



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
May 22, 2024
Whipple Memorial Town Hall
5:30 PM**

PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Putnam Kidder, Recreation Director
Peter Nichols, Housing Commission Chair
Rob Prohl, Conservation Commission member
Phil Sherman, Police Facilities Advisory Committee member
Karen Epstein, Budget Committee member
Rich Epstein, New London resident
Mary Rakow, New London resident

Chair Bill Helm called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM

RECREATION DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Putnam Kidder, Recreation Director, gave an update on summer programming. He noted that swim lessons will be offered at both beaches: six sessions total, starting in July. The timing of the lessons has been shifted to be later in the day based on community feedback. Late morning sessions will allow the water to warm up and evening sessions will accommodate a wider range of schedules. Lifeguard training will be starting soon, with a certified instructor that the department has worked with before. There will be additional training throughout the summer including joint training with the Police and Fire Departments, as well as New London Emergency Services, the morning of June 24th at Bucklin Beach. This allows the groups to be familiar with each other and the lifeguards can have the benefit of working with individuals that have real life experience. There will be ongoing training goals, which the staff can work on when they are not on “chair duty.” There was concern over staff members using their phones while it appeared they were on duty. Mr. Kidder noted it is a focus of training and that when they are taking their breaks, they are encouraged to be inside the guard house if they need to be on their phones.

Selectman Casey asked about the status of beach attendants. Mr. Kidder explained that that role has been harder to fill but they are hoping to onboard those individuals after school is out in June. Beach attendants will be raking the beaches each morning. Selectmen Kidder asked about the status of the bathrooms and the septic. A cleaning company has been hired and will be cleaning the bathrooms at both beaches 7 days a week once the beaches are open full time. The septic system has been pumped and there is an arrangement with the Police Department to make sure the bathrooms are locked at night. Strawberry Festival is coming up on June 22nd. More information will be available on the Recreation Department Facebook page, and the Town Website.

Chair Helm shared that he had attended a recent Recreation Commission meeting and had met Caitlin Vecchio Taylor, the resident interested in volunteering for the open Commission seat.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Bebe Casey) to approve the nomination of Caitlin Vecchio Taylor to the Recreation Commission. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

HOUSING COMMISSION HOP GRANT

Peter Nichols asked the Board to consider voting to accept the NH Housing Finance Authority Housing Opportunity and Planning (HOP) grant in the amount of \$103,914. He explained that the money would be expended over two years and would be used by September 30, 2026. The Housing Commission would like to use the funds to explore more ways to encourage the development of affordable housing in New London. They have talked with Resilient Planning and Design and Fougere Planning and Development about consulting on the project and they have agreed to participate. The grant is designed as a reimbursement grant: the town pays the bills and gets reimbursed with grant funds. There are three phases to the grant. The first phase would be used to take a detailed look at the current inventory in town, the second phase would involve developing possible solutions, the third phase would focus on implementation, which may not be immediate. Selectman Casey thanked Mr. Nichols for his work on the grant, and the work the Housing Commission has done to date.

Rob Prohl asked how community members will be able to participate in the process. Mr. Nichols said the goal does include community engagement which could include bringing different topics to forums and workshops. He encouraged everyone to participate and attend when the opportunity presents itself. Chair Helm spoke of the importance of advertising events through many channels and Mary Rakow also spoke in support of more advance notice for meetings. Karen Epstein asked for a clarification of the timeline of the grant. Mr. Nichols gave an overview of the work that had been done on the grant over the last year.

IT WAS MOVED (Bebe Casey) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the acceptance of the HOP grant in the amount of \$103,914. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mary Rakow asked about the status of the shrubbery at Elkins Beach, which she brought to the Board's attention at a previous meeting. It was noted that the Department of Public Works has trimmed back some of the excess foliage, as nothing can be removed from the protected shoreland area. Chair Helm thanked Ms. Rakow for her feedback and assured her they would continue to monitor the situation.

UPDATE ON POLICE FACILITY PROJECT

Chair Helm gave the history of the work to date and explained that the next step would be an assessment study by an architect. The Town has received three proposals and Chair Helm shared some of the feedback from the last Police Facility Advisory Committee meeting, the full recording of which is available on the Town website. Due to the history of work done by two of the firms on Whipple Hall and Buker, and the committee discussions, Chair Helm recommended hiring Lavallee Brensinger Architects for an assessment study. He noted that all three proposals were similar in price. The study is estimated to take about 19 weeks to complete. Selectman Kidder does not want to see the committee bogged down and supports moving ahead with hiring Lavallee Brensinger. Selectman Casey would like to see more conversation in committee meetings regarding the impact of hiring Lavallee Brensinger as an architect for the assessment study as that decision does not mean that they will be the architect on the project indefinitely. Phil Sherman, Police Facility Advisory Committee member, has concerns regarding the

scope of work as listed on the request for proposal (RFP). He stressed the importance of making sure that any contract agreed upon is reflective of the work that needs to be done. Mr. Sherman feels that there could have been a more robust attempt to gather RFPs from additional architects. He has identified three additional local architects with experience in Police Departments. Selectman Casey suggested including the additional architects on future RFPs. Mr. Sherman agreed that it is not a requirement to keep the same architect for each phase however, in his experience from the Whipple Hall 2022 Project Committee, he feels it allows for a smoother project start to finish.

Rob Prohl asked for clarification of the Selectmen's goals for what they might present at the next Town Meeting, with regards to the Police Facility project. Selectman Kidder explained the Selectmen will make as much information available as possible, but more work needs to be done by the committee before they can commit to what they might bring to Town Meeting. She also noted that there have been discussions in the past of how the Buker building might be used if the Police Facilities were to move from their current location. Chair Helm noted that any future use of Buker, and how the town handles communications with other towns, are items that are the responsibility of the Board, and he expects that they will revisit those topics later in the summer. Selectman Kidder wants citizens to remember that much work has already been done through past committees, such as the Future Use of Buker Committee, on how the Buker building might be used. The Board formed the Police Facility Advisory Committee to focus on the project at hand, not future uses of Buker.

IT WAS MOVED (Bebe Casey) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) for the Town of New London to hire the firm of Lavallee Brensinger Architects to develop an assessment study for the future Police Facility. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

JUNE 27th COMMUNITY GATHERING

The Board reviewed the list of topics they hope to discuss at their Community Gathering on June 27th, 8:30am, Wheeler Hall at Colby-Sawyer College. They will continue to fine tune the agenda, and order of speakers, as the date gets closer.

ABATEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Chair Helm asked if there were any questions from the Board regarding the recommendations of the Assessors for the ten following abatement applications:

- Recommended to be Granted:
 1. Taylor Family Trust, 742 Lakeshore Drive Parcel 051-009-0-0-0
 2. Twerdahl, 153 Sugarhouse Road Parcel 035-010-0-0-0
 3. Ryan, 295 Lamson Lane Parcel 062-009-0-0-0

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Bebe Casey) to accept the recommendations of the Assessors to grant abatements for the three listed requests. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

- Recommended to be Denied:
 1. Leavitt, 126 Hilltop Place Parcel 059-016-06A-126
 2. Echo Knoll Realty Tr., 636 Lakeshore Road Parcel 050-005-0-0-0
 3. Foss Rev. Trust, 128 Camp Sunapee Road Parcel 045-046-0-0-0
 4. Bianchi, 381 Bunker Road Parcel 062-024-0-0-0
 5. Stevens, 614 Bunker Road Parcel 076-031-0-0-0
 6. Kreisler Family II LLC, 261 Owls Nest Road Parcel 135-002-0-0-0
 7. Townley's Family Trust, 231 Pleasant Street Parcel 074-009-0-0-0

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Bebe Casey) to accept the recommendations of the Assessors to deny abatements for the seven listed requests. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Ms. Hallquist updated the Board that the abatement application from the Masonic Association, discussed at the last Selectmen's meeting, was withdrawn by the applicant.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Kim Hallquist read the following recommendations for appointment:

Planning Board:

- Emily Campbell (appointment as full member)
- Erin Maloney (new appointment as alternate)
- Charlene Baxter (new appointment as alternate)

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Bebe Casey) to approve the nominations to the planning board, as listed. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Zoning Board of Adjustment:

- Steve Root (appointment as full member)
- Julia LeMense (new appointment as alternate)

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Bebe Casey) to approve the nominations to the Zoning Board, as listed. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Housing Commission:

- Tom Vannatta (appointment as alternate)

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Bebe Casey) to approve the nomination of Tom Vannatta as an alternate member of the Housing Commission. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

SEWER WARRANT

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Bebe Casey) to approve the Warrant for Wastewater Charges in the amount of \$336,475. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Ms. Hallquist reported that the New London-Springfield Water Precinct Main Street water main replacement project is two weeks underway, and she has not received any complaints. She and Adam Ricker met with a group of citizens regarding short-term rentals (STR). There are two ways to address the issue; the life safety issues could be address through a Selectmen's ordinance which would take effect sooner than Town Meeting, and zoning changes that could regulate STR would need to go through the Planning Board and ultimately by a ballot vote at Town Meeting in March. Staff are reviewing how regional towns are handling concerns and will be getting legal counsel to ensure that any solutions brought forward are enforceable.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS & REPORTS

Selectmen Kidder reported on the most recent Board of Firewards meeting. The injured owl rescued from the side of Route 11 with assistance from members of the fire department is doing well. Training is ongoing.

Selectmen Casey reported that the group previously known as the Tri-Town Watershed Initiative has been renamed as the Four-Town Watershed Initiative. They are working on a best practices document to share with towns on watershed protection. The Budget Committee met May 8th for the first time with the newly elected members. The newly formed Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee met for the first time on May 9th. They will meet again on July 9th and will be starting with a focus on short-term goals. The May 11th New London Cleanup Day was successful.

Chair Helm reported on a recent Energy Committee meeting where they discussed the potential for purchasing the existing municipal solar installations. They discussed the best timing of entering a purchase and sales agreement related to getting approval for the purchase at a Town Meeting. They are continuing to review other options for achieving 100% renewable electricity.

MEETING MINUTES: - Approve Selectmen's Minutes of May 1st
IT WAS MOVED (Bebe Casey) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to accept the minutes of the May 1st meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The next regular Selectmen's meeting will be Wednesday, June 12th at 5:30pm, at Whipple Memorial Hall. Meetings will continue to be held on Wednesdays throughout the summer.

APPROVAL OF PAY VOUCHERS, PERMITS etc.

Items to be signed:

- Payroll Authorization Vouchers

Applications Approved &/or Denied

Building/Zoning Permits – Approved

- Keating Rev Trust, TM 070-013-0-0-0, BP 24-18, expanding rooftop solar by 2.03kw – Approved 4/25/24
- Susan Forest, TM 034-008-0-0-0, BP 24-20, remove deck and rebuild in new footprint, renovate bathroom and garage – Approved 4/25/24
- Michels Rev Trust, TM 094-020-0-0-0, BP 22-138A, amending shed from attached to detached – Approved 4/25/24
- Jenn & Jerod Rockwell, TM 073-065-0-0-0, BP 24-21, 12 x 16 shed with electrical and water spigot – Approved 5/9/24
- Richard and Joan Aseltine, TM 118-025-0-0-0, BP 24-23, demolishing and rebuilding SFH – Approved 5/9/24
- Black Bear Holdings LLC, TM 094-002-0-0-0, BP 24-24, addition of 18x36 inground swimming pool – Approved 5/9/24
- Gilman Sunapee Trusts, TM 068-006-0-0-0, BP 24-15, two story bard with covered walkway – Approved 5/10/24
- Michael C Hansen Trust, TM 128-014-0-0-0, BP 24-17, 40'x60' barn – Approved 5/20/24
- Bruce & Pat Allen, TM 138-007-0-0-0, BP 24-25, interior basement renovation – Approved 5/20/24

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:35pm

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.