



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

February 14, 2022

6:00 PM

PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Janet Haines, New London resident
Police Chief Emily Cobb
Gerry Gold, New London resident
Colin Beasley, Phil Sherman, Rip Cross; Building & Facilities Committee members
Bob Brown, Ruth White, Rob Prohl, Conservation Commission members
Leigh Bosse, *The Messenger*

John Lewis, New London resident
John Raby, Budget Committee member
Nancy Maraschio, New London resident

Selectman Cannon called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and opened the Public Hearing for the Proposed issuance of a bond in the amount of \$600,000 for the purpose of repairs and renovation of Whipple Town Hall and the Buker Building.

Public Hearing

John Raby stated when the Budget Committee reviewed this proposal there was general agreement that there should be a bond to finance the necessary improvements and it should be done in the next fiscal year. Mr. Raby stated there were critics but really the only dispute was how large the dollar amount should be, not whether there should be a warrant or if improvements should proceed.

Mr. Raby noted that during the budget process he asked those that wanted a lower dollar amount, what that amount should be and he did not get a response. For that reason, he voted for the warrant as it was written in the amount of \$600,000.

Rip Cross stated there is no breakdown of the costs on the warrant, so no one knows what they are getting for that amount. If this information was shared, people would have a better understanding. Town Administrator Kim Hallquist stated it was shared at the budget committee meeting hearing and when the warrant is posted all the information will be available on the town website for people to see.

John Lewis stated when he was at a recent town meeting discussing the purchase of property, several people stood up and spoke. After that discussion concluded, many people left. Later in the meeting another person spoke about the same issue and those comments were not heard by all the people that had already left. He feels the agenda is confusing and not clear and made suggestions to the Selectmen on considering a better format for the meeting.

The Chair declared the Public Hearing closed at 6:09 PM.

Public Comment

Janet Haines attended the meeting representing the League of Women Voters. She notified citizens about forums that will be held next Thursday from 7:00pm – 8:15pm. There are two candidates that are running for one open seat on the Board of Selectmen and 6 gentlemen will be competing for 3 seats on the Budget Committee. The meeting will be held via zoom. An email should be sent to lwvcandidateforums@gmail.com and this will allow you to register for the zoom call and submit questions for the candidates to respond to. Information will also be included in the *Shopper*.

Request to use \$50,000 of Mary Haddad Trust Funds for Philbrick-Cricenti Bog Walkway

Bob Brown, Chair of the Conservation Commission, attended the meeting to discuss a walkway improvement to the Philbrick-Cricenti Bog. Chair Brown noted the bog is the number one most visited site of all the 32 miles of New London Conservation Commission trails. There are parts that are dry but most of the area is not dry so there is a safety concern. There are many boardwalks on the trail that cover about ¾ of a mile. The boardwalk system is made up of 2-2x8 boards with four cross pieces. This supports a person walking in, but the problem is, people cannot pass each other without stepping off and there are times that the bog is more supportive than others depending on the water level and weather. Replacing the boardwalks requires constant maintenance. It is expensive in terms of time, and they don't have the volunteer labor force they used to have.

Chair Brown stated safety is a concern as they have had some falls out on the trail. Ruth White pointed out that several years ago someone got hurt and ambulance personnel had a hard time getting to the person. Chair Brown explained that they have talked to other conservation groups and some solutions suggested were nailing roofing shingles to the boards to produce an anti-slip surface, special paints and nailing chicken wire to boards to prevent slipping. The Conservation Commission has discussed this issue for several months and tried to find ways to make it better and safer. The solution they have come up with is to build a walkway that has an aluminum frame. This won't decay, has an anti-slip surface, and is grated so ice and snow will fall through. It is adjustable so it can be altered if needed. The only downside is the cost. To build this type of walkway is much more expensive but it is reliable and permanent. The Conservation Commission is requesting up to \$50,000 be approved for this from the Mary Haddad Trust to start this project, it will be done in phases and will require additional funds in the future to expand the walkway system.

Chair Brown stated the Conservation Commission has voted to approve this project and the Recreation Commission has also approved it.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to support the proposal for the aluminum walkway request up to \$50,000 out of the Mary Haddad fund. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Selectman Rollins asked if the Conservation Commission has considered putting donation boxes out or considered other fundraising options that might be helpful to sustain some of these projects. Chair Brown stated they have talked about some ideas and there are some opportunities they could research.

Chief Cobb – potential grant for body worn and dash cameras

Police Chief Emily Cobb attended the meeting and stated that recently the Department of Safety announced some state grant funds were made available for the use of body worn camera and dash cameras. This grant would allow for a reimbursement to the grantees of 50% of up to \$50,000. The quotes Chief Cobb received in the fall of 2020 ranged from \$30,000 to \$50,000 depending on how many body and dash cameras were bought. She would suspect that the cost has gone up since that time. She is here tonight to see if this is something the town would be willing to engage in and would they be agreeable to 50% of the cost. The deadline for the application is March 15, 2022. There is also a requirement to maintain the program for a minimum for five years and Chief Cobb feels this is reasonable. The Selectmen were all in favor and asked that she pursue the grant.

Petition submitted at last meeting asking Selectmen not to place a Town Meeting warrant article to purchase Cricenti land, or any real estate, without a proposed plan for its use – signatures validated by Town Clerk

Town Administrator Kim Hallquist stated 132 signatures were verified by the Town Clerk.

Request for New London Day 2022 to be held on Saturday, April 30th

The group of citizens that holds an annual clean-up day would like to hold the event on April 30th this year. The Selectmen were in favor of clean-up day in New London on Saturday, April 30, 2022.

Safety/Security Needs Assessment of Academy Building by MRI

Town Administrator Kim Hallquist informed the Board that the safety survey by MRI has been received. She will be sharing the information with town office staff and departments heads to discuss the findings and recommendations to come up with a plan to make safety improvements. Once this is completed, the plan will be submitted to the Selectmen to discuss implementation. Selectman Rollins asked if it could also be shared with the Building and Facilities Committee. Ms. Hallquist agreed that she will send it to them; the Building and Facilities Committee was not involved in the survey as they previously decided they did not need to be involved with this process.

Annual Financial Report FY2021

Town Administrator Kim Hallquist stated that the FY2021 audit has been received. She stated Treasurer Steve Theroux was happy with the audit; the Finance Officer and Town Administrator will be working to address points raised in the audit. The audit will be posted on-line.

TOWN ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

Town Administrator Kim Hallquist provided the following report:

- The lower shades were installed 3 hours ago in Whipple Hall. The top parts are being manufactured and will be installed at a later date.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS & REPORTS

Selectmen Kidder reported there was a Planning Board meeting held on February 8, 2022. There was discussion with Eversource regarding the interpretation of driveway regulations.

MEETING MINUTES: Approve the Selectmen's Minutes of January 24th.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to approve the minutes of the January 24, 2022 meeting. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Board noted that it will hold a regular Selectmen's meeting on February 17th along with the public hearing, and then not meet on February 28th as previously scheduled.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & SPECIAL EVENTS

- Next Regular Selectmen's meeting – Monday, March 7th – 6:00 PM - Whipple Town Hall
- **Public Hearing – Thursday, February 17th – 6:00PM – Fire Truck long-term lease \$946,000**
- Police Station Site Review Subcom. – Tuesday, February 15th – 1:00 PM – PD Training Room
- Conservation Commission – Wednesday, February 16th – 8:30 AM – Syd Crook Room
- Housing Commission – Wednesday, February 16th – 6:00 PM – Whipple Town Hall
- Building and Facilities Committee – Thursday, February 17th – 6:00 PM – Syd Crook Room
- **Town Offices Closed – Monday, February 21st – Presidents' Day**
- Planning Board – Tuesday, February 22nd – 6:30 PM – Whipple Town Hall

APPROVAL OF PAY VOUCHERS, PERMITS etc

Items to be signed:

- Accounts Payable Vouchers
- Intent to cut (2) - New London Hospital & Old Main St
- Application for town use – NL Barn Playhouse
- Raffle Permit - Elkins Fish and Game
- Birthday Cards - March

Applications Approved &/or Denied

Sign Permits – approved

- Pella Windows & Doors, TM 085-044-0-0-0. Approved. 2/1/22

Raffle Permit – approved

- Elkins Fish & Game Club – Michael Gelcius – raffle to benefit the youth scholarship fund.
Drawing date 12/7/2022

Building Permits-approved

- Charles H Richards, TM 093-009-0-0-0. Roof mount solar 23.14kW. BP 22-06. Approved. 2/2/22
- Oliver Wight Americas, Inc, TM 084-057-0-0-0. Update 2 bathrooms, & wet bar area. BP 22-10. Approved. 2/2/22
- Heidi Clarke 06 Revocable Trust, TM 118-003-0-0-0. Roof mount solar 23.585kW. BP 22-08. Approved. 2/3/22.
- Andrew D Johnson, TM 046-022-0-0-0. Roof mount solar 9.6kW. BP 22-11. Approved. 2/4/22.
- Ann Harris, TM 070-018-0-0-0. Roof mount solar 16.4kW. BP 22-12. Approved. 2/4/22

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson

Recording Secretary
Town of New London