



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES April 6, 2024 Whipple Memorial Town Hall 8:30 AM

PRESENT:

Bill Helm, Chairman
Bebe Hammond Casey, Selectman
Janet Kidder, Selectman
Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator
Lynn Lewis, Finance Officer

ALSO PRESENT:

Will Kidder, Town Clerk/Tax Collector
Police Chief Emily Cobb
Laura Abrahamsen, Tracy Library Interim Director
Peter Nichols, Housing Commission Chair
Nancy Rollins, Housing Commission member
Karen Epstein, Budget Committee member
Rich Epstein, New London resident
Bob Bowers, New London resident
John Ellis, New London resident
Phil Sherman, New London resident
Collin Beasley, New London resident
Howard Hoke, New London resident
Russ Moore, New London resident

Chair Bill Helm called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM, announcing that the meeting was being held in place of the originally scheduled for April 4th, that was postponed due to a snowstorm.

Public Hearing: Acceptance of Highway Grant in the amount of \$29,421.48 for mobile data terminal equipment in the Police Department.

Chief Cobb gave an update on the amended grant application discussed and approved at the February 8, 2024 Board of Selectmen meeting. She explained that based on the grant specifications, the funds would only be used to outfit the four marked patrol cruisers. She explained that the amount awarded to the Town had been amended from \$8,200 to \$29,421.48 and there is also some matching funds required from the Police Department, which she can absorb in her operating budget. There will be four marked cruisers that will receive this equipment, a condition of the grant is that the equipment go into vehicles that are used primarily for patrol so the Chief's vehicle and the detective vehicle will not get the equipment.

There was no public comment, or questions from the Board of Selectmen. Chair Helm closed the Public Hearing.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Bebe Casey) to accept the State of New Hampshire Highway Safety Grant in the amount of \$29,421.48. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chair Helm thanked all Town Staff that worked throughout the recent snowstorm for their efforts. He gave an overview of upcoming projects that the Board would be working on for the year: the completion of the water main replacement on Main Street, developing the detailed proposal outlining options for the future of the Police and dispatching departments (new or renovated), constructing a spending plan for the operating budget and capital investment takes into account the impact on taxes as well as many items that the town does not have direct control over like the school funding issue that Selectman Casey is following for the Board. The Board of Selectmen meetings, including the planned full day FY2026 budget discussion on October 25th, have been scheduled for the year and posted online. Chair Helm urged all to attend the various meetings to assist the Board. Citizens should check the website for updates, meeting place and agendas. Colin Beasley asked if the Selectmen would post links to four reports done previously on the police station project page. The Board agreed.

Grant Revision for Communications Tower Repeater

Chief Cobb presented a revision to the Emergency Management Performance Grant previously accepted at the February 22, 2024 Board of Selectmen meeting. She explained that this is phase III of the project which has been in the works for many years. As she had not personally submitted the original amount, she reviewed the documentation again and determined that the amount needed to be amended. She explained that it was originally \$135,000 and now the updated amount is \$103,000.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Bebe Casey) to accept the amended terms of the Emergency Management Performance Grant as presented in the amount of \$103,000.00 for the communication tower repeater project. Furthermore, the Board acknowledges that the total cost of this project will be \$206,000.00, in which the town will be responsible for a 50% match (\$103,000.00) THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

IT WAS MOVED (Bebe Casey) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to authorize Chair Helm to sign all documents related to the grant. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Peter Nichols noted that he wrote a grant for the Housing Commission and he was amazed at the amount of time that it took for the application so he appreciated how much work Chief Cobb has put in regarding these grants and he thanked her for her dedication.

FORMATION OF BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Selectmen Casey gave a background of how the idea for the committee started with a request from resident Bob Bowers to form a committee dedicated to sidewalks in New London. She reviewed the Board of Selectmen discussions around the need to have a committee dedicated to mobility issues in general and the timeline of reserve account funding in anticipation of a project to improve the sidewalks. Selectmen Casey referred to recommendations from the Master Plan that support the formation of an advisory committee dedicated to mobility enhancements.

The new committee will be called the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, to remain uniform with other similar committees in the state. The Selectmen would like the short-term focus for the committee to be on sidewalks, with a long-term focus on making the town more accessible, overall. The Selectmen reviewed the purpose and membership recommendations prepared ahead of the meeting. The membership will be seven regular members, and two alternate members.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Bebe Casey) to establish the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

IT WAS MOVED (Bebe Casey) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to nominate nine citizens to the Biking and Pedestrian Advisory Committee:

- 1. Ed Condict**
- 2. Donald Eberly**
- 3. Russ Moore**
- 4. Emily Campbell**
- 5. John Bouton**
- 6. Judith Ferreria**
- 7. Woody Canady**
- 8. Grant Smith**
- 9. Erica Brown**

Nancy Rollins asked if the committee would consider working with the Recreation Department and Police Department to have a Bike Safety Fair, perhaps closing down Main Street. Chair Helm thanked Ms. Rollins for the suggestion and clarified that the purpose statement does include guidance for the new committee to work with the Planning Board and the Recreation Commission, as well as the Board of Selectmen.

Colin Beasley asked if it was possible to expand the membership nominations to include everyone who had submitted an interest form. Chair Helm explained that the intent was to have the committee consist of nine members.

IT WAS MOVED (Bebe Casey) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve nine nominations to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

FORMATION OF POLICE STATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Chair Helm explained that when the Selectmen voted last fall to accept the proposal from Colliers Project Leaders for an initial study of the Police Department, a recommendation was made for an advisory committee to be created. The Selectmen have been considering how best to organize the committee and they are now ready to move forward.

Kim Hallquist provided examples of what type of work the committee could do, and how they might assist the Board:

- The committee will meet with the architect and consultants, currently Colliers Project Leaders, as well as the Police Department and other stakeholders, and then report to the Board of Selectmen.
- They may work on specific tasks such as reviewing submitted proposals and information that is gathered by the architect that is eventually selected.
- They can provide input on matters that are important to the citizens of the town and will ideally include some individuals that may have a background in law enforcement or building and architecture.
- Committees such as this can also provide another way for the Board of Selectmen to get information out to citizens and keep the community up to date.

Chair Helm stated that as the project evolves, the work of the committee can evolve. He expects that the Board will have regular interaction with this committee. The Selectmen discussed and agreed that there

will not be any Selectmen appointed to the committee however the police department should be represented on the committee. Chief Cobb intends to attend meetings regularly however her recommendation is that another department member be the official committee member. She has spoken to Lieutenant David Keith, a resident of New London and member of the School Board, and he is willing to serve on the committee if appointed.

Chair Helm suggested starting the appointments to this committee by appointing the following five individuals to the Police Advisory Committee:

1. **Phil Sherman**
2. **Bruce Parsons**
3. **Jeff Hollinger**
4. **Jim Casey**
5. **David Keith**

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Bebe Casey) to appoint five nominations to the Police Advisory Committee. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Nancy Rollins spoke about the history of discussions regarding the Police Station and how there are many different points of view on the topic. She expressed her desire for a balanced, equitable and thoughtful committee. Chief Cobb agreed that there have been many points of view on the topic, and she noted that this effort was new in that the town will have the benefit of having guidance and advice from an outside consultant. She believes that support from Colliers will help guide the committee through a fair, open, and thoughtful process. Phil Sherman recommended that guidance from the International Association of Chiefs of Police on planning and designing police facilities should be included as part of the committee planning. Chair Helm supports the idea of a fluid process.

It was noted that the Board would like to get this process started as soon as possible; they are awaiting word back from additional potential members and will appoint them at a future meeting.

HISTORIC MARKERS

Doug and Charlene Baxter met with Kim Hallquist to discuss the poor condition of New London's historic markers. The Baxter's provided pictures of the markers showing the need for restoration. There are sixteen markers in town, originally installed between 1963-1979 to celebrate the town's bicentennial. The Baxter's provided information on estimates of what it might cost to refurbish the markers, however there is more research that could be done. She asked if the Board was interested in pursuing the project. Selectmen Casey noted that 2029 is the Town's 250th Anniversary, and it could be possible to tie the project into that celebration. It was agreed that the Selectmen were open to gathering more information on the project. Jim Perkins, Town Archivist, will be contacted about the project as well.

ABATEMENT REQUESTS

The Selectmen reviewed the memos from Chief Assessor Kristen McAllister, regarding abatements.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Bebe Casey) to approve the recommendations of the Chief Assessor for the abatement applications as listed. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

- Abatements Granted:
 1. 81 Lighthouse View Road Trust, 81 Lighthouse View Road, Parcel 126-009-0-0-0
 2. Lawson, 1549 Little Sunapee Road, 030-020-0-0-0
- Abatements Denied:

1. Weinstein, 324 Stoney Brook Road, Parcel 137-012-0-0-0
2. Mulhern Trust, 157 Owls Nest Road, Parcel 141-003-0-0-0
3. Schweizer Trust, 813 Little Lake Sunapee Road, Parcel 032-002-0-0-0
4. Katsanos, 1223 County Road, Parcel 117-004-0-0-0
5. Kent Trust, 101 Lamson Lane, Parcel 049-014-0-0-0
6. Genter, 95 Old Route 11, Parcel 056-021-0-0-0

Howard Hoke questioned how one would know which abatements would be considered at the meeting in advance. The Board noted that for future abatements, a list of the applications to be considered will be posted. Mr. Hoke noted that he is interested in the application submitted by the Masons for property in Elkins.

APPOINTMENT OF TAX COLLECTOR AND DEPUTY TAX COLLECTOR

IT WAS MOVED (Bebe Casey) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to appoint Will Kidder as Tax Collector for a three-year term and to appoint Dianne Bottari as Deputy Tax Collector for a term of three years. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Kim Hallquist reported that the Board will be addressing reappointments to the various boards and committees. She noted that there has been less interest from people looking for appointment to committees so a reminder was put into the most recent *Municipal Matters*. The annual adoption of the Board's Rules of Procedure will be considered at the next meeting. Ms. Hallquist also noted that she met with New London Hopital Ambulance officials along with Chair Helm, and Chiefs Cobb and Lyon to discuss a contract for ambulance service to memorialize the service that has been provided for many years.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS & REPORTS

Selectman Casey reported that a stay was issued in the Rand decision (*Steven Rand, et.al. v State of NH*, a court case regarding school funding) so the issue is on hold for the moment. She noted that there are several bills in the legislature regarding this issue that she is monitoring.

Selectman Kidder reported that at the Planning Board, they heard from Mike Hansen who is asking to put an office building in across from Spring Ledge Farm. There was a tree cutting application and Colby-Sawyer College's application for a sign at Kelsey Fields. There was also a discussion of the zoning amendment results from Town Meeting.

Selectmen Kidder reported that at the Board of Firewards meeting it was reported that Engine 2 was sold for \$18,200 which was placed in the general fund. She also reported that the fire department was experiencing some issues with the new software in dispatching, Chief Cobb confirmed that all of the glitches in the software as it marries up with the fire department's Active 911 system have been resolved. The recent snowstorm had the fire department out for about 24 hours answering the many calls that came in.

Chair Helm reported that at the recent Water Precinct meeting the topic was almost entirely funding for the Main Street water main replacement project. He also reported that he recently received a call from Joe Hogan, owner of the land on County and Newport roads that the town had considered as potential police station locations, that they will be closing on the County Road property (former Bewley property) soon so the town should remove that property from its list of potential sites. Also, the water pump test for the Continuum project, New London Place, was a success so they will be progressing to the next step.

MEETING MINUTES: - Approve Selectmen's Minutes of March 21st

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Bebe Casey) to accept the minutes of the March 21st meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The next regular Selectmen's meeting will be Thursday, April 18th at 5:30pm, at Whipple Memorial Town Hall. After that, meetings will be held on Wednesdays for the summer.

APPROVAL OF PAY VOUCHERS, PERMITS etc

Items to be signed:

- Payroll Authorization Vouchers
- Yield Tax Levy – Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust
- Land Use Change Tax – Brunelle Realty Trust

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 AM

Respectfully submitted,

Cara Leone
Recording Secretary
Town of New London

Note: RSA 91-A:2, II provides that “*Minutes of all such meetings, including nonpublic sessions, shall include the names of members, persons appearing before the public bodies, and a brief description of the subject matter discussed and final decisions.*” A video of the entire meeting may be available for viewing on the town website, NewLondon.NH.gov, if more than the brief description contained in these meeting minutes is desired.