



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES November 18, 2019 6:00 PM

PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Paul Gorman, Planning Board Chair
John Raby, Budget Committee Member
Rob Prohl, Budget Committee Chair
Norm Bernaiche, Chief Assessor
Tim Paradis, Energy Committee
John Wilson, New London Resident
Bob Bowers, Chair, Buildings & Facilities Committee
Michael Williams, Colin Beasley, Peter Bianchi, Joe Cardillo, John Lewis, Buildings & Facilities Committee members

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

Appointments

CIP Presentation

Paul Gorman, Chair of the Planning Board, attended the meeting to submit the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to the Board. Mr. Gorman explained that the Planning Board is delegated by statute to submit a CIP to the Board of Selectmen each year. The CIP relates to capital expenditures only. The Planning Board identifies key issues which need to be part of the discussion in the budget preparation process involving the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee.

A subset of the Planning Board meets with Department Heads to review the existing CIP for completed projects and to recommend new initiatives. Some of the issues raised in previous reports include the issue of the New London Police Department and the New London Dispatch Department and where to house these functions. The Planning Board has addressed this in past reports and it is also a present recommendation.

Issues regarding the Transfer Station and its location and design have been taken off as a priority by the Selectmen and there is no comment by the Planning Board on this. In the event that the state agreed to give the town more property for expansion this could be revisited but at this time it will just continue to be monitored.

Mr. Gorman noted that the Police Department expressed a need to expand their radio communication coverage. The Planning Board continues to support this as an important issue. The ability that the present system has is not sufficient and police staff recommend a system that spans a larger geographic area.

The town should continue efforts to fulfill the warrant passed at the 2018 Town meeting to achieve 100% renewable sources for electricity by 2030 and 100% renewable fuel sources for heating and transportation by 2050. The Planning Board within the CIP endorse this objective and would like the town to pursue this actively.

With regards to the location of the Police Department, the Planning Board would like to convey their interest in seeing the town pursue the purchase of the Cricenti property (located behind the New London Shopping Center). This would be a good place for a Police Station and would also provide the town with a place for any future municipal facility needs.

The Fire Department is planning the replacement of their Rescue Engine and is working to determine the estimated cost of replacement.

As supported by the 2019 Master Plan survey, the Planning Board supports the annual funding for the Conservation Land Acquisition fund.

Chair Rollins asked if there was a subcommittee working on the Capital Improvement Plan. Chair Gorman responded yes, there is a subset of the Planning Board that works on this and it was Jeremy Bonin and himself, the full Planning Board reviews it and approves the final document. Rob Prohl stated that the Municipal Association had an article that discussed best practices of a CIP. He commented that in the past there was a CIP Committee that involved people from the community and Budget Committee. His preference would be that the more inclusive you can build up support and provide a document that has stakeholders in agreement with what is presented. It takes more time and effort but pays off in the long run.

Chair Gorman responded that over the past several years, there was a feeling by the Planning Board that there was a lot of duplicative action taking place in the development of the CIP. Rob Prohl stated that you get different points of view with a larger group. John Wilson asked if the meetings were noticed, how many meetings were held and were minutes taken. Chair Gorman is not sure about the process, but he knows that minutes were taken. Mr. Wilson stated he could not find them. Mr. Wilson also stated that having only two people on the subcommittee is not a good practice.

Bob Bowers addressed the Board to offer a rebuttal to the Capital Improvement Plan as presented by Chair Gorman, noting that he was speaking as a citizen and not as a member of the Buildings & Facilities Committee. Mr. Bowers is concerned that the process did not include the Buildings & Facilities Committee, pointing out that since they have been designated by the Selectmen to look at the Police Department issue, it might have been helpful to have a discussion about whatever differing viewpoints there might have been. The Buildings & Facilities Committee would probably have seconded the proposal since money should be put away in the CIP for either a new building or a remodel of the current facility. He would welcome the opportunity to have the Buildings & Facilities Committee sit down with the Planning Board to talk through these issues and come to a unified agreement.

Mr. Bowers also felt the presentation was inconsistent since the first part adopts the recommendation of a year ago that there should be a new police station. It states it is supported by the master plan

survey, but Mr. Bowers does not think this is true. He reviewed the survey and it is clear that Police Chief wants a new building, but it isn't clear what they are referring to when they state the survey supports it. It appears it might be due to question 21 and 23. Question 21 states 67.12% of people answered yes, we want a new Police Station, but the problem is the phrasing of the question. If you phrase it a certain way, you will get a certain answer and it is building the answer into the question by the way you state it. The Buildings & Facilities Committee doesn't want to be making recommendations based on one survey question when the people answering it did not have all the facts. The Buildings & Facilities Committee has been looking at the facts and discussing the data. Question 23 is a chart and people were asked to rate their priorities. The Police Department had a number one priority of 16.2% which is not a huge number. The highest priority was mobility enhancement. The Police Department was ranked #8 which indicates it is not a high priority for the public at large.

Mr. Bowers also pointed to another inconsistency in the second part of their statement; the Police Chief wants upgrades and expansion which is what the Buildings & Facilities Committee has recommended basically. The recommendation is to upgrade and expand what they already have. Mr. Bowers also stated he did not see any noticed published meetings, minutes or agendas of the Planning Board subcommittee related to the CIP. Mr. Bowers and Chair Gorman will work out a time to meet to discuss this.

John Lewis expressed his concerns about a subcommittee that is being formed within the Buildings and Facilities Committee, noting that the subcommittee is taking on aspects and nature of a full committee. Mr. Lewis is asking who has the power to appoint the subcommittee, it is a problem that currently exists and may be an increasing problem moving forward. Mr. Lewis proposed that only the Chair of the Building and Facilities Committee be allowed to appoint to the subcommittee. Mr. Lewis noted that he is fine with people joining the subcommittee as long as the Chair is appointing people. Mr. Lewis feels there is a danger when someone outside of the group makes appointments to the subcommittee. Chair Rollins stated that the Building and Facilities Committee has been formed by the Selectmen with a group of volunteers; as any group, it is up to the group to determine what the rules of procedure will be. She suggested having a conversation with the Chair and the entire Buildings & Facilities Committee to determine what is appropriate procedure. Mr. Bowers suggested having this discussion and invited Kim Hallquist to join them.

Public Comment - None

Discuss Transfer Station and the State Report of the Committee to Study Recycling Streams and Solid Waste Management in New Hampshire

Chair Rollins reported that Karen Ebel forwarded this report to them. Selectman Kidder commented that this is a comprehensive report and it's great that they are moving forward, however, unless the state gives the town the opportunity to use the land around the transfer station and offers money to help towns and cities to upgrade transfer stations there isn't anything the Selectmen can do. Chair Rollins asked if the board should recommend that we approach the state again with a request for that property. Selectman Kidder responded that they should ask Karen Ebel what her thoughts are about that. Chair Rollins stated that Karen Ebel did think it was a good idea.

Chair Rollins would like to put out another request to add members to the Solid Waste Committee. She suggested putting this request in the next issue of Municipal Matters.

Discuss FY2021 COLA for employee compensation

Ms. Hallquist reported that the town of Sunapee is budgeting a 1.4% cost of living increase, Social Security is 1.6% and Newbury will make their decision in mid- December. Sunapee also does a salary grade similar to New London which will be 2.5%.

Ms. Hallquist stated that the employees are very appreciative that the town does a salary scale now so increases are set as long as they get a good review. As far as COLA's she recommends being in line with what Sunapee/Newbury does which is between 1.4% -1.6% because going below surrounding towns means the town's salary grade scale does not stay current with current compensation levels.

Chair Rollins recommended a 1.5% COLA and asked Wendy Johnson to run the numbers so the Board can review what that looks like for the budget.

Town Administrators Report

Ms. Hallquist provided the following report:

- Lieutenant Emily Cobb and Ms. Hallquist attended the Building and Facilities Committee meeting last Thursday. They were well received and found the meeting valuable.
- Ms. Hallquist attended one day of the New Hampshire Municipal Association annual conference last week.
- Ms. Hallquist participated in the interview process to select a new CEO for New London Hospital. They have so far interviewed two candidates and are looking to interview another candidate soon.
- Michael Williams is assisting Ms. Hallquist with talking with computer service providers as he has experience in this area.
- Bob Harrington and Ms. Hallquist met with the Department of Environmental Services (DES) and RMI (the firm that helped with Sewer Lagoons). They were all in agreement that the town has properly closed its sewer lagoons.

Committee Meetings & Reports

Selectman Kidder reported on the Planning Board meeting held on November 12, 2019. Items discussed were:

- Bob Brown, Chair of the Conservation Commission attended the meeting to encourage support for a \$50,000 contribution to the Conservation Land Acquisition fund.
- An erosion and control plan for a property on Murray Pond Road was accepted.
- Ed Ordman and Heidi Tobin requested that the Planning Board waive a \$50.00 fee to merge a small lot to their bigger lot on Everett Park. This was denied.
- The request for New London Hospital to merge lots on County Road and Parkside Road was approved so Continuum can move forward.
- The final site plan review for the New London Barn Playhouse was approved with several conditions.

Meeting Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to approve the minutes of October 28th & November 4th Joint Selectmen & Budget Committee meeting. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED.

Upcoming Meetings & Special Events

- Next Regular Selectmen's Meeting – Monday, December 2nd – 6:00 PM
- Planning Board – Tuesday, November 19th – 6:30 PM
- Buildings & Facilities – Thursday, November 14th – 6:30 PM

- Conservation Commission – Wednesday, November 20th – 8:30 AM
- Curreant Use Public Forum – Wednesday, November 20th – 6:00 PM
- Master Plan Committee – Thursday, November 21st – 8:30 AM

Items to be signed

- Accounts Payable Voucher
- 2019 Municipal Assessment Data Certificate
- Property Tax Abatement request for tax maps: 105-019-0-0-0 & 061-020-0-0-0
- Birthday cards for town employees
- Applications To Use Town Property
 - ✓ Whipple Hall – On February 28th, 6:30pm-8:30pm and 29th, Noon-9:30am for an Alzheimer’s fundraiser hosted by King Solomon’s Lodge #14.
 - ✓ Whipple Hall – On February 23rd from 6:00pm to 9:30pm for a “Wild Cousins of our Best Friends” presentation by Sue Morse of Keeping Track hosted by The Fells.

Applications Approved &/or Denied

Temporary Event/Sale Permits – all approved

- Holiday Fair at First Baptist Church, 461 Main Street on Saturday, November 16th from 8:30am to 1:00pm.
- St. Nicholas Christmas Fair at St. Andrews Church, 52 Gould Road on Saturday, December 7th from 9:00am to 2:00pm by.

Sign Permits – all approved

- Temporary Sign – By Kearsarge Chorale for a 2’x3’ sandwich board sign at the Information Booth for a holiday craft fair from November 18th to November 24th.
- Temporary Sign – By Wilmot Community Action for a 2’x3’ sandwich board sign at the Information Booth for a concert from November 30th to December 7th.
- Temporary Sign – By James Bednor for a 2’x3’ A-frame sign at the Information Booth for the Springfield 250th Celebration, Springfield Thanksgiving Service November 15th to 24th.
- Temporary Sign – By James Bednor for a 2’x3’ A-frame sign at the Information Booth for the Springfield 250th Celebration, Christmas craft fair & wreath sale from November 20th to December 7th.
- Temporary Sign – By James Bednor for a 2’x3’ A-frame sign at the Information Booth for the Springfield 250th Celebration, tree lighting bell choir caroling from December 1st to 15th.

Building Permits

- Christel Shaw & Alfred Williams, 22 Milkhouse Road, TM 122-003-0-0-0. Ground mount solar array 12.32 kW. BP 19-146 APPROVED
- Mountain View Shopping Ctr. (Concord Ortho.), 277 Newport Road, TM 059-005-0-0-0. Interior renovation of 4000sq. ft. BP 19-154 APPROVED
- TH Bush Realty Trust (Gabriel/Kubit), 229 Barrett Road, TM 084-013-0-0-0. Roof mount solar array 4.875 kW. BP 19-155 APPROVED
- Mark Brunelle, LLC, Stonehouse Road, TM 130-021-0-0-0. Build new single family residence 3166 sq. ft. BP 19-156 APPROVED

- Robert Brown, LLC, 449 Forest Acres Road, TM 119-011-0-0-0. Modify roof line of attached shed. BP 19-157 APPROVED
- Lisa & Michael Bennett, 58 Balsam Acres, TM 095-009-0-0-0. Build 8x16 shed. BP 19-158 APPROVED
- Mountain View Shopping Ctr. (Blue Mtn. Guitar), 277 Newport Road, Ste. 5, TM 059-005-0-0-0. Interior renovations. BP 19-160 APPROVED

IT WAS MOVED (John Cannon) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to adjourn. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 8:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson

Town of New London
Recording Secretary