

Building and Facilities Committee
Minutes of 6-20-19
New London Fire Station; 6:30 p.m.

Members Present: Bowers, Beasley, Lewis, Williams, Bianchi,
Hoglund, Sherman, Cannon, Cardillo

Absent: Cross

Guest: Jay Lyon, Fire Chief

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

1. Fire Station

Chief Lyon outlined the history, background and construction of the present fire station. Chief Lyon then presented a report on his assessment of current and future needs/issues for the Fire Department. (Written report attached hereto as Attachment A, and made a part hereof.) Chief Lyon noted that the Fire Department/fire station had a very good site, in the center of Town, and the space was excellent. He noted that the primary concern with the fire station at present is that newer fire equipment requires higher vertical space for entry doors and parking bays. The time will arrive when it is likely the station will require an addition to accommodate this need. Luckily, he explained, the site itself is large enough to handle any potential needs over the next 10-15 years.

There are 2 full-time and 43 Call/Part-time members of the Department, with a total of 9 fire officers. He indicated that the time would come soon when the department would need an additional full-time employee to fill the fire prevention position that was approved by Town Meeting in 1999, but is currently not filled. In the event of such new hires, the building and its existing space can accommodate that need without any new construction for that purpose.

One main catalyst for needing a new fire station (2004) was to have a large meeting room for training purposes, which would obviate the need for constant travel to Concord for training of the many volunteers. It has proven to be very worthwhile. When it was built it cost under \$500,000,

and was built by local builder Brian Carey, with volunteer work done by the firefighters themselves. This allowed for construction costs of \$225,000 lower than the next lowest bid.

Chief Lyon also mentioned that he was not in favor of a “safety service building” that housed both fire and police departments, along with any other safety services. The present building serves the fire department well, and is centrally located in Town, which is a great asset to the department, and to the Town, since it is relatively equidistant to all points in Town. It also has visibility to Town residents, which is important, and is located immediately adjacent to the New London elementary school, which makes it ideal for educational instruction to young students, and allows quick and easy access for the department to the school. Since it is his belief that any space needs that arise in the foreseeable future can be accommodated on the present site, and because there are so many positives about its current location, he believes remaining in its present location is an important positive for the Town.

Chief Lyon shared schematics he had developed showing how new additions, in two phases, could be constructed to accommodate any reasonably contemplated future needs, including the possibility of adding an ambulance service if that need developed and the Town wished to pursue that possibility. If it were pursued, he surmised it would require the addition of eight new full-time employees, to handle four shifts of two persons each on a rotating basis.

Chief Lyon stated that the roof on the station will need to be replaced in the next 3 to 5 years. The timing of the re-shingling of the roofs would depend on whether the Town decided to add solar panels to the roof as part of its energy sustainability efforts. The new roofing would need to be done prior to adding solar panels.

The Committee had several questions, to which Chief Lyon responded. One question related to workforce housing, and Chief Lyon indicated that it would undoubtedly increase calls, but that it could be handled by the department as it is now constituted. The more pressing problem could be continuing to have volunteers to staff the department.

Fewer young people seem to be available and interested in participating. If the pool of volunteers declines, it could be necessary to hire additional full-time, paid employees. He also noted that a substantial contribution is made to the fire department for equipment and other needs through donations and grants he has been able to pursue.

From this conversation, the Committee concluded that further discussion was appropriate to determine if the Committee should develop suggestions for Town contributions to the capital reserve fund for general building maintenance, related to all buildings in Town. The Committee determined that this was an issue that should be discussed further, later in the process.

Mr. Bianchi inquired as to the fire training facility located at the DPW property. Chief Lyon stated that although it was still used for certain activities, it was not used for actual fires; and, he noted that the DPW was finding uses for its own purposes on at least portions of the property formerly devoted to fire training purposes. He suggested that for a proper fire training facility it would probably require regional cooperation, with a regional facility.

Chief Lyon concluded his presentation by noting that the fire department should more properly be thought of as an “all-hazards mitigation team,” since it deals with all kinds of hazardous materials and situations, in a variety of ways.

The Committee then took a tour of the Fire Station under the guidance of Chief Lyon.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Chief Lyon for his comprehensive report, and the personal time he had committed to aiding the Committee in its deliberations.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed by the Committee, and were then approved unanimously.

3. Reports

There were no separate reports.

4. Discussion of Committee Charter/Charge from Selectmen

The Chair reported that he had attended the Selectmen's meeting on June 17, and that the Selectmen had no questions about, and expressed no concerns regarding, the Committee's assessment of its tasks. He noted that he had discussed with the Selectmen that this assessment was something the Committee and the Selectmen would periodically revisit to accommodate any changes that were considered to be appropriate by either the Selectmen or the Committee.

5. Discussion of next steps/future meetings.

The Chair reminded the Committee that the next meeting, June 27, would be at Tracy Memorial Library, with Sandra Licks presenting her assessment of Library needs, and leading a tour of the Library (with Mr. Cross to chair the meeting). Subsequent meetings will be with Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator and Linda Nicklos, Town Clerk, on July 11 (the Committee determined not to meet on July 4), for their assessments of the Academy building needs, and a tour of the Academy Building.

The Chair then informed the Committee that he had discussed with Mr. Harrington meeting at the DPW facility on July 25, with a presentation by him of DPW buildings, sites, facilities throughout the Town. The Chair noted that he had discussed with Mr. Harrington the possible need to meet more than once, and perhaps needing use of the Recreation Department van to take the Committee members to other sites that needed to be viewed, because of Mr. Harrington's wide area of responsibilities and knowledge of Town buildings and facilities.

The Chair then suggested that the agenda for the meeting on July 18 should perhaps be a discussion of the buildings and needs of those facilities the Committee has visited, and devising a system of putting this information together in one source notebook. Mr. Williams informed the Committee that he thought the Town had an internet communications network that the Committee could have access to, which would allow centralized access to all Committee information, and communication. He volunteered to check with Kim Hallquist regarding this. The Chair also suggested that if time allowed at that July 18 meeting, the Committee may want to begin to determine what information it had and what information

it may need to assess the needs related to the Buker building. This will be a separate topic at some specified future meeting. The Committee was in agreement with this proposal for the July 18 meeting.

Mr. Cannon informed the Committee that there was a study performed in the past on various aspects of a possible consolidation of dispatch at the Police Department. He was unsure of the exact nature, but thought it might be helpful to the Committee to review this report, to determine if it had any bearing on the Committee's work as it pertained to its inquiry regarding the Police Department.

The Chair inquired if there was a Committee member who might be able and willing to put together a spread sheet keeping track of each facility visited and reported on, noting the information in each category of "current building repair needs," "current space needs," and "current maintenance needs;" as well as the same categories for future needs. Mr. Hoglund volunteered to do so. Finally, the Chair noted that soon after the DPW assessment, the Committee will seek the same items of input from the Police Dept. and the Recreation Dept., along with a tour of those facilities.

The Chair then noted that at the Master Planning public session Tuesday night, June 18, the Planning Board stated that its earlier statement of population (4600 residents, plus 1000 Colby-Sawyer students) was incorrect, and that the total was about 4600 residents *including* Colby-Sawyer students. Mr. Bianchi had informed the Committee of this error at its first meeting on May 23.

6. *Action Items.*

- a. Chair to request a written statement from Mr. Harrington prior to the meeting on July 25, of the current status and needs, and future issues for DPW buildings and facilities, to include a statement of the function supported by any proposed additions/changes to the respective buildings under the auspices of the DPW; and, also, to report on any pertinent matters of which the DPW is aware related to any and all other Town buildings.

- b. Mr. Williams to check with Kim Hallquist regarding the Town internet communications network to determine if it would be available to the Committee for centralized access to all Committee information, and communication.
- c. Mr. Hoglund to prepare a spread sheet for use by the Committee in tracking building needs as presented by the several departments to the Committee.
- d. Chair to contact Ms. Hallquist to obtain any reports on consolidation of dispatch at the Police Department.

The next meeting is scheduled to be held at Tracy Memorial Library on Thursday, June 27, at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Bob Bowers, Chair/Secretary

ATTACH MENT A

Town of New London 375 Main Street – Mailing:
Office of the Fire Chief 237 Main Street, New London, NH 03257

TO: New London Building Committee
FROM: Jason B. Lyon, Fire Chief
RE: Fire Station Maintenance and future needs
DATE: June 4, 2019

Dear members of the Building Committee,

History of the NLFD:

The current New London Fire Department station has been in operation since 1972. A 36 x 28 outbuilding was constructed by the NLFFA in 2000, and in 2004 an addition was constructed to connect the two buildings together. The total building is 10,858sqft, with 5,689sqft of the building is “living area” finished. The building lot is approximately 215’ deep by 278’+/- feet wide, which is 0.94 Acre/s. The original location of the fire station was Pleasant Street behind the Kidder Building. The construction of the 1972 building is brick and block walls with heavy duty trusses roof construction, spanning the main bay area. The 2000 and 2004 addition, is stick framed construction on a concrete slab.

There are three bays facing Main Street, and an additional bay facing the book store.

Like any municipal building, storage space is always one of the biggest issues. Fortunately, when the addition was completed 15 years ago, we looked into the future to address, the training and sleeping needs of the department.

The double hung windows in the main bay (original 1972 building) where replaced in 2008 by members of the NLFD. Unfortunately in 2004, “Windsor One” pre-primed trim, “Hardy Board” siding, and IKO architectural shingles were used, which at the time, were top of the line produces. These products are defective and have been involved in a class action suits several years ago. In 2018 Kearsarge Property Services replaced a substantial amount of the defective trim with plastic “Clear” trim and the siding that was deteriorating on the building. We also replace the three windows on the spare bay that were rotting.

Current needs:

Heating/Cooling: We are currently waiting for additional estimated cost of the split air system for air-conditioning in the training room. We expect the cost will be between \$5,000.00 and \$7,500.00.

Expanding the vehicle exhaust system: The installation price is \$7,900.00 to expand the side bay of the station and an additional \$12,900.00 for the installation of the vehicle exhaust system into the spare bay. As you might be aware, there is a direct correlation between vehicle exhaust and cancer. This system reduces the firefighter's exposure to carcinogens and other chemicals like carbon monoxide.

Future needs:

Roof Repair: Replacing the roofing on the original station, (replaced in 1994/95) and the singles on the new addition (2004). The estimated project is \$42,710.00 we are planning to replace the roof in the FY2024 budget, however if solar panels are intended to be installed sooner, then this would need to be adjusted.

Signalized intersection on Main Street: With responding to almost 1000 calls a year, having apparatus safety respond and return from incidents is extremely important. There have been an increasing "close calls" between vehicles and fire apparatus. A signalized intersection is required to ensure the safety of the traveling public as well as the fire department personnel and apparatus. Estimated cost is \$80,000.00+/-.

Station Expansion: In the future, (10 to 20 years) the New London Fire might have a need for an expansion of the current facility. The main catalyst would be the height of new apparatus. With the new federal emissions standards, the increased strength of the apparatus frame-rails the vehicles are now taller. When Ladder 3 was purchased in 2012, the ladder had to be designed to be lowered into the cab of the truck. This increased the price of the fire truck and in the future, the maximum height of 10'8", will be exceeded.

I have included plans for a future station addition which would not require the station to be relocated and which would save millions. The spare bays scissor trusses would be removed, and an additional bay would be constructed. This expansion would have 12 to 13ft garage doors and new bay would be deep enough to allow for a longer apparatus. I would estimate phase 1 to be \$250,000.00 to \$375,000.00. Phase 2 would be around \$75,000.00.

Please let me know if there are any additional questions that you might have.

Respectfully,