



# TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

July 26, 2018  
6:30 PM

### **PRESENT:**

Nancy Rollins, Chairman  
G. William Helm, Jr., Selectman  
Janet Kidder, Selectman

### **ALSO PRESENT:**

Judy Johnson and Will Gatchell – Harriman  
Bob Harrington – Public Works Director  
Scott Blewitt – Recreation Director  
Ed Andersen – Chief of Police  
Paul Gorman – Planning Board, Chair

Chair Rollins called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

### **Buker Study Kick Off Meeting**

Chair Rollins stated this is an opportunity to go over project goals, the schedule and vision for the project.

Judy Johnson is an architect and principal with Harriman. Will Gatchell is an architect and senior associate with Harriman. They have done a lot of work in municipal settings, public safety in particular.

It was noted that the agenda for the meeting includes review of the schedule; discuss project goals and vision, update on the walk through and verification of findings, review baseline space program and next steps. Representatives from Harriman completed a walk through earlier in the day and took measurements to verify what they have is accurate and will make adjustments and refine as they go.

Schedule – Harriman feels they should be able to produce the information the town is requesting by the end of September. They distributed a schedule for review that outlines the meetings of the Board of Selectmen and will plan to attend them, with the exception of August 6<sup>th</sup> when they are not available.

It was noted that the programing and needs assessment will start on Tuesday, July 31, 2018. They will coordinate this with Scott Blewitt. On Tuesday, a team of engineers will conduct a site visit. Mr. Gatchell wanted to make sure they had access to attic space to assess the mechanical units. A week later, on August 7, 2018 the engineers will evaluate what they have seen and write up a report. By then, the space program will be underway and the existing plan will be labeled with the square footage and will include what the needs are. This will provide how much space is currently available versus how much space is needed.

In August Harriman will assess the options noting that it is their understanding that the town is considering two options:

- a. Renovating inside the building with no addition.
- b. Renovate the building and a possible addition staying onsite.

Harriman will then come back and discuss the findings to get a sense of what direction the town would like to go in. The preferred option would be agreed upon at this point.

Selectman Helm stated that if the conclusion was that they should not work with this building, Harriman should tell them that. They should be given the latitude to state this based on their professional judgment. Selectman Kidder stated the space could be used in some other way and they should still find that out.

Chair Rollins hopes this would be part of the conversation as they move forward.

Ms. Johnson stated sometimes you must prove what doesn't work. The meeting on August 20, 2018 will be insightful with regards to this.

Selectman Helm feels they have been clear stating they don't want Harriman working on new options. If these options, in their professional opinion don't work, they need to tell the Board that.

If they do find a preferred option, they would like to start developing that option in more detail so they can review it and do a cost estimate.

Project Goals – Currently the police department and the recreation department are in the same building. Ms. Johnson asked if this works well for the community. Oftentimes, if there are two different functions in a building you look for opportunities to overlap and share space.

The district court used to occupy this space but moved out. It wasn't planned for the recreation department to move in, but it was available. It hasn't been ideal but has allowed for more programs.

Ms. Johnson asked if there was a Historic District commission. Selectman Kidder replied that the town has an archivist, Jim Perkins, and he is in every Wednesday; the town archives are in the basement of the town office building. Ms. Johnson noted that she wants to make sure they don't make recommendations before getting feedback from the state, if required. The Selectmen recommended speaking with Mr. Perkins.

Ms. Johnson clarified that they are only to look specifically in the boundaries of the building and within the property lines. Selectman Helm stated if Harriman felt they could satisfy working on this site if the house next door was acquired, it should be heard and considered. Chair Rollins agreed. Ms. Johnson stated they will plan to stay within the boundaries to start and will make recommendations as they go.

Selectman Helm asked Mr. Blewitt what his relationship is with the Center for the Arts, specifically, what are they using and what is the town's obligation to them. Mr. Blewitt stated that currently the Center for the Arts occupies the small conference room. They use the front lobby and some other rooms as gallery space and classes are done in combination with the Rec center. He doesn't feel the town is obligated to them and he would love to occupy some of the space they use. He commented that perhaps that relationship should change. The Selectmen agreed they do not feel obligated to them. Chair Rollins suggested taking into account time and how often space is used as opposed to when it's not being used.

Mr. Blewitt noted that the relationship between the Police Department and Recreation Center is a good one. The best thing is that the facility is shared and the building can be utilized during off hours. Dispatch is there 24/7 so they can get the key and use it for weekend performances etc.

Mr. Gatchell asked for thoughts on the relationship between the Police Department and the community and how its location supports that. Chair Rollins stated that they have always felt the Police Department should have a presence on Main Street. It is easy to identify and is next to the town green where there are many activities. From a traffic flow perspective, it is visible. Being near the College is also important. It is a bonus for the Recreation Department as they get a lot of college interns and they can walk across the street to work.

Ms. Johnson stated they will report back to the Selectmen but they will be communicating with the department heads as well. Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator, will be the point of contact.

Mr. Gatchell asked why they feel this is the right time for the project and is it time to execute. What specifically is driving this? Chair Rollins stated it has been on their list for a long time. Once the Board has the cost estimates they will look at where it fits with the capital plan and where the town is with bonds coming due. She observed that the town needs to move forward.

Mr. Gatchell also asked what their vision is and what images they associate with the project. Selectman Kidder stated it's important that nothing detracts from Whipple Hall. She would like to get rid of the sally port as it is unattractive. She would also like to see a scenario where the sally port is removed and replaced with something suitable for the Police Department. She thinks the addition could be higher in the back than it is currently.

Chair Helm stated the integrity of Whipple Hall should be retained.

Scott Blewitt would like to have new windows that aren't weighted and would also like the windows to have screens. He also suggested upgrading the stage lighting and making the balcony usable. It was noted that repairs to Whipple Hall are not part of the Buker Study.

Chief Andersen would like garage space.

Mr. Gatchell would like to add non-recreation and non-police department related groups to the program so they can identify how much square footage these groups are taking. Then they can determine if these groups should stay. Ms. Hallquist would be a good resource to provide information on who else uses that space.

Ms. Johnson stated this was a good kickoff meeting and a lot of progress was made. They will provide a visual presentation on August 20, 2018.

The discussion of the Buker Study was concluded.

### **Upcoming Meetings & Special Events**

- Next Selectmen Meeting – Monday, August 6<sup>th</sup> - 6:00 PM  
in conjunction with:
  - Nonresident Taxpayers' Meeting.
  - Pleasant Lake Draw Down Informational Meeting
- Conservation Commission – Wednesday, August 15<sup>th</sup> - 8:30 AM
- Zoning Board of Adjustment – Tuesday, August 7<sup>th</sup> - 6:30 PM
- Planning Board – Tuesday, August 21, 2018 - 6:00 PM
- Recreation Commission – Tuesday, August 7<sup>th</sup> - 5:00 PM
- Energy Committee – Wednesday, August 1<sup>st</sup> – 7:00PM

### **Other Business**

Selectman Helm reported on the recent Planning Board meeting he attended on Tuesday, July 24, 2018. The discussion included what resources the town would hire at the developer's expense to validate items such as drainage, sewer, water etc. What the Planning Board voted was to ask the Selectmen, on behalf of the Town, to hire two engineers. The developer will escrow the funds.

**IT WAS MOVED (Bill Helm) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the Planning Boards recommendation that the Town hire engineers for the Continuum Development on the land on Parkside Road and County Road. The cost of which will be paid by the developer with the anticipated costs put in escrow. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Selectman Kidder noted that it was discussed that it might be advisable to hire a building inspector for this project. It was noted that this cannot be accomplished without town meeting approval and there will be a cost to the town. Chair Rollins would like an analysis of the impact on Fire, Police and First Responders.

Police Officer, Stephanie Welch attended and was introduced to the Selectmen by Chief Andersen. Officer Welch will become the ninth full time officer for New London.

Selectman Helm would like an update from Ms. Hallquist regarding projects still outstanding since Richard Lee retired.

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:44 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson, Recording Secretary  
Town of New London