



# TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

October 18, 2021

6:00 PM

### PRESENT:

John Cannon, Chairman  
Nancy Rollins, Selectman  
Janet Kidder, Selectman  
Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator  
Lynn Lewis, Finance Officer

### ALSO PRESENT:

Bob Harrington, Public Works Director  
Emily Cobb, New London Police Chief  
Jay Lyon, New London Fire Chief  
Crystal Schimpf, Tracy Library Director  
Will Kidder, New London Tax Collector  
Celeste Cook, New London Resident  
Karen Ebel, NH House Representative  
Dan Wolf, NH House Representative  
David Croft, Merrimack County Sheriff  
John Doyle, Messer Pond Protective Association  
Maureen Prohl, New London Resident  
Rip Cross and Bob Bowers, Building and Facilities Committee  
Maureen Strahan, New London Resident  
Nancy Marashio, New London Resident

**Budget Committee Members:** Chris Lorio, Chair, Joe Cardillo, Vice-Chair, Melissa Leintz, Jerry Coogan, John Raby, Hannah Bianchi, Colin Beasley

Selectman Cannon called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

### Appointments

#### David Croft, Merrimack County Sheriff

Sheriff Croft attended the meeting to provide an overview of services the Sheriff's office provides. The office has a staff of 80 people with several different branches within the office. One branch is the transportation office which typically does 720 transports a month but that has slowed down drastically due to Covid. They transport all over the United States. The deputies are specially trained and certified.

There is a detective bureau which consists of three detectives who are available to assist other communities. Many smaller communities don't have the expertise needed and they are available to assist those communities. There is also a civil bureau which is typically a very busy unit but has been slow since the courts have been closed. Sheriff Croft noted that his civil bureau deals with evictions, when a court orders an eviction, Deputies go to the property to enforce the court order, forcing the tenants to vacate. He

shared a brochure of resources that is given out prior to an eviction to help people get the help they need. It gives them names and resources that they can reach out to for help.

Sherriff Croft believes in giving back to the communities that he serves. He has two deputies patrolling at night Monday through Saturday. He was also able to obtain a federal grant to hire an individual to do ICAC which stands for Internet Crimes Against Children. In the past year in Merrimack County internet crimes against children has increased by 300%. He also wants to start a crisis intervention team noting that there is a lot of mental illness in the communities that is not addressed, and this response team could help provide the services that people need, which will reduce the need for expenditures at the local level.

Sheriff Croft stressed that his office is available to assist local agencies when needed, noting that New London is fortunate to have such a capable Chief: Chief Emily Cobb.

### **Redistricting & House Reps**

Representatives Karen Ebel and Dan Wolf attended the meeting to discuss a topic raised at an earlier meeting regarding redistricting and a dedicated House Re for New London. Selectman Kidder asked if New London was going to get another representative as New London has more than 4,000 voters. Representative Wolf responded that the redistricting committee is meeting right now and he is unsure if they will change it or not.

Karen Ebel stated over time there has been an effort to have an independent redistricting commission so that the redistricting process isn't a partisan process and is fair. The way the constitution is set up, redistricting is required every ten years based on the census. There was a census done in 2020 so they are figuring out the new districts. An independent redistricting commission bill was passed through the legislature, but it was vetoed by the Governor in the last term. Now we have a bi-partisan committee of senators and house representatives that are working on redistricting and maps are being drawn up. There are no plans to have public hearings to discuss the draft maps.

Representative Ebel suggested that the Selectmen could write a letter to the redistricting committee once the results are made public, requesting another representative and request that public hearings be held. She noted that the Selectmen should ask the committee that the process be fair and transparent, and the town should have input. Representative Ebel also encouraged citizens to write to the committee as well.

### **Public Comment**

John Doyle, President of the Messer Pond Protective Association (MPPA), met with the Board to inform them that he sent a letter and thanked Public Works Director Bob Harrington and the Public Works Department for work done in the watershed as part of the ongoing efforts of the MPPA to address water quality in the pond. He asked thanks the Town Administrator, Adam Ricker and Paul Gorman of the Planning Board and Bob Brown and the Conservation Commission for their support. Mr. Doyle explained that the engineering expenses and almost all the materials are covered by grants. This money comes with the requirement of an in-kind match, much of which was provided by the town's work, so he is thankful to everyone for their support in getting these projects done.

### **Joint Meeting of the Selectmen and Budget Committee on the FY2023 budget.**

Public Works Director Bob Harrington began with a review his department and highlights of his FY2023 budget. Mr. Harrington pointed to capital expenditures for a new generator at Whipple (\$50,000) and a new roof at the Fire Station (\$43,000). He pointed out that expenses for maintenance and repair have increased, line painting costs have increased. Calcium chloride has increases – this is the material that is used for dust control, improper maintenance results in higher costs for gravel that must be replaced.

Colin Beasley questioned a 37% increase in labor for the Highway Department. It was noted that a part-time person became a fulltime, increasing that line. Other labor costs: retirement costs are dependent on rates set by the State of NH, the rate is applied against the wage. Life insurance and disability costs are related to the salary rate, the higher the salary the higher the premium. A \$5,000 in equipment repairs was discussed: Mr. Harrington noted that repair costs of aging equipment is increasing. Gasoline for all vehicles is purchased via the WEX system at state rates.

Colin Beasley asked about step increases, Ms. Hallquist noted that most steps are 2.5%, except for some of the higher steps of some grades when the increase is lower, 1.75% or 1.50%. It was noted that Transfer Station wages are lower because a higher-paid employee left and was replaced with a lower paid employee. It was noted that the sewer department budget is paid 100% by the sewer uses, the largest part being the charges of the Sunapee Wastewater Treatment Plant, of which New London pays about 70% of expenses based on the flow sent from New London. The tax base pays 1/3 of the bond for the Sunapee Wastewater Plant and the sewer uses pay 2/3. Mr. Harrington noted that he is looking to slip line sewer pipes to reduce the water infiltration into the system that increases the costs to New London.

The proposed loading dock at the transfer station was discussed; Mr. Harrington explained that his plan is to absorb the cost in his budget and the cost of a trailer from the recycling revolving account.

Selectman Rollins questions whether enough money in the fuel lines, noting that some are unchanged, and a few are decreased – she asked Mr. Harrington to go back and review it to make sure that enough has been budgeted. Mr. Harrington agreed, not that it is difficult to predict how much fuel will be used and what the cost will be; also pointing out that if the new vehicles come on line, that helps to decrease fuel usage.

## **Old Business**

### **Review bids received for Whipple AV and acoustic upgrades**

Rip Cross reported he provided the Selectmen with a bid summary as prepared by Dennis Mires. The Building and Facilities committee received and reviewed bids for AV equipment. Star Sound Music was the low bidder at \$92,000 and the committee recommends that the Selectmen engage them to do the AV work.

The committee reviewed one bid for acoustic wall panels from Dividers Plus and it was considerably less than anticipated. This is partly due to Jim Perkins, Archivist, wanted to keep the margin back 5” from the windows, this results in less labor costs. The panels are \$23,000. Including the cost for electrical work, the entire project should come in under \$120,000.

It was recommended that a preconstruction meeting be held with the contractors, Jim Perkins and an electrician to understand the work that needs to be done. It is important to get this on order as it will take 9 weeks to order everything and 2 weeks to install. Selectman Kidder stated she has not had time to review the information so is not ready to make a decision tonight. The Selectmen will put this on the agenda for the next meeting.

### **Community Forums on October 23 and 25<sup>th</sup> – final plans.**

Town Administrator Kim Hallquist distributed a draft agenda for the forums. A walk-thru will be held on Wednesday to test the systems. People at the forum will be asked to place colored dots next to each issue indicating what their priorities are; those participating via the Zoom webinar will take a poll to indicate their choices. A sign board will be displayed on Main Street.

## **Town Administrators Report**

Ms. Hallquist provided the following report:

- There is an issue with selling the land on King Hill Road. At town meeting it was voted to sell the property to an abutter, but he is unable to get a clear title; this is tax deeded property, so it is not unusual for title companies to be reluctant to offer title insurance. Ms. Hallquist asked the Selectmen if they wanted to spend money to allow the town to offer a clear title which would include filing a petition in court, with a likely expense of about \$5,000. Ms. Hallquist stated the town has a legal budget and could spend the money if they wanted to. The Selectmen noted that they were not interested in expending money for this purpose.
- The town received the County bill in the amount of \$3.325 million dollars which has increased in the amount of \$80,000.

### **Committee Meetings & Reports**

**Planning Board meeting** – Selectman Kidder reported the Planning Board accepted the Capital Improvement plan and had a final site plan review for Mountainview Shopping Center. The last unit available where Colonial Pharmacy used to be located is going to be used by Concord Hospital for Primary Care offices.

### **Meeting Minutes**

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes of the September 27, 2021 meeting. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED.**

### **Upcoming Meetings & Special Events**

- Conservation Commission – Wednesday, October 20, 2021 @ 8:30am-Syd Crook
- Housing Commission – Wednesday, October 20, 2021 @ 6:00pm-Whipple Hall
- Building & Facilities Committee – Wednesday, October 20, 2021 @ 6:30pm-Syd Crook
- Community Forum – Saturday, October 23, 2021 @ 7:30am-Kearsarge Prof Development Center
- Community Forum – Monday, October 25, 2021 @ 7:00pm-Kearsarge Prof Development Center
- Planning Board – Tuesday, October 26, 2021 @ 6:30pm-Whipple Hall

### **Items to be signed:**

- Accounts Payable Voucher
- Town Use
- Hart's Turkey Farm Catering menu - Review, sign, approve overage

### **Applications Approved &/or Denied**

#### Sign Permits – approved

- Julie Corey, TM 059-003-0-0-0. Walk-In Beauty Spa & Wellness. Approved 10/12/2021.

#### Building Permits-approved

- David & Susan Hollinger, TM 035-022-0-0-0. Build 3600 sq ft 2 story addition. BP 21-121. Approved. 10/13/2021.
- Robert Hutter Jr., TM 039-009-0-0-0. Install roof mount solar 9.345kw. BP 21-125. Approved. 10/13/2021.
- Robert & Deborah Zeller, TM 051-013-0-0-0. Install roof mount solar 10.68kw. BP 21-126. Approved. 10/13/2021.
- Petrina Markowitz Trust, TM 086-024-0-0-0. Install ground mount solar 6.4kw. BP 21-129. Approved. 10/13/2021.

- Matthew & Kathryn Bemis, TM 111-025-0-0-0. Extension of BP 20-102 for 24x40 addition currently foundation & backfill. BP 21-128. Approved. 10/13/2021.
- Alexander Deland Et Al, TM 030-018-0-0-0. Build 2<sup>nd</sup> story on existing house and attached garage. BP 21-123. Approved. 10/13/2021.
- New London Barn Playhouse, TM 084-009-0-0-0. Asbestos removal during renovation. BP 21-130. Approved. 10/13/2021.

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:42 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson  
Recording Secretary  
Town of New London