



# TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES February 17, 2015

### **PRESENT:**

Janet Kidder, Chairman  
Nancy Rollins, Selectman  
Peter Bianchi, Selectman  
Kimberly Hallquist, Town Administrator  
Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

### **ALSO PRESENT:**

Ed Andersen, Police Chief  
Minette Sweeney, *Intertown Record*  
Phyllis Piotrow, Budget Committee Member  
Jason Lyon, Fire Chief  
Steve Ensign, Board of Firewards  
Rob Prohl, Budget Committee Chair

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

### Acceptance of a Gift – Ed Andersen, Police Chief

Chief Andersen said the Police Benevolent Association would like to donate equipment to the Police Department. The value of the gift is \$1,600. Pursuant to RSA 31:95-e gifts under \$5,000 may be accepted by the Selectmen at a public meeting.

Chief Andersen explained that “Fatal Vision” is a kit that includes goggles that can be worn to simulate being under the influence of alcohol. They would like to hold some classes at Whipple Hall and perhaps at the highway garage for parents, teens, and college kids to offer the experience of what it is like to be impaired.

Selectman Bianchi asked Chief Andersen if he feels the Police Department have extra time to do this kind of community outreach. Chief Andersen said he does; it would take a couple hours, about twice a year, similar to the time spent with the “Stuff-a-Cruiser” event (food drive) they hold at Hannaford’s.

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to accept the gift of the impairment goggle kit per RSA 31:95-e. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### Town Administrator’s Report – Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator

Ms. Hallquist said she has had compliments on how the Department of Public Works is taking care of the roads with all the snow that has fallen of late.

Ms. Hallquist said that she and Richard Lee (Public Works Director) have been working with Pathways Consulting about the engineering and construction portion of the Elkins Sidewalk Project. If they can’t come to an agreement with Pathways they will need to go with the next engineering firm on the list.

Ms. Hallquist noted that NHDOT identified some bridge deficiencies at Brookside Drive. There are two large culverts (classified as bridges by the State) that Mr. Lee has been monitoring over the past several years as they have been deteriorating. Mr. Lee will be present at the next Selectmen's meeting to discuss the matter further.

#### New Business

##### *Letter from the Town of Newport Regarding Discontinuance of Back-up Ambulance*

Ms. Hallquist noted the receipt of a letter sent to New London Hospital Ambulance (NLHA) from the Town of Newport regarding the cessation of backup ambulance service to some of the towns served by NLHA, including New London. The Town of Newport set March 1<sup>st</sup> as the date to discontinue backup service. Selectman Bianchi said this letter only gave 16 days notice of the elimination of the ambulance service, which he felt was extremely inappropriate. He noted that the other towns have a March Town Meeting and their budgets were already done. This would put a hardship on these towns. Bruce King, President of New London Hospital, shared the same disappointment in the letter he sent just that afternoon.

Chief Lyon said this change would hugely affect the area and noted that the Newport ambulance came to New London Hospital 79 times last year, and most of the calls were from New London residents. The next closest ambulance is Andover, which is a volunteer squad. If/when they are not available, Hanover, Lebanon, Bristol, Hopkinton, Henniker or Marlow are the next options. Some real issues could come from this.

Selectman Bianchi asked how many ambulances the hospital has. Chief Lyon said they have three. One is for 911 calls and one is designated for transfers. The issue is staffing and if another call in another town takes place or there is a transfer, Newport ambulance would generally be called to come into town. Without a timely response, there could be significant issues. Timely transport to the hospital could be a problem and this was a real concern for the area. Chief Lyon said the area fire departments will be meeting that Thursday to discuss how to manage this change, which was a policy-level decision from the Board of Selectmen in Newport. This change also affects Mount Sunapee, which has an average of 110 calls per year.

Selectman Bianchi asked if this would be an issue for New London Hospital if they had the personnel to staff all three ambulances for any kind of call and not just keep some on for transporting. Chief Lyon said staffing has been a monetary thing with the hospital. Newport has always covered for New London and now they are possibly looking at a longer delay with zero coverage.

Chief Andersen said another delay is that when New London Dispatch has to call Andover, Hanover, or another town for back-up it is frustrating when the dispatchers can't find an ambulance to take the call. He commented that Newport has always called on NLHA's staff because they don't have a paramedic on staff and NLHA does. Chief Lyon said no one town can do it all themselves. They rely heavily on sharing apparatus and personnel.

Selectman Bianchi said the Town pays New London Hospital for the ambulance service and wondered how this will impact the Town. Chief Lyon said New London Hospital may need to increase their staffing. They need two EMT's on a moving ambulance; they will need to come up with some creative ways to handle the situation. No doubt, it is going to cost more money.

Selectman Bianchi wondered if there was a contractual agreement between the towns and the hospital. Ms. Hallquist said there was not; it is verbal agreement and the Town pays the hospital for their ambulance service.

Chief Lyon said on March 24<sup>th</sup> there will be a meeting in Newport to discuss this issue. He commented that Newport runs a very efficient service and even so had a loss of \$40,000 – \$60,000 each year, with an average of 1,200 calls per year. From a business standpoint it is a loss, but from an emergency service standpoint, it is the cost of doing business.

*Resignations of Recreation Commissioners*

It was noted that both Laura James and Allison McLean submitted letters of resignation from the Recreation Commission. The Recreation Commission recommends the appointment of Casey Biuso and Lindsay Lund to fill the vacancies.

It was determined that Casey Buiso would complete Allison McLean's term, and Lindsay Lund would complete Laura James' term.

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to appoint Casey Biuso to fill Allison McLean's seat and Lindsay Lund to fill Laura James' seat on the Recreation Commission. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

*Consider Abatement Request for Taxes for the Robert Carr Property*

The Selectmen noted receipt of a request for abatement of property taxes from the Robert Carr property on Lake Sunapee. The house was destroyed by fire in July. The Selectmen request that Norm Bernaiche submit his recommendation for consideration by the Board.

*Consider Abatement Request for Interest for the Estate of Ernestine Gay*

Ms. Hallquist said she wasn't aware that New London has ever abated for interest. Selectman Bianchi said this is being requested by legal counsel for the estate of Ernestine Gay. Ms. Hallquist said the lawyer is saying that since they couldn't pay the interest due to funds being frozen after Ms. Gay's death, they shouldn't be responsible for the interest in the amount of \$47.38.

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to deny the request for abatement of interest for the Estate of Ernestine Gay. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

*Griffin House Condominium Association –Request for Payment Plan for Sewer Charges*

The Board reviewed a letter from Griffin House Condominium Association requesting a payment plan for an unusually large sewer bill. The association noted that no one can understand the increase in usage at this point in time. Chair Kidder said she has no problem with a payment schedule but thinks it concerning that the usage went up so much from one bill to the next. Selectman Bianchi wondered if they would be coming back to the Town again if they can't pay future bills. This current request is regarding a past sewer bill. Ms. Hallquist said this would be a non-interest arrangement and they would pay it over time. She noted that the Town has allowed this kind of payment plan in the past when special circumstances results in an unusually high sewer bill, the full charges are paid but the property owner is allowed to pay over time, without interest.

Selectman Rollins said she was fine with a payment structure at this point but would like them to report back to the Selectmen during the summer to make sure they are monitoring the usage and committing to

figure out the problem. Selectman Bianchi thinks this should be a one-time thing and that they should not allow the same people to keep coming back with the same request.

Chair Kidder said she didn't have a problem allowing a 10-month payment structure and feels they have a plan to monitor the meter.

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to accept a payment structure for Griffin House Condominium Association for ten months, and that the owners be encouraged to monitor the meter over the summer. THE MOTION PASSED. Peter Bianchi voted: No.**

#### Old/Pending Business

*Discuss Report on Whipple Hall by Dennis Mires, PA., The Architects*

Selectman Bianchi wondered what Whipple Hall would be used for in the future. There were life-saving and sprinkling recommendations in the report. He thought they should think about what is going to happen with Whipple Hall and the Police Department. He thought this was a Town decision on the long-range plans for the Recreation Department and the Police Department.

Rob Prohl recalled that the CIP stated that building usage and looking towards the future needs for the Town were priorities. Ms. Hallquist thought it best to make a plan on what to do with the report; they do need to figure out what they want to do with the building. Selectman Rollins said they need to study the building needs in the Town; what the space needs are moving forward. Additionally, they need to have a single schedule of all the projects in Town and have it articulate where they are with the current costs and a five-10 year plan to make sure they have the right infrastructure. Clearly some life-safety things should be done and she would like to hear from the building committee on their reactions to the report.

Chair Kidder agreed that there are some things they should tend to immediately. She would like to hear from Mr. Lee and his recommendations on what they should address sooner rather than later. Ms. Hallquist said she would ask Mr. Lee and will forward the report to the Building Committee.

Selectman Rollins noted that Whipple Hall may be eligible for L-Chip dollars since it is now on the registry of historic buildings.

#### Committee Meetings & Reports

##### *Planning Board*

Selectman Bianchi said he wasn't at the last Planning Board meeting, but his understanding is that the Board finalized what they would present at the public hearing regarding zoning amendments.

##### *Budget Meeting*

Selectman Rollins said the Budget Committee met on Wednesday. They have proposed to meet with the Board of Selectmen at the end of the budgeting process to discuss any remaining discrepancies.

##### *Recreation*

Chair Kidder said the Winter Carnival was a great success. 270 tickets were sold for the Jack Frost dinner. The Recreation Department made about \$1,000 profit. Mr. Blewitt has 55 tickets for a May 24th Red Sox game. The ice skating rink is going well. Two February school vacation trips are planned; one to ragged mountain for tubing, and one to Smitty's movie theatre in Tilton. Chair Kidder said the Commission learned that Colby-Sawyer College would no longer be having a summer program for ages 5-12, so that leaves the New London Recreation Camp with a possibility of a big increase in enrollment for the upcoming summer season. Danielle Jallah will be running the Recreation Department camp this summer.

Sewer Lagoon Closure

Chair Kidder said she feels the Town should secure the services of Nobis Engineering for the lagoon closure. They have submitted their recommendations and since they are familiar with the lagoons, it seems logical they would be the company that was hired to close them.

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to move forward with securing the services of Nobis Engineering for lagoon closure in the amount of \$23,000.**

Ms. Hallquist thought there would still be about \$17,000 remaining in the fund after this expenditure. Selectman Bianchi thinks they should go out to bid when spending this kind of money. Ms. Hallquist said generally she likes bidding out but when they have a relationship that works, like they do with the engineers from Nobis, she doesn't see the need to go out to bid. Additionally, going out to bid for professional services such as engineering, legal and financial is not always best for the Town. Chair Kidder said one thing to consider is that it takes the staff a lot of time to familiarize another engineering company with the project. Selectman Bianchi thought it was poor business by not going out to bid. He thinks that the reason contractors don't want to bid on Town projects because the Town rarely puts things out to bid. He recalled that he recalls speaking with former Town Administrator Jessie Levine about putting a policy in place to determine a level of spending that would require a project to go out for bid.

Ms. Hallquist said if the firm is familiar with a project and have already worked on it with the Town, they have to determine if they have confidence in the company. While the Town could put the work out to bid, competitive bidding is not always mean the Town will get the most competent and effective service.

Ms. Hallquist asked if any of the selectmen have a problem with Nobis Engineering. Selectman Bianchi said he had no basis to say if they were good or not. Ms. Hallquist pointed out that they have been working with the Town for several years on monitoring of the former landfill site, and she has found them to be competent and are timely with reports to the State and with any follow up with issues that arise. Ms. Hallquist opined that the Town would be better served with engaging Nobis for the sewer lagoon closure engineering.

Chair Kidder said if they put this off now, it could take months to get another bid.

Chair Kidder asked for a vote on the motion.

**THE MOTION PASSED. Peter Bianchi voted: No.**

Approval of Meeting Minutes

*January 20, 2015*

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to approve the minutes of January 20, 2015, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

*January 26, 2015*

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes of January 26, 2015, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

*February 2, 2015*

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to approve the minutes of February 2, 2015, as circulated. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

In response to discussion held at the Selectmen's meeting of February 2, 2015, Chair Kidder made a motion to clarify that the Board of Selectmen's stance on the formula to be used for New London Dispatch's member towns.

**IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to continue New London Dispatch and review the formula for all towns. THE MOTION PASSED. Peter Bianchi voted: No**

Upcoming Meetings and Special Events

Conservation Commission Meeting – Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, 8:30am

Budget Committee Meeting – Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm

Citizen's Advisory Committee Meeting – Saturday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 7:30am

Next Selectmen's Meetings: March 2, 16 & 30, 6:00pm

Planning Board Meeting – Tuesday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7:00pm

Citizen's Advisory Committee Meeting – Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, 7:30am \*weather permitting, to be held at the Highway Garage

Selectmen's Schedule for Poll Representation on March 10, 2015

Janet Kidder: 8am – 12pm

Nancy Rollins: 12pm – 4pm

Peter Bianchi: 4pm – 7pm

All Selectmen will be present during the ballot count at 7:00pm.

Application for Building Permit

- Fran & Marie Murray, 96 Burpee Hill Road (082-027-000) – Build 10' x 14' addition and renovate sunroom to include 3' x 7' bump-out – APPROVED
- Emily Baldwin, 29 Woody Point (043-011-000) – Interior renovations – APPROVED
- David & Bethany Balford, 240 Knollwood (035-035-000) – Interior renovations – APPROVED
- Richard & Marguerite Lawton, 46 Highland Ridge (145-001-000) – Interior renovations – APPROVED
- Susan & David Reeves, 28 Twin Lake Villa (020-018-000) – Convert garage storage loft to music room – APPROVED
- Kelly Olive, 72 Wilder Lane (099-017-000) – Convert existing screened porch into a sunroom – APPROVED

Application for Use of Whipple Hall

Mad Athlete/Emerald Necklace – August 20, 2015 7am – 7pm. Registration and check-in point.  
APPROVED

Sign Permit Applications

Yaya's Memory Lane Antique Furniture & Gifts – 428 Main Street – APPROVED

Other Items to be Signed

Intent to Cut – 371 Mountain Road (112-005-000)

Selectman Bianchi asked how his colleagues felt about the New London Police Officers sitting on I-89 patrolling. Selectman Rollins didn't think it was a prudent use of their time provided it wasn't at the request of the State Police. Chair Kidder was opposed to having the New London Police on the highway unless request by the State Police for a specific incident. Chief Andersen will be informed of the Board's position on this matter.

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to move into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (c) THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Upon returning from non-public session, Chair Kidder called for a motion to adjourn.

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to adjourn the meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary  
Town of New London