



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
Whipple Conference Room
March 6, 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:

Robert Bowers, New London Resident
John Raby, *Intertown Record*
Michael Todd, Moderator
Bruce Hudson, Budget Committee Member
Linda Nicklos, Town Clerk

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

Preparation of Town Election and Town Meeting

The Board met with Michael Todd, Moderator, to review the warrant for the upcoming Town Meeting. Each article, with the exception of #19, is assigned to one selectman to introduce and to give the Board's view on it.

The potluck prior to Town meeting was discussed and Mr. Todd asked who would be in charge of this. Janet Roberts is the person in charge and she called the office to ask if it should be cancelled due to the low number of reservations. Chair Helm feels it hasn't been publicized well. The consensus was to move forward with it as there will be additional publicity in the coming days.

There was a discussion of the setup of the gym and coverage of various tasks during the meeting; Mr. Todd asked that names of participants be given to him prior to the meeting as he likes to recognize their efforts at the start of the meeting. Mr. Todd noted that he has heard that there may be an amendment on the bond and if it is to be amended, amendments have to be carefully considered and it has to be delivered in writing to the moderator prior to the meeting. He explained that voters can amend the bond article by simple majority but the entire article has to pass by 2/3 vote. It has to be a paper ballot and the ballot box has to be open for one hour.

Mr. Todd noted that he is up to speed on the changes have been to election laws; they concern registration and the absentee ballot processing. He attended an election seminar recently and he was happy that some of the ballot clerks were able to attend as well.

With regard to article 3 (bond article), Selectman Kidder suggested that once she is done presenting, she would like Mr. Todd to acknowledge Chief of Police Ed Andersen, so he can give an overview of the police department and dispatch facilities and asked that he be able to face the audience when he is presenting. Mr. Todd agreed to allow him to stand and face the audience as long as he (Mr. Todd) can also see him.

Mr. Todd stated they will be looking for people to join the election team in the future.

Public Comments – None

Old Business

The Board discussed the withdrawal of \$18,938.58 from the Town Buildings CRF to pay for Fire Station repairs previously approved. Chair Helm noted that this issues as tabled at the last meeting as the amount was not known.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the withdrawal of \$18,938.58 from the Town Buildings CRF to pay for Fire Station repairs. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Review of Warrant

Bob Bowers met with the Board to discuss the bond article. He commended them for the time and effort they put in and for looking at the future needs of the town. He distributed a fact sheet related to Bond Article 3. He stated that he reviewed the Mires report that was done in 2014 which outlined the needs related to heating and water infiltration system. He also met with Ed Andersen and took a tour of the police department to discuss the problems and issues they face.

He looked up the bond article from last year which said money would be set aside to look at the Buker building to see if it works for a Police Station.

Mr. Bowers pointed out that the Mires report states that the logical place for the Police Station is right where it is currently. It said the holding cell system is a very expensive system and is one of the better ones they had seen for a department of this size. There is no valid reason to change that and spend that kind of money somewhere else. It also stated the electric input to the building was at 20% capacity so there was more than enough electric capacity to take care of their needs. When he toured the building, Chief Andersen pointed out various issues and the heating and water infiltration are among the major issues. He pointed out storage issues which Mr. Bowers feels can be worked out.

Mr. Bowers noted that his concern is that we have an initial report that says the Police Department could be used where it is. Other than the heating and water issues, a lot of the concerns expressed by Chief Andersen could be resolved. Money has been set aside and a study has not been done. The warrant article refers to a “municipal building” so if this means something other than a Police Station, the town should know this before there is a vote. He would like to see the Selectmen reach a conclusion to table this article for this year. He agrees that we need to look to the future but feels we need factual data to support this and would like them to reconsider. Mr. Bowers concluded that he feels that if the bond passes, a study should still be done to see what could be done with the Buker building.

Selectman Kidder thanked him for comments and noted that her presentation at Town Meeting will address all the points he made. She explained that the idea is that property is being

considered for a municipal building, either a Community Center or a Police/Dispatch station. Spending money to do a study before they know what purpose would be didn't seem logical. The Board is trying to be proactive with the dwindling amount of property that is available to the town right now.

Chair Helm stated that the premise isn't about rushing to build a building. The sole purpose is they are trying to be proactive to acquire property. In several meetings, the Selectmen have discussed various pieces of property in the center of town because they believe municipal activities should take place in that area. He worries about going before the town only once a year. He believes they need to have available funds to acquire property to be determined later or they will miss opportunities. If the right piece of property comes up they need to be able to act. It's not about how they can fix up the Buker building; it's more about giving the town the ability to act on a real estate transaction if an appropriate one comes up. If the bond issue doesn't pass, they are unable to pursue anything they have been looking at as they have no negotiating power. Within the next ten years, the town will need additional property.

Mr. Bowers feels the Selectmen are doing the right thing by thinking ahead. The difference for him is that his logic starts with defining what the need is first. Their logic is trying to get what will work for their needs first, and then figuring out logic of use after.

Chair Helm feels they would be done in parallel. The problem is that he can do the studies that Mr. Bowers has addressed as they go along, but he only has one shot at getting the money next Wednesday to buy property if it becomes available.

Mr. Bowers stated that it was his understanding that there was not going to be a study of the Buker Building to see if it would work for a Police Department. Chair Helm stated he will consider having a study conducted because a lot of people have raised this. The Selectmen thought the Police Chief's views were clear and the things that the Mires study identified were clear but they've heard a different message, so they will consider doing the study, they will not ignore what they are hearing.

The Board noted that the first recommendation of the CIP was to build a Police/Dispatch station which is why they have asked Chief Ed Andersen to speak to the issue during the debate on the bond article. Bruce Hudson asked if this may cause confusion with the voters as it is being proposed as a municipal building. It is important to point out that one of the departments (Recreation or Police) has to leave the Buker building. The deficit of the space needs to be addressed.

Chair Helm agrees that several more studies need to be done.

Meeting Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes of the February 26, 2018 meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Items to be signed

- Warrant – Land Use Change Tax – Current Use
- Applications for Elderly Exemption
- Applications for Veteran Tax Credit

Applications Approved &/or Denied

Sign Permits

- Permanent Sign – Wood & Wood Signs for Lake Sunapee Bank, 116 Newport Road, TM 059-029-000. APPROVED 3-5-2018
- Permanent Sign – Wood & Wood Signs for Lake Sunapee Bank, 321 Main Street, TM 084-087-000. APPROVED 3-5-2018

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

The Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson, Recording Secretary
Town of New London