



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES Monday, February 3, 2020 6:00 PM

PRESENT:

Nancy Rollins, Chairman
Janet Kidder, Selectman
John Cannon, Selectman
Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator
Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

ALSO PRESENT:

Joe Kubit, New London Resident
Howard Hoke, New London Resident
Kim Bonin – Library Board of Trustee
Gordon Terwilliger – Library Trustee
Minette McQueeney, *Intertown Record*
Bob Harrington, Public Works Director
Margaret Blank, Underwood Engineers
Ben Drummond, Outing Club President

Joy Kubit, Kearsarge Climate Initiative
Sandra Licks – Library Director
Frank Anzalone – Library Trustee
Jamie Hess, Energy Committee
Joe Cardillo, New London Resident
Maureen Prohl, New London Resident
Sharon Nall, DES
Pete Smith, Outing Club Vice-President

PUBLIC HEARING: \$250,000 Bond for sprinkler system at Tracy Memorial Library

Chair Rollins opened the public hearing and stated that this public hearing is relative to the \$250,000 bond for the sprinkler system at the Tracy Memorial Library. Sandra Licks, Library Director, stated she is joined tonight by three Library Trustees: Kim Bonin, Gordon Terwilliger, and Frank Anzalone. She explained that work is being done to get a plan in place so once funding is available, the job can be done quickly. Over the past few years the issue of installing a sprinkler system has come up several times. The library currently does not have a sprinkler system and a lot of money has been invested in upgrading and renovating this historic building. They recognize they need to do all they can in terms of fire protection.

A fire protection engineering consulting firm is already involved and a draft floor plan sprinkler design and bid package is being worked on. They have earmarked up to \$250,000 to get this installed. The Board of Trustees is confident they can get this project done for that amount of money. If the project goes over, they would not be able to draw from the Capital Reserve fund and the library would need to use its own budgeted funds.

Having no further comments by the public or the Board, Chair Rollins declared the public hearing on the bond closed.

Wastewater Asset Management Plan Presentation

Margaret Blank, Underwood Engineers and Sharon Nall, DES, presented the asset management plan to the Board.

Ms. Blank, using a PowerPoint presentation, reviewed the steps and findings of the wastewater collection system asset management plan. She explained that it was funded in part by a state loan forgiveness program. The town is also going to take advantage of the same program for the storm water system plan which is just getting underway now.

Asset management is an ongoing process. Things will always need to be replaced and upgraded. An asset management plan helps you stay on top of things and is a systematic way of meeting the needs of the community. It is a decision-making tool that helps you to decide what assets to repair and replace and when. It also helps you decide how many employees you need and helps with budgeting and financial planning.

The goals of asset management are to:

- Understand the condition of your infrastructure
- Identify and correct current deficiencies
- Anticipate future needs
- Provide a basis to estimate financial resources that will be needed to rehabilitate or replace assets when needed.

In doing this project, the town is continuing to build on work they've already been doing. They've been doing CCTV inspections and manhole inspections and are expanding their capacity to do that.

Components of asset management are:

- Inventory and condition assessment
- Level of service – balancing customer expectations with cost
- Identifying critical assets and prioritizing projects
- Minimum lifecycle costs – these are operating costs
- Long term funding strategy - helping to schedule replacement cost over the long term
- Implementation Plan – for New London this involved storing and managing data.
- Communication Plan – This presentation is part of that but it is an ongoing process to educate the public and the Board of Selectmen. It is also important to stay on top of regulatory requirements.

The town owns approximately \$43 million dollars' worth of sewer system assets. This is one of the biggest investments the town has.

Some of the needs that have been identified specific to New London are:

- Lack of comprehensive information on the condition of horizontal assets (piping and structures). It was recommended to inspect about 20% of the system each year for the next five years. This provides a basis to know what condition our system is in.
- Information collection and handling – A GIS system has been instituted to replace the paper system to make it easier to collect and use the information that is collected.
- Staffing and Manpower – there was only one staff member for the sewer department.

How are these needs being addressed?

- The town has increased the capability of the CCTV inspection camera that it already owns. Larger diameter mains can now be inspected.
- Expanded GIS data handling capability. The town already had the software.
- A preliminary inspection schedule has been determined to facilitate the planning of work. The scale of the job requires more than one person. Safety and efficiency are important as well. The town plans to hire an additional employee.

Over the next ten years:

- There will be an estimated \$ 2.4 million dollars' worth of projects, primarily to gravity mains and manhole structures.
- At Georges Mills main pumping stations will need an emergency generator and automatic transfer switch. Pumps are past their estimated useful life and Georges Mills could use electrical upgrades.
- Job Seamans and Edmunds Road pumps are past estimated useful life.
- Town line meter station will need repairs to the building and the sampling and monitoring equipment needs to be replaced on a regular basis.

Asset Renewals & Revenues

- Set rates and step up slowly
- Stay on top of Inspections and maintenance – avoid surprises
- Cost estimates are an overall guide – identifying the condition and performance may mean that things don't need to be replaced and can be put off.
- Age isn't everything – assets can operate past their estimated useful lives.
- Rehabilitation can be done rather than a full replacement to reduce cost.

There is a cost with allowing facilities to run to failure. Emergency repairs are very expensive and cause a lot of inconvenience.

Sharon Nall from the Department of Environmental services praised communities that are embracing asset management. It is a tool that will give back what you put into it and helps make cost effective decisions going forward. Ms. Nall also informed the Board that her department can assist the town with energy audits of the wastewater system – an area that uses a large amount of energy so efficiencies that are found result in financial savings. She noted that there are additional loan forgiveness programs that her office can assist the town applying for.

The Board thanked Ms. Black and Ms. Nall for attending the meeting and for giving the informative presentation.

Kearsarge Climate Initiative – Update on activities

Joy Kubit and Jamie Hess attended the meeting to talk about Kearsarge Climate Action. Ms. Kubit provided some history and stated this group started in 2017 as Elders Climate Action and they met at the Council on Aging. Elders Climate Action is a national organization. In the spring of 2018, they became Kearsarge Climate Action and meet at Tracy Library on the second Thursday of every month. There are members from Newbury, Grantham, New London, Springfield, Andover, Bradford, Sunapee, Wilmot, Sutton and Warner.

Their purpose is to increase community awareness about climate issues and to provide experiences for people to take more action. The goals are to educate local citizens, provide area wide opportunities for community action and collaborate with local groups.

Past projects that were started in 2018 include the Energy Environmental Expo in collaboration with Colby Sawyer College as well as an electric vehicle expo in collaboration with the New London Energy Committee. Last year, a weatherize, solarize Kearsarge campaign was launched. About 65 houses were done total.

Jamie Hess reported that building on the success of last year's weatherizing program, they've expanded the area from 6 towns to 10 towns. They are trying to spread the word to residents and homeowners that

haven't heard about it. The weatherize program is a great way to tap into energy efficiency funds available statewide from NH Saves. Rebates of up to \$4,000 per homeowner are available for weatherizing.

There is a coalition in the state that is encouraging towns to have an energy warrant that is asking state and federal legislators to move forward with a program called Carbon Cash Back. In 2007 164 towns in New Hampshire passed warrants to do something about the climate. It passed in New London but nothing was done as nothing was specifically asked. Now there are 70 towns that will hopefully pass a warrant and the coalition is providing materials for advertising and promoting this issue. Basically, the push behind cash for carbon is to help communities build infrastructure that is less carbon intensive. A fee is put on pollution caused by carbon and that money goes back to residents. Adults should receive about \$300 back and this can be used in any way they choose. This helps offset any increased cost for people at gas pumps and with fuel costs.

Another warrant about single use plastic bags will be presented at town meeting.

In 2016 there was an Electric Vehicle Expo that was hosted by the Energy Committee in New London. It was successful and one of the largest events of its kind in New England. In 2018 another was held and was the largest even of its kind in New England and the first one officially sponsored by Kearsarge Climate Action. They plan to do another one this year and will most likely be held on September 26 and 27, 2020. In addition, this features solar panels, electric bikes, electric motorcycles and electric yard equipment.

The Kearsarge Climate Action group also plans to work with the school district to implement some of the same initiatives they have begun working on in the town of New London.

The Outing Club - Update on group's activities

Ben Drummond, President of the Outing Club and Pete Smith, Vice President attended the meeting to give the Board an update of happenings at the Outing Club. Mr. Drummond explained that he became President of the Outing Club a week ago, taking over for Laura Pillsbury. They have developed a strong executive board that consists of Chelsea Williams, Secretary, Kate Bidlack, Fundraising Chair, Andy Rose, Treasurer and Jim O'Hara is the Executive Director.

Mr. Drummond noted that the Outing Club had previously presented plans to the Zoning Board for a facility at the Club's fields on Parkside Road, but has since taken a couple of steps back to allow the new board to evaluate the Club's needs. This has been a learning process for them. They have since hired a professional firm to evaluate the current space which will include a forestry survey and wetlands survey that will take place in the spring. Once this is completed, they will determine what can be done at the fields. They have three years left on the lease at the SAU where they are currently running their programs.

A strategic plan is being developed that will look at a 3 to 5-year plan that focuses on the longevity and sustainability of the Outing Club. They will look at what the needs of the Outing Club are and perhaps collaborate with the Recreation Department to find out if there can be synergy between the programs. Mr. Smith added that the strategic plan will include everything – all programs and building needs; it is expected that the strategic plan will be completed in 4-6 months.

Chair Rollins asked about the Club's membership. Mr. Drummond stated that it is good, it is stable year-to-year. He noted that the Club lost the lacrosse program due to the school picking it up; the Club hopes to find a naturalist to do more at Knights Hill Park as they did in the past.

The Board thanked Mr. Drummond and Mr. Smith for attending the meeting and updating the Board on their plans.

PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

NEW BUSINESS

Condition of I-89 during recent icy conditions

Chair Rollins stated this was discussed at the recent Board of Firewards meeting. Last week there was an ice storm and roads started freezing at about 4:30pm between exit 10 and exit 12 on I-89, there were cars off the road everywhere. She noted that the town's fire department was called out to close and re-route the highway. Chair Rollins became aware of the poor conditions and asked Fire Chief Lyon to contact the DOT and Grantham to send out a sander; they didn't respond for four hours. When this incident was discussed at the Board of Firewards, it was decided that a letter should be drafted and sent to the Department of Transportation. Chair Rollins noted that in the spirit of mutual aid and working together, when a call like that is made, a response is needed as it became very dangerous and should be called to their attention. The Selectmen and Firewards will send a joint letter.

Request for a streetlight at Todd Farm Road and King Hill Road

Ms. Hallquist informed the Board that a resident of the Todd Farm community has requested a streetlight, which they feel will help with the vehicles that drive too fast on the road. The Board reviewed the streetlight guidelines, noting that the request does not meet the guidelines since it is on a private road. Private roads generally put up their own lights. Selectman Kidder stated that she would encourage them as a community to put lighting up at the entrance of their development. Ms. Hallquist will draft a letter denying this request.

Request for tuition reimbursement from employee

Chair Rollins stated they have received a request for tuition reimbursement from a Public Works employee for Civil Engineering. There is currently no money in the line item for this, but this category of the budget can absorb this cost. The employee meets the requirements for tuition reimbursement as the class is related to his position and he meets the requirement of length of employment with the town.

IT WAS MOVED (John Cannon) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the request for tuition reimbursement. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

TOWN ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

Ms. Hallquist provided the following report:

- A letter of resignation from Norm Bernaiche was received and his last day will be February 28, 2020. Ms. Hallquist will meet with Sunapee and Newbury tomorrow to work on next steps due to the vacancy.
- There are two petition warrant articles proposed and Linda Nicklos, Town Clerk has certified that there at least 25 signatures for each.
- The Budget hearing packets are available and have been distributed to the Board Selectmen.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS & REPORTS

Building and Facilities Committee – Selectman Cannon reported that the Building and Facilities Committee toured the Sunapee, Newport and Claremont Police Departments. They made a

recommendation to hire Dennis Myers, PA to do consulting work. The Committee will meet again on Thursday.

MEETING MINUTES - Approve the Selectmen's Minutes of January 27th

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2020 Board of Selectmen meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

UPCOMING MEETINGS & SPECIAL EVENTS

- Next regular Selectmen's meeting – Monday, February 24th – 6:00 PM
- Selectmen's Meeting – Wednesday, February 5th – 7:00 PM – approval of Warrant
- PUBLIC HEARING Budget Committee – Wednesday, February 5th – 7:00 PM
- Recreation Commission – Wednesday, February 5th – 5:00 PM
- Buildings & Facilities Committee – Thursday, February 6th - 6:30 PM
- State Primary Election Voting – Tuesday, February 11th – 7 AM-7 PM – Whipple Town Hall
- Planning Board - Tuesday, February 11th – 6:30 PM
- Conservation Commission – Wednesday, February 19th – 8:30 AM
- Citizen's Advisory Committee – Saturday, March 7th – 7:30 AM

Items to be signed

- Accounts Payable Voucher
- Solar Tax Exemptions

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to adjourn. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 7:23 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson

Recording Secretary
Town of New London