



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES August 14, 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:

Donna Nashawaty, Sunapee Town Manager
Sue Gottling, Sunapee Selectman
Joshua Trow, Sunapee Chair
Fred Gallup, Sunapee Selectman
John Augustine, Sunapee Selectman
Tom Chadwick – Proudstone Corporation
Douglas Dow – Proudstone Corporation

Chair Helm called the meeting to order at 6:00pm and welcomed the Sunapee Board of Selectmen.

Joint Meeting with Town of Sunapee – shared Zoning Administrator

Chair Helm asked Ms. Hallquist to summarize what she and Donna Nashawaty are proposing. Ms. Hallquist stated that the proposed inter-, municipal agreement has been shared with all Board Members. She pointed out that a new provision had been added, number seven, that will allow the allocation of insurance claims to be based on the town where the claim originated. The goal of the plan is similar to Tri-town assessing in that there will be a sharing of a staff person to do the same job in both towns. She observed that Tri-town assessing has been a success with the assessors as employees of Newbury. In this case, the Zoning Administrator will be an employee of New London and will work in both New London and Sunapee. New London was selected since New London will be using more hours than Sunapee. The person will follow New London personnel policies but the person will be following Sunapee zoning ordinance while in Sunapee and will follow New London's ordinances when in New London. The person will spend three days in New London and two days in Sunapee. There can be flexibility with this schedule if necessary.

If the New London and Sunapee Boards agree, the agreement will be sent to the State of New Hampshire, Office of the Attorney General. All inter-municipal agreements are reviewed by the Attorney General. The agreement is fairly flexible and either town can leave the agreement

with three months' notice. Ms. Nashawaty and Ms. Hallquist will work closely together to oversee this position. Ms. Hallquist believes this is a win/win for both towns as neither town needs a full-time person on its own, however a full-time position with benefits will most likely attract candidates with more experience, so both towns will benefit.

Ms. Nashawaty noted that she discussed this plan with the Sunapee Planner, a 26 year employee who has done both jobs at one time, and is currently doing both jobs again. He has been included in all of the discussions and he has helped re-draft the job description for Sunapee. She would like the person that is hired to utilize the systems and technology that is available to them. She noted that the Sunapee Planner also helped figure out how many hours would be required for Sunapee and it was determined that two days per week will be sufficient. Additionally, the Zoning Administrator will spend an hour a day responding to citizens via email or returning phone calls, no matter which site they are at, to set up appointments as this will allow for better customer service, which is very important. The job descriptions are similar for both towns. Ms. Nashawaty concluded that the challenge will be to learn both zoning ordinances and keeping them separate.

Joshua Trow, Sunapee Board Chair, agreed that the tri-town assessing has worked well but the difference in his mind is that this is a different process. Assessing between towns is similar; his concern is zoning regulations could be very different and would like to understand how it will affect someone who is doing both. If the regulations are close enough it might not be a problem but that is his main concern. He doesn't believe his concerns are enough to say no at this time, and if the right person is selected it may be fine. He feels the timing makes sense and having Michael (Sunapee Planner) have input given that he has had experience with the town for a long time has been helpful. Chair Trow noted that he is generally in favor of the idea, observing that the success of the tri-town assessing bodes well for this idea.

Ms. Nashawaty stated that Ms. Hallquist shared the New London job description with her and not much had to be changed for Sunapee's job description. The basic principles fell into the guidelines, it was more the rules. The rules of the state don't change and a lot of those things aren't arbitrary. The job descriptions are in the same format. Ms. Hallquist noted that it is a valid point that the zoning ordinances are different and this will require close supervision to ensure each ordinance is followed. She also observed that there will likely be a different level of customer contact in New London than in Sunapee; New London will do more frequent visits to properties. In the early stages, Ms. Nashawaty and Ms. Hallquist may have to meet with the person and highlight the differences in zoning ordinance and expectations for visits. Chair Trow stated it's not what they are supposed to do but how it's implemented that he is concerned with. Ms. Nashawaty noted that the Sunapee Planner has volunteered to overlap for a month to 6 weeks to help the Zoning person, so he will be a good resource.

Sunapee Selectman John Augustine feels this is an expensive way for Sunapee to go since they will now have to pay benefits which they haven't done in the past. He feels it would be helpful to know what the additional costs would be. He would like to understand what the benefit will be over what they have now. He's been told that everything is going great so why change it especially since it will cost a significant amount more.

Ms. Nashawaty stated that she disagrees that things have been going great as there have been lawsuits that may have been avoided if they had a person there to address issues. The technical piece has been an issue with the Zoning Board as they have been dissatisfied with some of the documentation they've been provided. She feels that a better pool of applicants would be more willing to apply knowing it is a full-time position with benefits. A quality applicant and continuity are the things she feels are most important.

Selectman Augustine responded that an alternative could be 24 hours part time in New London and 16 hours in Sunapee and no benefits would need to be paid. Ms. Hallquist noted that that scenario was considered, however it was felt that is a person is going to work 40 hours per week, then he/she would be seeking benefits. Selectman Augustine stated he would want to learn more about the cost before jumping to the highest paid option. For both Sunapee and New London it's a timing issue as well. The Sunapee Planner is filling in for now and Ms. Hallquist is handling it in New London. Ms. Hallquist agrees it's not the most inexpensive way to do it short term, but when you factor in things like lawsuits or upset citizens, there is a value in more capable and experienced staff, which is more likely to be found if the job is full time with benefits.

Chair Helm stated that he has taken New London salary grades and the level that this position will be listed in, including benefits, this will cost New London approximately \$36,000 per year for 3 days a week. Chair Helm clarified that New London's full-time person resigned and now the town is proposing filling it with two part-time positions for a total of \$3,000 or \$4,000 more than is currently budgeted for the full-time position. It was estimated that it will cost Sunapee in the \$24,000-\$25,000 range. Selectman Gottling also wanted clarification that the estimated figure does include benefits, noting that she is in favor of spending more (by including benefits) to get more experience in the position. Chair Helm stated the New London Board felt the same way when hiring the circuit rider and consulting rates the RPC charges which are higher as there is a value in having the skill set and it's important.

Selectman Gottling added that she definitely feels that not everything went smoothly in the Zoning office particularly with shorefront property. She feels strongly that Sunapee should be looking for a quality person that really wants to do the job; the extra cost is more than worthwhile.

Selectman Kidder stated there have been challenges with Zoning recently and it's important that it's done right, noting that New London needs to find the right person and probably won't find the right person unless benefits are offered.

Selectman Rollins commented on her previous experience and also looking at what other towns have struggled with in terms of trying to find qualified candidates, it can be difficult, particularly in rural areas where part time is not the optimal choice. She feels this is a good proposal and should provide what both towns need.

Chair Helm added that the Lake Sunapee Protective Association (LSPA) has been urging the towns to align themselves better. New London has more commercial content to its work, while Sunapee has more waterfront, but waterfront is the common element that needs to be managed

so that down the road there aren't issues. Sunapee Chair Trow stated that LSPA has been pushing for all four towns to align zoning ordinances but this may be a better start. In Sunapee, most of the local contractors know the rules and respect them, it's when people don't is when there are problems so this needs to be managed. He would like to ensure that our needs are covered and the candidate is qualified and invested in the area.

Selectman Augustine had additional comments regarding the concerns that came from the LSPA when they came before the Sunapee Board. These concerns were issues in the post construction audit that the process worked well up until construction happened and then what actually occurred was different than what was approved. He also heard they wanted someone to go out post construction to do inspections and audits and compliance work. He doesn't see any post construction responsibilities in the job description. He wants to understand that if the deficiency in the minds of the LSPA was that someone was going to check that regulations have been met post construction, this plan does not satisfy that complaint.

Ms. Nashawaty replied that it was not intended to be the circuit rider for the LSPA, instead, the plan is to fill our zoning administrator duties. If additional duties should be added, that would mean going back and adding them to the job description and she's not sure we have time. Selectman Gottling stated that compliance when something is completed is not very helpful. She was pleased to see that it does include conducting site inspections, when necessary to verify compliance with permit application, state laws and local zoning ordinances; she feels this is an improvement over what is currently done. Ms. Nashawaty heard from the Board Members that they wanted a circuit rider on behalf of the LSPA. That is not what we are addressing here.

Selectman Augustine also addressed the issue of meetings outside of normal working hours. He wanted to know if attendance at these meeting was above and beyond the 40 hours and therefore paid at time and a half? Ms. Hallquist responded that no, these hours will be included in the forty hour work week. New London and Sunapee will work out what meetings they want the person to attend and keep the work week at 40 hours; on a meeting day the person will be scheduled to come in later, or leave earlier on another day. It will be up to Ms. Hallquist and Ms. Nashawaty to manage this to avoid overtime hours. There may be busy times that may incur overtime or comp time, if so, the town incurring the overage will be responsible to pay. Selectman Augustine felt that some of this information should have been included.

Selectman Gallup asked if it may be a better fit to put this person in a salaried position. If it was a salaried person, during slower times could be less than 40 hours and during busier times use them more. The overtime scenario would go away. Ms. Hallquist and Ms. Nashawaty noted that they looked into this but this position doesn't fit the legal category of an exempt position.

Chair Trow asked what the timeline is. Ms. Nashawaty explained that the inter-municipal agreement must get approval from the State but it is cursory; once it's sent in if you don't hear back in 30 days it's approved. The intent would be that once the boards approve, a job would be posted and start searching for candidates. Both towns are without someone in this position. Chair Trow asked if we had to wait until the 30 days are up in order to hire someone. Ms. Nashawaty said she spoke with the Attorney General and this can be done simultaneously. The offer letter would state it is contingent on this.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the Inter-Municipal agreement with the Town of Sunapee for a shared Zoning Administrator as presented. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

IT WAS MOVED (Fred Gallup) AND SECONDED (Sue Gottling) to enter into the Inter-Municipal agreement with the Town of New London for a shared Zoning Administrator as presented. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Selectman Augustine would like to see the exact cost projections and questioned what the expectations are before it happens so we know what the reality will be 6-12 months down the road. Ms. Nashawaty stated this is the next step – to create the form that New London will use to bill Sunapee on a monthly basis. Both towns will pay mileage independently and share the phone expense. This is all explained in the agreement. Selectman Augustine inquired about where the funds will come from since this wasn't budgeted. Ms. Nashawaty stated that most will come out of the Planning and Zoning portion of the budget.

The New London Board of Selectmen thanked the Sunapee Board of Selectmen for attending the meeting to work out the Inter-municipal Agreement.

The Sunapee Board of Selectmen left the meeting.

Peter Christians Building Renovation/Rebuild Project

Tom Chadwick and Doug Dow from Proudstone Corporation attended the meeting to provide an update on the Peter Christians renovation project. Chair Helm wanted an outline of where it's headed and what the timeline looks like. He also wanted an update on the construction process from last Fall until now.

Mr. Chadwick stated that this was an update from the February planning meeting. The approval for changes that were made were doing demolition off of the original building permit. Nothing has changed from the plans approved at that meeting. The thing that has changed was that hardly any of the existing building was usable. Mr. Dow said they tried to save it and everything was stripped from the inside but it wasn't salvageable. Otherwise they would have torn it down all at once. It was very expensive to do it the way they did. The building was unsafe and the whole second floor of the building on the east side had floor joists that were sawed through.

Selectman Kidder asked when they thought construction would be completed. Mr. Dow stated it was difficult to give a timeline. They were originally hoping for November but it looks like it will be more like January. Selectman Kidder also asked said she has been asked by many people if they had saved the beautiful wood tables and Mr. Dow said yes. Mr. Chadwick stated that the seating plan is changing but they will do their best to put it back together, although differently.

Chair Helm wanted clarification on the layout and asked if the restaurant will extend out to the front where the gift shop used to be, also will there still be a deck outside. Mr. Dow said there will be a new patio on the West side and will be ground level. Access to the upstairs will be via

elevator which will be located where the old entrance was. There will be eight guest rooms upstairs. The name of the restaurant will be the same and the menu will be similar. Chair Helm stated the town residents are anxious for more information as to what is going on. He feels they should be more forthcoming with information.

Selectman Kidder stated there are a lot of changes going on with the old middle school coming down, Colonial is moving and so those things make people concerned about what is happening in town.

Chair Helm commented that one of the concerns that people have is what we are doing as a town to enforce the state building code. He observed that the town does not have a building inspector and questioned what is being done to make sure it is being built to code. Mr. Chadwick and Mr. Dow responded that the state inspectors have already been out several times and Fire Chief Jay Lyon has been onsite as well.

Mr. Chadwick feels it is going to be a beautiful property when it is done. It will be different, as it isn't the same Peter Christians, but it will be beautiful. Chair Helm feels it will help the vitality of the town to have the services they provide.

Ms. Hallquist commented that Mr. Chadwick has been very responsive whenever she has called him and she appreciates that.

Public Comments

Chair Helm noted that John Raby asked whether the Board would like to make any comments with regards to the events last weekend in Virginia. Selectman Kidder responded that the events were horrific, and it would be a nice, thoughtful gesture if the Board sent something to the city to let them know the Board is thinking of them. Selectman Rollins noted that her only concern is that it seems to be happening often and may set a precedent for the future, however she is fine with following Mr. Raby's recommendation. Chair Helm thinks it's important that all citizens voice their opinion; the only change he would make would be extend the Board's sympathy to not only Heather Heyer's family but also to the families of the two state troopers who lost their lives as well. Ms. Hallquist will prepare the letter and the Board will sign it.

Town Administrators Report

Ms. Hallquist provided the following report:

- Tomorrow morning at 8:00am she and the Recreation Commission will be meeting at Elkins for the shed issue. Ms. Hallquist said Richard Lee will be there and others who have commented have been invited.
- We are in the process of having the State come look at the Welcome to New London signs.

Other Business

Selectman Kidder reported that Richard Lee will be pruning the lilacs in front of Whipple Hall. She wants to also express her appreciation to the Garden Club and all they do to maintain the different sites and they have been generous with their time.

Meeting Minutes – IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes from the August 7, 2017 meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chair Helm is looking ahead at upcoming meetings and would like to make sure September 5, 2017 is on the calendar. The other meeting in September will be on the 19th.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to enter into nonpublic session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(d) consideration of the acquisition, sale, or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community. Roll call vote: Bill Helm: Yes, Janet Kidder: Yes, Nancy Rollins: Yes

The Board entered nonpublic session at 7:05pm

Respectfully submitted,
Trina Dawson, Recording Secretary
Town of New London

The Board reentered the public session at 7:19pm

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

Chair Helm noted that he believes the Board should investigate the viability of New London Hospital land on Newport Road (between WNTK and Hubert's) for possible future use by the town for a public building. He suggested that funds from the recently approved bond slated for a study for the town's facilities could be used. He explained that he spoke with representatives of the hospital to see if the town could do some preliminary investigations on the property and the hospital agreed, and provided an access agreement for this purpose. He suggested that the Board commit up to \$5,000 for this study.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) and SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to approve the access agreement with New London Hospital to allow the preliminary investigation and to commit \$5,000 from the bond for this purpose. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

The Meeting adjourned at 7:25PM.
Respectfully submitted,
Kimberly A. Hallquist
Town Administrator