



# TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN APPROVED MEETING MINUTES March 30, 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  
Donna Larrow, Police Department Administrative Assistant  
Phyllis Piotrow, Budget Committee  
John Ryan, Board of Firewards  
Scott Blewitt, Recreation Director  
John Wilson, Budget Committee  
Linda Hardy, Town Clerk/Tax Collector  
Bill Hardy, New London Resident  
Richard Lee, Public Works Director  
Tina Helm, New London Resident  
Rob Prohl, Budget Committee Chair  
Chris Lorio, Budget Committee  
Bruce Hudson, Budget Committee  
Bruce Parsons, Library Trustee  
Bill Green, Budget Committee  
Larry Dufault, Budget Committee  
Suzanne Jesseman, Budget Committee  
Joe Cardillo, Budget Committee  
Sandra Licks, Library Director  
Leigh Bosse, *The Messenger*

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

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

Ms. Hallquist noted that the Chair of the New London Bandstand Committee, Nicole Densmore, has been invited to come in to the Selectmen's April 13<sup>th</sup> meeting to discuss the Steve Mendelson Trust. She has also asked Chief Andersen and John Wilson to come in to discuss their findings regarding dispatch fees. Ms. Hallquist noted that notice has been given for the bond hearing to be held on April 13<sup>th</sup>, for a \$350,000 to make repairs to the Academy Building.

Ms. Hallquist said they are still waiting for DOT approval to go out to bid on the Elkins sidewalk project. The ads have to go out for a minimum of three weeks, she hopes that the notice to proceed will be received soon. It was noted that the project is about \$70,000 over budget right now. Ms. Hallquist feels

that the State will likely give the additional funding needed at the 80% level the project is scheduled to receive, and the Town will be responsible for the remaining 20%. William Rose from DOT has communicated that some projects in other towns did not go forward, for which project funds were intended, so it is likely that additional funding is available, however it is not definite. If additional funds are not available through the grant, the town will have to decide whether funds are available within the town budget to cover the costs.

Ms. Hallquist explained that she and Richard Lee (Public Works Director) will be at DOT on April 8<sup>th</sup> to get recertified for this project. Their previous certification is slated to expire in June and is necessary to have town staff certified during the entire project schedule.

Ms. Hallquist added that she and Mr. Lee attended a meeting in Newbury regarding the poor condition of State Route 103A. Also attending was Nate Miller from the Regional Planning Committee (RPC), Alan Hanscom, resident engineer from DOT, Dennis Pavlicek, Town Administrator from Newbury and Karen Ebel, State Representative for New London and Newbury who sits on the Transportation Committee. It was suggested by DOT that perhaps the towns could share the expense to do this work since the State budget does not have funding for the road in the near future. The RPC suggested they could try getting sections of the road approved each year instead of doing it all at once.

Ms. Hallquist noted that Tuesday, April 7<sup>th</sup> is the last day for petition warrant articles to be brought forth for Town Meeting.

Ms. Hallquist reported that the motion for contempt as filed against the town by Nicholas Gilman regarding his 2014 property assessment was dismissed by the court as requested by the town.

#### Old/Pending Business - Department Head Updates

Chair Kidder asked the Department Heads who were present to give an update on how things were going in their department.

**Recreation Department:** Scott Blewitt, Recreation Director, said they had a wonderful Easter Egg Hunt the previous Saturday despite the snow. The Wilmot Learning Place sold snacks and raised over \$200. Mr. Blewitt noted that a scholarship fund has been set up and donations are being made to sponsor children to attend the Recreation Department Sun and Fun Camp this summer.

**Police Department:** Ed Andersen, Police Chief, said the Police Department has handled over 800 calls for service for the first quarter. Arrests are at 51 for both quarters. The Department has received “drunk goggles” (goggles that can be worn to simulate how it feels to be impaired, similar to when drunk), and Officer David Keith will be using them to teach people about the dangers of driving while impaired. This month there will be a community talk at Hilltop where the goggles will be used.

Chief Andersen noted that several years ago there was a felony conviction at the college where some property was destroyed. There was over \$14,000 in restitution owed and the student was expelled. Through a felony diversion program, the student has just made the last payment of the full \$14,000; Chief Andersen noted that it is unusual to get full restitution, especially in an amount that high.

Chief Andersen noted that “Coffee with the Chiefs” would be starting the following day. Citizens can join the Fire and Police Chiefs for coffee at MacKenna’s to speak with them about matters that are important to them.

Chief Andersen shared that Officers David Keith and Eben Lamson received lifesaving awards recently in Sunapee. On April 22<sup>nd</sup> they will be presented with another award in Manchester. He added that the training room was used by area police departments to go over cadet programs.

Chief Andersen said that year-to-date, has handled 5,233 calls for service which is up from 4,711 from last year. They are continuing to send out a monthly newsletter to area towns on dispatching news. At the agency head meeting last month with area police and fire chiefs and ambulance, it was felt that overall, people are happy with the service they are getting from dispatch.

Chief Andersen noted some other things that had been going on in the department, including some members attending an active shooter training that was held in Conway, NH. Some computers that run Crimestar and 911 were upgraded. They have also had six people come in to apply for the dispatch full-time position. There will be a test for the applicants on April 10<sup>th</sup> and the top four will meet with Heidi Dunlop (Dispatch Supervisor) and the Police and Fire Chiefs who will pick the best candidate.

Selectman Bianchi wondered why the calls for service were up over last year. Chief Andersen noted that there was not one thing he could point to to explain the higher numbers. He noted that recently there has been a major issue at the park and ride. They have towed multiple cars and ticketed several others. People are parking in the roadway, making it impossible for Dartmouth Coach to make their loop in the parking lot. There were also vehicles with expired handicapped placards. He observed that there is not one specific reason why calls are up, it is across the board. When asked if other towns' calls were up, Chief Andersen said he wasn't sure if it was a local trend or not.

**Town Clerk/Tax Collector:** Linda Hardy, Town Clerk/Tax Collector, said her office has been busy collecting taxes and registering dogs. Vehicle registrations are trending upwards. The lien process will begin April 1<sup>st</sup> for those whose 2014 taxes are not paid. Ms. Hardy reminded everyone that anyone who wants to run for any offices should sign up in her office by Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5pm.

**Public Works:** Mr. Lee, Public Works Director, said his department is still in "winter mode" and have had 114 inches of snow this winter. They are currently \$22,000 over budget for salt and sand. Public works vehicles are being inspected in March. The new trash trailer and truck are on the road. Trash is running the same ton-wise as it was last year. They are finding it harder to get rid of recyclables and companies are slow to come get them. The money they are making on recyclables is going down as well because the market is flooded and China isn't buying as much as they used to.

**Fire Department:** John Ryan, Board of Firewards, was there to provide an update for the Fire Department as Chief Lyon was at a training and unable to attend the meeting. Mr. Ryan informed the Board that there have been 195 calls for service as of that morning. The department participated in a live burn training at 86 Porcupine Ridge, in Slope and Shore, with 45 personnel from the surrounding areas participating. Mr. Ryan reported that the training event worked very well and it was a valuable training exercise (the house in question was donated for training purposes by Susan Nichols).

#### Correspondence

##### *Letter from Center for the Arts*

Chair Kidder acknowledged receipt of a letter from Jean Connolly from the Center of the Arts who was concerned about the lack of adequate space in the Town for their organization and others. The letter was also sent to the Planning Board and will be considered during its review of town facilities.

New Business

*Deacon/Howard Current Use Assessment*

The Board reviewed a letter from Attorney Mark Puffer requesting current use assessment from 2012 to the present for the Deacon/Howard property. This property was the subject of an abatement appeal that was heard by the NH Supreme Court. Norm Bernaiche (Chief Assessor) and Kris McAllister (Assistant Assessor) and Town Counsel have reviewed the letter and agree that the request should be denied. Ms. Hallquist explained that in 2012, the application for current use was denied by the Selectmen in part as a portion of the land the property owners wanted put in current use did not qualify. At that time, the applicants were advised to resubmit the application with the qualifying piece of property listed but they chose not to submit a new application and instead appealed the Board's decision to the Board of Tax and Land Appeals and then to the Supreme Court. At various times during the appeals the property owners indicated that if they could not enroll all of the property in current use, they did not want to put any in. The current request by Attorney Puffer on behalf of the property owners is a departure from that position. The property owners now request that the qualifying land be placed into current use retroactive to 2012, even though they didn't fill the form out in a timely manner, and still have no application on file.

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to deny the request of the Deacon/Howard for current use assessment for 2012 forward. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Approval of Minutes of March 16

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to approve the minutes of March 16, 2015.**

Selectman Bianchi was concerned that information that appeared in a paragraph on the top of page two was not discussed during the meeting:

*“Prior to the public hearing the Board contacted town counsel and Terry Knowles, State of NH Division of Charitable Trusts, for direction on how funds should be dispersed. Following the advice of town counsel, discussions were held with the Recreation Commission and Conservation Commission to agree on a protocol for requesting funds from the Trustees of Trust funds. It was agreed that when funds are requested, there will be a joint meeting of the Selectmen, Conservation Commission and Recreation Commission to discuss the proposed project and a vote will be taken whether the project is consistent with the terms of the trust. If so, a request will be made to the Trustees of Trust Funds. It was noted that Town Meeting can also vote to use funds as well.”*

Ms. Hallquist agreed that the information was not said during the meeting, however she added the information, prefacing it with the phrase “prior to the public meeting” to assist the reader in understanding the background information on the topic. Selectman Bianchi said he thinks that in a public meeting these things should be stated in the record. He didn't think this was the way to put this information in there. It implies that the Selectmen voted on it, which they never did. He noted that the Selectmen discussed the protocol but it was never voted on.

Ms. Hallquist thought the information was helpful to the reader to know what was going on. It could be removed if the Selectmen felt it necessary.

Selectman Rollins said she has no problem with the paragraph being in there. Chair Kidder asked Selectman Bianchi what his suggestion would be, as he had noted it should be referenced somewhere in the minutes within this timeframe. Selectman Bianchi said it should be documented but not in this way

before they had had a chance to discuss it in a public meeting. The Board agreed to remove it from the Minutes before approval.

Page 3, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph: With regards to the Planning Board's occupancy requirement changes, Selectman Bianchi thought it should be added that the changes were within the site plan regulations. Chair Kidder said it would be helpful to add some background information to clarify the regulation.

Ms. Hallquist noted that the Scheuch Building Permit was not approved at the meeting on March 16<sup>th</sup> and reference to it would be removed. The Permit would be approved at that night's meeting instead.

Page 5: It should be noted that the Town could pay back some of the principal.

**THE MOTION TO APPROVE AS AMENDED WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Other Business

Selectman Bianchi said that in accepting the Mary Haddad money, it would be distributed with consent of a majority vote of the Conservation Commission, Recreation Commission and the Board of Selectmen, each having one vote. He is in favor of this and noted that Town Counsel has approved this method of approvals. Selectman Bianchi said maintaining, creating trails, and purchasing land was what the money is earmarked for. He thought purchasing land with that money should be done at a Town Meeting as it is a large undertaking with long-term implications.

Ms. Hallquist said this wasn't discussed with the other two entities (Recreation and Conservation Commissions). Selectman Bianchi said if neither of them agreed with the land purchasing change he was proposing, so be it. He said if they spell out exactly how the money is to be spent, they won't run into problems like they have with the bandstand committee and the Steve Mendelson Trust. Ms. Hallquist said she would relay this information to the other two commissions.

Committee Meetings & Reports

Selectman Bianchi said the Planning Board met the previous week for the second hearing for the amendments to the zoning ordinance. There was some discussion about various modifications. The sign ordinance and definition of "family" will have proposed changes. At the meeting there were some tree-cutting applications and the Planning Board will visit two sites at 6pm the following evening. There had been a mistake in the way the points were counted in one instance in the past, so the Planning Board will go in person to check it out.

The Planning Board heard a conceptual plan to move a portion of Pike Brook Road and to make it wider. The Board will start on more zoning changes for next year soon. A committee was appointed to discuss space needs in the Town. Bill Dietrich is heading up the committee and it will be comprised of one Budget Committee member and two to three Planning Board members.

The Chair called a recess at 6:43pm until 7:00pm when the Budget Committee was due to meet with the Board of Selectmen.

The meeting reconvened at 7:00pm.

**Library update:** Sandra Licks, Library Director, said the Children's room at the library was completely re-done after water damage and mold issues had been remedied, and would be open the following day.

**Joint meeting of the Selectmen and Budget Committee**

Chair Kidder welcomed members of the Budget Committee to the meeting to discuss the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee budgets. She explained that the only other thing the Selectman have added is an article on the warrant for \$350,000 for repairs to the academy building and possibly Whipple Hall. They will recommend this article and the Budget Committee may choose to do so as well. The only other addition is \$45,500 for interest on debt service on the bond the first year. She asked for comments from the Budget Committee.

Chair Prohl asked the Budget Committee if they wanted to comment. Mr. Dufault asked if this would be similar to a home equity loan. Chair Kidder said they aren't sure of the terms at this point. She said that the \$350,000 is well within what they are able to borrow.

Ms. Piotrow thought there were several good things having to do with this proposal by the Selectmen. She favored separating out the Whipple Hall question and the alternatives, which are not immediately tied to the money they are looking to borrow. She didn't like borrowing money instead of consistently putting funds into capital reserves so they don't have to borrow. Maintenance wasn't done to the Academy Building, which is why this money is being borrowed. It is essential to go ahead immediately and the \$350,000 seems to be a reasonable sum of money to probably be able to cover the building and immediate life-saving issues at Whipple Hall. She didn't think they had a choice and had to do this work.

**IT WAS MOVED (John Wilson) AND SECONDED (Joe Cardillo) to approve the recommendation by the Board of Selectmen to borrow \$350,000 and to add \$45,500 to the FY2016 budget to pay for debt service on the bond, for work to be done to the Academy Building and, should any funds be remaining, they would go towards work needed at Whipple Hall.**

Mr. Cardillo wondered if they should read the warrant before approving the motion. Ms. Hallquist noted that the Selectmen have not decided on the final wording of the article yet, but the amount of \$350,000 is set and the main focus will be the Academy Building.

Mr. Hudson said they still have to get a quote for the building. Selectman Bianchi said once they get the money, it may be in their best interest to hire an engineer to provide bid specs for the project. They want to make sure they do everything properly. It was noted that Mr. Wheeler had suggested asking for a time and materials contract instead of a traditional bid for the work.

**THE MOTION WAS APPROVED BY THE BUDGET COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Piotrow asked how the Budget Committee felt about changing the date of Town Meeting back to March. Mr. Cardillo said if they go back to March they are shortening the budget process which he thought was good. They are not getting a good turn-out for the school vote and he felt that going back to a March Town Meeting would help this situation. Selectman Bianchi said the Selectmen voted to put it on the warrant to move Town Meeting back to March. Selectman Bianchi said they sat at the polls for the school vote recently and saw a very low turn-out of voters. He suggested that maybe it was time for the Board of Selectmen to support the change. He said the School Board and Municipal Budget Committee budgets have been the same or extremely similar of late, but at some point, a key issue will come about and more voters would be beneficial. Chair Kidder said the Town Clerk brought up the issue and it was her recommendation to put it on the warrant.

Dr. Wilson observed that there are a lot of looming college issues, such as changing zoning at Kelsey fields, etc. and having college student participate in voting could have a big impact. He suggested that having the meeting in March gives them a lot more voting power to change those things. He thinks this is a consideration. Ms. Hallquist noted that all voters, including students, are able to vote on zoning issues via absentee ballots, so even though they might not be in town in May, the students could still voice their opinion via absentee voting.

Chair Prohl thanked the Selectmen for agreeing with the Budget Committee on the items that were different in their budgets. He said he got a call from Bill Helm, Chair of the Planning Board, asking for another volunteer to serve on the subcommittee to study space needs in Town. He said he would be serving on the committee. Selectman Bianchi said the subcommittee was planning to meet that week or the next to come up with a schedule.

Mr. Hudson said in reference to moving forward into the next fiscal year in a timely manner, the total salary and benefits as part of the percentage of the budget looks like a problem to him. A 4% raise across the board was an eye-opener for him. He didn't think it was equitable and fair to the taxpayers in the town and the employees. Some employees are probably more deserving than a 4% raise. He thinks the Selectmen need to take a look at this to come up with some criteria to get away from the across the board raises. Selectman Rollins said she has brought this up several times to come up with a more equitable way to determine raises.

Selectman Bianchi said he thinks that the next year he anticipated some interesting situations; they are going to have to come up with \$240,000 to cover the \$240,000 of capital reserve accounts they won't have next year (referring to the anticipated revenues received by discontinuing several capital reserve funds that will add \$244,295 to revenues to off-set taxes). He concluded that the Selectmen and Budget Committee will be challenged to come up with ways to account for the loss of these one-time revenues.

Ms. Piotrow thanked the chairs of the Budget Committee and the Board of Selectmen for the idea of the reconciliation meeting to come to some common ground.

#### Other Business

*Letter from Emmy Potter, 6th Grader, in Support of Donate Life Month*

Chair Kidder acknowledged receipt of a letter from Emmy Potter, a 6th grader, regarding the Town's vote to not fly an organ donor flag. The Board will send Ms. Potter a letter thanking her for her input and will explain why they did not vote for the flag and acknowledging the town's support of organ donation.

#### Upcoming Meetings and Special Events

Planning Board – Tuesday, April 7 – 7:00 PM

Recreation Commission – Tuesday, April 7 – 5:00 PM – Whipple Town Hall

Budget Committee – **Public Hearing on Budget** – Wednesday, April 8 - 7:00PM – Whipple Town Hall

Next Selectmen's Meeting – Monday, April 13 – 6:00 PM.

Conservation Commission – Wednesday April 15 – 8:30 AM

Citizens Advisory Committee – Saturday, April 18 – 7:30 AM – Location TBA

Board of Selectmen's Meeting – Monday, April 27 – 6:00 PM

Sunapee Wastewater Meeting – Wednesday, April 30 – 5:30 PM

Board of Selectmen's Meeting – Monday, May 4 – 6:00 PM

#### Application for Building Permit

- Adrienne Neary – 333 Barrett Road (096-032-000) – Interior renovations - APPROVED

- Justin & Erin Garzia – 683 Seamans Road (098-008-000) – Mobile chicken coop and pig shelter - APPROVED
- Stanley & Pamela S. Bright – 470 Burpee Hill Road (070-020-000) – Construct 12’x26’ lean-to addition to existing shed - APPROVED
- Jonathan & Sarah Scheuch – 192 Andover Road (110-008-000) – Install 5.1kw ground mount array on a racking system - APPROVED

Permanent Sign Permit Applications:

Rick Hurst estate Auctions  
Tuckers Restaurant

Other Items to be Signed:

- Pole Licenses (2)
- Tax Abatement – Clara & Patricia Cantor
- Tax Levy

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:34pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary  
Town of New London