



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES September 9, 2019 6:00 PM

PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Minette McQueeney, *Intertown Record*
Karen Hoglund, New London Resident
Bob Harrington, Public Works Director
Diane Yelton, New London Resident
John Wilson, New London Resident
Emily Swindell, Senior at Kearsarge
Regional High School

Leigh Bosse, *The Messenger*
Jay Lyon, Chief of Fire Department
Vahan Sarkisian, New London Resident
Joan Lamson, New London Resident
Paul & Linda Messer, New London Residents

Selectman Rollins called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and opened the public hearing for the informational meeting for the Pleasant Lake Drawdown.

Public Hearing

Pleasant Lake Drawdown Informational Meeting – drawdown to begin on September 19, 2019 to complete dam repairs

Town Administrator, Kim Hallquist reported that Pleasant Lake is drawn down at various times to complete repairs to the dam. The draw down that is scheduled for September 19, 2019 is to allow repairs to be made to the dam; the repairs were scheduled to be completed last fall but because of the excessive rain the lake never got low enough to make the repairs. The gate was closed in November 2018 and set to winter level; plans to repair the dam were abandoned. This drawdown is to allow those same repairs to be made.

Public Works Director, Bob Harrington spoke with the company that will be repairing the dam to ask whether or not these repairs could wait a year or two; the recommendation is to do the repairs now as the repairs are significant enough that we need to address it as soon as possible. The Board of Selectmen agreed to begin lowering the lake beginning on Thursday, September 19, 2019.

Ms. Hallquist communicated with a representative from the Wilmot Chase Pond Condominium Association explaining this process. The representative informed Ms. Hallquist that they have lowered Chase Pond by eight inches in preparation for the water that will be coming starting on September 19th. Ms. Hallquist also communicated with a representative of the dam bureau at DES and they are aware of it and are all set as well. NH Fish and Game is also aware of it.

Bob Harrington reported that the repairs will take a few days and then it will take time for the concrete to cure. The goal is to close the gate mid to late October to allow the lake to refill.

Diane Yelton asked if it will go as low as it did last year. Ms. Hallquist explained that hopefully it will go lower than last year as last year it didn't go low enough for the work to be done. Ms. Hallquist stated they realize there are people that depend on an adequate water level for wells, so the work will be done as quickly as possible and the gate shut to allow the lake to fill up again.

Joan Lamson stated that generations of her family have enjoyed Pleasant Lake. When the water is lowered in September, it shortens their use of the lake by at least a month. This is a hardship to them and others who don't consider summer to be over by Labor Day. When the water is lowered, they must take in docks or they get stuck in the mud. Ms. Lamson does not think the lowering is good to be done so often as it affects the brooks and fish. She stated that Fish and Game has expressed this also. She pointed out that in the 33 years that she has lived year-round on the shore of Pleasant Lake, the water has been lowered numerous times to fix the dam. She is wondering why during this time, the dam isn't being fixed to last longer, and when workers are hired to work on the dam and it rains, are we paying them even if the work isn't done. Bob Harrington responded that they are not paid for work that isn't done. As far as lowering the dam, they can't work on it if there is still water flowing through so that is why it didn't get done last year. He stated that there is a lot of water velocity going through the dam gate and it wears out over time. John Wilson noted that the lake is lowered every five years and although dam repairs can be done at that time, the main reason for the lowering is so that homeowners can do shore front repair.

Karen Hogle noted that she saw diver flags and equipment by the dam. She asked if work has already been started. Bob Harrington noted that divers are not part of the project and he was unsure who is diving in the area. John Wilson stated over the past few years he knows that a diving group comes up to remove junk out of the lake so it may be that group.

Chair Rollins stated since there are no further comments, the hearing was closed, and the town will proceed as planned.

Kearsarge Regional School Senior Project

Emily Swindell, a senior at Kearsarge Regional High School attended the meeting; also attending with Emily was her mother. Ms. Swindell explained that Kearsarge High School requires all seniors to do a senior project. Ms. Swindell has chosen a project that involves community work and community service and is also something she has wanted to do for a long time which is to start a cat cafe. She first saw this in California a few years ago while on a family vacation and loved the idea. Ms. Swindell described a cat café as an area that is one side with cats and one side with food with a wall in between. Customers can play and socialize with the cats as well as get a drink or snack. This is a great way to socialize the cats and bring awareness to the public of adoption opportunities.

Ms. Swindell is asking to use the town green and to set up two large tents, one for cats and one for food. She spoke with Grounds café and NH kittens and they have agreed to help with this. She provided a letter to the Board of Selectmen with the details. Chair Rollins asked for clarification on what Ms. Swindell's request is. Ms. Swindell stated her request is to use the town green on September 28, 2019 from 10am – 3pm. She would also like the fee to be waived.

Chair Rollins asked if people would be able to adopt a cat at this cat café. Ms. Swindell stated no, not on site due to New Hampshire laws, but they could speak to the representative at NH cats to discuss adoption opportunities. Selectman Kidder wanted to ensure the town common is left in the condition it was prior to the use for a cat café. Ms. Swindell stated yes.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to allow Emily Swindell to use the town common on September 28, 2019 for a cat café and agree to waive the standard \$100 fee. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Public Comment

Vahan Sarkisian asked if when the Board of Selectmen approves the use of the town common, does evidence of insurance have to be provided. Ms. Hallquist responded that it depends on the type of event, insurance is required if the event includes alcohol or large groups of people. An example is the Rotary Event on Sunday, they have provided insurance for the event; the town's insurance company Primex does encourage the town to get insurance.

Old Business

Discuss appointed Tax Collector Position

Ms. Hallquist stated that in March 2018, the issue of the Tax Collector was before the Board of Selectmen. At that time it was decided since the existing Tax Collector, Linda Nicklos was asking for a full-time staff person in her office and the board was not prepared to offer the full-time staffing, some of the duties were taken away from her to free her up for other duties. Ms. Hallquist was appointed Tax Collector at that time and Ms. Nicklos was appointed Deputy Tax Collector.

Since that time, Lynn Lewis was hired in March of 2019 and went full-time in July. Ms. Lewis is doing a great job and seems comfortable with her role. Ms. Hallquist recommends that the Board of Selectmen offer the Tax Collector position back to Ms. Nicklos since it works best for the residents to be able to go to one office for services. She doesn't see the need to continue the way we are currently doing it since now there are two full-time people in that office. Ms. Hallquist noted that if Ms. Nicklos does not feel that she can take on the duties of the Tax Collector at this time, she recommends that the Selectmen hire someone on a more permanent basis. Ms. Hallquist was only doing this on a temporary basis.

Ms. Hallquist noted that if a change is made the auditors will need to audit the books so that a new warrant can be issued to the new collector. There is a cost involved in order to do this but is a state law. The cost is between \$2,000 - \$3,000 for the audit.

Selectman Kidder asked if Ms. Nicklos is in favor of being appointed Tax Collector and Ms. Nicklos stated, yes, she would love to take it back. Selectman Kidder asked that since the office was closed on Friday's to get caught up, will we now return to a Monday – Friday schedule. Selectman Kidder feels that the town would appreciate having the office open all week. Ms. Nicklos stated this hasn't been discussed but she is open to it, pointing out that there are plusses and minuses to having the office closed on Friday. She thinks it is working well with having the office open two Saturdays and having the office closed on Friday's as they are getting caught up. Selectman Kidder observed that now that there is a full-time employee, it is reasonable to request that the office is open Monday – Friday. The Saturday hours are nice for people only here on weekends, or working full-time, so being open at least one Saturday a month is helpful.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to appoint Linda Nicklos as the Tax Collector as soon as the audit is complete of the records. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Board discussed the office hours, noting that Monday-Friday hours are important, and now that residents are used to Saturday hours, that at least one Saturday should be continued, pointing out that Ms. Nicklos could decide to open more than one Saturday if she wanted to schedule it that way.

IT WAS MOVED (John Cannon) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to change the hours back to being open Monday – Friday and at least one Saturday a month. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Consider approval of Conservation Commission acceptance of gift of \$25,100 pursuant to RSA 36:A-4 (I)

Ms. Hallquist stated that by statute, the Conservation Commission is allowed to accept gifts but only with the approval of the Selectmen. She explained that Doug Lyon obtained contributions towards the purchase of the land the town bought on Shaker/Route 11. That is what this money represents. If the Selectmen agree to allow the Conservation Commission to accept the funds, the Conservation Commission will meet to accept the funds and it will go into their Conservation funds. The Conservation Commission will reimburse the town for attorney fees and the cost of closing and less money will be withdrawn from the Mary Haddad fund. The Conservation Commission does want to keep some of the money to put an easement on the property.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to approve the acceptance of the gift by the Conservation Commission in the amount of \$25,100. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Resignation of Planning Board Member Bill Dietrich

The Board noted that Planning Board Bill Dietrich has resigned; a letter of appreciation for his service was issued by the Board.

Town Administrators Report

Ms. Hallquist provided the following report:

- The public hearings for the New Hampshire Transportation ten-year plan will start. Bob Harrington and Kim Hallquist will be going to the one in Franklin in October.
- Today was the first day of meetings with the Assessors (Norm Bernaiche & Kris McAllister) for property owners that want more information on their new property assessment. Property owners can make appointments for meetings all week, or they can call and speak with the assessors.
- Ms. Hallquist distributed the revised budget meeting schedule.
- The September municipal matters edition was distributed.
- The State Department of Transportation submitted their Park and Ride application on Friday and were happy with the support letters received: letters were received from Colby-Sawyer College, New London Hospital, Kearsarge Regional School District, and the towns of Newbury, Sunapee, Wilmot, Newport and Springfield as well as the Regional Planning Commission.

Chair Rollins thanked Ms. Hallquist for her efforts in obtaining all these letters; noting this should really help the State's application.

- Wendy Johnson reported that the \$1.25 million-dollar loan that was taken out by the Town in 1999 to renovate the Academy Building and Whipple Hall has been paid off.
- Wendy Johnson requested the withdrawal of \$6,800 from Capital Reserve for the transfer station survey.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to approve taking funds from Capital Reserve for the survey done at the transfer station. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

- Wendy Johnson explained there was a lot of work done on several buildings over the last year that amounts to \$30,176. She would like to take this out of town building Capital Reserve fund which currently has \$152,000 in it:
 - Academy Building emergency repair to generator - \$7,700
 - Mini split work and entrance heaters \$5,900
 - Electrical Panels on town green \$6,500
 - Painting Elkins Post office - \$10,000

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to withdraw \$30,176 from the town building Capital Reserve fund to pay the above items. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Committee Meetings & Reports

Chair Rollins recently attended a Board of Firewards meeting. They discussed number of calls, the compliance prevention position and ambulance services. Chair Rollins thanked them for hosting the recent Citizens Advisory Committee meeting.

Meeting Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (John Cannon) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes from the August 19, August 26 and September 3, 2019 meetings. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED.

Upcoming Meetings & Special Events

- Next Regular Selectmen's Meeting – Monday, September 23rd – 6:00 PM
- Planning Board – Tuesday, September 10th – 6:00 PM
- Buildings & Facilities Committee – Thursday, September 12th – 6:30 PM
- Conservation Commission – Wednesday, September 18th – 8:30AM
- Budget Committee – Wednesday, September 25th – 7:00 PM
- Recreation Commission – Wednesday, October 2nd – 5:00 PM @ Whipple Hall
- Citizens Advisory Committee – Saturday, October 5th – 7:30 AM

Other Business

Vahan Sarkisian asked for more information about the hospital project and waiving fees for the developer related to building permits. Ms. Hallquist explained there are building permit fees and the developer asked that the building permit fees be waived because they are hiring their own building inspector to complete inspections on the project. Since the town doesn't have a building inspector, those inspections won't be made by town personnel. Tomorrow, Ms. Hallquist will be meeting with Fire Chief Jay Lyon, Zoning Administrator Nicole Gage, Public Works Director Bob Harrington and

Planner Adam Ricker to get an idea as to how much time this staff will be devoting to that project to better estimate how much in fees should be charged. Then, Ms. Hallquist will recommend to the Selectmen whether or not they should waive any fees. Chair Rollins stated they haven't waived any fees at this point.

Mr. Sarkisian asked if we are leaving it up to the developer to hire their own inspector. Ms. Hallquist stated yes, they have voluntarily agreed to hire inspectors; she noted that it is likely that their financial backers want to ensure the buildings are constructed to code. The town doesn't provide this service. Mr. Sarkisian asked shouldn't the town should be concerned that everything is being built to code; wouldn't we want to know that these inspectors are legitimate?

Ms. Hallquist stated people can hire whoever they want to build their homes and businesses. The town of New London does not require any proof that they are using licensed electricians or plumbers etc. Mr. Sarkisian feels this is a good example of a time for the town to get serious about getting a building inspector. This is a very large project and a lot of money involved. He would think the town would be uncomfortable being in this position.

Selectman Kidder stated whenever it has been brought up in the past to hire a building inspector; it has been shot down by the budget committee. There have been Selectmen who were opposed to it as they didn't want to add staff and pay salary and benefits. To hire someone with all the expertise a needed for a building inspector would mean spending a significant amount of money. It has been discussed frequently and the issue has always been money. It would be difficult to find someone to work part time with that level of competence.

Mr. Sarkisian is surprised the town hasn't been sued for negligence with regards to buildings being built and not inspected. Ms. Hallquist stated that there is no legal requirement for the town of New London officials to enforce the state building code. The state can enforce it, but they can't force towns to enforce it. She pointed out that even towns that have building inspectors have bad things happen as the result of poor building construction, and the towns are not automatically liable for it.

Items to be signed

- Mascoma Bank Loan Documents - \$750,000 loan
- Thank you letter to William Dietrich
- Birthday cards
- Applications To Use Town Property
 - ✓ Town Common & Inn Common – On Saturday, October 5th from 10:00 am – 11: 00 am for the Blessing of the Animals by the St. Andrew's Church.
 - ✓ Town Common - On Saturday, September 28th from 10:00 am – 3:00 pm for Kittens and Chai Senior Project by Emily Swindell.

Applications Approved &/or Denied

Temporary Event/Sale Permits – all approved

- Colby-Sawyer Homecoming at the Quad & athletic fields, 541 Main Street on Saturday, October 5th.
- Appreciation BBQ at Habitat for Humanity, 41 Main Street on Wednesday, August 19th, 11:30 am – 2:00 pm.

- Cupping/tasting with Ragged Coffee Co. at Grounds, 374 Main Street on Saturday, September 21st from 9:00 am – 11:30 am

Sign Permits – all approved

- Permanent Sign 19-016 – Eleanor Goddard, Concord Food Cooperative, 52 Newport Road, TM 059-031-0-0-0.
- Temporary Sign – By NL Rotary Club for a sandwich board sign at the Information Booth for the Food Truck Festival from August 30th to September 15th.

Building Permits

- Michael Holz, 540 Sugarhouse Road, TM 022-003-0-0-0. Build 8x12 shed. BP 19-093 APPROVED
- Kearsage Regional School District, 114 Cougar Court, TM 073-078-0-0-0. Renovation of former cafeteria to Learning Center (phase1). BP 19-105 APPROVED
- Jesse & Tara Stone, 227 Andover Road, TM 110-006-0-0-0. Roof mount solar array 8.68kw. BP 19-108 APPROVED
- Justin Snyder, 79 Sutton Road, TM 123-002-0-0-0. Ground mount solar array 10.01kw. BP 19-109 APPROVED
- Putnam Family Trust, 506 Forest Acres Road, TM 119-006-0-0-0. Build 2 story garage with breezeway. BP 19-110 APPROVED
- Cindy Daley Trust, 269 Burpee Hill Road, TM 081-009-0-0-0. Build 3 sided open shed. BP 19-111 APPROVED
- Brent & Ann Kern, 58 Westside Drive, TM 055-025-0-0-0. Build 3 season room/ remove deck BP 19-112 APPROVED
- JT Underwood & Lori Manor, 276 Stoney Brook Road, TM 137-014-0-0-0. Build 4x10 shed onto garage. BP 19-113 APPROVED
- Bragg-Brown Living Trust, 1041 Lakeshore Drive, TM 065-009-0-0-0. Roof mount solar array 10.4kw. BP 19-116 APPROVED
- Christopher & Pauline Lizotte, 598 Pleasant Street, TM 048-011-0-0-0. Roof mount solar array 6.175kw. BP 19-117 APPROVED
- John Ellis, 37 Old Main Street, TM 095-031-0-0-0. Roof mount solar array 8.4kw. BP 19-118 APPROVED
- Mark Pensgen, 47 Snow Lane. TM 055-019-0-0-0. Roof mount solar array 9.325kw. BP 19-119 APPROVED

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:44 PM.
Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson
Town of New London
Recording Secretary