



# TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES September 30, 2014

### **PRESENT:**

Janet Kidder, Chair  
Peter Bianchi, Selectman  
Nancy Rollins, Selectman  
Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator  
Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

### **ALSO PRESENT:**

Ed Andersen, Police Chief  
Jason Lyon, Fire Chief  
Bill & Tina Helm, New London Residents  
Bruce Hudson & Renate Kannler, New London Residents  
Rob Prohl, New London Resident  
Phyllis Piotrow, New London Resident  
Minette Sweeney, *Intertown Record*  
Leigh Bosse, *The Messenger*

Chair Kidder opened the meeting at 6:00pm. She gave the floor to Bill Helm, Planning Board Chair, to speak in regards to the vacancies on the Planning Board.

Mr. Helm offered that he is very happy with the newest members of the Planning Board, which were appointed by the Selectmen. He added that there is not a Conservation Commission representative on the Planning Board and thought perhaps this should be considered as a possible benefit. He also said it would be nice to have someone with some legal training on the Planning Board, as there are legal issues that come up often. Mr. Helm suggested that they also think about looking for another woman to sit on the Planning Board, as the majority of members are men.

Mr. Helm suggested they could fill the full-time vacancy by appointing one of the current alternates or by approaching one of the two women lawyers he knew of who were New London residents; Ms. Dufault or Ms. Hudkins. The Selectmen agreed to take his recommendation under advisement.

### Town Administrator's Report

Ms. Hallquist said the last meeting with the Sunapee Sewer Commissioners was productive and they believe the issues regarding the flows between the two towns is resolved. They will wait to get one year of flow readings from the two new meters (at the town line and at the plant) before making any changes: New London will stay at 65%. It was thought that the old meters were giving inaccurate readings.

Ms. Hallquist noted that the Town received a refund from Health Trust for a little over \$21,285.66, which will be deposited into the General Fund.

Ms. Hallquist explained that she is contacting DES and NH Fish & Game to see if they have an interest in participating in discussions related to Chip Mathewson's request to allow some water to pass through the Pleasant Lake dam at all times to keep the downstream stream active.

Ms. Hallquist shared that the Town's Wellness Committee is promoting an employee challenge for the month of October. Employees are urged to participate in one of many various wellness activities each day.

Ms. Hallquist said that the CIP (Capital Improvement Program) process started last week. The Planning Board heard from the Police Department, the Fire Department, the Town Administrator and the Water Precinct. She thought it went very well.

Ms. Hallquist noted there was a meeting the week prior with Pathways Consulting, the engineers for Elkins Sidewalk project along with some of the Elkins Committee members, Richard Lee, Janet Kidder and herself. They discussed railings, paint color, pedestrian bridge, etc. William Rose (DOT) will have some remarks about their plans soon.

#### New Business

##### ***Communications (Dispatching) Study***

The Chair asked for comments on the dispatching study. Selectman Bianchi thought the report, prepared by Bob Barry of Primex, was thorough but thought the Board needed to expand on some parts of it. He suggested that the Board pursue the technology aspect a bit further.

With regard to the meeting to be held on October 11<sup>th</sup> with the other towns served by the dispatching center (Croydon, Grantham FAST, Newbury, Sunapee, Sutton, and Wilmot), Selectman Bianchi thought the Selectmen should decide on some key points without talking about the financial implications.

Questions they should ask are:

Should New London charge for capital improvements?

- If the answer is yes, how should they be charged? All at once or over several years?

Should New London require maintenance agreements?

- They have not charged towns for maintenance of equipment in the past. Would they decide to charge towns proportionally depending on the number of calls, or choose a fixed rate? Also, what would be the Town's policy if a town that uses New London dispatch decides to leave and be dispatched from another agency? Would they get their money back?

Selectman Bianchi said he was in favor of charging the other towns for capital improvements. His rationale was that all the other providers noted in the report charged a fee for capital improvements and he felt it was important to do so. Recently the Town voted to spend \$86,000 on a repeater and console. He thought the other towns should share in paying for these kinds of things. He also thought the other towns should pay for the maintenance of the equipment. Selectman Bianchi thought the other towns should be charged a fixed, one-time amount for maintenance and if they choose to leave in a year, they would not get a refund.

Selectman Rollins agreed that Bob Barry did a great job on the report and also thanked Ms. Hallquist and Ms. Johnson for the work they did in working on the fee scenarios. As she read through the suggested fee scenarios, she thought operational costs should include the administrative and maintenance costs. She didn't agree with Selectman Bianchi on charging the other towns for capital costs. They haven't added

maintenance and administrative costs previously, so this would be an increase to the other towns. No matter what they decide to do they will still need to make capital improvements. She would not support asking the other towns to pay for capital costs at this time.

Chair Kidder agreed and thought Option #2 of the fee scenarios would seem most reasonable. In the first year there would be significant capital costs New London will invest in, but it will show the other towns that they are going to do what is needed to keep a well-maintained and upgraded system going.

Selectman Bianchi said the \$125,000 New London would spend for another console and \$86,000 for the repeater and console would put the Town out over \$210,000. He offered that these were things that may or may not benefit the Town of New London. He felt strongly that they should include the capital improvements in the other town's fees. The other agencies providing dispatching services include these fees in their services and he felt New London should do the same.

Ms. Hallquist pointed out that the six scenarios that the Board is reviewing only included the \$87,000 in capital expenditures that was appropriated at the last town meeting. The Selectmen are considering those capital costs, but not capital costs that may be expended in the future as this Board cannot determine what a future Select Board will decide with regards to dispatching fees in the future. A future Board may decide to include capital expenditures so it should be made clear that the discussion about capital expenses relates to fees that will be determined for 2015 only.

Mr. Prohl asked if it would be legal to have a 10-year agreement with the other towns, similar to how the towns have a cooperative with the school district. He thought there should be some certainty about how long towns would be participating in their dispatching service. Ms. Hallquist said this would be possible and would take a vote at their town meetings to do so.

Ms. Helm asked what the goal is for the meeting on October 11<sup>th</sup> with the towns currently using New London Dispatch. Chair Kidder said the Board would like to find out the other towns' positions with regards to dispatch and their ideas about the service and participating with New London. Ms. Helm thought this was a good opportunity to involve the other towns in a productive discussion; they may offer some ideas New London hasn't thought of yet. She felt it was a good chance to collaborate.

Selectman Bianchi said if they decide to go with Merrimack County and Lakes Region Fire for dispatching, they wouldn't need to discuss this any further.

Ms. Piotrow asked if the Board has any deadlines on when the other towns might need to know if New London was going to keep dispatch or if they would be going with another agency. Chair Kidder said the other towns have their town meetings before New London's (March vs. May). Therefore, the Board will know in March whether or not the other towns are on board. Any extra costs from towns that decide to go elsewhere would need to be absorbed by New London. Ms. Hallquist pointed out that bills will go to the other towns in November so they have the information available for budgeting purposes.

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) to charge member towns for capital expenses for dispatching.**

The motion was not seconded. Chair Kidder said both hers and Selectman Rollins' opinions on this matter were already stated.

Mr. Hudson asked if New London would continue with a one-year contract for dispatch. Chair Kidder said it would depend if they could make an agreement with the other towns. It could be similar to the tri-town assessor's agreement New London has with Newbury and Sunapee.

Mr. Hudson wondered if there was thought of amortizing the dispatch expenses that were just incurred over the next year or two with the other towns. Chair Kidder said that would be part of the discussion but at this time they don't want to charge the other towns for capital expenses.

Selectman Bianchi said they are now left with two scenarios for fees: leave the dispatch fee formula as it is, or change it to include an administrative and building fee.

Chief Lyon said it was discussed in the area towns that they were in favor of increased fees contingent upon New London upgrading the service and infrastructure. Because of the relationship some towns have with New London due to topography and mutual aid history, they want to stay with New London instead of going elsewhere even if they could save money. New London needs to get the main infrastructure to a higher level to be able to justify an increase going forward. He felt towns would be on board with contributing to capital upgrades as well.

Chief Andersen noted that the repeater has been installed on top of Mt. Kearsarge and on top of their existing tower. The repeaters are now talking to each other. Additionally, he is applying for a 100% grant for a repeater site on Mt. Sunapee. This Friday at noon it is due and he is waiting to get some information from Beltronics and he anticipates that it will be ready for signing on Thursday.

Chief Andersen said he is also writing a grant for 100% funding for one console. In a month or so, a 50/50 grant would become available, which they would be better qualified for, to get a console at half price. In either scenario, the Town looks to benefit, should they win the grant. Chief Andersen thanked the Fire Department and the Sunapee Police Department for hiking all the equipment up Mt. Kearsarge to get it installed.

Chief Andersen added that the message he has received from the other towns is that they are very interested in staying with New London Dispatch due to the topography, proximity and relationships they have formed. New London has never gone forward to increase the quality of their service. They are now writing grants, getting more qualified dispatchers and are putting two people on during the busy shifts, as was promised to some towns in the past. These things will show the other towns that New London is investing in its service and hopefully the other towns will want to stay. Chief Andersen also liked option #2 on the list. He thought that would be a positive step forward.

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to authorize Chief Andersen to apply for a 100% grant for repeaters to be placed on Mt. Sunapee. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Chair Kidder asked Ms. Hallquist to write a letter to Bob Barry to thank him for the work he did on the report. Ms. Hallquist said she would do so and have the Selectmen sign it.

***Appointment of Brian Dumais to fill vacancy on School MBC***

It was noted that this recommendation came from Rich Anderson, Municipal Budget Committee member. Mr. Dumais is a resident of New London and has a child in the school system and is willing to take on the responsibility.

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to appoint Brian Dumais to the School Municipal Budget Committee. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

*Appointment of election workers*

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to accept the list of election workers as recommended by the Town Clerk. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

*Town of Sunapee permits for work on New London's Georges Mill Pump Station*

Ms. Hallquist noted that the Town of Sunapee requires a land disturbance permit (\$40 fee) and a \$500 cash bond, in order for the Town to do the work on the Georges Mills Pump Station (GMPS). Ms. Hallquist suggested that the Board request a waiver of the fee and requirement for bond given that New London is a municipality and because the Town of Sunapee also uses the GMPS for its sewer department.

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to request waivers from the Town of Sunapee of the \$40 application fee and the \$500 cash bond for the work at the GMPS. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

*NH Supreme Court Order in the Appeal of Deacon Family Limited Partnership*

The Board noted receipt of the NH Supreme Court decision in the case of the Deacon Family Limited Partnership's appeal of the Board's denial of current use assessment. The Court affirmed the Town's denial of current use for part of the property.

*Modification of Original Loan Agreement for Sunapee Sewer Treatment Upgrade*

The Board discussed the need to request a modification of the original loan agreement in order to reflect the changed substantial completion date for the project. The new date is September 1, 2014.

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to approve the modification for the original loan agreement for the Sunapee Sewer Treatment Upgrade project to reflect the changed substantial completion date of September 1, 2014. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

*Use of unassigned fund balance to be used to reduce taxes*

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) to use \$400,000 to reduce taxes.**

The motion was not seconded. The Chair asked to hear from the Finance Officer, Wendy Johnson, regarding her recommendation.

Ms. Johnson prepared information on the historical use of fund balance to reduce taxes as well as a projected tax rate using various amounts of fund balance. She noted that they added \$479,946 to the Unassigned Fund Balance. Ms. Johnson pointed to a graph showing the town tax rate from 1994 – 2013 and observed that the rate has been pretty level save for the blip in 2011 when they had to budget for the 18 month transition to move to the fiscal year. Her thought would be to use \$400,000 which would leave about \$1,000,000 in surplus. She noted that the town has gone down below \$1,000,000 in the past, however she believes it to be prudent to stay at \$1,000,000.

Chair Kidder thought they should return \$450,000 to the taxpayers. Using \$400,000 would leave \$1,334,067 in surplus, and using \$450,000 would leave \$983,467. Selectman Rollins agreed and felt \$450,000 was reasonable.

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to apply \$450,000 to the tax rate. THE MOTION PASSED. Yes: Nancy Rollins, Janet Kidder No: Peter Bianchi**

***Schedule for FY2016 budget***

Selectmen were fine with the dates proposed by Ms. Hallquist (December 5<sup>th</sup> budgets to the TA; December 12<sup>th</sup> budgets to the Selectmen; final vote by Selectmen on February 2<sup>nd</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> and turn over to Budget Committee February 4<sup>th</sup> or February 11<sup>th</sup>). It was noted that the dates set could be amended as the budget process progressed.

***E-mail from Webster Selectman Bruce Johnson***

Bruce Johnson, Selectman from Webster, suggested towns include a warrant article addressing school funding. Selectman Rollins said since this came from another selectman from another town, perhaps they should ask the Municipal Budget Committee for their recommendation and ask them to review it. The article asks that New Hampshire provide a meaningful system of funding for educational needs. The authors of the article want to reform state funding for education with significant reduction to property taxes.

Chair Kidder questioned where the money would come from to pay for education if property taxes were reduced. She thought it was a great idea but unless they want to recommend adding a sales tax and/or an income tax, this was meaningless. The money has to come from somewhere. Selectman Rollins said she would still like to hear from the other two committees. She has felt that the property tax is not an appropriate way to pay for education and state government. There have been no meaningful studies on how they could offer a more broad-based tax that would be more equitable. Selectman Bianchi said anytime a tax has been added to alleviate property tax, a couple years later property taxes are increased even more and those funds are sent to the state capital and not back to the people. It is a nice idea but he didn't think it would amount to much.

Old/Pending Business

There was none.

Committee Meetings & Reports

Selectman Bianchi said the Planning Board had a work session on the CIP and a meeting to discuss the Seaman's Road subdivision, which was ultimately approved. There were some tree-cuttings as well. It is a concern from the Planning Board that the select board be more active with regards to yield cutting to make sure people do not cut on steep slopes, on the shoreland or other overlay districts. There have been some cuttings that have violated some overlay district regulations. Selectman Bianchi said the Planning Board would like the Selectmen to make a resolution on how to handle this. Ms. Hallquist said the Selectmen could sign the intent to cut and add the step of writing a letter asking land owners to consider the district they are in and any portions of the property they should not cut on.

Meeting Minutes

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to approve the minutes of September 8, 2014, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to approve the minutes of September 16, 2014, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### Upcoming Meetings & Special Events

Next regular Selectmen's Meeting – Monday, October 13<sup>th</sup> – 6:00 PM

Citizen's Advisory Committee – Saturday, October 11<sup>th</sup> – 9:00 AM \*Whipple Hall\*

- Meeting will include representatives of towns served by New London Dispatching

Recreation Committee Meeting – Tuesday, October 7<sup>th</sup> – 5:00PM – Whipple Hall

Planning Board – Tuesday, October 14<sup>th</sup> – 7:00 PM

### Other Business

After a brief discussion of how to best fill the full time vacancy within the Planning Board, it was decided to move Bill Deitrich (alternate) into the vacant full member spot.

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to move Bill Deitrich from alternate to full member of the New London Planning Board. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

There are now three alternate member vacancies to be filled on the Planning Board, which the Board will consider at a later meeting.

### Application for Building Permit:

- Richard Green – 848 County Road (093-017-000) – Addition of 16' x 16' to existing shed – DENIED
- Steven & Mary Lou Hoyt – 984 Main Street (109-002-000) – Convert 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of garage to living space with ½ bath and no kitchen, new garage dormer and roof on house & garage – APPROVED
- Sally R. Dean Rising Rev. Trust – Hayfield Lane (128-020-000) – Construct 3 bedroom home with attached garage – APPROVED
- Michael Holz – 146 Sugarhouse Road (035-025-000) – Add solar panels to roof – APPROVED
- Daniel Schimberg – 196 Pike Brook Road (135-004-000) – Interior/Exterior improvements in main house, septic & electrical updates in cottage – APPROVED
- Jeff & Julie Deacon – Pillar Lane (094-023-000) – Construct 3 bedroom home with attached garage – APPROVED
- Jules & Michael Catania – 515 Sugarhouse Road (022-004-000) – Addition to house including deck and porch – APPROVED

### Application for Use of the New London Town Commons & Bandstand:

- Elkins Fish & Game Club – Fly-fishing tutorial – May 23, 10am – 3pm – APPROVED

### Application for Use of Whipple Hall:

- League of Women Voters – Candidates Forum – October 28, 6-10pm – APPROVED
- Friends of Market on the Green – Winter Market – 10/18, 11/29, 12/20, 1/24/15, 2/28/15, 3/28/15, 4/25/15 – 8am – 3pm – APPROVED

### Application for Use of Town Office Conference Rooms:

- Warner Community Action Program (CAP) – Fuel Assistance Meetings 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays 9-12 (9am – 12pm) Oct. 1 – April 30 - APPROVED
- Adventures in Learning (AIL) – Education Classes – Tuesdays from Jan 20 – March 3, 2015 - APPROVED

Other Items to be Signed:

- Notice of Intent to Cut – Clara & Patricia Cantor – 425 Lakeshore Drive
- DES – Modification to original loan agreement for the Sunapee/New London Wastewater Treatment Plant

With no other business, Chair Kidder called for a motion to adjourn.

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary  
Town of New London