



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

December 7, 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:

Jay Lyon, New London Fire Chief
Emily Cobb, New London Police Chief
Bob Harrington, Public Works Director
Will Kidder, New London Tax Collector
Chelsea Williams, Outing Club
Steve Ensign, Board of Firewards Chair
Drew Drummond, Outing Club
Pete Smith, Outing Club President
Carter Bascom
Karen Hogle, Board of Firewards
Minnette McQueeney, *Intertown Record*
Budget Committee members: Joe Cardillo, Chris Lorio, John Raby, Rob Prohl
Building & Facilities Committee members: Bob Bowers, Colin Beasley, Peter Hogle,

Chair Kidder called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and read the zoom authorization information. Chair Kidder called the roll – Nancy Rollins: present, John Cannon: present, Janet Kidder: Present

Chair Kidder noted that the employee luncheon was held last Friday. Each department attended at a designated time, employees received service awards and were given a box lunch. Police Chief Emily Cobb, Fire Chief Jay Lyon and Administrative Assistant Dianne Bottari arranged the luncheon. Despite scheduling challenges, the event was wonderful, and the decorations were very festive. Chair Kidder thanked them all for the work they did.

Appointments

Pete Smith, Outing Club President - request for FY2022 funding: \$95,000

The Selectmen received additional information from the Outing Club on Friday. Pete Smith attended the meeting and stated the information he submitted is in an effort to further define a partnership and allocation of funding. He explained that it includes a lot of budgetary information but outlines the proposal of the allocation of funding that will go towards extra programming, a Director's salary and New London resident's subsidy.

The funding will go towards their operating budget and allow them expand programming and further define youth athletics and adult programming in the area. It also allows them to partner with the Recreation Department to enhance programming moving forward. The amount of funding will be reviewed each year and can be adjusted if needed.

Selectman Cannon asked if the winter programming would begin next year or now. Mr. Smith responded they would like this to start immediately so they can begin the hiring process and develop programs for spring and summer. Even though this funding is for the next budget cycle, they would start now knowing the funding is on the way. Mr. Smith commented that the impact that COVID-19 has had on the Outing Club this year has been severe and this allocation will help with that.

Selectman Rollins clarified some of the budgetary numbers and comparison enrollment data with Mr. Smith. She also asked where the Outing Club was in discussions with the Recreation Department at this point. Mr. Smith stated they had good conversations early in the fall and then recently he received an invitation from Justin Garzia of the Recreation Commission to meet this Wednesday to discuss a collaboration. Selectman Rollins stated it would be good to continue with ongoing meetings as there is still a lot to discuss and work that needs to happen. Mr. Smith also commented that they would like to know what feedback the town would like as they steward the allocation and what those expectations are. Selectman Rollins responded she would like to hear how things are going on a quarterly basis.

Chair Kidder thanked Mr. Smith for the proposal. She asked how many board members are on the Outing Club board. Mr. Smith responded there are 5 members of the Executive Committee and they operate with between 9 and 10 board members with elections coming up in the next month. Mr. Smith stated at least 5 of those members live in New London. She also asked what the funding formula will be for each town that they serve, will it be based on population or some other criteria? Mr. Smith responded that they are reviewing that model right now and will be making those requests in the coming year. Chair Kidder asked where they would hold youth indoor swimming programs in the winter and Mr. Smith stated they are considering approaching Colby-Sawyer College about that. Chair Kidder asked if they are still considering building an indoor facility. Mr. Smith stated they are always considering this and continue to explore all avenues to create an indoor space. Chair Kidder noted that at a meeting back in February there was discussion about a strategic plan the Outing Club was developing. Chair Kidder stated it would be helpful if they shared this strategic plan with the Selectmen. Mr. Smith noted that they continue to work on the plan, they have taken a new approach by using the John Doerr system which has been very useful.

Bob Bowers, Chair of the Building & Facilities Committee

Appropriation of \$10,000 - \$15,000 to hire professionals to determine what is required to upgrade Whipple Hall for use as appropriate and adequate board and committee meeting space. Mr. Bowers stated this relates to a memo dated November 13, 2020. This includes the fourth and fifth bullets on the agenda which are Sprinkler System in Buker and Whipple and Upgrades to Police Department. Drapes, acoustics and the sprinkler system are all factors involved in this study. The reason they want to hire an expert is due to intricacies in trying to set up a system that is HVAC appropriate, has drapes that reflect sound appropriately and the sound system itself. Then adding in the sprinkler system so they all mesh together in a way that will work. Having an expert analyze that and give guidance on next steps is important. The other aspect is maintaining the historical integrity of Whipple Hall. The Committee would look to Jim Perkins and other interested parties when this work is being done to ensure the historical qualities remain intact.

Chair Kidder agrees that we should be sensitive to Whipple Hall with regards to the work that is done there. However, she is unsure this is the year that a study should be done due to the economy. She is not in favor of having another study done and thinks we should wait. Selectman Cannon agrees that he is unsure that this is the year to do this but does think it should be done using a systems approach and is all integrated. Selectman Rollins asked Finance Officer Wendy Johnson if \$10,000-\$15,000 could be found in the current budget for this purpose. Ms. Johnson replied that it is up to the Selectmen to decide how to spend money and there is unspent money in other departments that it could be pulled from. Selectman Rollins stated she listened to the Building and Facilities Committees presentation and believes this does need to be done sooner rather than later noting that this would be money well spent and would like to move forward.

A MOTION WAS MADE (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to approve the request to appropriate \$10,000-\$15,000 to hire professionals to determine what is necessary to upgrade Whipple Hall. Nancy Rollins: yes, John Cannon: yes, Janet Kidder: yes. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Building Inspection of Commercial Properties - Mr. Bowers stated that because the town does not enforce the state building code with its own building inspector, the Building and Facilities Committee recommends that the State Fire Marshal's Office inspect commercial buildings if it can be done without having to adopt the town code. Mr. Bowers stated that Town Administrator Kim Hallquist had pursued this question in the past and was told that there were no issues as long as the state Fire Marshalls office has the staff and willingness to do it. Selectman Cannon commented he would be surprised if the Fire Marshall's office agreed to take this on as it is unlikely they have the staffing to do it. The Selectmen asked that this matter be investigated further to see if the State Fire Marshal would do commercial inspections.

Request that Selectman refer requests for land purchases, use of existing buildings, facilities and property to the Building and Facilities Committee - At a recent meeting it was mentioned that Chief Cobb had looked at the possibility of purchasing an existing building for Police Department needs rather than remodeling or building a new building. The Committee feels that anytime this is done it should be brought before the Building and Facilities Committee first.

Kim Hallquist responded that it is her understanding that all department heads are aware that the charge of the Building and Facilities Committee is to look over these kinds of projects. Ms. Hallquist advises department heads to do their due diligence and get as much information as possible prior to bringing it to her for discussion and then to the Selectmen who can decide if the subject is worth pursuing further. This is the case with Chief Cobb and once she is finished with her research, she will bring it to both the Selectmen and Building and Facilities Committee.

Selectman Rollins stated she appreciates the department heads taking the initiative to look forward at possibilities however she does think the Building and Facilities committee should be brought in sooner rather than later. The Building and Facilities committee is a group of skilled individuals and having their knowledge and expertise from the beginning is critically important. She also thinks that when a visit is made to a facility that includes a member of the Board of Selectmen that is jumping the gun and she would prefer instead that the department head reach out to the Building and Facilities committee. Chair Kidder stated that any request that a department head makes should be vetted with Ms. Hallquist initially to see if it is viable. If so, it would be directed to the Selectmen. If more information is needed, other committees could be consulted at that time. Selectman Rollins disagreed noting that Ms. Hallquist is not an expert in buildings and facilities. Ms. Hallquist clarified that she is not saying she is an expert, what she is saying is that she requires department heads to do their due diligence prior to bringing the

suggestion to the Selectmen and Buildings and Facilities Committee. Ms. Hallquist explained that the department heads are the experts in their departments while her role is to assist them in organizing their information, looking at alternatives to make sure they have enough information to bring before the Selectmen.

A MOTION WAS MADE (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) that the Building and Facilities Committee be included in any discussions about pursuing, expansion, renovation, retrofit, etc. sooner rather than later as they have the expertise. Nancy Rollins: yes, John Cannon: yes, Janet Kidder: No. THE MOTION CARRIES.

Land behind Public Works Department – Ms. Hallquist stated she mentioned this topic to the Board several weeks ago. Conservation Commission Chair Bob Brown brought this up as he heard the land was for sale and the Conservation Commission has a trail going through the property. Chair Brown was concerned that the sale of the property might adversely impact the trail. The sale price of the land is not something the Conservation Commission could afford even to protect the trail so he thought the Public Works Department might be interested to help share the cost.

Chair Brown walked the property with Bob Harrington and then they brought this information to the Building and Facilities Committee. Bob Bowers asked for support to purchase the property. Bob Harrington stated at some point in the future they may need to expand the Public Works Department into that area. Fire Chief Lyon could use some of the property for training. Ms. Hallquist feels it is worthwhile for the Selectmen to look into this further. The current price of the property is \$130,000. Chair Kidder stated if they are planning to pursue the property they should have an appraisal done to determine if the asking price is reasonable. Selectman Rollins would like to know how much is buildable by getting a wetlands survey. All were in agreement.

Bob Harrington - Public Works Director

Update on Barrett Road sewer break - Bob Harrington stated they had a break in the sewer main on Barrett Road. This is the second break in that section in the past few years. Rather than dig the road up he is looking to have a company come in a slipline it for \$28,000. He recommends getting the work done as soon as possible.

Transfer Station trash compactor - another issue is repairs needed to the trash compactor. The pistons needed to be pulled out and repairs will cost approximately \$15,000. Also, the NRRA informed them that the current cardboard recycler is no longer going to be in business as of the end of December. That means the trailer will go away. The town was given the option to purchase it for \$2,000 however Mr. Harrington does not think it should be purchases as the trailer is in poor condition. He is looking at a used trailer that is road worthy and will cost \$10,000-\$11,000

Needed repairs to recycling building roof - During the building inspections it was noticed that the recycling building is in desperate need of a roof. The price for that will be \$15,000 for a metal roof. This is located at the Public Works garage.

A MOTION WAS MADE (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to approve Bob Harrington's request to take care of the Barrett Road sewer break, repair the Transfer station compactor and repair the roof of the recycling building. Funds will be used from the various pools of money set aside for those issues. Nancy Rollins: yes, John Cannon: yes, Janet Kidder: yes. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Public Comments

Carter Bascom attended on behalf of the Outing Club tonight. He feels strongly that there was always a goal for the Outing Club and the Town of New London to work together to benefit the community. He stated the community wants these recreation opportunities to be supported and urged the Board of Selectmen to listen to the Outing Club and work with them.

Town Administrators Report

Kim Hallquist provided the following report:

- The Kearsarge Community Band will not be doing any concerts in December. They thanked the Selectmen for agreeing to allow them to use the bandstand but with COVID-19 numbers going up it is not the best time.
- The employee luncheon went very well thanks to Chief Emily Cobb and Dianne Bottari. Other members of the wellness committee were also a big help: Chief Jay Lyon and Sam Clarke. It was a great time, the food was excellent and the employees appreciated it.
- Town Meeting guidance was sent to the Selectmen. There will be more discussion in the next few weeks on how to handle Town Meeting.
- *Municipal Matters* went out today.
- The meeting to interview Housing Commission candidates will be held on Monday, December 14, 2020.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS & REPORTS

Planning Board - The Planning Board met on November 24, 2020. The main agenda item was the addition to New London Barn Playhouse which received final site plan approval. The public hearing with regards to Continuum and the Hospital Association was withdrawn.

Meeting Minutes

A MOTION WAS MADE (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to approve the minutes of the November 16, 2020 meeting. Nancy Rollins: yes, John Cannon: yes, Janet Kidder: yes. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Upcoming meeting schedule - The Selectmen agreed to schedule meetings on January 4 and 25th and February 1 and 22.

Upcoming Meetings & Special Events

- Next regular Selectmen's meeting – Monday, December 21st – 6:00 PM – via Zoom
- Planning Board – Tuesday, December 8th – 6:30 PM – via Zoom
- Budget Committee – Wednesday, December 9th – 7:00 PM – via Zoom
- Zoning Board – Tuesday, December 15th – 6:30 PM – via Zoom

Please see the calendar on the town website for a complete listing of other meetings, including subcommittee meetings, of the various town boards: www.nl-nh.com

Items to be signed

- Accounts Payable Voucher
- Investment Policy

- Veterans Credit
- Warrant – Yield Tax on Timber Cut
- Application for Sewer Connection

Applications Approved &/or Denied

Building Permits

- Hill Homestead LLC, 112 Parkside Road, TM 073-009-0-0-0. Build addition & add dwelling unit. BP 20-151 approved 12/4/20.

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:36PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson

Recording Secretary
Town of New London