



TOWN OF
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES**

**May 8, 2017
6:00 PM**

PRESENT:

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

OTHERS PRESENT:

Laura Lorio, Chair; Casey Biuso, Lori Lavolpicelo, Justin Garzia – Recreation Commission Members
Scott Blewitt, Recreation Director
John Raby, *Intertown Record*
Peg Andrews, New London Resident
Erica McCullough, New London Resident
Norm Bernaiche, Tri-Town Assessor
Rob Prohl, Budget Committee Chair
Bruce Hudson, Budget Committee member
Joe Cardillo, Budget Committee member
Edward Andersen, Police Chief
Malika Sidmore, New London Resident
Tyler Sidmore, New London Resident
Tim Lund, New London Resident
Kristin Hubbard, New London Resident
Chris Lorio, Budget Committee member

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

Chair Helm recognized the Recreation Commission, in attendance at the Board's request to discuss current and future activities of the Recreation Department.

Laura Lorio, Chair of the Recreation Commission, began her presentation by giving a brief summary of the Recreation Commission and Department. She noted that the Commission is made of up seven appointed members: Board of Selectman representative Janet Kidder, Casey Biuso, Justin Garzia, Lori Lavolpicelo, Steven Sidmore, and Lyndsay Lund and Recreation Director Scott Blewitt. She noted that Chad Denning, the former Director, resigned in 2012 as he felt that he was not supported in his position and felt challenged at every turn; Ms. Lorio noted that she hoped that would not happen again.

Ms. Lorio observed that with the departure of Chad Denning, Scott Blewitt was hired on an interim, part-time basis; within 6 months it became clear that 25 hours per week was not enough time to provide the recreational programming that was desired, so Scott was hired as the full-time director. Now, coming into his fourth year as the full-time Recreation Director, Scott has continued to increase the programming tenfold. He has added many activities and trips for children and seniors, dozens of children's programs, changed and improved old special events and created new ones. With Scott's leadership, the Recreation Commission has increased involvement in Hospital Days, expanded Winter Carnival and the Jack Frost Dinner, the Haunted Walk and created brand new events like the Strawberry Festival, Pumpkin People Contest, Chili Festival, Free Hot Dog Day, Bike Rodeo, Broom Hockey tournaments and the Chad Denning Memorial Walk to School Day. He has filled important voids in the community such as vacation-week camp offerings and extended summer day-camp offerings. He also provides an internship program for CSC students.

Ms. Lorio addressed the issue of the Outing Club (OC) and the Recreation Department by stressing that the relationship between the Recreation Dept and the OC is just fine. She observed that the OC is a group of people with whom the Recreation Commission are friends with; the groups communicate frequently, and help promote activities and fundraisers. The two groups collaborate on events and participate in their programs and have attended meetings together. She noted that the OC is a private organization that does not receive any funding from our town and can do whatever they choose. Ms. Lorio urged anyone with questions about this issue to see the Recreation Commission and hoped that people would stop implying that there are problems between the two organizations.

Ms. Lorio noted that she felt the amount of time talking about the recreation department budget and analyzing of the finances of the programs seems excessive given the small size of the budget in relation to the overall budget. With regard to the revolving fund, Ms. Lorio observed that its purpose is to provide a mechanism to facilitate the timely payment of recreation programming expenses which will allow for a more creative and flexible approach to program offerings. She noted that it is as transparent as the commission knows how to make it as the town finance director oversees money spent out of the revolving account. The Town Administrator also has to sign off on expenditures. She noted that the commission hears that there is too much money in the account and they also hear that some programs don't make enough money. Ms. Lorio noted that the commission doesn't see it as a problem to have additional money in the revolving account and they do not support the idea of a cap on the amount, pointing out that there is certainly a lot that could be done with more money down the road if recreation ever has its own facilities.

Mr. Lorio reviewed the hockey issue and how it came about, pointing out that the commission was attempting to address the issue of safety at the rink that was raised to pucks flying off the ice and potentially hitting people. She noted that the commission worked over several months' discussion various alternatives, including having two rinks, and then decided that putting up netting at the existing Bob Andrews rink was the best way to go. The commission was surprised when the Selectmen did not approve the request for \$4,500 from the Recreation Capital Reserve Fund for this purpose when the request was made.

Ms. Lorio concluded her remarks by suggesting that rather than focusing so much on questioning the department and the revolving fund, it would be nice to recognize the quality work our department is doing and be forward-thinking for the benefit of our town and our citizens. She noted that in her opinion, this should start with a conversation about some type of community center (or multi-purpose facility) as it is what the community needs and wants for all generations. She suggested that as the Board looks at the space needs

throughout the town departments, and with other members of the community, we should be forward thinking and start the conversation about a facility that would include (at the very least) a gym, classroom spaces, office space, storage space and a field or park. She suggested that this will be considered in the future planning for the town.

Casey Biuso read a statement from Lyndsay Lund, who was not able to be at the meeting that night. Ms. Biuso reported that Ms. Lund appreciates the time and attention of the Selectmen in recreation matters and she observed that she felt the Board has the best intentions for the town and that governing is not an easy task. Ms. Lund noted that she sometimes posts to Facebook to raise awareness of issues, however it is not her intention to offend the Selectmen. Ms. Lund suggested that it is very important for the community to have some clarity on the objective for the Recreation Department and the services it provides. Ms. Lund suggested that the Recreation Department budget gets more scrutiny than other town departments, noting that what is considered by some as a necessity to attract and maintain a vibrant and balanced population is countered as superfluous and unnecessary to others. And the result of that discord and imbalance of service values and priorities is likely why the discussion is being held now. Ms. Lund stressed that she feels that an active Recreation Department is critical to attract business and families to New London.

Ms. Biuso, now speaking on her own behalf, said she doesn't feel the commission is confused about their policies and their mission and they know who they are working for. She feels they have felt disregarded in their efforts from the Selectmen. She isn't sure why their opinions are disregarded but hopes it isn't due to the commissioner's age or because they are not natives of New London.

Justin Garzia said he is new to the town and they chose New London from every other town in the country. It is attractive to young families even though it is out of the way. He'd like to work to make it even better for the future.

Chair Helm said this is the first time in about 10 years that a meeting like this has happened between the Selectmen and the Recreation Commission. He reminded those at the meeting that they were not there to just discuss the ice skating rink, but would like to discuss the whole department and their thoughts about the future.

Chair Helm noted that the Commission discusses activities "for the Town of New London" but actually, they are providing recreational opportunities for the entire area. This is something they need to have an agreement on; do they want this as a town? Ms. Biuso said they pride themselves in the fact that they open up their programming to other towns. They don't want to close their doors and be elitist. Chair Helm said personally, he is fine with having the programming open to others. He isn't sure how his colleagues feel. Selectman Rollins hopes the programming remains broader than just for the Town of New London residents. The goal is to provide for the children. Selectman Kidder said the focus should be on New London and fortunately they offer programs that can be availed by the broader community. This is how she feels it should continue.

Mr. Blewitt said they take pride in welcoming residents from nearby towns to participate in their activities. There are actually some classes that wouldn't happen if it wasn't for people from other towns attending. Ms. Biuso said they get pushback from the Budget Committee if they use language like "Serving the Kearsarge Region" because they do not receive money from other towns for their programming. Chair Helm said they should remain transparent; if there is a problem with the Budget Committee that should be taken up with

them. Those from other towns should pay more, as they are asked to currently, but it should be noted that the programming isn't just for the Town of New London. Mr. Garzia said surrounding towns welcome others to use their resources as well.

Selectman Rollins likes that the primary focus is on New London but not with the spirit of trying to limit others' participation. Mr. Blewitt said there has been talk about residents versus non-residents when it comes to swim lessons. Non-residents pay more and are given a restricted parking pass for only the amount of time the lessons are held.

With regards to the ice rink, Chair Helm said they have had no discussions on the side; they had Mr. Lee stake out an area on Gould Road where there had been some discussion about building a rink for hockey. It is thought to be a viable place to develop a rink for skating. They have never discussed anything more.

Ms. Biuso said the cost of taking on an additional rink wasn't something they felt the Town would want to pay for. It is also something of permanence that she didn't feel the Town would want to have to work around with mowing/parking for Hospital Days.

Chair Helm asked how the Commission felt about having a designated rink for hockey. Ms. Biuso said if they could find a place to keep it attractive to their "Main Street Brand" she would be interested although she has some problems with the cost and maintenance of it. If the vision will withstand five or ten years she would be on board. Mr. Blewitt said a 64' x 128' rink would cost about \$13,380, with removable boards. It includes the water and power lines. There are ongoing costs to consider, like liners every few years and maintenance. In Sunapee, there are two individuals from the highway department who do the majority of the work putting together the rink and maintaining it. They have a snow blower and a sweeper. A new coat of ice is laid down each day in good winter weather.

Selectman Kidder asked about lighting and parking if they were to put a rink on the Gould Road area. The cost to employ others in the town to maintain this second rink concerns her as well.

Chair Helm said there are two skating programs to consider: recreational and hockey. It doesn't seem that they mix easily especially on a small space. If they are going to offer programs, they should do it and not "chew around the edges of it." There has been a desire for hockey in town and they haven't found a good solution. He worries that some will think the netting and poles along Main Street are ugly; moving the hockey area to another location may be the solution.

Mr. Blewitt said the Bob Andrews Rink is a wonderful, small-town skating rink. Even with a larger rink, he doesn't ever foresee the Recreation Department having a hockey program. Mr. Garzia said they'd have to have a facility like Warner does, to have a program. He loves the idea of having a separate rink but it will require a lot of money (liner, maintenance, snow blower, etc).

Ms. Lorio said they need a recreation center with a gym. They are limited in space and the only gym they can use is leased by the Outing Club. Whipple Hall has been nice to have but it isn't a recreational facility. There are enough people to use a facility. Ms. Biuso feels they are having growing pains; maybe the community hasn't caught up with this. They understand it will be a lot of money and they haven't started researching the costs. The historical building they are using should not have ball marks on the walls from the activities

happening within it. She feels prospective residents of New London would be attracted by a community center. There will definitely be a cost to having a community center. The recreation program could become the heart and soul of the community.

Mr. Blewitt explained the reason the day camp is held at Whipple Hall instead of the school. Two years ago the school noted they would be working for the next four summers to have asbestos removed, so they would not be able to use their facilities. Mr. Blewitt feels they should have recreation facilities in town. There should be a Frisbee golf course. The only playgrounds they have are at the school or the Outing Club. During the day, pre-school families don't have a place to go. They need basketball hoops, etc. There should be a dog park also. There are several elements of recreation they should have in the Town. He is able to utilize the gym from 3-4pm but it isn't available afterwards. They need more space.

Ms. Lorio said there are few things that take kids from technology and one of those things is a gym and activities they have because of a gym.

Mr. Blewitt envisions a multi-generational, multipurpose, gathering place.

Chair Helm said there is a problem with where kids can go after school. COA is busting at the seams. There is a need for a place like this and a space for all. He said trying to rely on other bodies with their own agenda (college, school district, Outing Club) they aren't going to get where they need to go. New London has a different set of purposes.

Ms. Lorio asked if they were to find a piece of land to build a community center, it might also be a place they could have a hockey rink. Is this possible? Do they have a community that will make this venture worthwhile?

Ms. Biuso said it is hard to do basic things in Recreation without scrutiny over funding. Selectman Rollins said there is a balance they are trying to keep between the wants and needs of the town and the tax rate for the residents.

Chair Helm said he would like to meet with the Recreation Commission again. Mr. Blewitt said he and the Recreation Commissioners want to be team players and to have good relationships with the town. He wants to be on the same page with things like the revolving fund; is it good to have a lot of money, or bad? He would like to have a vision of what they should have and to do some planning.

Selectman Rollins said they do need to discuss how the Recreation Department provides funds to those who request scholarships. She feels a "Friends of New London Recreation" non-profit should be established to enable donors to give and to get a tax break for doing so. She was informed that the revolving fund covers these scholarship expenses but then an ad came out recently soliciting donations for scholarships.

Mr. Blewitt said he has had many people provide boats and monetary donations. They have been satisfied with the town's Tax ID number for tax breaks. He said he provides financial assistance to any who ask for it. He works with Celeste Cook, Welfare Officer, to make it work. However there are probably people who don't know about the scholarships or who are too afraid to ask for them.

Malika Sidmore said the Recreation Department doesn't get enough money. She has two teenage boys who get bored. The little rink is not enough for them; she feels strongly that they need a bigger place for everyone. New London has a lot for little kids and the elderly, but not a lot for the teenagers. They need to make a longer term plan. There are a lot of teens in the town who have nothing to do.

Kristin Hubbard has two teenage children. She had noted earlier in the meeting that the bathrooms at Elkins beach are not cleaned regularly. She further explained that the Elkins bathrooms are being cleaned, just not often enough. Other towns have cleaning services that come regularly; New London should have this as well. She also noted that contrary to Ms. Lorio's comment earlier about the library struggling with the amount of children going to the library after school that the library wants more kids to visit. She is on the "Friends of the Library" board and said they are not having a problem with the number of kids going there currently. The kids are always welcome there.

Mr. Cardillo said sometimes projects lose momentum. He loves the skating rink and sees it as a representation of quintessential New England. The Commission made a good decision about stopping hockey at the rink; then they changed it and let it come back with stipulations. He thinks hockey should be held somewhere else. He called Newport and Sunapee to see what they do. They don't encourage hockey on their rinks. A group of people create a hockey area down by the high school in Newport, which is where it is held.

Ms. Sidmore said she was on the skateboard park committee in the past and feels that nobody thinks about them or cares about putting time and money into those projects for the teenaged segment of the society. They don't even have a basketball court.

Mr. Cardillo said his kids are teens too but doesn't feel that people don't care about them in the town. Things lose momentum. They should do the little things they can do first, and then the larger projects.

Mr. Raby said it sounds to him that in order for New London to thrive they need somewhere for all ages to commune. There is a pretty extensive wish-list. He hasn't heard any numbers. How much money do they want?

Chair Helm said these details would come later, after more discussion between the Recreation Commission and the Board of Selectmen.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no new business.

NEW BUSINESS

Consider acceptance of \$3,000 donation from Dartmouth Coach

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to accept \$3,000 from Dartmouth Transportation to help pay for the video feed capabilities to be transmitted to the New London Police Department. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Consider memo from Wendy Johnson, transfer of \$69,888 from the Pleasant Lake Dam CRF to general fund
Ms. Johnson said these funds would cover the costs for engineering, which was complete.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the transfer of \$69,888 from the Pleasant Lake Dam Capital Reserve Funds to the General Fund. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Review revolving fund policies

This would be discussed at the next meeting.

Discuss appointments to committees

This would be discussed at the next meeting.

Accessory Dwelling Unit Fees

The proposal is to charge \$100 flat for each ADU application. Selectman Kidder said this amount had been fully vetted at a recent Planning Board meeting. It is similar to other town's fees.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to charge \$100 for each Accessory Dwelling Unit application. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Welcome to New London signs

Selectman Kidder said that Jeremy Bonin from Bonin Architects has offered to create the design for signage and the landscaping around them. She met with one of the architects and they visited sites at the transfer station and the Crockett's Corner. They will not charge for the design work. If the Town likes their plans they will put the project out to bid.

TOWN ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

Academy Building - Richard Lee has contacted ARC and the HVAC units have been ordered.

Pre-bid meeting for Pleasant Lake Dam: Was held on Thursday, this was a non-mandatory meeting. The bid opening will be on May 18th.

Conservation Commission: Have ordered more trail maps that are updated to include new trails. These maps are sold in the town office and also at some local businesses. The sale of the maps goes into the general fund. The Conservation Commission operating budget is about \$1,000 short of the funds needed, but there will be sufficient funds to transfer to cover the costs elsewhere in the budget, so Ms. Hallquist recommended that the maps be ordered as soon as possible to be available for the upcoming tourist season.

Pleasant Lake Dam Monitoring equipment: Canary Systems has decided that it is best to wait until after the upgrades to the dam.

Municipal Matters: The April edition of *Municipal Matters* went out last week.

Project Dashboard: The project dashboard and project summaries has been submitted to the Board and will be posted on-line as well.

Memo from Tax Collector Linda Nicklos: Regarding a letter from Jim and Jane Hunter regarding interest on late payment of taxes. Since the memo came just today, it will be placed on the Board's next agenda for consideration.

Updated Zoning Ordinances: The Zoning Ordinance has been updated to incorporate the zoning amendments approved at Town Meeting, it has been posted on-line.

Tax bills: Pick-up work (adding or subtracting value to property due to building permits and demolition permits issued to April 1st) is complete and the warrant for tax bills will be ready for signing by the next meeting, and bills will be printed after that – Ms. Nicklos is working with the company that will be printing/mailling the bills to make sure the bills contain all of the required information.

State building Code: Lucy St John was contacted by the State Fire Marshall's Office with regard to the town's building permit system and lack of building inspections. Lucy, Jay Lyon and Kim Hallquist will be discussing this issue and will report back.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS & REPORTS

Chair Helm said he, and several Planning Board members, Ms. Hallquist and Ms. St. John met with the new UVLSRPC Executive Director Steve Schneider. They discussed Crockett's Corner and other traffic issues in the town.

MEETING MINUTES

Approve Selectmen's Minutes of April 24, 2017

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to approve the minutes of April 24, 2017, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & SPECIAL EVENTS

- Next Regular Selectmen's Meeting – Monday, May 22nd - 6:00 PM
- Planning Board – Tuesday, May 9th – 6:30PM
- Conservation Commission – Wednesday, May 17th - 8:30 AM
- Recreation Commission – Tuesday, May 9th – 5:00 PM – Whipple Town Hall

OTHER BUSINESS

Chief Andersen said during the Colby-Sawyer College commencement an individual arrived and said he had firearms in his backpack and said he was going to kill some people. He was arrested.

Other Items to be signed

- Payroll Authorization Voucher

- Accounts Payable Voucher
- Affirmation of Sewer Easement and Betterment Assessment
- Sewer Betterment – Edmunds Road
- Appointment Card

Requests to Use Town Property & Event Permit

- Whipple Town Hall & Town Common/Bandstand, by Nicole Densmore for N.L. Bandstand Committee on June 23, 30, July 7, 14, 21, 28, August 11, 18, 2017 from 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. for 2017 Summer Concert Series.

Approved Building Permits

- David & Risa Radeke, 583 Forest Acres Road, TM 119-021-000. Demo of existing house & construct a of 2 bedroom house. BP-17-025. **APPROVED 5-1-2017**
- Edward Prince Jr. & Leland, 34 Bunker Road, TM 061-014-000. Finish area over existing garage and add bathroom. BP 17-029. **APPROVED 5-1-2017**
- Nick & Kristin Baer, 84 Forty Acres Road, TM 039-004-000. Install ground mounted Solar array. BP 17-031. **APPROVED 5-1-2017**
- John & Susan Lavolpicelo, 7 Job Seamans Acres, TM 074-002-000. Increase Deck size and build separate Screened Porch. BP 17-032. **APPROVED 5-1-2017**
- Colonial Pharmacy/Split Rail LLC, 98 Colonial Pharmacy/Split Rail LLC, TM 059-030-000. New Retail Building of 14,098 sq. ft. BP 17-033 **APPROVED 5-1-2017**
- Steve & Nancy Birge, 929 Main Street, TM 109-003-000. Installation of roof-mounted Solar. BP 17-034. **APPROVED 5-1-2017**

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to enter non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a): the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee. Roll call vote: Kidder: Yes; Rollins: Yes; Helm: Yes

The Board entered nonpublic session at 7:40 PM.

The Board reentered the public session at 8:21 PM.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to withhold the nonpublic session minutes pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, III. Roll call vote: Kidder: Yes; Rollins: Yes; Helm: Yes.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:21 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London