



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

375 MAIN STREET • NEW LONDON, NH 03257 • WWW.NEWLONDON.NH.GOV

NEW LONDON BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, November 3, 2022

Whipple Hall

6:00 PM

PRESENT:

Nancy Rollins, Chairman
Janet Kidder, Selectman
Bill Helm, Selectman
Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator
Lynn Lewis, Finance Officer

ALSO PRESENT:

Will Kidder, Town Clerk - Tax Collector
Jay Lyon, Fire Chief
Steve Ensign, Board of Firewards Chair
Bob Harrington, Public Works Director
Emily Cobb, Police Chief
Paul Gorman, Planning Board Chair
Phil Sherman, Whipple Hall Project Committee
Michael Todd, Town Moderator
Sara Scheuch, Library Trustee
Steve Solomon, Library trustee

Budget Committee members: Lou Botta, Joe Cardillo, Hannah Bianchi, John Wilson, Melissa Leintz

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

Appointments

Michael Todd, Moderator: State General Election

Town Moderator, Michael Todd attended the meeting to discuss the state general election coming up next Tuesday. Mr. Todd shared that Tina Helm organized 50 volunteers to help with staffing in various positions and he thanked her for her work on that. There have been reports on the news that certain advocacy groups are encouraging certain voters to mark their ballots in such a way that they must be hand counted. This could have a foreseeable effect on slowing the tally results. The goal is for a very smooth election.

Chair Rollins stated there was a presentation on September 27, 2022 regarding the poll pad system. She asked Mr. Todd what the future is for that and if it will actually happen. Mr. Todd does think it will speed up the check in process and is far more accurate. It will simplify and makes things faster. Tablets would need to be purchased and then pay for an annual subscription service. There is also a

fee for each election. Chair Rollins asked Mr. Todd to research and provide what the potential cost would be for this system for the Town of New London. Will Kidder shared that the poll pads would include 4 pads, 3 for the check in tables and one for supervisors. The upfront equipment cost is \$8,300 and this includes a one-time programming fee. Then there is a yearly cost of \$300 per poll pad so a guaranteed \$1,200 expense per year and \$300 per election with a maximum of 4 elections in a year. The highest estimated total would be \$10,700. Dedicated secure internet may need to be upgraded for Whipple Hall as well.

New recommendations for appointment to assist with elections are John Cannon and Martin Sheerin.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Bill Helm) to accept Town Moderator, Michael Todd's recommendation of John Cannon and Martin Sheerin to assist with the elections. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

FY2024 Budget Prep: CIP, Bonded Debt, Capital Reserve Funds and review of final budget

CIP – Paul Gorman, Chair of the Planning Board and Chair of the CIP subcommittee of the Planning Board attended the meeting to discuss the Capital Improvement Program that the Planning Board is charged with. Chair Gorman shared the subcommittee consisted of members of the Planning Board, Paul Vance, Tim Paradis, Emily Campbell, and Budget Committee member Lyndsay Harkins. The committee met regularly during the summer months and met with department head as well as with individuals from other town committees.

Chair Gorman stated that the library has ongoing maintenance projects related to the building. The action recommended is for the town to continue their yearly \$35,000 contribution so these issues can be addressed.

Chair Gorman shared the subcommittee met with Public Works and they were able to update the report in a variety of different ways from the last report. One example is that the staff has been able to recondition some of their equipment so requests that would have submitted a year ago can be pushed out because they have been repaired.

When meeting with the Fire Department, they discussed the issue of how they plan for the purchase of their equipment and the fact that there is a major investment that will need to be made in 8-9 years. The equipment that will be needed in the future is taller and longer and will not fit in the current facility. The conceptual solution is that an addition be built with a bay to accommodate a larger truck. Although the expansion is not anticipated for many years, the Committee recommends the Fire Department and town begin the planning process as well as plan financially for the project.

Chair Gorman stated that the discussion held with New London Police Chief Emily Cobb focused on the need for a new facility. The committee supports an organized planning process to acquire land, design and construct a new facility to accommodate the department now and in the future.

The CIP spreadsheet shows the spread of expenses over the course of many years. Selectmen Helm requested that the report for the spreadsheet indicate the recommendation of \$35,000 to the Library as

he does not see that on the spreadsheet or in the report. Chair Gorman agreed to look into making an adjustment.

Bonded Debt – Kim Hallquist reported that these are commitments that the town already has and does not recommend any changes. Finance Officer Lynn Lewis stated that she did add in a line item for a 15-year bond for the purchase of the Bewley property. It is currently just an estimate, but she can get final numbers later on. Selectman Helm stated the number seems to be on the high side.

Capital Reserve Funds – Kim Hallquist reported the following Capital Outlays are using the town capital reserve funds so they do not have an impact on the tax rate:

- Fire Utility truck payment
- Highway Department dump truck and sander
- Transfer station refuse trailer
- Town Building maintenance
- Tracy Library repairs (Flooring and kitchen and bath)
- Gravel road upgrades & paving

Transfers to Capital Reserves:

Kim Hallquist reported that she and finance officer Lynn Lewis reviewed the transfers to capital reserves and created a document that details the amounts that have been requested and that total amount is \$1,017,510. They created another document that has all transfers to capital reserve funds reduced by 50% so that would bring the total to \$508,755. Ms. Hallquist and Ms. Lewis will recommend some changes but there are some that they do not recommend reducing by 50% and some that might be able to be reduced by more than 50%.

Fully funded amounts:

- Town building maintenance - \$50,000
- Computer maintenance/replacement - \$24,000
- Master Plan update - no contribution
- Energy Projects - \$30,000
- Records Management Systems - \$10,000
- Fire vehicle replacement - \$210,000
- Town vehicle/equipment repair - \$10,000
- Fire breathing apparatus - \$10,000
- Fire department radios - \$15,000
- Communications equipment - \$34,000
- Police equipment - \$10,000
- Sidewalks - \$30,000
- Highway equipment replacement - \$339,510
- Gravel road paving - \$100,000
- Sewer department - \$20,000
- Conservation land acquisition - \$50,000
- Library building maintenance - \$75,000

Items that were not recommended for a 50% reduction or for no funding at all included:

- Town building maintenance – recommended to double it to \$100,000.

- Records management system is new and could be pushed out to next year.
- Fire department radios should be fully funded at \$15,000
- Sidewalks recommended to go to zero but there are funds in the municipal and regional transportation improvement fund that could be used.
- Gravel road paving – an additional \$100,000 was given to the town from the state so those funds could be used instead of funding the CRF this year.

Selectman Helm commented that we should take a look at the existing process and should pause after we get through town meeting to review capital expenditures. Selectman Kidder stated she did think about John Wilson's suggestion to not contribute to any of the capital reserve funds for this year but she noted that it would put the town in a really difficult position for the FY2025 budget and going forward. She is comfortable with the recommendations made by Kim Hallquist and Lynn Lewis. Chair Rollins agrees that the recommendations for the items that shouldn't be reduced by 50% are prudent. Selectmen Helm stated he is still uncomfortable with the Library discussion. When Library Director Crystal Schimpf presented the budget, he asked to be provided with the maintenance history of what has been done with the building and where they are going with it. It would be useful to better understand why we are where we are and to have a schedule of projects as we go forward.

Steve Solomon, Library Trustee, stated he attended a meeting this past summer with the Budget Committee and they reviewed their capital expenditure plan for the next few years which was based on surveys done on the building. They know in the next 5-7 years there will be some major costs to replace sections of the roof. It is an older building and will have continued maintenance. They were advised by the Budget Committee to put a certain amount of money into their capital planning so at the end of the 4-5 year period they will have enough money for the roof instead of waiting until a year or two before and asking for a huge amount of money. The money they are asking for in this budget is a step in that direction. They are in the process of doing a complete architectural engineering evaluation of the systems and structure of the building so they will know going forward what sort of things they will need and presumably what that will cost.

Joe Cardillo asked about ARPA funds and if there are any restrictions that prohibit the use of these funds to be used towards projects we need to do. Can these funds be redirected? Kim Hallquist stated she will look into the rules but does not believe it can be used for roof or building maintenance. The Selectmen have committed 25% of the funds to the sewer department and 25% to the water precinct with 50% remaining for other projects.

Selectman Helm stated there are two major expenditures that are not in the budget yet. One is wages and the other is the increase in tipping fees/waste. Bob Harrington stated that line item for waste disposal will need to be increased from \$120,000 to \$155,000.

Final Budget Review:

- Selectman Helm would like to take the wage salary study out of the 2024 budget.
- Selectman Helm would like to reduce the legal line item from \$15,000 to \$10,000.
- Selectman Helm would like to reduce the Whipple Hall maintenance and repair budget from \$10,000 to \$5,000. This was discussed several weeks ago and much of what is being done there is being funded through the \$600,000 bond.
- Selectman Helm suggested keeping the Chamber of Commerce amount the same and not increasing it from \$12,500 to the requested amount of \$15,000.

- Selectman Helm stated the Police Chief suggested the cost of the pistol project could be spread out over two years. Chief Cobb stated she reworked the numbers and has decreased the line item for general equipment amount by \$14,000 so it would go from \$65,000 to \$51,000. This would mean they can get all of the pistols this year. John Wilson stated there was discussion about putting off getting a new police cruiser for a year as it only has 70,000 miles on it. Chief Cobb stated it was discussed as a possibility, but she is not in agreement that it should be put off for another year. It just puts us behind we could start seeing increased maintenance costs. Also, the value of the trade in would significantly go down. Selectman Helm agrees that they should stay on schedule for cruiser replacements.
- Selectman Helm suggested zeroing out the upgrade to dirt roads line item and the calcium chloride line item. There have been no expenditures in either of these line items for a few years. Bob Harrington stated he doesn't have an issue cutting the dirt roads budget but the price of calcium chloride has increased significantly and they currently don't have any. Selectman Helm is fine keeping \$10,000 in there for the calcium chloride but would still like to remove \$10,000 for dirt road upgrades.

Discuss conceptual plan for police station on County Road

Kim Hallquist shared a first conceptual plan for a potential 10,000 square foot police station. There was discussion yesterday with the Energy Committee regarding solar and reducing electricity costs. Selectman Helm feels fortunate that the engineers were able to turn this around so quickly so there was something concrete to discuss. Possibly reducing the mass of the building and parking will be discussed further. Chief Cobb commented that this is a great starting point.

Joe Cardillo stated as a member of the former Building and Facilities Committee and police station site subcommittee, a lot of time was spent looking at numerous potential sites in town. Their priority was to make every effort to find a location that checked off a number of boxes and listen to what was important to the police. Sites were eliminated that entered or exited into residential areas, specifically County Road. It was clearly stated that there was little interest in the County Road section of the Bewley acquisition and significant and major interest in the Newport Road parcel of the land. They were given clear guidance by the police that their priority was to enter onto Main Street or Newport Road. Now the focus seems to be on a site that didn't fit the criteria months ago. Chief Cobb responded that her recollection is that the County Road parcels weren't for sale at the time and the seller was interested in annexing a piece of the 7 acre lot on Newport Road to keep for the County road lots. Joe Cardillo responded that questions are going to come up with voters as to why County Road is ok now when it wasn't before.

Selectmen's regular meeting schedule for November & December

Chair Rollins recommended meeting on November 10th and 17th and December 8th and 22nd. Selectman Helm requested just having one meeting in December. It was decided to have just one meeting on December 15, 2022.

TOWN ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

Kim Hallquist reported the following:

- Interviews have started to fill the full time Recreation Director position.
- Ms. Hallquist was contacted by the owners of the Bewley property today and they have reviewed the purchase & sales that town counsel prepared. They have recommended some changes, one being to remove the stipulation of the appraisal coming in at \$600,000. Town counsel will continue to work with the sellers to come to agreement on the P&S.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS & REPORTS - None

MEETING MINUTES: Approve the Selectmen's Minutes of October 27th - Deferred until the next meeting.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & SPECIAL EVENTS

- Next Regular Selectmen's meeting – Thursday, November 10th - 6:00 PM
- Citizens Committee – Saturday, November 5th – 7:30 AM
- Energy Committee Public Hearing – Wednesday, November 9th – 7:00 PM
- **State General Election – Tuesday, November 8th – 7:00AM – 7:00PM – Whipple Town Hall**
- **Veterans Day – Offices Closed - Friday, November 11th**
- Planning Board – Tuesday, November 15th – 6:30 PM
- Budget Committee – Wednesday, November 16th – 6:30 PM

OTHER BUSINESS:

Selectman Helm asked Chair Rollins if there could be discussion at the next meeting regarding a furniture update for Whipple Hall. Chair Rollins agreed.

APPROVAL OF PAY VOUCHERS, PERMITS etc.

Items to be signed:

- Accounts Payable Forms
- Wastewater Abatement Request

Applications Approved &/or Denied

Building/Zoning Permits – approved

- Bright Farmhouse Trust, TM 070-021-0-0-0. Add 592sq ft addition to existing SFH. **BP 22-124.** Approved. 10/28/22.
- John & Linda Boisvert, TM 086-023-0-0-0. Build 12x20 shed. **BP 22-130.** Approved. 10/28/22.
- MDM Realty Trust, TM 020-004-0-0-0. Finish basement in existing SFH add 621sq ft. **BP 22-128.** Approved. 10/28/22.
- Matthew E. Kelly, TM 130-017-0-0-0. Chimney and flue repair & maintenance. **BP 22-125.** Approved. 10/28/22.
- Read Family Trust, TM 020-005-0-0-0. Add covered front porch. **BP 22-134.** Approved. 10/28/22.
- Larry Ballin, TM 087-003-0-0-0. Roof mount solar 1.2kWH. **BP 22-132.** Approved. 10/28/22.
- Lynn & Damian Petry Trust, TM 084-086-0-0-0. Remodel interior of existing 2100 sq ft house and add 1008sq ft detached garage. **BP 22-136.** Approved. 11/2/22.

NONPUBLIC: The Board of Selectmen may enter into nonpublic session, if so voted, to discuss items listed under RSA 91-A: 3, II.

IT WAS MOVED (Bill Helm) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to enter into a nonpublic session pursuant to RSA 91-A: 3, II (a): the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee.

Roll call vote: Rollins: yes; Kidder: yes; Helm: yes;

The Board entered nonpublic session at 7:34PM.

The Board reentered the public session at 7:45 PM.

IT WAS MOVED (Bil Helm) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to seal the nonpublic session meeting minutes. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson
Recording Secretary
Town of New London