



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES September 19, 2017 6:00 PM

PRESENT:

G. William Helm, Jr., Chairman
Nancy Rollins, Selectman
Janet Kidder, Selectman
Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator
Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

OTHERS PRESENT:

Will Kidder & Kim Bonin, 1941 Building Cupola Group
Beebee Hammond Casey, School Board Member
Jay Lyon, Fire Chief
Richard Lee, Public Works Director
John Ellis, New London Resident
John Raby, Intertown Record
Chris Hansen, Whitney Brook Road

The Chair opened the meeting at 6:00PM.

1941 Building Cupola

Will Kidder, a member of the group trying to save the cupola, met with the Board to discuss the preservation of the 1941 Building Cupola. He reviewed the meeting with the School District Facilities Committee, noting that it was a very positive meeting and although it has not been officially approved by the full school board, all indications are that the project will be approved. Ms. Hallquist agreed that it was a positive meeting and noted that the Board could decide to accept donations, to be held in trust, for use on the cupola and could also commit town funds since preservation of historic items is a valid public purpose.

Mr. Kidder pointed to four areas that he wanted to review with the Board:

1. The group would like the Board to agree to set up a fund to accept donations;
2. School district will donate bricks and have paid \$3,500 to remove the cupola from the building and they will agree to do the routine maintenance so the group would like to request the town contribute \$5,000 to the fund;
3. After cupola is placed, the school district will own the cupola and maintain it and the grounds, and the School District would like assurance from the town that in the case that an extraordinary repair is needed, the town would agree to work collaboratively with them, by helping to pay for those non-routine repairs;
4. How can this group help, should it be a town committee or citizen committee?

The Board discussed that setting up the fund to accept donations, as has been done with the animal shelter donations and the Police K-9, will not be a problem. Chair Helm said he is

reluctant to commit to any financing before the Board sees the budget and also before they know how much will be raised in donations, noting that they have not donated any money to other causes, such as the K9. Selectman Rollins noted that she was under the impression that it would be 100% fund raising; Mr. Kidder agreed and noted that there will be fundraising activities. Selectman Kidder noted that she believed that many people will want to donate, however if town funds are required, she would like to consider \$3,500. Chair Helm suggested that as a way to show the town's collaboration and financial commitment, perhaps the town should budget an amount that could be used for maintenance.

The Board discussed that if the group would like to help, they can organize themselves as a private group to fund raise and to advise the Board on matters concerning the cupola; the Board will not require the group to be an official town committee.

Selectman Rollins asked to see a draft of the agreement that will be entered into with the School Board on the long-term maintenance issue, noting that she would like to see the funds coming from fundraising. Mr. Kidder agreed and noted that his group intends to raise as much money as possible and funds left over after the placement of the building will be used for the future repairs and maintenance.

The Board thanked Mr. Kidder and his group for their work on the project and expressed their support of it and asked that they return to the Board at their next meeting, October 2nd, with more details on the budget for the project and a draft of the agreement with School District on maintenance.

Chris Hansen, 256 Whitney Brook Road

Chris Hansen met with the Board to discuss the road drainage issues he has been having over the past few years, and this last year has been the worst. He noted that he has lived in his home for 26 years and never had the issues he has been dealing with the past two years, this year being the worst. Mr. Hansen notes that the town does a good job grading the roads but the water and silt that comes into his backyard and driveway is ridiculous and shouldn't be that way, noting that trees in his yard are beginning to be impacted by all the water and there is a potential they could fall on his house.

Mr. Hansen explained that the water comes from Wilmot and comes down into his driveway, and also through the woods and into his backyard. He has installed a pipe to try to help the situation, but the situation is very hard to deal with, and he did not feel that he should have to deal with it since the water didn't always come onto his property in the amounts it is now. Mr. Hansen suggested that road work done by the Town of Wilmot has created this problem and he did not feel that it was proper to direct water onto someone's property.

Public Works Director Richard Lee informed the Board that he is very familiar with the issue and explained to the Board that work has been done on the drainage on the road to help direct the water. He noted that water runs down and storms have been different in the last few years where large amounts of water come in a short period of time, which sometimes causes backups in culverts which causes the water to go down the road instead of into the culverts. Mr. Lee stressed that the water has always gone into the woods but it is now spreading out, the town cannot go onto private property to clear out silt or rocks that wash onto the land.

Mr. Hansen stressed that a change in drainage must have occurred as the amount of water on his property has definitely changed; there have been several big storms over the past 20+ years and they have never done the damage that he has seen on the past few years. Mr. Lee noted that the

town does routine maintenance on the road and cleans the ditches, but they have not changed the drainage.

Chair Helm suggested that the Board view the area in question. The Board set October 6th at 9:00AM to view the area, this will be a public meeting. Chair Helm encouraged Mr. Hansen to provide the Board with any documentation he might have on this issue such as photographs or expenses paid to deal with the issue.

Public Comments

There were none.

Town Administrator Short and Long-Term Priorities

Chair Helm noted that in August the Board asked the Town Administrator to provide the Board with her recommendations on short and long-term priorities for the town, and asked her to discuss them. Ms. Hallquist noted the following as her recommendations for priorities:

Short-term:

Employee Relations: “Make New London the best place in the region to work.” Ms. Hallquist noted that she recommends that the Board make it a priority to do everything it can to make New London the best place in the region to work. She noted that it is getting harder to find good people to hire, noting that the town has a sign-on bonus to try and attract experienced police officers and also the cost to train new employees is substantial. She noted that making New London the best place to work includes providing the best equipment and facilities possible in which to work, offering appropriate training and competitive benefits and having a supportive leadership team.

Ms. Hallquist noted that health insurance comes up each year at the start of the budget process and the tone of the conversation is taken by many employees as an attack on their benefits, as if changes must be made because costs are going up. Employees understand that insurance is expensive and they have demonstrated that they are willing to work with the Board, but they have also made it clear over and over those benefits are important to them. Ms. Hallquist stressed that it is important to keep the tone of such discussion positive and collaborative for the best results.

Selectman Rollins noted that there isn't an industry in the country where insurance isn't looked at every year and did not like to hear that the employees feel that their benefits are under attack as all businesses review insurance costs.

Police Station/Community Center: Whether the facilities are combined or two separate facilities, it should be a priority to get a new police station and a community center. She noted that the police facility is inadequate now, the community center is a facility that will add to the town. The Buker Building has serious heating issues that will be costly to fix and it is difficult to make decisions on the building unless a plan is made as to the future of it.

Selectman Rollins feels that they should be thinking of a Public Safety Building; police, fire and ambulance and consider the Community Center on its own.

The Board agreed that the Buker Building should continue to be maintained, especially life safety issues, until the town can make decisions on the future of the building.

Attention to infrastructure: Ms. Hallquist pointed out that the town has made great strides in dealing with infrastructure over the past few years after many years of neglect, so she

recommended the Board continue to fund building repairs and maintenance, paving of gravel roads and maintenance of existing paved roads and begin to plan for the more costly bridge repairs so they are done before cost increases.

The Board discussed the sidewalk on Main Street that has been discussed for many years. Mr. Lee noted that this may be a costly project because there are some serious drainage issues that would need to be addressed. The Board noted that the Main Street sidewalks will likely be a longer-term project. Chair Helm noted that short-term gravel roads could be addressed but the town may need to take a breather from larger projects given the work done in the last two years. Mr. Lee noted that they are getting close to dealing with all of the gravel roads that were scheduled to be paved, noting that the town went from 4 days of grading to 2.5 days.

Ms. Hallquist noted that since she came up with her list, she has heard more about towns adding televised meetings for their Boards and it is seen as a positive way to inform the public about what is going on, so it may be something the Board wants to consider.

Long-term:

Enlarging Public Safety Departments: police, fire, ambulance: The police department is not adequate now, the fire department will have issues should we need to add much more equipment – the future for both should be considered including personnel needs.

Stabilization of tax rate: expand commercial districts: Having a stable tax rate is important to attract business and to encourage homebuyers to purchase in New London; she questioned whether the Board should establish an economic development committee. The Board noted that there was such a committee in town in the past and it was not successful.

Largest taxpayers/employers: The hospital and college are important to the town both in tax payments but also the economic impact from all of the employees. The town does a good job collaborating with both and should continue to think of ways to work together. Ms. Hallquist noted that one way to help the college might be to increase their tax exemption, which would give them some financial relief. John Ellis asked how often town officials meet with college and hospital officials; Chair Helm noted that there are frequent contacts with staff and the Selectmen have contacts with many of the people through their community activities. Chief Lyon also noted that the college has in the past held quarterly community meetings to keep the citizens updated on college events. Chief Lyon also pointed out that the town is installing sidewalks on Seamans Road that will benefit the college.

Workforce Housing: Ms. Hallquist noted that workforce housing is an issue for many towns. She noted that the hospital may develop their property for senior housing that may require 100+ employees, and she questioned where those 100 people will live. Chair Helm noted that the college will be changing their rules regarding off campus housing, which will open up some rental properties in New London.

Chair Helm asked why building inspection is not included in the priority. Ms. Hallquist noted that she did not include it because all discussions held on the topic led her to believe that the Board would not support a building inspector. Chair Helm felt that if she felt it is a priority then it should be listed.

Selectman Kidder asked for the status of: (1) Contract with CHA for the investigation of the hospital property: signed; (2) the Mid-State Regional Coordinating Council for Community Transportation (RCC) request at the last meeting: Ms. Hallquist is inclined to recommend

joining, but would like to wait and see what Newbury and Andover does; (3) State DOT notice on the 10-year plan meetings: Mr. Lee attends.

Welcome to New London signs: Selectman Kidder noted that the signs are being made, the sign maker will be in touch with Mr. Lee for the installation and he understands that the posts must be wood, not granite as per the State DOT. The project is on track.

MacKenna's Proclamation: The Board prepared a proclamation recognizing the closing of MacKenna's Restaurant after 23 years as an important part of town. Selectman Rollins suggested the Board include that it is a welcoming, family friendly environment and this is very much valued by all citizens.

Review of Fees: The Board reviewed the various fees charged by the town: Planning Board fees, building permits, rental of town fees. Selectman Kidder noted that the Planning Board reviewed its fees in March and found them to be adequate. Chair Helm asked the certificate of occupancy fee be removed from the Planning Board sheet and the date changed.

The Board discussed building permit fees. Ms. Hallquist provided information related to the need to have permit fees be related to the actual cost of the town administering the program. Chair Helm noted that Sunapee appears to charge more. The board discussed the difference between building permit and Planning Board site plan which is charged a separate fee. Chair Helm suggested that the charges for wind systems be changed to alternative energy systems, like Sunapee uses. The Board asked that the forms be updated and will be considered at a future meeting for approval.

Dispatch fees have been the same for several years and Ms. Hallquist does not recommend a change to the formula at this time. Selectman Kidder will be meeting with Chief Andersen, Chief Lyon and Fireward Board Chair Steve Ensign and will recommend a change if needed.

Mr. Lee does not believe e-waste fees should be changed.

Chair Helm noted that the ZBA fee is different from the Planning Board and questioned if there was a reason for the difference, no reason was identified.

The Board discussed the fees for use of the town facilities. It was noted that the fees do not cover the costs, but it allows nonprofits to use Whipple Hall. The Board discussed that the churches and the college do charge for their facilities as well. Mr. Ellis asked for the amount of fees: the fee is \$25 for up to 12 hours and 13 hours + is \$35. He asked if the cost of cleaning is factored into the fee, it was noted that the exact cost was not included in determining the fee.

Recreation Commission Vacancy: Selectman Kidder submitted names of possible people to serve on the Recreation Commission to fill the vacancy of Lyndsay Lund. Selectman Kidder noted that more than one person could be appointed. Chair Helm noted he would contact each person to see if they would be interested in being appointed.

Budget Committee Meeting: Chair Rollins asked for an updated dashboard and also compiling 5 or 10 years history of total dollar amounts to be raised by taxes for the town, school and county and to compare year-to year.

Town Administrator Report

Phosphorus Study: Has begun, Colby-Sawyer College students are working with Chris Roberts in the Wastewater Department – Ms. Hallquist and Mr. Lee will meet with the class tomorrow to discuss the project.

Shared Zoning Administrator Position: Donna Nashawaty, Deb Langner and Ms. Hallquist interviewed 3 people today, they will likely interview one more; it is likely that an offer will be made soon.

Land Use & Assessing Coordinator Position: This position has been posted and we should be able to start interviewing the week of October 9th.

Governor Sununu established the Lake Sunapee Public Boat Access Development Commission to research and evaluate potential development of the Wild Goose property and potential alternative opportunities for public boat access on Lake Sunapee. The New London Board of Selectmen shall appoint a resident to sit on the Commission.

Sewer Lagoons: Mr. Lee and Ms. Hallquist inspected the recently excavated sewer lagoons with Dennis Thompson, a State DES person and the project manager from RMI who took soil samples. RMI will be preparing a waiver application asking permission to leave the buried lagoons as is.

Pleasant Lake Dam: The work is essentially done, the granite steps near the gatehouse must be replaced but otherwise the project is done.

Budgets for FY2019 will be available on Friday, September 22nd – the first budget review is on October 2nd – Public Works.

Committee Reports

Selectman Kidder reported on the following committee meetings:

Recreation Commission: Jean Connolly, Center for the Arts, met with the Commission and she would like to ask for a waiver of fees and she was referred to the Selectmen for that request. The Recreation Commission is not offering an opinion on the fee issue, but they recognize the good works of the Center of the Arts. The poles for the skating rink are being fabricated and will be installed – being left aluminum and not painted; Scott is working on a map of the locations of the pumpkin people – the contest will run Oct 1st – 31st; the shed at Elkins will be moved when the docks are moved; there are 6 senior trips planned, Scott is working on his budget and he was instructed to ask for increases in beach and office staff.

Tri-town Assessing: Norm is participating in a current use webinar, no major lawsuits, Vision software must be replaced as it is no longer supported – Norm recommend using Avitar at a cost of \$11,000 which will be less overall from the Vision costs.

Planning Board: Lots of tree cuttings, request to remove a cottage on Lamson Lane; Energy Committee is working on zoning changes for energy issues, and they may recommend a charging station.

Archives: Discussed that Pam Bright, Tina Helm and Sue Bucklin Cox have agreed to serve on a committee to plan the Whipple centennial in conjunction with the New London Hospital celebration.

Master Plan Steering Committee: Discussion of process, Mark Vernon, Conservation Commission, has agreed to join the committee.

CIP: Ed Andersen attended and presented his recommendation to relocate the police station, Scott Blewitt attended to present his recommendation to build a community center.

Chair Helm reported that he, Ms. Hallquist and Liz Meller attended a By-ways meeting at the Livery in Sunapee. The meeting covered: (1) Work on brochure and map to make it more user

friendly, (2) Chamber of Commerce needs to play a more active role; and (3) to expand the by-way to include a Sunapee Harbor loop.

Other Business

Mr. Lee noted that the Academy Building insulation was finished on Monday and he expects to start on the sprinkler project directly, hopefully completing the project this fall.

Meeting Minutes – Chair Helm noted that a name was incorrectly spelled and should be corrected: Cicley Markoff.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes from the September 5, 2017 meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to enter into nonpublic session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(a): the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee. Roll call vote: Bill Helm: Yes, Janet Kidder: Yes, Nancy Rollins: Yes

The Board entered nonpublic session at 8:01 PM
The Board reentered the public session at 8:36 PM

The Board voted to seal the Minutes. Roll call vote: Bill Helm: Yes, Janet Kidder: Yes, Nancy Rollins: Yes

Items to be signed

- Notice of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber – Pingree Rd. TM 023-002-000 by Nate Byfield.
- Requests to Use Town Property
 - ✓ NL Inn Common by Sybil Sloan of St. Andrew's Church for the Blessing of the Animals on Saturday, October 7, 2017 from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM.

Applications Approved/Denied

Temporary Event/Sale Permits

- First Baptist Church, 461 Main Street for a Rummage Sale on Saturday, October 7th from 8 am to 12:30 pm. APPROVED

Sign Permits

- Temporary Sign – WFK Ice House Museum for a 6 sq. Ft. A-frame sign, at the information booth for the Lunger Event from September 13th – 23rd. APPROVED
- Temporary Sign - First Baptist Church for an 18'x24' sign at the information booth for the Rummage Sale from October 1st – 7th. APPROVED

Building Permits

- Timothy Hardy, Bog Road, TM 129-029-000. Construct 3 bed house. BP 17-101 APPROVED 9/12/2017
- Kenwood & Elizabeth Foster, 84 Summit View Road, TM 138-009-000. Add a 10' x 12' deck on 2nd floor. BP 17-102 APPROVED 9/8/2017
- FG McSwiney Family Trust, 49 Balsam Acres, TM 095-003-000. Exterior renovations (vinyl siding). BP 17-103 APPROVED 9/8/2017

- Paul & Gina Christman, 881 Morgan Hill Road, TM 006-002-000. Replace existing deck with 12'x24' in same location. BP 17-107 APPROVED 9-18-2017
- Mary Lou Cummings, 464 Pleasant Street, TM 061-015-000. Interior Renovations. BP 17-105 APPROVED 9-18-2017

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) and SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to adjourn the meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Meeting adjourned at 8:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly A. Hallquist
Town Administrator