



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES February 21, 2017 6:00 PM

PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Phyllis Piotrow, New London Budget Committee
Ed Andersen, Police Chief
Emily Cobb, Lieutenant
Leigh Bosse, *The Messenger*
Jaclyn Goddette, *Argus Champion*
Matthew Bemis, New London Resident
Tim Paradis, New London Planning Board
Paul Gorman, New London Planning Board Chair
Joe Kubit, New London Planning Board
Marianne McEnrue, New London Planning Board
Bill Dietrich, New London Planning Board
Lucy St. John, Planning & Zoning Administrator
Casey Biuso, New London Planning Board
Doug Lyon, New London Resident

Chair Helm opened the meeting at 6:00pm.

Public Hearing – Bond Issue & Establishment of Police Details Revolving Fund

Chair Helm open the Public Hearing on the bond issue and the establishment of a police details revolving fund.

Chair Helm addressed the bond issue first:

Article 3: Bond for \$875,000 for the purpose of:

- a. Upgrades to the Pleasant Lake dam,
- b. Sewer lagoon closure,
- c. Repairs to the Academy Building,
- d. To pay for a study of the Buker building and other sites to determine the future location/possibilities for the Police Department and the Recreation Department, and
- e. To pave some gravel roads

Chair Helm asked if anyone present wanted to speak to this issue. There were none.

Chair Helm addressed the second item: establishment of a police details revolving fund:

Article 4: Police Special Detail Revolving Fund

This revolving fund is being requested for the purpose of managing funds coming from and being paid to police for special details. Income will be deposited into the fund and may accumulate year to year and will be separate from the regular budget. When detail work is done, revenue that comes in goes into the revolving fund to pay the salaries that are due to the officers who work the detail.

Chair Helm asked if anyone present wanted to speak to this issue. There were none.

Appointment: Matthew Bemis – 10 Buker Way, Appealing Building Permit Fee

Ms. St. John, Planning and Zoning Administrator, said that Mr. Bemis submitted a building permit and she signed off on it. The building permit would allow for the renovation and relocation of two existing structures on the property. Mr. Bemis disagrees that he is required to pay the building permit fees for the existing structures. In 2013 the buildings were first approved as soft shell tarp enclosures. Mr. Bemis doesn't believe he should be charged the additional square footage because he is only moving them. She feels he should be charged because he will be moving them, as well as siding and roofing them.

Mr. Bemis said he got a permit for the two buildings 2-3 years ago and was charged the same as any structure with a full foundation. He is being charged a second time just because he wants to move them. He doesn't think it is fair on top of the other fees he is paying to do other improvements to the property. He said he was told that he was being charged because he was moving and improving them at the same time and wouldn't if he was doing just one or the other.

Ms. Hallquist said the plan is to have the two tarp-like structures sided and roofed and moved to another location. There is no provision in the current fee schedule that allows for structures to be renovated and moved without being assessed the permit fee. A permit is required so the town can make sure they have the proper setbacks. The only thing exempted from subsequent fees is if a footprint did not change. In this case, the footprint is changing location, even if not in size, because the structures are being moved. Ms. St John said he is making additional improvements to these structures, which triggers the charge per square foot.

Selectman Rollins agrees with Ms. St. John. It seems to be a major improvement to the structures and they are being moved. She feels the fee structure is a prudent one.

Selectman Kidder feels the ordinance is fuzzy and is confusing to people. It seemed to her like it is double jeopardy; he has paid once already. However, this is an upgrade and is becoming a substantial structure.

Chair Helm said he drove by the property and it seems Mr. Bemis will take the structures and make them into real buildings. This is no different than improving another part of the property and the fee should be charged. He offered that the structures should not be described as temporary. Ms. St. John said this was the terminology Mr. Bemis used in the building permit.

Chair Helm inquired if Mr. Bemis is conducting a business from the location. Mr. Bemis explained that he is in the business of locating underground utilities (like Dig Safe). Everything he uses is in his van, which is his business vehicle. These improvements are not being made to house business equipment or to be for business use.

Chair Helm said he and his colleagues interpret his plans to be worthy of the charge implied.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the recommendation from Lucy St. John to impose the Building Permit fees as presented, and deny the request by Mr. Bemis to waive said fees. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Announcement of Promotion within the Police Department – Ed Andersen, Police Chief

Chief Andersen said that Emily Cobb has recently been sworn in as second-in-command for the Police Department. Lieutenant Cobb thanked the Town and said she is happy to be working for New London and serving its citizens. She offered that it has been a good move for her family and for her, professionally.

Audit Report

Ms. Hallquist noted receipt of the financial audit report for year ending June 30, 2016 as prepared by Plodzik & Sanderson. She said the report is available for viewing at the Town office and online.

Update of the Master Plan – Paul Gorman (Chair) and members of the Planning Board

Mr. Gorman said the Planning Board has been faced with clarity issues in the town's zoning ordinances. These issues have encouraged the board to review the town's master plan, which was most recently approved in 2011. The Planning Board feels it is time for them to review the Master Plan again and ask themselves if what is there is active, relative, helpful and clear. The Master Plan drives the zoning ordinances in the town. This is not something that can be done quickly. The process has two major parts: review, editing, updating and renewing the present master plan. There is also looking at the ordinances in the town and determining how the Master Plan impacts them.

Mr. Gorman observed that the future of the college and the hospital are very important to the town; the question of how they as a town address that is an important thing to look at into the future. The Planning Board needs the help of the Selectmen to finance this effort as funds will be needed to pay for assistance from the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (UVLSRPC) as the Planning Board cannot do all of this work alone. Mr. Gorman said he, Chair Helm and some of the Planning Board members have been attending workshops to learn how to better involve the townspeople in this process. They need to express the Town's need for the citizens to participate and give their opinions and ideas. Other town boards also need to be involved including the ZBA and Conservation Commission, among others. Bill Dietrich (VP of the Planning Board) is willing to head the Master Plan update process. Mr. Gorman observed that Mr. Dietrich has been through this before when he sat on the Planning Board in the Town of Hanover, NH; he is interested in putting together a steering committee to move forward, as well as being financed. The UVLSRPC is one entity that specializes in helping towns facilitate this process.

Chair Helm introduced Doug Lyon who is a former member of the Board of Selectman, current Chair of the ZBA, has worked for Colby-Sawyer College, and is on the board at New London Hospital. He thought maybe Mr. Lyon could share what is going on at the hospital and college to help with this planning.

Mr. Lyon said he is happy to hear Mr. Gorman talk about the two largest employers that have the most economic impact of the town; the college and hospital. Both of these entities have economic issues every year but the hospital's issues are more complex. He noted that rumors about a senior housing development on the 50 acres of land adjacent to the hospital, discussions which date back to the 1970's, have resurfaced. This topic has come up again and the hospital is now considering two possibilities: development of a hybrid continuing care community (mirrors a project in Peterborough) which has independent living, assisted living and memory care. This facility has 63 units on 2 acres of land and the hospital has 40 buildable acres. They would likely be cottage-style buildings. Alternately, a construction company has approached the hospital about constructing senior housing. They are interested in buying or leasing the land long term and building a combination of both senior living and potential for workforce housing. Both ideas are out there. The land is currently a non-performing economic asset to the hospital. They would be happy to participate in the plan with the Town; the hospital and Town need to be integral parts of the discussion.

Selectman Rollins said a renewed Master Plan is a critical piece to these discussions. She doesn't want to put a lot of energy into it and see it put on a shelf, as it has been in the past. She recognizes the economic development needs of the hospital and the college. She pointed out that the town's median age is higher than surrounding towns and as a town they need to struggle with what kind of community they will be in 10 years with the aging population, how can they be economically viable? Selectman Rollins thinks they need to have an economic plan. There are many vacant sites on Main Street that used to be shops. How can they generate other businesses so people will want to come here? Workforce housing is a critical factor; they face this when talking about the Town's employees, and the hospital and college employees who can't afford to live in New London. How do they come to a consensus as to what their Main Street will look like in the future? She pointed out that appearances are very important and questioned how the town can make itself look appealing. All ages seem to be interested in having the town be a multigenerational, walking community and she questioned how that could be achieved. Selectman Rollins noted that she is interested in participating in the planning process of the Master Plan.

Chair Helm was concerned that they get bogged down in the 250 pages of wording that went on in the last plan, and suggested that there are three significant things to focus on:

1. Housing (health-related or a developer bringing value to the vacant land). This could bring problems with regards to the Town's sewer and water availability;
2. Economic development issue. They either need to have the tax base grow due to large houses being built on the lake, or find other ways to generate business in town. He didn't want to wait very long to try to bulk up the economic and tax base in the town.
3. Selectmen have put money into a bond issue to study facilities. Some feel the recreation facilities are not adequate. If they want to attract young families, they need to have adequate facilities. Also, what is the future of the police department/dispatch facility? Will it be met by improving the Buker building?

These are the items Chair Helm feels are the most important. He doesn't think they can wait 2-3 years to study these things while assembling the new Master Plan.

Selectman Kidder worries about the impact of lakes and streams due to increased development. They have already seen some people in town are reluctant to see agriculture or forestry happening but they need to support this. Storefronts are empty, she feels, because they haven't been properly maintained. These are issues that will need to be addressed. Selectman Kidder noted that updating a master plan is interesting and at times contentious, but is also a very worthwhile process.

Ms. Biuso said she has never heard any talk of the master plan, following it, etc. at any of the meetings she attends. She noted that she felt all of the groups in town should be held accountable to the master plan; otherwise, why do it?

Ms. St. John said there are many sections of the Master Plan, and there are recommendations. There are a lot of general ideas that need to be explored and see if their current ordinance allows them to happen. Some provisions need to be changed to reflect the ideas that they want to see in the town.

Chair Helm noted that there is a capital reserve fund that is earmarked for updating the master plan. \$5,000 will go in after the next Town Meeting making it have a total of a little over \$12,000. They plan to adjust the purpose of the current fund to make it usable for any year (it has a date specified), and to also make the Selectmen agents to expend. Assuming the changes pass at Town Meeting, the Planning Board will then need to come to the Selectmen to make a request to expend funds.

Mr. Gorman said the planning commission charges \$15,000/year for their services in this regard. For the second year of work, the Town will need to come up with some more money.

Request of Support from the Town of Newbury

Ms. Hallquist said the Selectmen have been asked to consider supporting the Town of Newbury on their position opposing a boat launch at Wild Goose on Lake Sunapee. She said the Town of Sunapee also agrees with Newbury that the relocation for the boat launch is necessary for safety concerns. She has drafted a letter of support should the Selectmen wish to sign it.

Selectman Rollins said she is in support of sending the letter but the project is likely close to completion (this has been going on for several years) and the funds are now in the budget. Chair Helm said although this is true, the project hasn't been approved yet.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to send the letter drafted by Kim Hallquist from the Town of New London to the Governor in support of the Town of Newbury's position on the boat launch location. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Request for June 7, 2017 to be Ausbon Sargent Day

The Town is in receipt of a request from the Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust (ASLPT) to declare June 7th as Ausbon Sargent Day to commemorate their 30th anniversary.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to declare June 7, 2017 as Ausbon Sargent Day in the Town of New London. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Pleasant Street Property Conservation Easement Re-Assignment

The Board reviewed the assignment of easement deed as prepared by ASLPT to remove the Town as primary easement holder and replace it with ASLPT, currently the back-up easement holder. Ms. Hallquist explained that since the Town now owns the property on the west side of Pleasant Street (formerly the Kidder/Cleveland property), by law they can no longer hold the conservation easement on it. This deed has been reviewed by town counsel and is approved.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to approve the assignment of the Pleasant Street property conservation easement to the Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Notice of Receipt of Resignation from the Conservation Commission

Ms. Hallquist noted receipt of the resignation of Dan Allen from the Conservation Commission. Selectman Kidder said they appreciate the long service and all Mr. Allen has done as a volunteer for so long. He has been a vital and active member of the Conservation Commission for many years.

Town Administrator's Report – Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator

Ms. Hallquist said she reached out to Colby-Sawyer College looking for students who might want to do a phosphorous study. College officials have expressed interest; she and Richard Lee will continue discussions.

This upcoming Thursday Ms. Hallquist will go to the Newport Health Center upon an invitation by hospital president, Bruce King, to join in a discussion on healthcare with Senator Jeanne Shaheen.

Ms. Hallquist said the Town Report final proof is due back to the office that week. They anticipate it will be printed and back before the March 7th deadline.

With regards to Town Meeting, Ms. Hallquist said the details are in order regarding rental chairs, sound system, etc. At the March 6th Selectmen's meeting Michael Todd (Town Moderator) will be in attendance to go over logistics for Town Meeting.

Committee Reports

Recreation

Selectman Kidder reported that the Recreation Commission discussed winter carnival. It was a huge community success and enjoyed by many. They raised over \$4,000 and there were many donations. 400 people bought tickets for the Jack Frost dinner, and people donated money for the fireworks. There was a recent senior trip to Lincoln, NH to visit the ice castles. There was some discussion of the revolving fund and how the use of it going forward could be clearer to various members and groups. They are starting discussion on the Easter Egg Hunt in April.

Review of Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes of February 1, 2017, as circulated. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes of February 6, 2017, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes of February 8, 2017, as circulated. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Upcoming Meetings and Special Events

- Next Regular Selectmen's Meeting – Monday, March 6th - 6:00 PM
- Planning Board – Tuesday, February 28th – 6:30PM
- Recreation Commission – Tuesday, March 8th – 5:00 PM – Whipple Town Hall
- Elections: Tuesday, March 14th – 7AM – 7PM – Whipple Memorial Town Hall;
- Town Meeting, Wednesday, March 15th – 7:00PM – Kearsarge learning Campus/Outing Club Gymnasium
- Conservation Commission – Wednesday, March 15th - 8:30 AM

Other Discussion

Selectman Kidder feels before the Master Plan discussion starts they may want to get together with the Outing Club to see if/how they could do things together. They should try to find out what their goals are for the future. Chair Helm said he would be happy to talk with the Outing Club.

Signatures

Requests to Use Town Property

- Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust by Deborah Stanley of 71 Pleasant Street for Town Common/Bandstand on June 7, 2017 from 11AM to 4PM.
- New London Center for the Arts by Deborah Lang of PO Box 872 for Whipple Memorial Town Hall on Feb. 4 and 25, March 4 and 18, 2017 from 6PM to 10PM. Various performances to be held.

Other Items to be signed

- Pay Authorization Voucher by Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer
- Birthday cards for employees

Approved Building Permits

Heather & William Ogmundson, 246 Barrett Road, TM 084-022-000. Insulate and replace interior walls. Build 10' x 28' deck from breezeway to house. **BP17-009. APPROVED 2/13/17**

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to enter into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) to discuss the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her.

Roll call vote: Kidder: Yes, Rollins: Yes, Helm: Yes.

The Selectmen entered nonpublic session at 7:06PM.

The Selectmen reentered the public session at 8:28 pm.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to withhold the nonpublic session minutes from public disclosure pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, III. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:28pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London