



# TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN

### MEETING MINUTES

Whipple Town Hall

November 8, 2021

6:00 PM

#### **PRESENT:**

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

#### **ALSO PRESENT:**

Emily Cobb, Police Chief	Crystal Schimpf, Tracy Library Director
Liz Meller, New London Resident	Kim Pruett-Ilg, Recreation Commission
Peter Nichols, Housing Commission	Carol Foss, New London Resident
Bob Brown, Conservation Commission	Tom Vannatta, Housing Commission Chair
Winfried Feneberg, Housing Commission	Michael Kennedy, Conservation Commission
Mark Vernon, Conservation Commission	Nancy Marachio, New London resident
Tim Paradis, Energy Committee	

**Budget Committee Members:** Chris Lorio, Lyndsay Harkins, Joe Cardillo, Melissa Leintz, Jerry Coogan, John Raby, Hannah Bianchi

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

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Nancy Marachio attended the meeting to discuss redistricting and to urge the Selectmen to send a letter to the House Redistricting Committee as they are taking public input this week. Next week when the Committee meets, it will decide which redistricting map to use as there are currently three sets of maps. One group put New London by itself but only gave us one representative. The minority map puts New London with Wilmot and Danbury. The issue with that is that Danbury doesn't have common interest with New London as it is in the Lakes Region Planning Commission instead of Upper Valley Planning Commission and their students go to Newfound school district, not the Kearsarge Regional School District as New London and Wilmot students attend. The majority report continues the New London and Newbury district, but it does not assign a dedicated representative to New London. The Selectmen agreed that retaining the district of New London and Newbury would be best for the town.

**IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to send a letter to the House Redistricting Committee in support of the majority report that includes New London and Newbury in the same district. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Approval of addition to Low Plain Conservation Easement with Fish & Game – approved by voters via Article 21 at the 2020 Town Meeting.**

Ms. Hallquist stated the Conservation Commission has been working hard since 2020 on getting this property added into the easement that is already existing with Fish & Game. Bob Brown, Chair of the Conservation Commission agreed this has been a long, drawn-out process largely due to COVID. The town acquired what they refer to as Low Plain 200 which is 30 acres on the west side of Low Plain. Adding this to the 169 acres they already have brings Low Plain up to 200 acres which is a nice addition. Last year some forest management work was done on this property to improve the health of the forest and improve the wildlife habitat. They received positive comments from Fish and Game and other agencies on how well that project was done. The net on that project was approximately \$17,000 which goes to the town.

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the addition to Low Plain Conservation Easement with Fish & Game. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Chair Brown updated the Board on the purchase of parcel 088-006, as 23 acre parcel bring purchased for \$225,000 using Mary Haddad Funds. The environmental assessment went fine but there are issues with the deed. Once the legal work is done this can be finalized.

#### **TOWN ADMINISTRATORS REPORT**

- Ms. Hallquist reported that they are a little short staffed in the town office due to illness as well as an open position for a land use coordinator. She is hoping to fill that open position soon.
- The annual audit starts next week
- Adam Ricker and Kim Hallquist will be meeting with Mag Francis tomorrow and again the following week regarding various issues related to the Eversource project done last summer.

#### **Budget Committee: Joint meeting of FY2023 Budget:**

##### **Conservation Commission**

Bob Brown, Chair of the Conservation Commission stated that their budget request is level with last year's request. It has been an interesting year due to COVID and supply chain issues. Usage of the trails has increased by 3 times the usual amount and material prices have gone way up. They had a successful forest harvest at Low Plain netted \$17,500 to the town.

##### **Housing Commission**

Tom Vannatta, Chair of the Housing Commission stated the Commission started in January 2021. He feels very lucky that the Housing Commission is made up a great group of committed individuals who are ready to take on the mission of providing a variety of economic level homes in the community. Mainly the focus is on low income and workforce housing. Over the past several months the Housing Commission has been interacting with other groups such as the Kearsarge Housing Coalition and a few others. The plan is to work together to develop an assessment of the housing needs in New London.

Mr. Vanatta explained that at the September Housing Commission meeting, the group discussed their budget needs thoroughly and were all in full support of the budget that has been requested. It is a large jump from the previous year but in order to move forward as a commission and bring their mission to life, they will need more funding. They are requesting an additional \$15,000 to hire a consultant or contractors to work with them to provide guidance and experience. They will also use these funds for printing and advertising so people know who they are and what they are about. As a new group they will need to educate themselves so may attend conferences and educational opportunities so there may be a cost associated with that.

Housing Commission member Peter Nichols stated workforce housing and housing opportunity ranked second and third place with regards to priority at the recent community forums. It's important to get financial support for expenses so they can get going in the right direction noting that the town's zoning ordinances need review and possible revision.

### **Recreation Department**

There is a request to increase the waterfront staff wages budget. Wages for staff has gone up however last summer we didn't have the staffing we wanted so that budget will most likely be underspent.

There is a decrease in the rink maintenance line item as a liner was purchased and that cost will come out of the current year's budget.

Funding for the Outing Club line is at \$0; the FY2022 budget funding of \$40,000 was a one-time appropriation to assist with getting a fulltime Executive Director on board and for programming. If the Outing Club, or any other group, needs funding for a program that will serve New London citizens, they can apply for funding under the Recreation Activity fund. The amount requested in that fund is \$69,984. Jackie Christensen stated she was impressed with the report that was provided by the Outing Club; they provided programs over the summer that included the summer camp and Track and Field. There is still room for more collaboration and programming. Putnam Kidder has been hired as the part time Recreation Director.

### **Archives**

Jim Perkins attended the meeting and stated they are requesting their usual \$1,000 stipend for supplies. This year, partly in response to the new sprinkler system in the town office building and also in response to the need for more shelf space, they are proposing a two-year program to install movable shelving which will increase capacity by 70% in the same floor space. The total cost over the two-year period will be approximately \$60,000. There is an individual who will be donating \$20,000 towards it so the request is for \$23,000 this year and another \$20,000 the following year. This system would be able to be disassembled and moved to another location if necessary.

### **Administration**

Ms. Hallquist reported one of the biggest areas of increase in this area is for a salary wage study for \$15,000 which is new for this budget. Salary studies are done when towns feel that the salary scale being used is out of date due to economic conditions or hasn't been done in a while. A wage study was last done in 2016 and prior to that was done in 2006. The consulting company will give the selectmen some recommendations on what area towns are comparable to New London. The Selectmen have a compensation philosophy that they look to in order to make sure wages are in line with what taxpayers can afford and that also seeks to have competitive salaries to attract and retain high quality staff.

The other large increase was for the records retention project for \$30,000. This is an estimate on the cost to begin the project of digitizing the town's records. Ms. Hallquist is talking to various consultants who do this work. This project would ease the pressure for storage space in the town office.

### **Finance**

Lynn Lewis, Finance Officer reported the finance officer's salary went down due to the retirement of Wendy Johnson who was at a higher salary than the replacement. There was a slight increase for the part time employee due to a step increase. There is a slight decrease for the request in the audit amount as there is a part of the audit that is being done this year that will not be needed next year. Other small increases include office supplies, equipment leases and advertising due to rising prices.

### **Assessing**

New London is part of the Tri-town assessing which is made up of Newbury, Sunapee and New London. The percentage charged to each town is based on the number of properties in each of the three towns: Sunapee has the most followed by New London and then Newbury. The budgeted amount for salary is less this year as Norm Bernaiche retired and his replacement has a lower salary.

### **Legal & Animal Rescue Fees**

Both of these areas are based on an estimate as it's difficult to determine how many times legal counsel will be required and if a stray dog or cat is found the town is required to house them for a certain number of days.

### **Planning & Zoning**

There are some changes mainly due to combining these roles into one. Adam Ricker is now doing both planning and zoning. The budget includes a request for \$15,000 for a corridor study. The corridor study is seen as the first step needed to implement additional goals identified in the Master Plan. By defining the needs of this corridor, bicycles, pedestrians, cars, parking, intersection safety, etc., the Planning Board can begin to implement strategies and amend the ordinance and regulations. The other request for \$2,000 is for engineering review. The Planning Board is able to hire engineers when it thinks it needs to for review of applications.

### **Insurance**

Kim Hallquist reported Primex is the company that provides the town's insurance – they also provide training for staff to learn about ways to reduce injury and accidents.

### **Patriotic Purposes**

This budget has not been spent in a long time, but the appropriation is \$300, and Ms. Hallquist recommends keeping that amount in there so it is available if a group would like to create a program.

### **Energy Committee**

Tim Paradis attended the meeting to request an increase in the Energy Committee budget. It is currently \$450 but there are some projects they would like to do and they would like to increase it to \$900. There is a tool that helps identify which properties would be good for solar and the committee is interested in that as well as possibly putting money towards an E Bike.

### **Other Conservation – Care of trees**

Ms. Hallquist reported that Dave Carey, the town's Tree Warden, uses this budget to replace trees that have been removed due to disease or to add trees in other areas.

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson  
Recording Secretary  
Town of New London