



TOWN OF
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES

July 6, 2020
6:00 PM

Whipple Memorial Town Hall – 25 Seamans Road

PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Police Chief Emily Cobb	Nancy Marashio, New London Resident
Recreation Director Scott Blewitt	Robyn Boisvert, Camp Director
Alexis Lorden - Beach Manager	Ginny Glendinning - Lifeguard
Bebe Casey, New London Resident	Leigh Bosse, The Messegner
Lyndsay Harkins, Recreation Commission	Dan Harkins, New London Resident
Justin Garcia, Recreation Commission Chair	

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

Public Hearing: Acceptance of Livescan Fingerprint System donated by the Police Benevolent Association

Chair Kidder opened the public hearing and asked Chief Cobb to explain the equipment that she would like the town to accept.

Chief Cobb explained that the discussion about the Livescan Fingerprint system started in 2019. Initially, former Police Chief Ed Andersen agreed to split the cost of this machine between his budget and the Police Benevolent Association (PBA). Since those original discussions, the PBA request for donations towards the purchase of the equipment was so successful that the entire cost of the machine, which is \$17,625, was donated. The decision was made to go with a desk top version and have an employee of the Highway Department build a cabinet at a significant reduction in cost. The PBA has agreed to cover the cost of the cabinet up to \$500 as well. Installation and on-site training are included in the price and the machine is under warranty for the first year. There is an annual maintenance fee post warranty in the amount of \$2,964 and it was proposed that this would be paid out of the general equipment line in the police budget.

This is a digital machine, so it eliminates the old-fashioned process which involves ink. It captures fingerprints and palm prints and alerts the police right away if a print is not readable. It can be used for criminal bookings, civilian applicant background checks, and sexual offender registrations. This process is much faster.

IT WAS MOVED (John Cannon) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to accept the Livescan Fingerprint System as offered by the Police Benevolent Association. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Public Comment

Scott Blewitt, Recreation Department Director attended the meeting to address issues related to the beaches. Mr. Blewitt stated that as expected, the July 4th weekend was busy at the beaches and they felt prepared due to procedures that were put into place. As beachgoers entered the beach, they were asked about residency. The staff person in this role was the beach attendant, lifeguard or beach manager depending on staffing availability and scheduling. Once the beaches reached capacity, beachgoers may have experienced a delayed entry, but no one was denied. The New London police came multiple times during the day and issued warnings and tickets for violations. Parking is certainly an issue on the weekends.

The Recreation Department day camp utilizes both the beaches Monday – Friday. There are approximately 30 campers/counselors coming in at a time and this year they are broken up into pods of 8 campers and 2 counselors. They are trying to be sensitive to others and their personal space.

Mr. Blewitt stated that he is aware that many concerns have been raised. One concern is related to beach pass restrictions. He feels it may be time to pursue firm restrictions which may include requiring a photo ID, providing a tax bill or utility bill and/or a driver's license with a New London address. He also suggested increasing the parking violation fee. Currently it is a \$25 fine. He would also like more signage and these signs should clearly state the beach rules.

Police Chief Cobb noted that the police department did issue several tickets over the weekend. She received feedback that people wanted guest passes allowed for the family members of taxpayers. Out of state plates were of concern as well. She responded that out of state plates could be a property owner/taxpayer in town from out of state with a second home here in New London; these people would be issued a beach/transfer station decal. There were also complaints about no parking on Old Dump Road. There was an incident involving a group that had alcohol the beach, but it was handled with no issues.

Selectman Cannon asked what the lifeguard hours were. Monday through Saturday the hours are 9:00am – 5:00pm and on Sunday it is 11:00-5:00pm. He asked if any thought had been given to expanding or adjusting the hours. Alexis Lorden, Beach Manager, responded that currently they are working the maximum hours without going into overtime.

Selectman Rollins asked who was checking residency and the Beach Manager responded that this is usually the beach attendant. Selectman Rollins asked who is cleaning the bathrooms and the response was that this is also the beach attendant and the lifeguards also assist with this. This is done every two hours by in-house staff. Scott Blewitt noted that the bathrooms are professionally cleaned Tuesdays, Thursday, Saturdays and Sundays prior to opening. Selectman Rollins asked how much beach attendants are paid; Mr. Blewitt responded beach attendants are paid \$9 per hour, lifeguards are paid \$11.50-\$13.00 and the Beach Manager is paid \$16.50 per hour.

Selectman Rollins asked what happened to the idea that volunteers would assist the beach staff with people who challenge checking residency or parking. Scott Blewitt stated they have not identified individuals to volunteer at this time. Selectman Rollins would like to explore this further as she does not feel that this should be the responsibility of the beach staff.

Bebe Casey, a New London resident stated that her son was part of the group that was spoken to about alcohol on the beach. The police officer that responded was very professional and her son and his friends immediately got rid of the alcohol, but it was the process that bothered her. She explained that they were not warned and there was no sign that stated it was not allowed. They felt singled out as there were other groups there that were drinking alcohol in plain sight as well and nothing was said to them. She is in favor

of a volunteer or ambassador program where a community member greets people and goes over the rules. It would be a better way to welcome people in our town and support local businesses. She would be happy to volunteer to check people in to the local beaches. Chair Kidder suggested that Scott Blewitt send an email blast or post on social media to solicit volunteers.

Chair Kidder stated it is necessary to ask people more than just their name and if they are a resident of the town. We need to ask for a form of identification that they need to show at the beach. She suggested checking with other towns to see what other communities are doing. The people that are using the beach should be residents of the town and our staff should be safe.

Lyndsay Harkins sent in some written suggestions. She noted that the hours posted online are 10:00 - 5:00 so their needs to be some consistency for the public. There should be more signage and a more official table set up for check in with an umbrella for shade for the attendant. She agrees that there should be a public request for adult volunteers to help oversee the enforcement of the policies. Increasing the parking violation fine to \$100 might deter people from parking illegally. Ms. Harkins feels the bathrooms should be professionally cleaned daily. This was already voted and agreed upon according to the May 28, 2020 meeting minutes.

It was agreed upon that a government issued picture ID would be required to prove residency and the bathrooms would be professionally cleaned every day at both beaches. Mr. Blewitt will inform the cleaners that they are needed on a daily basis and will work on procedures to have staff check ID's at the gate.

Update on town's financial position

Wendy Johnson provided the following update:

- First quarter taxes were due on July 1, 2020 and as of July 3, 2020 86.2% have been collected as compared to 91% a year ago. This equates to being down by approximately \$179,000.
- The Selectmen agreed to wait until the next Board of Selectmen meeting in two weeks to make a decision about hiring for new positions and resuming step increases.

Consider recommendations of Chief Assessor on charitable-educational-religious exemptions

Kim Hallquist stated that a memo was circulated that informed the Selectmen that all the charitable, educational and religious exemption forms have been submitted and the Chief Assessor is not recommending any changes, all should be approved/denied consistent with last year.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to accept the recommendations of the Chief Assessor for charitable, educational, and religious exemptions. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Correspondence from Dan Wolf, regarding use of town property for outdoor dining

Dan Wolf, owner of the New London Inn, thanked the Board of Selectmen for allowing him to temporarily have a tent for outdoor dining on town property. He appreciated the town working with him on this.

Discuss procedure for establishing Housing Commission as approved at Town meeting

Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator, stated people have shown interest in being on the Housing Commission and she is asking the Selectmen for direction on how to proceed: does the Board want to interview candidates or does the Board want to request interested citizens to submit additional

information, possibly in the form of questions posed by the Board? Ms. Hallquist will send the volunteer interest forms she has received to the Selectmen for review. Ms. Hallquist recommended that the Board have a goal of getting a broad representation of residents to appoint to the commission.

Resignation of John Lewis from the Buildings & Facilities Committee

The Selectmen acknowledged the resignation of John Lewis from the Building and Facilities Committee.

Town Administrators Report

Ms. Hallquist provided the following report:

- Chair Kidder asked Ms. Hallquist to contact Sue Stuebner, the President of Colby-Sawyer College to see if she was available to discuss their plans to welcome students back to campus. Ms. Stuebner is available to attend the next Board of Selectmen's meeting on July 20, 2020.
- Crosspoint, the owner of the shopping plaza, is not renewing the lease of the liquor store; the lease ends on July 31st. Crosspoint tried to get the liquor store to move into McKenna's or to the former Colonial pharmacy space. The Planning Board approved a site plan in July 2019 for the liquor store to move into the former McKenna building but apparently that might not take place. Ms. Hallquist asked the Selectmen if they would like to weigh in with the state about this to try to keep the liquor store in town. The Selectmen are in favor of sending a letter to the Liquor Commission stating that the liquor store is important to the Town of New London and will copy the letter to the Governor, and New London State Representatives Dan Wolf and Karen Ebel and Senator Ruth Ward.

Committee Meetings & Reports

- Selectman Rollins attended a recent Board of Firewards meeting. The board reviewed the year end budget and discussed concerns about the upcoming budget. There were some staffing changes as well. Flow testing was done on the air packs and they are still good.
- Chair Kidder stated she attended a Master Plan subcommittee meeting last week. They discussed maps and a possible zoning amendment change for vote at the next town meeting. They also discussed where to house the town clerk/tax collector if social distancing continues long term as the office is too small to allow for social distancing. One thought is to enlarge the current office by including the Town Administrator's Office, move the Town Administrator to where assessing and land use currently are located and then move the assessing, planning and zoning functions up to Buker.

Meeting Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to approve the minutes of the June 15th and June 25th, 2020 meetings. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED.

Upcoming Meetings & Special Events

- Next regular Selectmen's meeting – Monday, July 20th – 6:00 PM
- Recreation Commission – Monday, July 8th – 11:00 AM

Other Business

New London Police Chief Cobb stated that last week a promotional process was held for David Keith who was promoted to Lieutenant. There is currently an open position for a patrolman and a dispatcher.

Items to be signed

- Warrant for Wastewater Charges
- Property Tax Refunds
- Abatements of Lien Costs
- Petition for License – Utility Poles/Underground Conduit – Pleasant Street
- Charitable-Educational-Religious Exemptions
- Solar Energy Systems Exemption
- Veterans Exemption

Applications Approved &/or Denied

Sign Permits – all approved

- Permanent Signs # 20-10, 11 & 12 – Peter Christians’s Restaurant, Proudstone Corporation, 195 Main Street, TM 073-079-0-0-0.

Building Permits

- Zachary & Jessica Brennan, 21 Gould Road, TM 084-083-0-0-0. Roof mount solar 7.56 kW. BP 20-058 approved 6/16/20 - Amended 7/1/20.
- Proudstone Corp., 195 Main Street, TM 073-079-0-0-0. After the fact - Build 14’x20’ deck. BP 20-059 approved 6/16/20.
- Samuel Drive, LLC, Blueberry Lane, TM 086-025-0-0-0. Build new single family residence. BP 20-060 approved 6/16/20.
- Deborah Hoover, 39 South Cove Road, TM 048-018-0-0-0. Build 12’x20’ shed. BP 20-062 approved 6/24/20.
- Edward & Melody Johnson, 1359 Route 103A, TM 128-010-0-0-0. Convert porch into living space & add farmer’s porch. BP 20-061 approved 6/30/20.
- Meghan & Chris Scarpa, 358 Stoney Brook Road, TM 137-010-0-0-0. Build 10x20 shed on existing slab. BP 20-064 approved 6/30/20.

Motion to Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:21 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson
Recording Secretary

Town of New London