



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

July 20, 2020
6:00 PM – via Zoom

Due to the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this Board is authorized to meet electronically. The public has access to contemporaneously listen and participate in this meeting through the video conferencing at: <https://zoom.us/>.

PRESENT:

Nancy Rollins, Selectman
John Cannon, Selectman
Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator
Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

ABSENT: Janet Kidder, Chair

ALSO PRESENT:

Sue Stuebner, President, Colby-Sawyer College
Jamie Hess, Energy Committee
Bob Harrington, Public Works Director

Selectman Rollins called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. She will be the acting chair tonight in Janet Kidder's absence.

Public Comment - None

Appointments

Sue Stuebner, President, Colby-Sawyer College – Fall Semester

Sue Stuebner met with the Board to provide an update on the fall semester plan for students returning to campus. President Stuebner explained some of the key components of the reopening plan for the college starting with the basic tenants of the plan is to follow the Governor's recommendations. Colby-Sawyer College will welcome students back to campus in mid-August. Students will be moving in over a 14-day period that will be staggered, allowing space for those students coming from out of state to quarantine until they can be tested and have a negative Covid test. Once they have a negative Covid test they resume regular activities on campus. Having smaller numbers of students coming in gradually is safer.

The semester will start on September 8 and will continue for twelve weeks on campus. On the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, students will be dismissed and will be finished with their core academic semester. They will take their finals remotely. Some of the class periods have been extended to fit it in to a twelve-week semester. Students will be social distancing in the classrooms and the college has utilized a moving company to remove desks from all the classrooms to maintain the maximum number allowed based on square footage. Students will wear masks during classes as an added precaution.

There will be approximately 750 students that will live on campus. They are not using as many triple or quad rooms to allow students to be socially distanced in the residence halls. They will be testing all students, including those coming in from out of state when they arrive and will re-test again 10-14 days later. There is also a protocol based on having a positive case as well as random testing that will continue throughout the semester, the number to be tested will be related to the number of cases in New Hampshire at that time. They are taking the testing seriously and will be doing sampling depending where the numbers are.

Dining services are following the appropriate protocols which include no buffet style service and serving will be from behind Plexiglas. There will be a lot of grab and go options and picnic tables will be available outside. The dining facilities will not be available to the public this fall to further keep numbers of contacts down. It was announced today that there will not be any Fall athletics.

There will be a lot of education done with students regarding Covid and that has already started via social media posts by the college. Travel will be limited essential travel and only in New England. Students will sign an oath about wearing a mask and taking Covid restrictions seriously. The community will be allowed to use the Hogan Center, but hours will be limited, and the logistics are still being worked out. The college anticipates about \$1.1 million dollars in additional expenses due to Covid this fall. There is a space on campus that could hold up to twelve students if they needed to quarantine. Social gatherings will be limited for the first several weeks. If policies are not adhered to, they will use the conduct system to help with compliance.

Selectman Rollins commented that if there is anything that the town can do to help support the college and the students coming back to campus please let them know.

Jamie Hess, Energy Committee – Lighting projects

Jamie Hess met with the Board to discuss LED lighting upgrades for the remaining town buildings that have not been upgraded yet. The Library was done first and then the large Public Works garage. Next on the list is the Police Station, Fire Department, Academy Building and the Recreation Department. There are four options to consider:

1. Do nothing and leave things as they are.
2. Proceed and take advantage of Eversource rebates that have been temporarily boosted as a result of Covid.
3. Budget money to do upgrades at lower rebate.
4. Enroll in Smart start program (this is a popular program and already fully subscribed for 2020 and possibly 2021 as well).

The largest project would be the Police Department and the total cost would be \$10,216. The annual savings would be \$3,762 and a payback period of 2.72 years. This is the highest return on investment and the shortest payback period. If the Police Department plans on moving within those 2.72 years and the building needs to be repurposed, it might not be a wise investment. If the renovation project isn't going to happen for 4 years or so, the upgrade would already be paid off. If the plan is within the next two years and the project is not paid off it wouldn't be advisable. Selectman Cannon will present this information to the Building and Facilities Committee at their next meeting for their input.

The next project would be the Fire Station with a cost of \$4,609, an estimated annual savings of \$1,146 and a payback period of 3.66 years.

The Academy building cost would be \$7,425, an estimated annual savings of \$1,732 and a payback period of 4.29 year.

The Recreation Department (Whipple Hall) cost would be \$1,986, with an annual savings of \$406 and a payback period of 4.89 years.

Mr. Hess asked the lighting consultant if he would optimize the projects to improve the return on investment and reduce the payback period and the answer is yes for all the projects with the exception of the Fire Station. Instead of replacing all the fixtures, a less expensive option would be to replace only the most heavily used fixtures and simply do bulb replacements on the less frequently used fixtures. If this was done on the Academy Building, for example, the payback period would be 3.5 years instead of 4.29 years. The downside to this plan would be that the building would have different light fixtures and bulbs, so replacing them would mean making sure the right bulb is available. Mr. Hess would recommend doing a mixture of fixture replacements and bulb replacements if a lower cost is needed.

Selectman Rollins thanked Mr. Hess for all the work he has done on this. The Selectmen will vote on this at the next Board of Selectmen meeting.

Old Business

- **Reconsider parking ban on Old Dump Road**

Kim Hallquist attended a Recreation Commission meeting last week and they are recommending that the town lift the parking ban on Old Dump Road because the existing parking at Bucklin beach is not enough to allow the 75-person maximum capacity. The ban was originally instituted as a way to control the number of beach goers at Bucklin, light of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Recreation Commission would like to reinstate parking on one side of the street like they have done in the past. Ms. Hallquist has spoken with the Chief of Police and she agrees that with the appropriate signage there would be no issue if it continues to be by permit only. The temporary parking ban would be reversed. Selectman Rollins agrees and thinks this is the right thing to do.

- **Consider FY2021 budget issues: new hires and employee step increases**

Finance Officer Wendy Johnson reported that for the first quarter tax collections they have collected 93.6%. This is less than 1% under where we were last year at this same time. The town's cash position is good and is up \$900,000 from last year.

New hires include the full-time fire fighter, the highway department employee going from part time to full time and the part time position in the finance department. The total amount for new hires would be \$149,000.

Selectman Rollins recommends going ahead with the step increases for FY2021 as budgeted. The total amount for step increases would be \$37,500. The total amount for July would be \$436 and increases monthly as employees reach anniversary dates and are evaluated.

Selectman Cannon agrees with moving forward with the step increases and is in favor of starting the hiring process for new positions.

IT WAS MOVED (John Cannon) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to move forward with the step increases and to begin the hiring process for the additional positions. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

New Business

- **Consider FY2021 paving appropriation**

Public Works Director Bob Harrington reported that the prices for asphalt have slowly been dropping but may not hold. The most recent pricing he has gotten went from \$66 per ton to \$64.50 per ton. For the planned paving projects this would be a savings of approximately \$2,600. Overall, for all the paving the town could save \$10,000. The cost of grading has been almost cut in half as well. Mr. Harrington is concerned that if the town waits, it may not get done this year, which has been an issue the past few years. The Selectmen agreed that getting the paving done this year is important and agree the price is appealing.

IT WAS MOVED (John Cannon) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to begin the paving process and authorize this expenditure. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Town Administrators Report

Ms. Hallquist provided the following report:

- The Building and Facilities Subcommittee has been working with consultant Dennis Mires. Mr. Mires has submitted his first draft to the subcommittee for review on Thursday. The full committee will review the report next week when Mr. Mires comes to present it.
- A drop box has been installed at the Academy Building. With the town offices being closed, people can now drop things off into the drop box and it goes directly into the building.
- There is a new kiosk at Elkins Beach. Elkins Fish and Game, the Conservation Commission, the Pleasant Lake Protective Association, and the Public Works Department worked together to get the kiosk in place.
- Beaches were at capacity this weekend. Things are going well and there were no issues. Signage is posted so that people are aware that only New London residents and their guests are allowed. A machine has been ordered which will print passes so New London residents can get a beach pass to show at the gate, instead of showing drivers licenses or tax information. Selectman Rollins would like an article printed in the *Shopper*, *Municipal Matters*, and/or the *Intertown Record* letting people know about changes being made.
- The Recreation Commission increased the capacity at Elkins Beach from 80 people to 125 people. The sign has been changed.
- There are no specific plans to open the Academy Building to the public at this time due to the inability to safety space visitors from each other when in the building. The way things are working now seems to be going fine. There are several towns that are still not open as well.
- The Library is still closed but they are offering porch pick up. They are using their meeting room to quarantine books.

Meeting Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (John Cannon) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to approve the minutes of July 6, 2020 meeting. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED.

Upcoming Meetings & Special Events

- Next regular Selectmen's meeting – Monday, August 3rd – 6:00 PM
- Recreation Commission – Wednesday, August 12th – 11:00 AM
- Planning Board – Tuesday, August 11th – 6:30 PM

Please see the calendar on the town website for a complete listing of other meetings, including subcommittee meetings, of the various town boards: www.nl-nh.com

Other Business - None

Items to be signed

- Accounts Payable Voucher
- Warrant - Yield Tax Levy for timber cut (2)
- Dog License overpayment
- Application for Sewer Connection, Building Expansion, and/or Service – After the fact hookup
- Land Use Change Tax
- Charitable-Educational-Religious Exemptions
- Veterans Exemption

Applications Approved &/or Denied

Sign Permits – all approved

- Permanent Signs # 20-13 – Studio Sage LLC, Morgan Point LLC, 10 Lovering Lane, TM 084-061-0-0-0.

Building Permits

- Edward Burt, 130 Sutton Road, TM 123-028-0-0-0. Demo chicken coop. BP 20-063 approved 7/8/20.
- Ben Barton Trust, 52 Main Street, TM 073-044-0-0-0. Finish second floor of garage. BP 20-065 approved 7/8/20.

IT WAS MOVED (John Cannon) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to adjourn. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:01 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson
Recording Secretary

Town of New London