical and has always been counted. Chair Helm asked for the wording of the area of donation of leave time to other employees to be changed to read "*The Board of Selectmen may grant, "at their sole discretion", requests for donation of leave.....*

Selectman Rollins would like to add a definition for a relative caregiver such as children that are taking care of their parents, whether or not they reside in the same home, as being a proper use of sick leave.

Ms. Rollins would like sick leave to cover this. She does not want detailed a roster of who may qualify as a familiar relationship but would like the Town Administrator to have discretion over this.

*Nepotism*

Selectman Kidder felt that care was needed in the wording of personnel policies concerning the hiring of family (nepotism) to the town payroll so as not to exclude a very qualified individual because of their close family relationship to a supervisor. This could be problematic in a small town where there is not a large pool of candidates to choose from. It should be left open that exceptions to the hiring process may be reviewed by selectmen on occasions. Chair Helm felt there should not be any grey area left open to be challenged by a lawsuit in the future. Fire Chief Lyon stated that historically, families have encouraged their sons/daughters, fathers/mothers to join the fire department and presently his own wife works for the department. Ms. Hallquist stated hiring family members is not a problem; it is when the supervisor is related to an employee that may present difficulties. Ms. Hallquist noted that she has not experienced any difficulties with the existing employees who are closely related to their supervisors. Ms. Rollins would like more conversation on this and it was agreed that Ms. Hallquist would talk with department heads to develop the language for the hiring policy that would address nepotism but not exclude potential qualified candidates.

*Tuition Reimbursement*

Ms. Hallquist introduced the topic of tuition reimbursement for employee education classes and referred to her memo that would approve employees taking classes on subjects that are not necessarily associated with their job description, but would apply to a job in the town that the employee might qualify for. She felt it is a benefit for employees to take courses outside of their own job position so that they might apply for another position in the town. Example: perhaps Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer, would like be the Town Administrator and wanted to take some public administration classes or if she wanted to join the police department and she would take classes. There would be some oversight in approval of the course/class the employee was going to take by the department head, with final approval by the Town Administrator. Although this money is budgeted, not many people take advantage of the benefit.

Chair Helm noted that he has a problem with this area and felt that in a town as small as New London, it is unlikely someone is going to transfer from finance to the police department, or the public works

department to becoming a finance officer. From a practical standpoint, a person cannot take more than two courses a year. He would rather have a policy that states unique situations where there is a person who might be qualified for an advancement in position by enrolling in further course work and we want them to achieve that advanced position, then it will be considered. The current language sets an expectation that the town should pay for courses to help an employee earn a bachelor's degree. Chair Helm stated he expects the Town Administrator to be managing the expectations of the staff and put the needs of the town first and don't want to find ourselves in a position of having to say no to the employee after he/she has been "bubbling it up". Police Chief Andersen stated he has one employee who would like to move up in rank and prior to this they would need further course work to achieve that degree. Chair Helm noted that he would have no problem with that unique situation, but if he said that if all four patrolmen wanted to take courses, he would have to say no.

Selectman Kidder stated it was important to let the employees know how much they would be reimbursed and if the money is not in the budget, they would have to wait until next year. Selectman Rollins stated this is the personnel policy and we are making a statement to our employees. If there was an opportunity for career advancement, then the Board would make an investment but with the understanding that the employee must guarantee he/she will remain employed by the town for a specified time frame. If an employee leaves early, they will be expected to reimburse the town for education expenses. Selectman Rollins noted that the example of the police getting a master degree in order to take a higher position is a valid one with the town's mission focus which is to invest in good employees and keep good employees having a career ladder is part of that.

In summation, Chair Helm stated the Selectmen were agreeing with all of Kim Hallquist's recommendations except for the part on nepotism and a little "tweaking" on the educational assistance as well as waiting for overtime information from Finance Officer Wendy Johnson.

### **Town Administrator Report**

The deadlines for town meeting are December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017 as the last day to petition for zoning amendments. The Planning Board will meet afterwards to discuss because they have to include it in their public hearing notice and also their recommendations. The last day for petition warrant articles is February 6, 2018 where citizens can petition to have a matter go on the warrant; including money issues. The Budget Committee will hold their public hearing after that day to consider any petitions that may be submitted that includes money.

Ms. Hallquist reminded all that the students of Colby-Sawyer College will present their work on the phosphorus study on Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup> at 6PM at the Ivy Science Center; the public is encouraged to attend.

### **Meeting Minutes of November 27, 2017**

**IT WAS MOVED (Bill Helm) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to approve the minutes of November 27, 2017 as presented. Helm and Rollins voted YES; Kidder ABSTAINED. THE MOTION PASSED**

### **Upcoming Meetings & Special Events**

- Next Regular Selectmen's Meeting – Monday, December 18<sup>th</sup> - 6:00 PM
- Recreation Commission – Tuesday, December 5<sup>th</sup> – 5:00 PM – Whipple Town Hall
- Budget Committee – Wednesday, December 6<sup>th</sup> – 6:30 PM
- Planning Board – Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup> – 6:30 PM
- Conservation Commission – Wednesday, December 20<sup>th</sup> – 8:30 AM

**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: Helm: Yes, Kidder: Yes, Rollins: Yes**

The Board entered nonpublic session at 6:55 PM  
The Board reentered the public session at 7:25 PM

**IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) 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
- Application for Tax Abatement Request
- Application for Veteran's Credit
- Warrant – Yield Tax Levy
- Applications To Use Town Property
  - ✓ DATE CHANGE - Whipple Hall on February 17, 2018 from 4:00 pm to 10:00 pm for the Winter Performing Arts Series by Nicole Southworth for the “Center for the Arts” (change from February 24, 2018).

**Applications Approved &/or Denied**

Sign Permits

- Permanent Sign – By Capital Roofing Inc. for a 14 sq. ft. sign at 420 Main Street. APPROVED
- Temporary Sign – By Wilmot Community Association for a 2' x 3' A-frame sign at the Information Booth from November 26th to December 2, 2017 for a Holiday Craft Fair. APPROVED
- Permanent Sign – By Split Rail LLC for a 13.75 sq. ft. sign at 82 Newport Road. APPROVED

Building Permits

- William & Susan Kenney, 115 Lamson Lane, TM 049-016-000. Demo & construct 3 bedroom house. BP 17-128 APPROVED 11/21/17
- Louis Botta, 433 County Road, TM 072-007-000. Interior renovations. BP 17-138 APPROVED 11/21/17
- Marilyn Soper Living Trust, 53 Spruce Lane, TM 045-040-000. Interior renovations kitchen/bath. BP 17-139 APPROVED 11/21/17
- George Quackenbos Trust, 157 Poor Road, TM 091-011-000. Interior renovations kitchen. BP 17-140 APPROVED 11/21/17
- Ruth Clough Family Trust, 985 Pleasant Street, TM 036-007-000. Demo of house only. BP 17-144 APPROVED 11/30/17
- Jennifer Hansen, 102 Tracy Road, TM 117-0113-000. Demo interior only - down to studs. BP 17-145 APPROVED 12/5/17
- Louis Botta, 433 County Road, TM 072-007-000. Interior renovations of basement. BP 17-146 APPROVED 12/4/17

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:29 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Vitiello, Recording Secretary  
Town of New London