



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES February 5, 2018 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:

Phyllis Piotrow, Budget Committee Vice-Chair
Joe Cardillo, Budget Committee member
Vahan Sarkasian, New London Resident
John Raby, *Intertown Record*

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

Public Comments: None

Proposed \$500,000 bond issue

Chair Helm stated that the proposed \$500,000 bond issue was discussed with the Budget Committee last week and after that discussion it was decided clarification on a few things was needed prior to the bond hearing.

Phyllis Piotrow asked at the budget meeting what the purpose was for, and why it was being done in one lump sum. Chair Helm noted that he wanted to be clear about the purpose and whether it is for a Police Department, for a building that would have related public safety (i.e. Police dispatch, emergency management or an ambulance bay) or a building that will house some or all the activities held in other town buildings such as Buker, Whipple Hall and the Town office building. Chair Helm explained that there hasn't been a specific discussion with any details yet so they would like to do that tonight.

The draft of the warrant article currently states it is for a site for a municipal building. Selectman Rollins feels that they should take the approach that identifies both the challenges with current facilities as well as referencing the CIP and future needs. Chair Helm feels that for warrant article purposes should be precise. Selectman Rollins doesn't want it to be so precise that it ties their hands.

Chair Helm thinks the third alternative addresses the fact that the Police Dispatch is not in a proper facility. In discussions with Lou Botta, Emergency Management Director, it was suggested that a common place for emergency preparedness would be great. The question has

been raised in the past as to what would happen if the hospital said they didn't want to house the ambulance anymore. If the Town were building a building, that issue would be considered. Storage in various buildings has been discussed and the Recreation offices are inadequate.

Selectman Kidder feels that the Police Department and the Recreation Center are in inadequate locations for what they are trying to do. If we believe the Town will continue to grow, we will need more storage space and meeting rooms and will need to find places to put those departments. Repurposing what we have is not feasible to house them. If something suitable comes up for either or both, we should have the opportunity to make an offer.

Selectman Rollins also feels that currently there isn't adequate parking for such a publicly used building.

The Board discussed how the article could be worded to make sure the transfer station was not included, so that none of the \$500,000 could be used for that purpose. Ms. Hallquist suggested adding a specific exclusion of the transfer station. Selectman Rollins feels this will be adequate and thinks it will come down to the explanation and how it's presented. Selectman Kidder wants to let the public know the current site of the Transfer Station will be repurposed in some fashion to adequately meet the needs for recycling and trash removal.

Phyllis Piotrow stated that going before the town, asking for the money without knowing what property it is, will not be an easy sell. She wants them to make a convincing argument for flexibility. She feels if all the various possibilities are presented, the citizens will have to trust their judgment. Selectman Kidder stated that if the voters don't trust the Selectmen to select appropriate land, then the article won't get passed.

Joe Cardillo feels they are putting the cart before the horse. He toured the Police Station today and agrees we do need vision as there are problems, but feels the current site is a good one. He's unsure how to get this out to the voters and keep it an open ended to where three people are charged with the decision to buy a piece of land. The study was not done on the Buker building and there is a lot of misinformation. His concern is that it's being pushed and not well defined. Chair Helm corrected Mr. Cardillo and stated the study has been done.

Vahan Sarkisian asked if the Town has a long-range planning committee in New London. Selectmen Kidder replied that the Capital Improvement Plan group is a subcommittee of the Planning Board. Their first recommendation was finding a location for a new Police Department and they also included other things with a community center being one of them. Many of the recommendations they made last year have been completed: the sewer lagoons, Pleasant Lake dam, sidewalks on Parkside and Seaman's Road. Now that these are done, they turned their attention to other priorities. Mr. Sarkisian stated that the three projects listed aren't what he considers to be long range planning. He thinks looking 5, 10, 15 years ahead is long range planning. He feels there should be a better understanding of what is needed. The Police Station with a few changes might be adequate. Has this been considered? Selectman Kidder stated they have met and talked about this in various meetings for a long time. If they don't find anything suitable, they don't need to spend the money.

Selectman Rollins feels they are thinking long range. Properties are getting fewer and fewer and they want to try to keep things in the central corridor so there are limitations on what is available. Even if an architectural review was done on Buker, it still may not be suitable.

Chair Helm said in the past five years he has been trying to think long term. The infrastructure needs to be looked at. A study had been done to look at all the buildings in town. Mr. Lee has been given \$50,000 to do repairs to the Buker building. There were three areas that still need

attention in the next 5-10 years and they are the Police Station, Transfer Station and Recreation. Recreation was identified and discussions about using the 1941 building were unsuccessful, so it still remains on the list. The Transfer Station study was done and with some help from the state and some creativity, the Board is hopeful that the Town will be able to continue to use the existing site. He noted that the Police Department is still a problem. Chief Anderson asked for a new police officer this year, but in the next 5-10 years, they will need a new building. The Selectmen can't go to the next step if their hands are tied. They've done as much as they can until they find a viable option and need money to do that.

Selectman Kidder stated that the reason they are going for the bond is because it doesn't affect the taxpayer unless they use it. She noted that when the addition was put on Whipple Hall, many were opposed to it. They felt it would degrade a beautiful historic building but there was nowhere else to put it. Phyllis Piotrow feels they are asking for permission to be in a position to negotiate. Without a bond, the Board wouldn't be able to do anything.

Ms. Piotrow observed that she feels the Hospital project is secretive. The only thing she has seen so far is from the minutes of the Planning Board in January. With a big new development, the Town needs to be equipped to meet the needs of that kind of facility. It would put demands on police and town government. This could be an argument for getting a bond for building for a new police station.

Joe Cardillo asked who was involved in the CIP Committee. This committee was comprised of Paul Gorman, Bill Berger, Janet Kidder, Rob Prohl, and Bill Dietrich. Mr. Cardillo stated the public doesn't attend meetings. He feels that once people know the Town is looking for land, it could possibly drive the price up. He wants details on how big and what the ideal size building would be, how many vehicles, what is the traffic flow. Once this is known, you can determine what the ideal size is for the parcel of land. He feels a question the public will want to know are what are the needs for the building? He feels it's important on how it's worded and presented.

He recalls the land acquired with the Conservation money on Pleasant Street East. It was presented that they may have the opportunity to build a community building on that land in the future. Now it is being put under a conservation easement. Selectman Kidder stated it was never proposed to the voters as being a possible site for a community center at the town meeting. There were a number of people on Pleasant Lake that were opposed to building on that land because it is in the Pleasant Lake water shed.

First Draft of the 2018 Town Meeting Warrant

Article 1B is highlighted as it hasn't been included yet.

Article 3 has been reviewed.

Article 11 is for the asphalt roller.

Article 12 is for Fire Department radios

Article 13 is for paving gravel roads.

Article 15 makes them agents to expend in the event they want to do the survey for the current Transfer Station property. That way they don't have to put an amount in.

Article 16 Quarterly collection of taxes.

Article 17 Ausbon Sargent Easement. Vahan Sarkisian feels we should wait on this until a long-range plan has been done. Chair Helm stated the Town still retains ownership, but it is under a conservation easement.

Article 18 Petition

Tomorrow is the deadline for petition warrant articles so more petitions could come in.

High Pine Pump Station Funds

The Board discussed funds that are currently being held by the Trustees of Trust Funds for improvements to the High Pine Pump Station; a capital reserve fund was never established, and the project is completed, so Ms. Johnson recommends moving the funds from the Trustees back to the Sewer Fund.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to transfer funds from the Trustees back to the Sewer Fund as recommended by the Finance Officer. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Town Administrator Report

Ms. Hallquist provided the following report:

- New lights have been installed on the back of the Town Hall building to improve the safety of those in the parking lot at night.
- An issue of *Municipal Matters* went out today. One will be done before the end of the month with all the town meeting warrant articles. Chair Helm requested that something regarding the height of Peter Christians be addressed.
- One petitioned warrant article has been submitted to date, which the Town Clerk verified and there are enough voters on it.
- The deadline to sign up to run for office has passed, there is a list of the candidates running. No one signed up for the Trustee of Trust Funds.

Committee Meetings

Selectman Kidder provided the following report:

The Master Plan Subcommittee met with all the department heads on January 30, 2018.

Police Department – Chief Anderson was thankful that the equipment had been maintained for police and dispatch and it's never been in better shape. However, a new police facility is needed.

Highway Department – Mr. Lee reported that his staffing is appropriate. If and when changes happen, they may need to increase staff. They've had challenges getting roads plowed early so scheduling was changed to accommodate that.

Town Clerks Office – Linda Nicklos reported that since the department has grown, she may need a larger office. She also feels the Planning Board should be mindful of water, sewer, and roads and possibly will need to increase staff in police, highway and fire as growth warrants.

Recreation – Scott Blewitt reported that he would like to offer more programs for children through seniors. He noted that the beach facilities are in good shape.

Zoning – Nicole Gage suggested that we have a building code enforcing agent and try to promote affordable housing. She also thinks we should look at our storm water and erosion control management rules.

Finance – Wendy Johnson stated she will probably need an assistant at some point.

Fire Department – Jay Lyon reported the need for housing for fire personnel and he agrees a code enforcement agent is a good idea.

Library – Sandra Licks reported the library building is in good shape. The meeting room at the Library holds 65 people but the town could use additional meeting space.

The Planning Board met and discussed tree cuttings. They decided to table the solar amendment for this year as there were still questions about our proposal.

The owners of the bakery on Lovering Lane presented a proposal to enclose the deck. They will begin construction soon.

Meeting Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to approve the minutes of the January 22, 2018. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Other Business

Chair Helm noted that three people have signed up for the town clerk position and pointed out that New London is a town that doesn't state one person has to hold both positions. Chair Helm asked if it should continue to be separate positions. Also, the statute states that the compensation voted for at town meeting is what has to be paid to the town clerk. His sense is that for convenience, it has been split between 50/50 between the town clerk and the tax collector. His observation is that it isn't actually 50/50 as far as the work load. If there is any chance that the Board didn't want to continue to have one person doing both jobs, we might not have the right compensation in place and may want to modify it. Not the total amount of money but the split of it in the budget. This can be done on the floor of town meeting or at the budget hearing. We've done the same thing with the deputy town clerk and assistant tax collector positions, however this is a different situation.

Chair Helm pointed out that if any one of the three candidates became town clerk and not tax collector, would the Board feel that paying them \$30,000 a year, as currently budgeted, is the right compensation? The Board noted that in recent times, the positions of town clerk and tax collector have been held by the same person. Ms. Hallquist noted that the question was raised by all three candidates and she has informed all that the town clerk position is an elected position and the tax collector position is appointed by the Selectmen who may, or may not, appoint the town clerk to fill the position.

Selectman Kidder doesn't see a reason to change. Chair Helm feels the town clerk job is a bigger job than the tax collector job and if they split the jobs he would feel badly that they were underpaying the town clerk.

Selectman Rollins struggles with the functions of the town clerk. She wants to know if there is a sense of how much time there is to do all of those functions. Is it a full-time job? Chair Helm doesn't feel it is and if it is, we are understaffed at this point. There is a full time equivalent of work there but that's why we have a deputy.

Selectman Rollins asked if there was a proposal for the compensation split. Chair Helm would like to discuss it. The Selectmen will give this more thought.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to enter into a 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 7:09 PM.

The Board reentered the public session at 7:29PM.

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 Veteran Tax Credit
- Applications To Use Town Property
 - ✓ Whipple Hall on April 7, 2018 from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm for the Junior Intern Auditions by Andrew Miller for the Elkin's Fish & Game Club.
 - ✓ Whipple Hall, Town Common/Bandstand, NL Inn Common on Fridays, June 22, 29, July 6, 13, 20, Aug. 10, 17, 24 from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm for the NL Bandstand Concerts by Nicole Densmore for the NL Bandstand Committee.
 - ✓ Whipple Hall on Saturday, April 28, 2018 from 5:00 pm to 10:00 pm for the Hillman Benefit Concert by Nicole Densmore for the Hillman Scholarship Fund.

Applications Approved &/or Denied

Sign Permits

- Permanent Sign – Laurie Schive for Blue Loon Bakery, 12 Lovering Lane, TM 084-059-000. APPROVED 1-25-2018
- Temporary Sign – By Colonial Pharmacy for a 13.75' sign on right side of building, 82 Newport Road, TM 059-030-000. APPROVED with conditions 2-5-2018

The Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:31 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson, Recording Secretary
Town of New London