



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

November 16, 2020

6:00 PM

Via Zoom

PRESENT:

Janet Kidder, Chairman
Nancy Rollins, Selectman
John Cannon, Selectman
Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator
Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

ALSO PRESENT:

Russell Moore, New London Resident
Pete Smith, Outing Club President
Detective Lt. Rowe, New London Police Department
Fire Chief Jay Lyon
Police Chief Emily Cobb

Budget Committee Members: Joe Cardillo, Rob Prohl, Lyndsay Harkins, Jerry Coogan, John Raby, Chris Lorio, Mark Christensen, Lauren Snow Chadwick.

Chair Kidder called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. The meeting authorization statement was read. Chair Kidder called the roll: Nancy Rollins: present, John Cannon: present, Janet Kidder: present.

Public Comment – None

Installation of signs to improve safety of bicyclists – keeping 3 feet minimum to pass – Russell Moore & Detective Lt. Rowe

Detective Lt. Rowe of New London Police Department provided a brief background regarding his experience with bike patrol. When he worked for the town of Newport, he got their bicycle patrol program back up and running. Bicycling is a passion of his and he enjoys this recreational activity. When he came to work for New London, he was excited to learn that the opportunity was here and they already had two bikes. He is working on keeping the program strong and getting officers trained as well.

Detective Rowe discussed the installation of signs to improve the safety of bicyclists in New London. Bicycling is a growing sport within the community as well as nationwide. There are benefits both to the environment as well as personal health. Signage within the community will invite bicyclists into the community. Conversations at the state and county level have been held regarding road safety laws and best practices. Signage for bicyclist will also help pedestrians.

The communities of Keene, Concord, Portsmouth, Lebanon and Hanover have been designated by the league of American Bicyclists as bicycle friendly communities. The Bicycle Friendly America program provides a framework of tools and incentives that allow the states and communities to make bicycling an additional option for transportation and recreation. Bicycle enthusiasts look for these types of

communities to go to and enjoy their sport. Bicyclists have a legal right to the road, and everyone needs to work together to educate motorists, bicyclists, law enforcement and the broader community about what those rights are. In 2009 the state enacted RSA 265:143-a which states that drivers are to exercise due care when approaching a bicycle. Drivers should leave a reasonable and prudent distance between the vehicle and the bicycle. The distance that is presumed to be reasonable is at least 3 feet when the vehicle is traveling 30 mph and for additional foot of clearance for every 10 mph above. Placing the bicycle safe distance signs throughout our community will help with safety.

Copies of the proposal were distributed to the Board of Selectmen. Detective Rowe and Russel Moore feel that the proposal brought before the Selectmen is a modest and inexpensive way to reduce the risk of injury and death to cyclists. Striking a cyclist has a psychological impact on the motorist as well and this can be reduced with education. The town of New London is seeing a significant increase in the use of bicycles in the community by people of all ages. The town has many paved roads with magnificent scenery which makes it ideal for bicyclists to share our roadways.

Russel Moore informed the Board that he is passionate about bicycling and bicycle safety and is a member of the New London community. There have been discussions with the Fire Chief, Police Chief, Public Works Director and other town officials to get support for the proposal. All are in support to enhance pedestrian/bike safety in the town of New London. The town's Master Plan calls for the promotion of active transportation and enhancing pedestrian/bike safety. Based on the connections that Detective Rowe has with the town of Newport, they were able to secure 11 shared road signs. It is recommended that those signs at intersections that are hazardous, roads that are narrow or roads that are hilly and windy. Installation of the signage is estimated to be \$30 per sign. Lt. Rowe is willing to submit a request to the Police Benevolent Association to help with this cost. The signs are the same size as speed limit signs and will be placed where they will be highly visible. There was also discussion regarding alternate bike routes to reduce biking traffic on Main Street.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to approve signage for bicycle speed limits. Roll call vote: Nancy Rollins: yes, John Cannon: yes, Janet Kidder: yes. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

New Business

2020 tax rate set by Department of Revenue: \$14.94 (\$14.71 in 2019); Water Precinct: \$0.82 (\$1.08 in 2019).

Town Administrator Kim Hallquist stated that the Department of Revenue has set the 2020 tax rate at \$14.94 which is up from last year. The water precinct is slightly lower than last year.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to accept the tax rate. Roll call vote: Nancy Rollins: yes, John Cannon: yes, Janet Kidder: yes. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Warrant for collection of 3rd and 4th quarter property taxes: \$9,692,202.02

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to accept the warrant. Roll call vote: Nancy Rollins: yes, John Cannon: yes, Janet Kidder: yes. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Kearsarge Community Band Use of Bandstand for music events in December

Kim Hallquist stated that the Kearsarge Community Band is asking if the Selectmen would allow them to hold a few concerts using the bandstand in December. They understand that with COVID numbers

increasing it may not be possible, but they will social distance and will encourage attendees to also social distance.

Selectman Rollins thinks this is a great idea and if they could do a Holiday concert that would be wonderful. Selectman Cannon and Chair Kidder agree. It would be nice to get outside and hear music.

Resignation of Stanley Morono from the Conservation Commission

Chair Kidder noted that Mr. Morono has resigned from the Conservation Commission as e no longer resides in New London, which is a requirement for membership. The Conservation Commission is discussing who they would like to appoint to the Commission and will give the Selectmen their recommendation soon.

Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and potential bonus to town staff and election staff

Chair Kidder stated at the last meeting two suggestions were made for the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) amount for employees. The suggestions were a 1.3% or 1.5% COLA and also there was discussion whether a bonus would be given for employees instead of a COLA. At a recent Citizen's Advisory Committee meeting a member stated that giving a bonus is a one-time thing whereas a COLA stays on the payroll year to year.

Selectman Cannon is leaning towards a 1.5% COLA. He stated this has been a trying year and employees have really stepped up.

Selectman Rollins stated she had originally suggested the 1.3% COLA based on the cost of living amount that is going into social security this year. She is concerned about subsequent years and feels we are heading for stressful financial times.

Selectman Cannon suggested 1.5% and Selectman Rollins suggested 1.3%. Chair Kidder would like to use the 1.5% since the difference is not that significant to the town and shows appreciation to the employees.

IT WAS MOVED (John Cannon) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve a 1.5% COLA. Roll call: Nancy Rollins: yes, John Cannon: yes, Janet Kidder: yes. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Town Administrators Report

Ms. Hallquist provided the following report:

- Town Meeting is the second Tuesday in March (March 9th) and the evening meeting will be on Wednesday (March 10th), the following night. Town Meeting may look different this year due to COVID. Ms. Hallquist has reached out to Colby-Sawyer College and the School Superintendent to see about potential locations that might allow for 250 people to attend and practice social distancing. There is still time to figure this out, but we should explore all options available.
- The Buildings and Facilities Committee sent out a few memos and are in favor of investigating the purchase of land behind the Public Works Department. Bob Bowers, Bob Brown, Bob Harrington and Ms. Hallquist will be meeting to discuss this. There are already conservation easements on the property.
- The Buildings and Facilities Committee is in favor of the State Fire Marshall doing inspections of commercial buildings only. Ms. Hallquist recommends reaching out to the Fire Marshalls office to confirm what they are able to do before the Selectmen makes a decision on the recommendation.

- The employee holiday luncheon will be held on December 4, 2020 with a snow date of December 11, 2020. Police Chief Cobb and Dianne Bottari are working on this and it will be a pickup and go event. Departments will come in waves so they can social distance.
- The Housing Commission candidates interviews will be done after Thanksgiving via Zoom, candidates will be polled to find a convenient date. Ms. Hallquist will reach out to New London Hospital CEO Tom Manion to see if he has a representative he would like to have in attendance.

Committee Meetings & Reports

Chair Kidder attended a Planning Board meeting on November 10, 2020. Eversource withdrew their request to cut trees on Soo Nipi park Road, a designated scenic road. Also, there will be a law office going in the former Lisanne's space.

Meeting Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to approve the minutes of the October 26, 2020 meeting. Roll Call: Nancy Rollins: yes, John Cannon: yes, Janet Kidder: yes. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED.

IT WAS MOVED (John Cannon) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to approve the minutes of the November 2, 2020 meeting. Roll Call: Nancy Rollins: yes, John Cannon: yes, Janet Kidder: yes. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED.

Upcoming Meetings & Special Events

- Next regular Selectmen's meeting – Monday, December 7th – 6:00 PM – via Zoom
- Master Plan Committee – Thursday, November 19th 8:30 AM – via Zoom
- Solid Waste Committee – Thursday, November 19th 9:00 AM – via Zoom
- Buildings & Facilities Committee – Thursday, November 19th – 6:30 PM – via Zoom
- Planning Board – Tuesday, November 24th – 6:30 PM – via Zoom
- **Town Offices Closed – Thursday, Nov.26th & Friday, Nov. 27th – Thanksgiving Holiday**

Items to be signed

- Accounts Payable Voucher
- 3rd Property Tax Billing
- Employee Birthday Cards

Applications Approved &/or Denied

Sign Permits – all approved

- Permanent Signs (4) 20-25, 26, 27, 28 – Hannaford Supermarket & Pharmacy, 99 Sparrowhawk Rd, TM 065-018-0-0-0.
- Temporary Signs – By Adventures in Learning, for 2'x3' sandwich board at the Little Common for course and membership info. from November 11th to December 11th.

6:30 PM: Selectmen and Budget Committee Joint meeting to prepare FY2022 budget: Outing Club request, any remaining departments, Revenues, review entire budget for final approval and transfer to the Budget Committee

Chair Kidder called the roll of the Budget Committee: Robert Prohl: present; John Raby: present; Lauren

Snow Chadwick: present; Joe Cardillo: present, Chris Lorio: present, Mark Christensen: present, Lyndsay Harkins: present

Outing Club request for \$95,000 – Kim Hallquist stated Pete Smith, President of the Outing Club, is in attendance tonight to discuss their budget request.

Pete Smith apologized for submitting additional materials to the Selectmen late this afternoon and understands that the Selectmen may not have had a chance to review it.

Mr. Smith stated that the proposal will allow the Outing Club to offer more programming. He noted that he met with Justin Garzia of the Recreation Commission several times. Both organizations are going through leadership changes so with this allocation of funds, it would allow the Outing Club to offset some of its salary fees. It is opportunity to collaborate with the town and other organizations around town.

Chair Kidder asked what amount of funding would be requested from other towns. Mr. Smith stated this is still in process, explaining that the amount they will request is unclear as they would need to look at the constituent numbers and how many constituents are in each town. The amount requested for New London would be reviewed each year and they would develop a subsidy program for New London residents. If the amount requested isn't needed, they won't request as much the following year. This number gives them a level of comfort moving forward into the unknown with regards to programming. The Outing Club would love the opportunity to show the Town of New London what they can do. They have great facilities and a group that is dedicated to this and the funding would allow them to take it to the next level.

Selectman Rollins would like to know how many New London residents have taken membership in the Outing Club. Mr. Smith responded that annually they are operating with numbers between 475-500. Selectman Rollins would also like a better understanding of their budget including a salary breakdown and revenue sources for two years. She would like to also understand the New London resident subsidized rate. Mr. Smith agreed that he would submit the requested information.

Lyndsay Harkins stated they are in a position where they have to put funding and faith into an unknown entity. Budget Committee Chair Rob Prohl would like to know what the big picture looks like for the Recreation Commission. Ms. Harkins responded that is the whole point of these conversations and that is what they are trying to define. They have some time since they can't hold programs right now anyway.

Jerry Coogan would like to see a plan from the Outing Club that outlined their overall budget, how much is being requested from other towns and how New London fits in to the overall program.

Joe Cardillo disagrees and feels we can wait on defining the Recreation Director position. This can be pushed out beyond budget season. This is a problem that we've been trying to solve for years and we have an opportunity now to bring these two groups together. He is in favor of giving this every effort it deserves.

This discussion will be continued at the next Board of Selectmen's meeting.

Revenues –Wendy Johnson reviewed the estimated revenues, explaining that this section of the budget relates to income that comes into the town other than property taxes. This income comes from a variety of sources, the largest one being motor vehicle fees. We will probably see a decrease in interest on deposits and another unknown is the meals and rooms tax.

Budget Committee follow up – Selectman Rollins would like more information from Lou Botta, Emergency Management Director, regarding the climate-controlled storage unit and questioned if it was common equipment in other towns. Ms. Hallquist noted that the storage container would allow for the storage of items, like food and equipment, that must be in a climate-controlled environment. Fire Chief Jay Lyon responded that most towns find space in buildings to store these items, since New London is limited on storage space, Mr. Botta feels this would be the best option in the interim.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to adjourn. Roll call: Nancy Rollins: yes, John Cannon: yes, Janet Kidder: yes. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 7:42PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson
Recording Secretary
Town of New London