



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

375 MAIN STREET • NEW LONDON, NH 03257 • NEWLONDON.NH.GOV

NEW LONDON BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES Wednesday, May 24, 2023 Kearsarge Professional Development Center 6:30 PM

BUDGET COMMITTEE PRESENT: Chris Lorio (Chair), John Wilson, Colin Beasley, Hannah Bianchi, Lyndsay Harkins, Lou Botta, Melissa Leintz, Charles Kelsey, Janet Kidder, Selectman Representative

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mark Christensen and Bebe Casey, Selectman Representative

STAFF: Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator; Lynn Lewis, Finance Officer

ALSO PRESENT: Police Chief Emily Cobb; Bob Harrington, Public Works Director; Will Kidder, Town Clerk-Tax Collector; Steve Ensign, Board of Firewards; Adam Ricker, Planning & Zoning Administrator; Peter Nichols, Housing Commission; Fire Chief Jay Lyon; Nancy Marashio, New London resident; Bill Helm, Selectman; Putnam Kidder, Recreation Director; Crystal Schimpf, Tracy Library Director; Sherry Williams, Tracy Library Trustee

Chair Lorio called the meeting to order at 6:30PM and announced the start of the FY2025 budget season.

Welcome new member

Chair Lorio welcomed newly elected member Charles Kelsey and asked him to introduce himself. Mr. Kelsey noted that he is excited to be part of the Budget Committee and he looks forward to working with everyone. He stated that his family has been in New London for over 100 years. He and his wife Cynthia moved into town about four years ago when they moved into his grandfather's old house on Little Lake Sunapee. Mr. Kelsey explained that he has worked for many years in the corporate world and he feels that that experience will be helpful.

Chair Lorio recognized the many years of service of former Budget Committee member Joe Cardillo who served as Chair and Vice Chair over the years, noting that Joe had a lot of experience and was very helpful to him and to other members. Chair Lorio thanked Joe for his service.

Chair Lorio noted that all members should have an agenda and information on capital reserve funds. He noted that approval of the minutes would be moved up on the agenda to be taken next.

Approval of Minutes of February 8th, 2023

John Wilson noted a typographical error on page 6: ...payments *were* reduced... not *we* reduced.

A vote to approve the minutes of February 8th as amended was taken. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Elect Chair/Vice Chair

Chair Lorio noted that due to what he expects to be a busy work schedule, he does not feel that he can continue as Chair and therefore nominated Lyndsay Harkins as Chair. Lou Botta seconded the nomination.

John Wilson nominated Colin Beasley as Chair. Hannah Bianchi seconded the nomination.

Vote on the nomination for Lyndsay Harkins to serve as Chair: Lorio, Botta, Kidder and Harkins in favor; Wilson, Beasley, Bianchi, Leintz opposed. Kelsey abstained from voting noting that he does not know either candidate, so he is uncomfortable voting. The vote was 4-4, the nomination did not pass.

Chair Lorio agreed to remain as Chair until the Committee takes up the issue of the election of the Chair and Vice Chair at its next meeting.

Selectmen's Report

Selectman Kidder reported that earlier in the evening the Selectmen heard an update of the Whipple project and went over priorities including the wage study that has started. Also, there was a tour of the Broom property to see if it is viable as a future site of the police station. The Board went over information on the Capital Reserve funds and she asked that the Budget Committee meet with the Selectmen either on June 7th or June 14th to discuss these funds in more detail, as discussed during the last budget preparation. Colin Beasley noted that it will be a working session to review the various funds to decide if changes will be recommended.

The Budget Committee agreed that they will meet with the Selectmen on June 7th at 6:30PM.

Colin Beasley suggested that other items to be discussed included an analysis of financial software and dispatching fees. Selectman Kidder noted that the Board has not yet started discussion of the FY2025 budget and she was not sure when those items would be discussed. Mr. Beasley asked if the Budget Committee could have subcommittees that include experts to look into some of these bigger picture items parallel to the Selectmen's work. Ms. Hallquist agreed that the Budget Committee can have subcommittees however it does not have a budget to hire experts. Mr. Beasley noted that the experts would be citizen volunteers. Ms. Hallquist pointed out that the Budget Committee has had subcommittees in the past.

Meeting schedule for budget season

Chair Lorio noted that in the past the Budget Committee met on Wednesday at 6:30PM beginning sometime in September. There was general consensus that the schedule would work for the coming budget sessions.

Discuss meeting with department heads

Chair Lorio noted in the past, Budget Committee members that wanted to meet with the various departments were asked to select the departments they wanted to attend and select if they wanted to be primary or secondary and then those members would meet with town departments and report back to the committee. Members could go to all department meetings if they wanted to. There was a general consensus that this format worked well in the past and should be used for this budget cycle as well.

Other business

Colin Beasley asked that only the budget worksheets with the percentage change be printed to save paper. All were in agreement.

Lyndsay Harkins asked about the procedure for the Selectboard member. Ms. Hallquist noted that the Selectman member is a full voting member just like all other members, the only difference is that the selectman member did not run for election to the Budget Committee, instead, he/she is appointed by the other selectmen. It was noted that Selectman Casey will be the Selectmen's representative, Selectman Kidder was present tonight as Selectman Casey was not able to attend. Ms. Harkins also asked about members meeting outside of a meeting. Ms. Hallquist noted that a meeting of a quorum of the committee must be held in public at a properly noticed meeting so that deliberations happen in public. She pointed

out that if fewer than a quorum meet it is not a violation of the law but she cautioned members to consider the appearance of impropriety that such a meeting of members could have on the public.

Charles Kelsey asked about the role the Budget Committee plays with the department heads in their budget preparation. Chair Lorio noted that department heads are happy to give members a tour of their facility and will share information on their budget needs and challenges. He asked if there are areas that the Budget Committee does not get involved in, for example, do they get involved in staffing levels or FTE's (full time equivalents). Chair Lorio noted that the Committee would not get involved in determining if a department needed a new employee but the budget request for that employee would be brought to the Budget Committee. He noted that a Budget Committee could discuss the issue of new employees with a department head. Mr. Kelsey noted that his questions were aimed at being productive and not spending time on things outside their purview as he values and respects the time of the department heads – he would like this to be a collaborative and even a fun process. Chair Lorio suggested that he meet with the Town Administrator for additional information on the procedures for budget committees and it was noted that there are also budget training courses that all members can attend.

John Wilson pointed out to Mr. Kelsey that the Budget Committee, in the time he has spent on it, has had its creative moments too.

Adjourn

IT WAS MOVED (Lou Botta) AND SECONDED (Lyndsay Harkins) to adjourn the meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 6:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kimberly Hallquist
Town Administrator