



TOWN OF
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES

February 1, 2021

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:

Michael Todd, Town Moderator
Will Kidder, Town Clerk
Emily Cobb, New London Police Chief
Sandra Licks, Library Director
Bob Harrington, Public Works Director
Tina Helm, Election Volunteer Coordinator
Ann Bedard, Assistant Moderator
Winfried Feneberg, Superintendent of Kearsarge Regional School District
Lynn Lewis, Finance Officer
Celeste Cook, New London Resident
Maureen Strachan, New London Resident
Minette McQueeney, *Intertown Record*

Building & Facilities Committee members: Colin Beasley, Peter Hogle, Peter Bianchi

Budget Committee members: Rob Prohl, John Raby, Joe Cardillo

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

Governor's Emergency Order #83: Ability to postpone town election and town meeting

Michael Todd, Moderator, addressed the Board to discuss the Governor's Emergency order and the recommendation on Town Meeting 2021. He noted that at a recent Citizen's Advisory Committee Meeting various options for Town Meeting were discussed.

Mr. Todd stated Option 1 is to vote on the second Tuesday in March and have the business portion of the meeting in the gymnasium the next day as is normally done. After considerable discussion, it was concluded that it might not be possible to have a business meeting and observe COVID protocols in the SAU gymnasium. The town highway garage was successfully used for voting in November but unfortunately it was felt that to try to use that space for voting in March would place too much of a burden on that municipal department. The building would be tied up for several days and inclement weather could be an issue as public works vehicles are in the area getting snow and salt to maintain the roads. If there is an option to conduct the voting elsewhere that might make more sense.

Option 2 is to have the vote on Tuesday in March and then have the business meeting conducting via Zoom. There would be two zoom meetings, one meeting would be to present the warrant and after a seven-day period to receive comments, the warrant would be amended. The second zoom meeting would explain the amendments to the warrant, finalize it, print it and vote on it using a drive through process. Mr. Todd stated Zoom meetings can be cumbersome and it can be challenging to conduct a robust debate on a Zoom platform. Access to electronic equipment could also be an issue for citizens and could put them at a disadvantage.

Option 3 states we can postpone the business portion of the meeting as well as the election, which is allowed under Emergency Order #83. Traditionally the town has had voting and then town meeting the next day, which has worked well for the town. Mr. Todd feels that the voting sessions should be done close to the business meeting. In this way, people who sign up to vote at the election can also vote at the town meeting. His recommendation is to postpone both the voting session and the business meeting to the second week in June. They have been looking at several different venues to hold the business meeting outside where they can erect a tent, have access to power and have adequate parking.

Another issue is the Kearsarge Regional School voting as this has traditionally been done together with the March voting session. There is more participation in the Regional School District vote when they are held at the same time. The school also has the option to postpone.

They have been offered the space in the renovated cafeteria of the Elementary School, now referred to as the Professional Development Center. A tour was taken of this space and there were concerns with air flow and social distancing. There would be adequate parking.

Will Kidder stated the decision should be based on safety and the right thing to do is to move election and town meeting to June. He stated it would be nice if the school could move their election too but understands if they can't and must hold it in March. Tina Helm stated it is also her preference to have the election and town meeting back-to-back in June on the town green. She believes Whipple Hall could accommodate the School District election on March 9, 2021 if they are required to hold that election, but she would like to move all of it to June.

Kim Hallquist agrees with the Election officials who have spoken. She appreciates that other towns have decided to have both their election and meeting as usual in March, but noted that they have fewer voters and can more easily provide social distancing while New London cannot due to its size. She recommends the change to June as well.

Selectman Cannon is in favor of postponing and holding both elections together. Selectman Rollins commented that sessions are successfully being held in the legislature currently using Zoom. She asked for comments from Superintendent Winfried Feneberg and also asked why we wouldn't consider holding the meetings in May instead of June. Mr. Todd stated having the voting in June centered on the thought that the longer we postpone, the more time people have to get vaccinated and also the weather would likely be better if it was held outdoors.

Winfried Feneberg stated they are dealing with seven towns, so he reached out to all the town moderators. In a cooperative district there should be consensus and if there isn't there should be a majority rule if they are going to consider changing the date. At least five or six towns have made the commitment to have it on March 9, 2021. He also reached out to legal counsel. He would prefer to have the voting all on the same day so New London is doing it at the same time as the other six towns. If voter turnout is lower, that is to be expected. He responded to the comment about air flow in the renovated section of the Elementary School and stated in all the buildings in the district, they meet the CDC requirements for cubic feet per minute air exchange.

Chair Kidder agrees that waiting until June makes sense since more people will be vaccinated and may be more willing to come to a meeting. Also, the weather should be better.

IT WAS MOVED (John Cannon) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to accept the recommendation of the election officials to postpone the New London town meeting, including the election and business meeting until Tuesday June 8, 2021 due to concerns related to the COVID-19 health emergency. John Cannon: yes, Nancy Rollins: yes, Janet Kidder: yes. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to hold the election for the School Board budget meeting to March 9, 2021. John Cannon: yes, Nancy Rollins: yes, Janet Kidder: yes. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Lack of Disposal of Construction & Demolition (C&D) materials at Brush/Metal Center

A citizen inquired why the town does not accept C&D materials at the town's metal and brush disposal center, forcing residents to take materials to Newport. Bob Harrington stated the brush and metal disposal area is not a secure location and there are issues there now with people dumping stuff off in front of the gate. He has concerns about people sneaking things in after hours because they do not want to pay for it. It should be in a spot where it could be monitored. This will not be approved at this time.

Public Comment – None

Old Business:

Selectman Rollins thanked Chief Cobb for including the Building & Facilities Committee in research being done at the Stahlman Building. She understands that Frank Lemay of Milestone Engineering and Construction and Architect Frank Anzalone are doing work related to this. She questioned who requested their involvement and who is paying for their services? Chief Cobb responded that she requested their involvement as they have expertise in the area but has not asked for any money and they have not been told they will receive any money for the preliminary items they are working on. Selectman Rollins asked if it is pro bono at this point and Chief Cobb responded yes. Selectman Rollins stated in the future, she would like Chief Cobb to work with the Building and Facilities Committee first. It could potentially put those two organizations in a compromising position with regards to whatever future decisions are made moving forward. Chief Cobb responded that she considered it information gathering to see if it was even a viable option as a Police Department. She mentioned this to the chair of the Building and Facilities Committee back in November and wanted to get as much information as possible to be prepared.

Peter Bianchi stated it does put the architect and the the builder in an awkward position because if things do move forward, they already have a leg up about what is going on to put anything out for bid. It has happened in the past and it was an uncomfortable situation.

New Business:

There will be a virtual open house this Friday from 4:30-6:00 recognizing Sandra Licks' 14 years of service at Tracy Library.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to issue a proclamation thanking Sandra Licks for her service to the town of New London and wishing her luck in her future endeavors. John Cannon: yes, Nancy Rollins: yes, Janet Kidder: yes. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Town Administrators Report

Ms. Hallquist provided the following report:

- Lynn Lewis has been hired to replace Wendy Johnson as the Finance Officer. Dianne Bottari has been selected to replace Ms. Lewis and Will Kidder will be asking the Selectmen to agree to Ms. Bottari's appointment as Deputy Tax Collector.
- Adam Ricker, Town Planner for the past 3 years has accepted the position of Planning and Zoning Administrator and will start on February 22, 2021.
- Ms. Hallquist has received a lot of compliments on the skating rink as the ice has been excellent. People are also very happy with the availability of the loaner ice skates that are available at the Recreation Department.
- So far there are three applicants for the Administrative Assistant position and 1 applicant for the part-time Recreation Director.
- Ms. Hallquist is in the process of gathering the list of last years' lifeguards to contact them to see if they want to come back for the upcoming summer season. An ad will also be placed in the newspaper about this. The Recreation Commission is meeting next week so she will have them review the ad and discuss rate of pay.
- Randy Foose has submitted a volunteer interest form for the Housing Commission. She let him know that all the full commission members have been selected, but there is an open slot for an alternate member. He stated he would be happy to serve in that capacity.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to accept Randy Foose's request to be on the Housing Commission and to appoint him as a third alternate member. John Cannon: yes, Nancy Rollins: yes, Janet Kidder: yes. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Committee Meetings & Reports

Planning Board – Chair Kidder stated the Planning Board met on January 26, 2021. They discussed a driveway permit appeal, an annexation and updated plans for the Barn Playhouse. There was also discussion about a proposal for a Capital Improvement Plan Committee. This will be discussed further at the next Planning Board meeting on February 9, 2021.

Meeting Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (John Cannon) to approve the minutes of January 19, 2021 meeting. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED.

Upcoming Meetings & Special Events

- Next regular Selectmen's meeting – Monday, February 22nd – 6:00 PM – via Zoom
- Budget Committee – PUBLIC HEARING – Wednesday, February 3rd – 7:00 PM – via Zoom
- Buildings & Facilities Committee – Thursday, February 4th – 6:30 AM – via Zoom
- Citizens Advisory Committee – Saturday, February 6th – 7:30 AM – via Zoom
- Housing Commission – Monday, February 8th – 6:00 PM – via Zoom
- Planning Board – Tuesday, February 9th – 6:30 PM – via Zoom
- President's Day – Monday, February 15th – Town Offices CLOSED

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
- Tax Abatement

Applications Approved &/or Denied

Building Permits

- David Kaminski, 104 Hilltop Place, TM 059-016-0-0-0. Interior renovations. BP 21-001 approved 1/13/21
- Pearl Street LLC, 19 Pearl Street, TM 084-048-0-0-0. Renovation of apartment#1. BP 21-002 approved 1/13/21.

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:57PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson
Recording Secretary
Town of New London