



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN APPROVED MEETING MINUTES December 22, 2014

PRESENT:

Janet Kidder, Chairman
Nancy Rollins, Selectman
Peter Bianchi, Selectman
Kimberly Hallquist, Town Administrator
Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

ALSO PRESENT:

Ed Andersen, Police Chief
Jason Lyon, Fire Chief
Donna Larrow, Police Department Administrative Assistant
Phyllis Piotrow, Budget Committee Member
Bruce Hudson, Budget Committee Member
Rob Prohl, Budget Committee Chair
Gayle Hedrington, WNTK

Chair Kidder called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Town Administrator's Report

Ms. Hallquist said she had nothing new to report since the last meeting.

FY2016 Budget Preparation

Dispatch Budget – Ed Andersen, Police Chief

Training

Chief Andersen presented his FY2016 budget request for dispatching. He informed the Board that he is requesting \$5,500 to cover 40 hours of training for each of the full and part time dispatchers they have. That would cover wages or overtime wages for those covering shifts if part-time dispatchers are not available. The town has not done a good job training dispatchers in the past so Chief Andersen suggested that training be increased. He noted that a dispatch academy may be opening up at the State level, and if so, he would like to send the dispatchers to it.

Travel and Meals

Chief Andersen said this line item was \$300 and he would like to increase it to \$1,500 to cover the cost of some trainings where grants cannot be used, or in the event that they can't get a grant for a training. In the past they have let dispatchers use the detective's vehicle to travel to trainings, but when that vehicle is not available they have to drive their own vehicles and have had to pay for their own food.

Equipment

Chief Andersen said they have always bought very cheap chairs for the dispatchers that do not hold up over time. These are two chairs that are used 24/7, every day of the year. They would like to purchase two

quality chairs which are about \$1,300 each. Another \$1,000 in that budget would be for miscellaneous equipment (mice, keyboards, screens for computers, etc).

Miscellaneous

Chief Andersen said this line had \$200 in it and he would like to increase it to \$1,000. Officers and dispatchers pay for things such as detergent, soap, sponges and wipes out of pocket. There has never been a line item for those kinds of things.

Equipment Repair & Maintenance

Chief Andersen said he would like to replace the Com-Log recorder for \$16,000. This is a device that records all the radio transmissions coming in and going out of dispatch. Frequently, they are asked for copies of recordings from lawyers. It would be easier to find the recordings if they had this updated device. Even if dispatch leaves, they will still need this piece of equipment as they will still have and use radios and phone lines.

Selectman Bianchi asked if the conferences Chief Andersen was referring to were in New Hampshire or out of state. Chief Andersen answered that they are all in New Hampshire except for one that is held in the State of Maine that they have gone to in the past. He would like to get back into the rotation of sending two officers and one dispatcher per year to this training as it is really good training and they use up to date information. Chief Andersen said he would like to have the dispatchers take some training on what to do if/when there is a call about active shooters and other high stress calls.

Selectman Bianchi wondered why the training line hasn't been above \$300 for the last several years. Why didn't they need to do training in those years? Chief Andersen said the dispatchers needed the training, they just weren't sent to get it. He added that training was not as important to others who held his position as it is to him and he feels it is necessary to send the dispatchers for regular training.

It was asked what was included in the "Miscellaneous" line item besides wipes and detergent. Chief Andersen said the monitors that show the jail cells often burn out and they would be replaced with money from this fund. It would also be used to replace keyboards and other small equipment items.

Selectman Bianchi wondered why the Com Log was listed under the "Equipment & Maintenance Repair" line item if they intend to replace the equipment, not repair it. Chief Andersen said the name of the account is called Equipment Repair or Maintenance but they are looking to replace the Com Log, not repair it.

Selectman Bianchi said last year the Town spent \$48,500 for the new console. Chief Andersen said they haven't spent that money yet. They are waiting to see if they are going to get a 50% or 100% grant. He has been assured that they will have quotes from Beltronics and Ossipee Mountain Electronics soon and will know how much they will need to spend.

Chief Andersen said the only piece of equipment they will need this year in dispatch is the console. If the grant comes in it will complete what they are trying to do for radio service. If they don't get the grant they will need to talk with all the towns to see what they should do. He has heard from Bernie at Beltronics that the cost for the console that was approved at Town Meeting in May is more than what they have set aside.

Selectman Bianchi said the Selectmen would be discussing dispatch at their meeting on January 5th. They will need to know what they are talking about and whether they will keep dispatch in New London or

outsource. If they decide to keep dispatch, he felt it would be important to discuss a capital reserve fund. Chief Andersen said the uncertainty of whether dispatch is staying in New London or not is something that is possibly holding them back from getting a grant this year. If the Selectmen decide to outsource dispatch, they will still need a console. He added that the second console would cost less than the first because the first contains the “brains” of the system.

Selectman Bianchi said he didn't have a problem with dispatch staying in New London but he didn't want the Town to have to pick up another \$80,000 tab. They would need to talk with the other towns to see if they would be on board. Chief Andersen said he would have the numbers for a 10-year outlook for equipment costs from Ossipee Mountain Electrics and Beltronics in time for the January 20th Selectmen's meeting. He wondered if they could hold off on the discussion of dispatch until then. The Board agreed.

Selectman Bianchi said Bob Barry from Primex suggested (in his dispatch study) allotting 10% of the cost of the dispatch equipment per year for maintenance. Chief Andersen said the cost of the first and second console had been added together and divided by two, which is how they got the \$48,500 price for the first console. In actuality, the first console will cost more like \$70,000 since it has the brains of the system within it. The second one will cost less than the first.

Chief Andersen said he heard a lot of single towns had applied for the grant but New London would be favored over those requests because the grant is intended for multiple town services. He said he would plan to attend the meeting in January where the applications were discussed.

Police Department Budget – Ed Andersen, Police Chief

Part-time Hours

Chief Andersen said the past amount for this line item has been \$19,671 and he is proposing an increase to \$30,784. This accounts for 32 hours, 4 shifts/week at \$18.50, for two weeks. He is trying to get the department moving forward and in the right direction; staying on top of policies, evidence and equipment within the cruisers, and he is hoping to assign a part-time officer to manage the in-car camera system and the Police Department's video system. One thing he didn't consider, being that the video system is new to the Police Department, is the hours they have to spend recovering video. For every arrest, the person moves from the “trap” to the booking area, and then to a cell. Typically, defense attorneys will ask for copies of the video where their clients are shown. Chief Andersen said he spends hours tracking the people they have arrested on film and pulling up the information. This also goes for the in-car videos; they have to find the information, record it, put it on a CD and send it out. They are trying to juggle all of this and are falling behind with it. An additional part-time officer could be assigned this task so that he, and the two sergeants do not have to spend the time doing it.

Policies and Procedures

Chief Andersen said that policies change every day and he would like someone to be in charge of this who can train the department and keep them up-to-date. He thinks it would be good to review one policy per month to see if what they are doing needs to be updated. By putting this job onto the officers it is pulling them off of the road and putting them behind a desk. He would like to have the department certified to the national standards of “CALEA” (Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies) which is only attained after their policies and procedures are reviewed by an outside organization and deemed to be of the highest quality.

Selectman Bianchi said this account has gone up \$11,000 which is over 50% from last year. He said it sounded like the full amount was going to be used for the new duties he described. Chief Andersen said about \$10,000 is going to be used for the new duties, which accounts for the increase.

Police Department Overtime Wages

Chief Andersen said he has decreased the amount in this line item because he put in for training overtime in another line item, which is one reason overtime wages had been low. He added that they are trying to have two officers out during the day and the evening except for on Sundays. He finds himself having to respond to calls because the other two are tied up with other calls for service, which takes him away from attending to his administrative duties.

In 2013 there were 162 arrests. In 2014 (year to date) there have been 220. This number accounts for single or double arrests (one or two people being arrested at a time), but does not include the arrests that are made at college parties. Officers are traveling to Newport a lot more due to the increase in arrests. Chief Andersen related that recently, every new London officer had to be in court on the same day so New London PD had to ask the Town of Sunapee's Police Department to cover New London's calls while they were away.

Chief Andersen said officers have to go to court for various court proceedings in Concord and also to courts in Claremont, Franklin, Henniker and Hillsboro at times. This doesn't count for the times that tickets are contested.

Chief Andersen explained that he decreased the overtime line item by \$6,100, but added a new line for Police Department Overtime Officer Training in the amount of \$15,000. These changes accounts for about \$9,000 more, overall. He went on to note that there is required training in New Hampshire. They must have eight hours of continuing education, a four- hour Taser class, a four-hour firearms deadly force class, and they must qualify at the shooting range at least once a year. They qualify on rifles, shot guns and duty guns. They also require eight hours of defensive tactics and handcuffing training. This does not count for specialty schools that officers are sent to. He would like to have a line item just for training. Chief Andersen added that it is good for the department to get some training as a whole so they will know how they will react to certain situations as a department. He pointed to the active shooter trainings conducted last year as good examples of department-wide training that he would like to do more of in the future.

Selectman Rollins wondered if the Police Department ever has trainings on how to deal with people who have conditions such as autism and mental illness. Chief Andersen said they do and they are trained on how best to avoid situations that could "set off" someone who has a sensitivity to things such as touch and sound. He commented that they have a very young department and life experience and training is what keeps them out of lawsuits.

It was asked what the difference accounted for in the Conference & Training Line Item. Chief Andersen said the difference covers the cost of the conferences, meals, travel, ammunition, Taser cartridges, OC, back strapping at the range, targets they put up, and the cost for the schools they attend. He commented that ammo is a large part of this expense but it is starting to come down in price a bit.

Telephones

Chief Andersen said he took \$1,000 off of this line item. They have averaged \$1,400 per year in phone expenses so he took some off but didn't want to go down too far. This is for the phones shared between dispatch and the Police Department. It also includes the "Air Cards" for the laptops in the cars to be able to communicate with Dispatch.

Computer Support and Service

Chief Andersen said he was asking for \$3,000 more to pay for maintenance and support service for the computers in the office. Each time they encounter a problem they have to call Systems Plus (their computer vendor) which incurs a fee.

PD Firearm and Replacement

Chief Andersen said the average spent has been about \$250 but he is proposing an increase to \$500. The department has an armorer now and they plan to keep the guns maintained each year. He didn't think the supplies would be too much, but if they are ever in a shooting situation, the Attorney General's office takes the gun. If they are short a gun, they would need to have money to replace it. They are waiting for the new guns that were budgeted for in 2014 which should be in any time. The delay was caused by an opportunity Chief Andersen was trying to take advantage of, where he would have received new guns at no cost. After there had been documented issues with the functionality of the weapons, he decided to forgo the opportunity and go with what had been budgeted for, as he knew it was a quality product.

General Equipment

Chief Andersen said next year they will have to look at changing their Tasers. As of December 31, 2014, they won't be supported or maintained by the Taser manufacturer. He was able to get some repaired for \$400 from Taser over the last year, as some were out of service. He would like to have one for each full time officer and two for the part time officers to share.

Chief Andersen noted that the radar systems in the cars were purchased via a grant and are used every day. These are starting to break down. He would like to start changing one out each year through the use of a 50/50 Highway Safety Grant. He said they just received three new PBT (Pulmonary Breath Tests) for free. They need two more lap tops for the cruisers as well. In all, \$67,012 would be the Town's 50% share for the needed equipment.

PD Miscellaneous

Chief Andersen said they are using the training room at the police station a lot more now than in the past. The Highway Department is using it as well. They have old tables and the chairs from upstairs that are breaking. He would like to get six, 8' folding tables, 48 chairs and storage dolly for them. They use the room for trainings at times and have 40-50 people there. If they host a LEEDA class, the training company will provide two free officer trainings, which are usually \$650 per officer for a week-long course. He offered that hosting one of these courses in New London would benefit the town businesses and the restaurants, as well as providing training opportunities for New London's officers at no charge.

Chair Kidder asked Chief Andersen if he thought they could budget less for gasoline since the price is going down. Chief Andersen wasn't sure and didn't know what would happen with gas prices. He hesitated to take much away from that line item.

Fire Department Budget – Jay Lyon, Fire Chief

Chief Lyon said historically, going back to 2012, the budget is pretty tight. In 2013 they had a switch in personnel regarding per diem and full time staffing. At the end of 2013 they had \$22,450 remaining from unspent funds. Last year the amount unspent was \$4,249. This is due to the zero-based budget he puts together each year. Chief Lyon noted that the budget for 2015/16 is very similar to what they have requested in the past but said there are some notable increases.

Telephone

This has increased to \$5,950 mostly due to the new "Active 911" system they are using.

Vehicle Repair and Maintenance

This line was \$12,700 last year and Chief Lyon is requesting it be increased to \$18,700. He explained that they were scheduled to have a deposit in the CIP of \$8,000 in 2016 for this. However, the Budget Committee requested in the past to have repair and maintenance costs added into the operating budget. The increase he is budgeting for reflects that change. Last year they went over in Vehicle Repair and Maintenance by \$6,000 which doesn't accurately reflect in their year-end budget but was very close. They took money from other line items to make up for it, which he had to justify to the Board of Firewards.

Conferences and Training

Chief Lyon noted that the personnel list over the years changes because people move on for various reasons. Training is extremely important. It cost \$7,200 for five firefighters to go through the minimum certification, which is about 200 hours. The firefighters aren't paid for taking the class but the Town does pay for the class. Each class is \$599. Five individuals also went through Level 2 certification, which is \$475 per class. They are part time employees but these people are volunteering their time to take the classes. 9 officers, including himself, get \$200 each to pay for leadership classes, tactics and strategy. He stressed the importance of individuals taking these kinds of trainings.

Small Tools & Equipment

Chief Lyon noted an error on this line item. It should be \$2,600, not \$22,600.

Uniforms and Safety Equipment

Chief Lyon explained that pants and jackets are \$2,000. The NFPA standard is to replace these every five years. For the interior firefighters, this standard is adhered to. Their old gear is then reissued to an individual that may not be going into a building and so they are getting another five years out of it. At the end of the 10-year period the pants and jacket do not meet the standards. New Hampshire has a program with Nicaragua, where they package up the gear and send it to them to use it.

Maintenance & Repair

Chief Lyon said they have individuals who like to maintain and paint the station. The difficult issue is the defective product that was used for the trim board at the station. The company that manufactured it went out of business so the Town can't recoup any of the costs. He recommends going with a COMA product which holds paint and is plastic; it will never rot.

Chief Lyon noted that the bay floors at the station are subject to abuse when hose gets dragged across it, when it is cleaned so often and when other activities are held there. They have painted the floor three times since 2004 but can't get the paint to hold to the floor. They are requesting \$15,000 in this line item, which includes \$11,350 for a three-part epoxy finish to be applied to the floor. It will be similar to the floor at the Sunapee Fire Station, which will make cleaning much easier.

Selectman Bianchi asked what the Medical Services line item accounted for. Chief Lyon said it is for medical supplies when they go to a call. They also use it for TB shots, which are \$10 each, Hepatitis shots, which are given in a series of three shots at \$75 each, and physicals.

Emergency Management – Kim Hallquist, Emergency Management Director

Ms. Hallquist said the total for this line item is down from last year due to a decrease in the line to repair the generators, which is not needed in the next budget. The fee for yearly generator maintenance is \$3,700 and is included in the budget. She explained that it has been the practice for several years to have a town employee serve as Emergency Management Director at no additional salary. The Emergency Management Committee is made up of volunteers of the Town and include town department heads and

staff from the college, hospital, school and COA. Chief Lyon noted that when he gets a firm number on the cost for Active 911, he would submit it so it can be added to the budget (members of the committee not already on Active 911 will be included so that necessary personnel will be accounted for in an emergency).

Conservation Commission

Ms. Hallquist reported that the Conservation Commission would not be requesting an increase in their budget. They are not asking for any additional capital reserves and the appropriations are the same.

Old Business

Abatement Request

The Board discussed a request for abatement requested for the Shaw's, Unit 22 The Seasons, for \$217.35. Selectman Bianchi said it appears that the Town made a mistake when it reported the outstanding taxes due to be used during the closing of the property. He said the taxpayer was told one amount that was incorrect and now the Town is asking for the correct amount. He didn't think this was right and felt the town should not collect the amount in question.

Chair Kidder said this was her initial reaction as that is what would likely be done in a business situation. This, however, is a municipality and if the Town had overcharged them, the Town would return the money to the taxpayer. She was not in favor of approving the abatement. She agreed it was the Town's mistake but nevertheless, it is taxpayer money and they need to collect it.

Ms. Hallquist noted that mistakes do happen. If the Town had mistakenly not sent a tax bill, the law allows the Town to send a supplemental bill to collect the proper amount. She noted that if a similar mistake happened in a motor vehicle transaction the state would not waive the amount, it would be collected or the registration would be voided. Ms. Hallquist noted that it is unfortunate that mistakes happen, however, she urged the Board to be mindful about setting precedence like this as it results in unfair amount of taxes being paid by other taxpayers.

Selectman Rollins understood it was public money but after 25 years in public service, she thought they should honor the abatement request and admit their mistake.

IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to grant the abatement in the amount of \$217.35 for the Shaw's, Unit 22 The Season's. THE MOTION PASSED.

Selectman Kidder voted against the motion.

Center for the Arts – Request to Serve Alcohol on Town Property

Ms. Hallquist explained that the Center for the Arts want to serve alcohol at Whipple Hall during their "First Friday" events. It was thought perhaps the Selectmen should defer the discussion to the next meeting so Chief Andersen could review the request. Chief Lyon said he would need to sign off on an assembly permit.

IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to allow alcohol to be served during the Center for the Arts "First Friday" events each month, pending approval from Chief Lyon and Chief Andersen.

Selectman Rollins felt that the Center for the Arts should do its due diligence before the Selectmen act on the request by providing the exact dates in question and also by getting the approval of the Fire Chief and Police Chief. Once this information is provided the Selectmen will consider the request.

The motion was withdrawn.

Committee Reports

Planning Board

Selectman Bianchi said the Planning Board met the previous Tuesday. New London Wood Products had gone to the ZBA to expand a non-conforming use to build a barn for horses at their business. They were approved for doing so and the Planning Board approved it too. They will have to come in for a building permit for the barn. The rest of the meeting was spent discussing signs. They are still discussing a proposal by Lucy St. John (Planning & Zoning Administrator) that is an effort to simplify the permitting of signs.

Selectman Bianchi said that Accessory Uses were discussed and the college may come in soon to increase the institutional zone to include the houses on Seamans Road.

Recreation Commission

Chair Kidder said there was discussion of the Mary Haddad Trust. Ms. Hallquist attended to answer questions and explain what is known about the Trust. Winter Carnival is planned for January and a Strawberry Festival is planned for June.

Approval of Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to approve the minutes of December 15, 2014, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Upcoming Meetings

Next Selectmen's Meeting – Monday, January 5– 6:00 PM

Planning Board – Tuesday, January 13– 7:00 PM

Budget Subcommittee on Capital Reserve Funds – Wednesday, January 14– 6:00 PM

Citizen's Advisory Committee Meeting – Saturday, January 24– 7:30 AM – Fire Station

The Town Offices will close at 1:00PM on Wednesday, December 24 and will be closed on Thursday, December 25

Public Comment

Bruce Hudson wondered if the claim being paid in the Seastrand settlement (*Janelle Westfall v. Town of New London, et.al*) would cause the town's insurance premiums to increase. Ms. Hallquist agreed that it would, noting that all claims brought forth during the year impact the town's cost of insurance.

Application for Building Permit:

Steve and Connie Jankoski, 99 Little Brook Road (035-037-000) – Build 16' x 24' garage – APPROVED

Other Items to be Signed:

- Arbor Day Proclamation
- Warrant to Collect Wastewater Charges
- Warrant to Collect Land Use Change Tax

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to adjourn the meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London