



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

March 26, 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:

Richard Lee, Department of Public Works
Ed Andersen, Police Chief
Linda Nicklos, Town Clerk
Phyllis Piotrow, Budget Committee Vice-Chair
Sue Jesseman, Budget Committee member
Joe Cardillo, Budget Committee member
Joe Kubit, New London resident
John Raby, *Intertown Record*
Jaclyn Goddette, *Argus-Champion*

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

Public Comment: None

Old Business: None

New Business

Consider Appointment of Tax Collector

The Board reviewed a memo from Kimberly Hallquist, Town Administrator, outlining various options for the appointment of the tax collector. The tax collector is appointed by the Selectmen for a one-year term.

All of the Selectmen agreed on option 4 which states “To appoint a new tax collector and to appoint the current tax collector and town clerk staff as deputies and assistants. The tax collector appointed will be responsible for the tasks that are time consuming but do not need to be done during regular business hours such as sending out tax bills, executing tax liens, tax deeding, and end of the year financial reporting; the deputy and assistants will process tax payments and answer property owner questions. The cost of this option is estimated to be \$5,400 and \$8,000 minus any proposed reduction in the town clerk’s salary as a result of her not being the tax collector. This option will have the positions of tax collector and town clerk performed by two

different people, which goes back to how it was done prior to 1983; however, it will not be as noticeable to the public since tax payments will still be received in the same office. The position could be paid as a stipend like the treasurer at a set amount.

Selectman Rollins stated there have been concerns over the last year relative to adjustments that had to be made within administration. In order to try to balance workloads, this makes sense from a financial standpoint and the expectations of a person's time.

Chair Helm agrees and has spent time in the clerk and tax collector's office. He feels he has a better understanding of what goes on with regards to day to day activity. A major goal is to have the office run smoothly as it is the face of the town. He also noted that in doing some research, a number of other towns separate these two functions including the town of Pembroke.

Ms. Hallquist spoke with the town of Pembroke, where the town administrator also serves as the tax collector. She explained that the town appointed the town administrator because they feel it is a part time job and the town administrator had the experience (he was a former Department of Revenue auditor) so it was easy for him to step in when their tax collector left the position.

Chair Helm feels they aren't ready to determine who they would want to appoint and would want to spend time seeking alternative proposals. They are however, under statutory obligation to make an appointment before April 1st. He suggested that the Town Administrator could do this on a temporary basis while the Selectmen take time to consider possibilities for a permanent appointment. An audit will need to be done. Selectman Kidder feels if Ms. Hallquist is willing to do this it makes the most sense.

Wendy Johnson feels this won't reduce the day to day workload. She feels the person that is appointed will need to have a good understanding in order to do the tasks required of them.

Phyllis Piotrow stated it appears this will have budgetary implications. She would like copies of the memo Kim Hallquist distributed to be provided to the members of the Budget Committee so they can review it. She is also concerned that an action like this by the Selectmen will be interpreted by many people in town as a direct repudiation of the vote.

Selectman Rollins clarified that the vote was for the Town Clerk position, not the position the Board is currently discussing. Ms. Piotrow stated that is true, but most people that come into the town clerk's office come in to pay their taxes so they see the roles to be similar. Selectman Rollins stated at the discretion of the Board of Selectmen, they have the right to appoint the tax collector. Ms. Piotrow stated she knows they have the right, but her concern is how this will be perceived. Selectman Rollins replied that messaging will be important and when the decision is made, they will be mindful of how it gets communicated.

Chair Helm commented that the budget impact is going to be minimal.

Linda Nicklos commented that without a full-time deputy it is difficult to perform the town clerk and tax collection duties to the level that she would like. She doesn't feel there is enough help and questioned whether the proposal included more hours for her deputy.

Chair Helm stated that they have heard the need for more help throughout the budget process; in appointing someone else as tax collector, the Board is removing some of the responsibilities that Ms. Nicklos currently has, so this should free up some of her time.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to proceed to separate the tax collector and town clerk roles and appoint a part-time tax collector. Also, the town

clerk will be appointed as a deputy tax collector. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to appoint Kim Hallquist tax collector with no additional compensation. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chair Helm noted that if the tax collector role is removed, it is logical to reduce the full-time compensation being paid. The current budget assumes it is 50% for town clerk and 50% tax collector. Chair Helm feels this is unreasonably low for town clerk. The town clerk's role is a large majority of the total. He proposes for discussion to set it at 85% of her current compensation with full benefits. The statute doesn't suggest the town clerk's job is part time or full time so there is no obligation to worry about that with regards to benefits. Chair Helm would like Ms. Nicklos to come back to the Board of Selectmen to give more details about the hours the town clerk's office will be open.

Linda Nicklos feels that since the tax collector is not collecting the taxes and processing all of the payments, as that will be her responsibility as the deputy, her compensation should be 90% of her current compensation not 85%. The Board agreed.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to set the Town Clerks salary, and including deputy tax collector, for this fiscal year and next fiscal year at 90% of current compensation with full benefits. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Consider Requests for Appointments to Various Boards and Committees

Planning Board

Michele Holton has served on the Planning Board for ten years and is not seeking reappointment. It was recommended that Paul Vance be appointed to that seat.

Tim Paradis is up for reappointment and wishes to remain on the Planning Board. Paul Gorman, Planning Board Chair, has indicated a desire to have additional alternates and two suggestions for alternates are David Royal and Bruce Hudson. Selectman Kidder supports the appointment of Mr. Royal as he is a long-time resident of the town.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to appoint Paul Vance and Tim Paradis as a full members and David Royal as an alternate of the Planning Board. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Zoning Board of Adjustment

Paul Vance will need to resign as an individual can't serve on more than one land use board and he has been appointed to the Planning Board. Vahan Sarkisian's term is up. Jerry Coogan is currently an alternate and has been elected to the Budget Committee. He would also like to be the representative for the Upper Valley Regional Planning Commission, so Chair Helm suggested not reappointing him as an alternate on the ZBA. The Chair of the ZBA has suggested that Stan Bright and Heidi Lauridsen be made alternates. Bruce Hudson and Noah Weinstein have also been suggested. Frank Anzalone would be the only remaining alternate with the departures of Paul Vance and Jerry Coogan. There can be up to five alternates.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to appoint Frank Anzalone as a full member and appoint Bruce Hudson, Heidi Lauridsen and Stan Bright as alternates to the ZBA. Vahan Sarkisian and Jerry Coogan will not be reappointed. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Conservation Commission

Andrew Deegan, Tim Paradis and Michael Kennedy are all up for reappointment. All would like to remain on the Conservation Commission.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to reappoint Andrew Deegan, Tim Paradis and Michael Kennedy to the Conservation Commission. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Recreation Commission

Laura Lorio and Carol Kinzler are up for reappointment. There is an opening and Peter Hamel has expressed interest. Chair Helm suggested Tyler Beck if he is interested so Kim Hallquist will reach out to him. This will be deferred until after the next recreation commission meeting.

Archives Committee – Deferred

Board of Firewards

Stephen Ensign and John Ryan have expressed their willingness to continue to serve on this committee.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to reappoint Stephen Ensign and John Ryan to the Board of Firewards. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission

Elizabeth Meller is up for reappointment. Chair Helm would like to step down from the committee and Gerry Coogan would like to be on the commission.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to reappoint Elizabeth Meller and appoint Jerry Coogan to the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Solid Waste Management

Chair Helm would like to be appointed to this committee. As a Board of Selectmen created the committee, the committee can have unlimited members.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to appoint William Helm to the Solid Waste Management Committee. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Sewer Committee

The Board discussed whether the Selectmen are required to attend quarterly meetings of the Sunapee Sewer Commission. Chair Helm noted that he would prefer having those with more of an aptitude for the work that is done be the ones to attend the meetings. Richard Lee noted that

he felt that when the New London Sewer Commission was disbanded by the voters, the requirement to meet was placed on the Selectmen. More research will be done on this issue.

Consider Annual Concurrence of Emergency Operations Plan

Ms. Hallquist stated there have been no changes since last year. Each year the state requires that the Selectmen and the Emergency Management Director sign and reaffirm the plan and acknowledge that they understand it and will follow it.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to agree and sign the annual concurrence of Emergency Operations Plan. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Discuss Issuing a Request for Proposal to Study Harold W. Buker, Jr. Municipal Building

At the last meeting it was agreed that a study would be done on the Harold W. Buker building. They have asked Ms. Hallquist to proceed with putting together a request for proposal to bring proposals forward. This is estimated to take 6-8 months. The things they would like high-lighted in this request for proposal are parking, storage, meeting space. It will be a feasibility study to determine use by the Police Department and the Recreation Department. This is a study of the Buker building, not Whipple Hall.

Review Town Projects Status

- The Academy building project is coming to an end. The final big project is the sprinkler system. Final measurements were taken and the work will be completed by the end of June.
- The Asset Management plan related to the sewer system is underway. There was meeting with Underwood Engineers and state DES the first week of March.
- Brookside Road culverts – One was completed and there is one left to do. There will need to be additional work and Mr. Lee will bring DES and Fish & Game to the site, as there may be changes that need to be made. Currently we have the permitting but not the funding. Chair Helm stated the funding will be part of the next infrastructure bond. Pingree Road and Goose Hole Bridge will be added to the next update.
- GIS mapping is still on target and should be completed by the end of this year.
- The Harold W. Buker Jr. building study will be conducted.
- Public Works Director Replacement – 14 resumes have been received for that position. Public Works professionals will review these resumes this week and those candidates that are chosen will be sent to the Citizens Committee. After the Citizen Committee review, the first week of April, then the Selectmen will do interviews. Depending on how much notice the successful candidate has to give to his current employer, they will have at least one month of working with Mr. Lee.
- Sewer Lagoons – Three sewer lagoons have been closed and one is remaining. We cannot leave it in place. The Public Works Department will be able to do this work.
- Transfer Station Study – The study has been done and options have been reviewed. Staying with the current location and trying to get property from the state seems to be the best option. We have filed the application for them to sell the land to us or give it to us. This process can take between a year and 18 months. We would like to find out as soon as possible if they even think it is feasible.

Projects that have been removed from the list in 2017

- Pleasant Lake Dam
- Elkins Guardrails
- Seaman's Road and Parkside sidewalks
- Paving of 8 gravel roads
- Brookside culvert site 1
- Sewer lagoons 1-3

Senate Bill 438 Regarding local authority to postpone town meeting and local elections

With regards to a communication from the State on Senate Bill 438, Chair Helm asked Ms. Hallquist to prepare a letter in opposition of this. This bill seeks to take from the town the ability to postpone local elections. It has been thought for many years that moderators have the authority to postpone elections but last year when a nor'easter hit, there was a lot of confusion as to whether towns could postpone. This bill seeks to make it clear that towns do not have the ability to postpone elections and that postponing can only be done by a call to the Secretary of State. Many municipal officials are opposed to this and feel it should stay locally controlled and moderators have the ability to make this decision. The Selectmen are opposed to SB438 for these reasons. The New Hampshire Municipal Association has submitted an amendment to say elections will stay in local control but it will make clear how towns will go about it. A house election committee hearing will be held on Thursday and the letter will go to that committee so they know New London is opposed to SB 438 in its current form. If that gets passed, the Selectmen support the NHMA's amendment instead.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to send a letter to the House Committee in opposition of SB 438. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Budget Committee Calendar

The committee will be meeting on April 25, 2018 and they would like a proposed schedule for BOS/Budget meetings for next year.

Banners

Joe Cardillo attended the meeting and commented that he was glad to see the Selectmen decide to erect banners for the 100th anniversary celebration in town. He wonders if this could become a more permanent thing as it creates energy and beautification for the town. If they can become more permanent, where else would we want them? He also suggested having businesses and families sponsor a banner to help defray cost.

Town Administrators Report

- The health insurance quotes received came in at a 6.6% decrease which represents \$35,000 decrease (less what the employees pay) from what was budgeted.
- There was a water leak in the Police Department earlier in the day. Chief Andersen explained the sprinkler system malfunction had caused water to leak into the communications equipment room, the area he fears for such a break. He noted that the Fire Department responded quickly so there was no damage to equipment.

- Ms. Hallquist will be meeting with Lou Botta, the Emergency Management Director, and Pete Berthume from Colby Sawyer College, to discuss emergency shelter needs in town.

Meeting Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes from the March 6th and 12th, 2018 meetings. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Other Business

Richard Lee discussed the Pleasant Lake draw down that will occur this Fall to allow for work to be done on the face of the dam. A public hearing will be held this summer.

Items to be signed

- Payroll Authorization Voucher
- Accounts Payable Voucher
- Yield Tax Levy
- Application for Veteran Tax Credit
- Landowner Permission Agreement
- April birthday cards

The Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson, Recording Secretary
Town of New London