



TOWN OF  
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MEETING MINUTES**

**May 3, 2021**

**6:00 PM**

**Via Zoom**

**PRESENT:**

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

**ALSO PRESENT:**

New London Police Chief, Emily Cobb  
Public Works Director, Bob Harrington  
Emergency Management Director, Lou Botta  
New London Fire Chief, Jay Lyon  
Representative Karen Ebel  
Randall Herman, New London resident  
Colin Beasley, Building and Facilities Committee  
Putnam Kidder, New London Beach Director  
Carolyn Elliott, New London resident  
Ted Hebert, New London resident  
Susan Brown, New London resident  
Janet Haines, New London resident  
Kim Pruett-Ilg, Recreation Commission  
Sheri Cote, Recreation Commission  
Rob Prohl, New London resident  
Linda Jackman, New London resident  
Pamela Drewniak  
Justin Garzia, Recreation Commission  
Greg Parthum, Recreation Commission  
Jack Elliot, New London resident

**Conservation Commission members:** Bob Brown, Michael Kennedy, Mark Vernon, Michael Gelcius,  
Ruth White, Joe Kubit

Selectman Cannon called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Chair Cannon called the roll: Nancy Rollins; present, Janet Kidder: present, John Cannon: present.

**Public Comment – None**

**OLD BUSINESS**

• **Building and Facilities Committee – recommendation for blinds for Whipple Hall**

Colin Beasley reported that he received an email from Dennis Mires regarding the two action items from the last meeting. The first one referred to locations where there were other installations as well as the

show room. Mr. Beasley will provide this information to Kim Hallquist and the Selectmen can choose where they want to go look at examples. The second item involved getting alternative bids and three different bids will be provided.

- **Purchase of land behind highway garage**

Kim Hallquist reported that the Board of Selectmen asked her to contact the Real Estate agent to see whether they could negotiate on the price. The Real Estate agent informed her that the seller believes he can get \$135,000 based on the real estate market and the assessed valuation which is \$107,900. Selectman Kidder stated the asking price is too high. If we are going to move forward with this property, we should use the assessed valuation of \$107,000. Selectman Rollins and Chair Cannon agree and will take no action at this time.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Support for Amendment to SB 28: naming the New London roundabout the “Jessie Levine Roundabout”**

Representative Karen Ebel is on the Public Works and Highways Committee which oversees roads, bridges, and infrastructure. They also review naming requests for roads and bridges in the state. She is planning to present a bill to officially, under state law, name our roundabout after Jessie Levine. It is the policy of the committee to seek town support through the Board of Selectmen before they vote in favor of this. A plaque was dedicated to her 5 or 6 years ago but unless it is officially named under state law it could be named for someone else in the future. Jessie Levine was the town manager for 11 years and during that time there was a lot of discussion about what to do with the intersection of Newport Road/County Road. Ms. Levine always supported the concept of a roundabout and it took a lot of effort to get the roundabout built. In addition to the service to our town, Ms. Levine has many other accomplishments in the state with respect to local government. Selectman Kidder thanked Ms. Ebel for spearheading this effort. It is important that the plaque stays in place and that the state acknowledges the many contributions that Ms. Levine made not only to New London but to the greater community as well. Selectman Rollins and Chair Cannon thanked Ms. Ebel and are in support as well.

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) that the Board of Selectmen of New London support the amendment SB 28 naming the New London roundabout the “Jessie Levine Roundabout”. Nancy Rollins: yes, Janet Kidder: yes, John Cannon: yes. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- **Discuss New London Mask Resolution**

Susan Brown stated she sent an email to the town but also attended the meeting tonight to share her thoughts on the mask resolution. She has two engineering degrees and has spent a lot of time researching this issue. There is a lot of fear and the US media is pushing fear narratives more than the rest of the world media. Many people are understandably afraid, but many are frustrated with the mask mandates because the science is incredibly weak. Healthy people should not wear masks as it does not do any good and there are harms it can do which is well documented. The vaccines are readily available for people that want to protect themselves in that way and it is time for people to make their own decisions.

Emergency Management Director Lou Botta stated although he would like to stop wearing masks, we owe it to others to exercise care when it comes to the public. Currently, the CDC recommends that all people wear masks when they are not in a position to be 6 feet apart. Even though the Governor allowed the mask resolution to expire, Mr. Botta feels we are not there yet when it comes to protecting the general public. The data still shows significant transmission in New London and as more people come up for the summer season from areas of higher transmission rates, we are vulnerable. Variants of COVID 19 are infecting younger people at increased rates, especially those who are not vaccinated. Mr. Botta stated that

doing away with a mask resolution would leave our business community with very little support as far as enforcement.

Carolyn Elliott is a resident of New London and stated she is firmly against all mask mandates outside, specifically at the town beaches, the dump, parks, and playgrounds. The vaccine is in abundance and anyone that wants it can get it at this point. If you elect to not get the vaccine you are choosing to assume your own risk. We need to return to normal life as the state has recommended. Our town should not have rules above and beyond what the state has directed. Transmission outside is near zero so we are long overdue to drop the mask mandates outside.

Pam Drewniak works at New London hospital and although she is not speaking on behalf of the hospital, the general healthcare community has made it clear that masks protect not only the people wearing them but also protects people that are susceptible who didn't get the vaccine. Those that didn't get it or don't want it can also spread it. She is in favor of the mask mandate.

Janet Haines is a member of the New London barn playhouse board and they are desperate to get back to performing. She suggested this decision be delayed for another month.

Randall Herman stated he is firmly against the mask mandate and is homeschooling his children, so they are not masked or socially distanced every day. He feels we will look back at this time to what has been done to our children and feel great shame. Mr. Herman is a former science teacher and has taken masters and doctorate level research design and statistic courses. He has a doctorate in clinical psychology and believes the level of neuroticism related to COVID is important and should be mentioned. There is evidence of masks not working and we should not be putting a lot of trust in certain government organizations such as the CDC. We should be careful who we listen to and question things that do not add up.

Jack Elliott agrees with Mr. Herman and feels that wearing masks outside is absurd. New London is one of the least populated towns in New Hampshire and part of the reason he lives here is for freedom and liberty. With the vaccine available for everyone there is no reason for everyone to be forced to wear a mask. This has gone on for too long and he is firmly against wearing masks outside.

Justin Garzia stated many studies show it is important for people to get outside in the sun and fresh air and the risk of transmission outside is low risk. Having a mask mandate for outside is unnecessary and restrictive. Loosening the mask mandate should be considered as a first step.

Selectman Rollins stated the guidelines still strongly suggest that if you cannot socially distance that it is important to still wear a mask. The epidemiologists are still advising the healthcare communities in New Hampshire and recommend that the guidelines continue. This should be reviewed on a monthly basis. Pfizer is already saying there may need to be a booster and possibly an annual shot. Even people that are vaccinated are still coming down with COVID 19. It is premature to drop the guideline.

Selectman Kidder agrees with Selectman Rollins and as much as she would like to not wear a mask, we must look at the numbers of people that are still getting infected and dying every day. We have not reached a point where we can feel safe about not contracting the COVID virus. This should be revisited after town meeting. She is not in favor of ending the mask resolution.

Chair Cannon feels it would be premature to end the mask resolution as well. The masks are required to protect others. This is a decision made by the Selectmen and is in effect until the Board decides to either

replace it with something else or has no reason to keep it in place. Citizens of the town can voice their opinion about this at town meeting.

**Discuss rules for beaches this summer.**

Kim Hallquist stated some of the issues the Selectmen need to decide for the beaches this summer are whether they will they limit the number of people at the beaches, whether the beaches will be limited to New London residents and their guests and whether the floating docks will be put in the water this year.

Kim Hallquist noted she reviewed the CDC guidelines, and they continue to recommend social distancing and mask wearing when social distancing is not possible. Transmission of COVID 19 is less problematic outdoors than indoors. Justin Garzia believes the CDC wants people to wear masks even in the water if social distancing cannot be maintained.

Police Chief Emily Cobb stated last year they hired a part time parking attendant to help enforce parking because the Board decided to limit it to residents only—no guest passes. There were a lot of complaints from people who were not aware they could not have guest passes. There were a lot of complaints about lack of parking on Old Dump Road as well.

Selectman Rollins reviewed the CDC guidelines for beaches and it clearly states do not wear masks in the water. They also strongly recommend that people use cloth masks and social distance, use hand sanitizer, and avoid crowds. Selectman Rollins suggested following similar guidelines that were used last year and have signage recommending that people maintain social distancing, use hand sanitizer etc. Chief Cobb feels there are some areas that the Board and the Recreation commission can look to do differently such as opening the playground.

Carolyn Elliott would like the signage to be in sync with the resolution language which states if you cannot socially distance then you need to wear a mask. It is misleading to state masks are required and should be clarified.

Selectman Kidder agrees that last years' guidelines should be reviewed. Her concern this year is staffing. At this point there are only five people that are interested in being lifeguards. Putnam Kidder is the new Beach Director and stated staffing is the number one priority. We need to make sure it is a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone.

Randall Herman commented it would seem most of the people using the floating docks are children and they are at extremely low risk and danger. He supports putting the docks in the water.

- **Conservation Commission potential purchase of land on Rte 11 at Low Plain**

Conservation Commission Chair Bob Brown attended the meeting to discuss parcel 088-006 at the Esther Currier Wildlife Management area at Low Plain. This land has been on the desirable lands list for over 25 years. They have actively been discussing it for the past five years. It is a 23.2-acre parcel that is contiguous to the main section of Low Plain. The parcel is forested with wetlands, has a cascade brook and is an important Pleasant Lake watershed. The parcel was originally priced at \$400,000 which they felt was excessive. They were advised not to get an appraisal and did research. The price was then reduced to \$245,000. They also discussed this with Ausbon Sargent who felt it was a fair price. The owners were consulted and agreed to accept \$245,000. The Conservation Commission is looking for support of the project and for approval to release \$245,000 from the Mary Haddad fund. The other option would be to use the Conservation Land Acquisition fund which has \$270,000 in it.

Selectman Kidder thinks this is a worthwhile piece of property and meets the criteria that Mary Haddad set forth in her gift to the town of New London. She is in favor. Selectman Rollins and Chair Cannon are also in support of this.

Joe Kubit commented that some of the incidental costs are not allowed to be covered by Mary Haddad funds. There are certain things the trust cannot pay for.

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) that contingent on approval from the Recreation Commission that the Conservation Commission's request be approved to purchase the land on Route 11 at Low Plain from the Mary Haddad fund up to \$245,000. Nancy Rollins: yes, Janet Kidder: yes, John Cannon: yes. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **Town Administrators Report**

Ms. Hallquist provided the following report:

- With the Selectman's vote on the Jessie Levine roundabout, Ms. Hallquist will speak at the committee meeting on Wednesday to let them know the Selectman have approved and recommended it. The Selectmen will sign a letter that will be sent to the committee.
- The public hearing for the budget will be held on Thursday.
- Municipal Matters went out last week.

### **Committee Meetings & Reports**

**Planning Board** – Selectman Kidder reported a Planning Board meeting was held on April 27, 2021. A representative from Eversource presented a proposal for tree cutting and trimming on scenic roads. All property owners on scenic roads have been notified of this. There was a request for two businesses on Main Street and Pearl Street to pave their parking lots. There was discussion about whether site plan review was needed and due to concerns about drainage it was decided to require it.

**Building & Facilities Committee** - The Building and Facilities committee made a presentation to the Citizen's advisory Committee on Saturday along with Police Chief Emily Cobb.

**Housing Commission** – Selectman Rollins reported that the Housing Commission met and continues to work with other groups relative to work done on a survey to determine the type of workforce housing and projects that may be possible in New London.

### **Meeting Minutes**

**IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes of April 19, 2021 meeting. Janet Kidder: yes, Nancy Rollins: yes, John Cannon: yes. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED.**

### **Upcoming Meetings & Special Events**

- Recreation Commission-Tuesday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 5:00pm
- Energy Committee-Wednesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm via Zoom
- Buildings & Facilities Committee-Thursday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm via Zoom
- Budget Public Hearing-Thursday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm
- Budget Public Hearing Con't (if needed) Monday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm
- Planning Board-Tuesday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm

- Buildings & Facilities Committee-Thursday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm via Zoom

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](http://www.nl-nh.com)

**Items to be signed:**

- Accounts Payable Voucher
- Property Tax Credit/Exemption (5)

**Applications Approved &/or Denied**

Sign Permits – approved

- Permanent Sign 21-07. Jean Connolly, Center for the Arts. 353 Main St. TM 084-090-0-0-0  
Approved 4/22/2021.

Building Permits-approved

- Mitchell & Penny Latva Trust, 182 Everett Park, TM 073-011-0-0-0. Build 2532 sq ft addition w/garage, reno kitchen. BP 21-030. Approved 4/27/2021.
- John Finck & Eve Burton, 651 Main St, TM 096-002-0-0-0. Replace existing shed with new, same footprint. BP 21-041. Approved 4/29/2021.
- Margaret & Herbert Lyon, 85 Bog Rd, TM 107-022-0-0-0. Finish 750 sq ft basement, add bath. BP 21-047. Approved 4/29/2021.
- Andrew & JoAnn Purdy, 579 County Rd, TM 082-036-0-0-0. Build 14x24 shed. BP 21-049. Approved 4/29/2021.
- Anthony Thompson Trust, 57 Main St, TM 073-057-0-0-0. Build 12x24 deck at rear of house. BP 21-048. Approved 4/29/2021.

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:28PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson  
Recording Secretary  
Town of New London