



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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NEW LONDON BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES Wednesday, June 7, 2023 Kearsarge Professional Development Center 6:00 PM

PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Bob Harrington, Public Works Director
Emily Cobb, New London Police Chief
Jay Lyon, New London Fire Chief
Will Kidder, New London Tax Collector
Crystal Schimpf, Tracy Library Director
Michael Williams, New London Information Technology Officer
Phil Sherman, Whipple Hall Project Committee
Joe Kubit, Trustee of the Trust Funds
Jim Steproe, Trustee of the Trust Funds
Joe Cardillo, New London resident
John Lewis, New London resident
Nancy Marashio, New London resident

Budget Committee: John Wilson, Chris Lorio, Lyndsay Harkins, Hannah Bianchi, Melissa Leintz, Mark Christensen (via Zoom), Lou Botta, Colin Beasley, Charles Kelsey

Selectman Helm called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Nancy Marashio thanked the team that toured the Broom facility. She pointed out that the Police Station Site Committee felt it would be a good idea to look at multiple sites and now the Selectmen have done that.

Chief of Police request to expand Dispatching Center

Police Chief Emily Cobb shared that a few years ago she started looking at new Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) software and records management software for the Police Department. She ultimately applied for a grant for the software which was awarded to the town. The grant funds will hopefully be released sometime this summer. In order for the software to function appropriately, they will need more monitors. Currently the dispatchers are operating off three monitors and a small iPad. This software will require seven monitors as there are different things on different screens that they will need to look at. The dispatch center is very small and there is physically not enough space to accommodate the equipment to support this new software.

The proposal before the Board tonight is to remove a portion of the wall between the Dispatch Center and the recreation office. All possible options within the police station were looked at to find a solution for more space before concluding that going into recreation was necessary. Chief Cobb spoke with the project manager at North Branch who is currently doing renovations in Whipple Hall and she obtained an estimate. She felt that it would be best if this could be done while North Branch is already on site as the estimate would be double if they had to come back at a later time. The estimate that was given to complete this construction project is \$33,343 and would take approximately three weeks. Chief Cobb wanted to stress that this would be a temporary solution to a longer-term problem in terms of space at the Police Department.

Selectman Casey asked why they couldn't just put a door in to access that other space. Chief Cobb stated that just putting in a door wouldn't work as they need their dispatchers to be able communicate with each other when there are multiple people in there and also their line of sight from another dispatching station in that office area to the front window is important. It would be better to have an open space.

Selectman Casey asked where the money would come from to support this project. Town Administrator Kim Hallquist responded one option would be to use American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. The town has already committed 50% of these funds but some of the remaining funds could be used. They could also use funds from the Town Buildings Capital Reserve fund or find funds in the operating budget.

Chief Cobb added that she was able to source some used dispatch console desks from another department in New Hampshire. The desks can raise and lower and withstand the weight of the monitors and equipment they will need. Town Clerk Will Kidder stated they will need to address storage and understand where chairs etc. will be moved to if the recreation office is no longer available for this purpose.

Phil Sherman, Chair of the Whipple Hall Project Committee, stated that he hasn't been in the loop with any of the discussions with North Branch related to the expansion of the Dispatch Center. It sounds to him that if they are cutting the price in half, that means they are planning to use some of the management and overhead time from the Whipple project to support this. It is a risky thing to have a contractor go in two different directions without a common point of control. He requested that Chief Cobb attend the Whipple Hall meeting tomorrow to discuss this further. Chief Cobb stated she doesn't think it will impact the Whipple Hall project schedule but it they would be utilizing the use of the Superintendent and other staff.

Joe Cardillo asked if town employee Matt Grimes could do any of this work. Chief Cobb stated she didn't talk with Mr. Grimes as this would involve a crew that would need to be bigger than what he could do by himself.

IT WAS MOVED (Bebe Casey) AND SECONDED (Bill Helm) to approve the request of \$33,343 to expand the dispatch center as outlined in her memorandum of June 6, 2023. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Consider request of LSPA to use Recreation Van for an event in Sunapee.

IT WAS MOVED (Bebe Casey) AND SECONDED (Bill Helm) to pass over this item as the request to use the van was withdrawn. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Finance Officer – NH Public Deposit Investment Pool (PDIP)

Finance Officer Lynn Lewis reported that due to financial uncertainty in our country over the past few months, she felt it would be a good idea to update everyone on the security of finances for the town. This update includes funds from the daily operating budget and revenue that is deposited to Ms. Lewis from various sources and collected by Town Clerk-Tax Collector Will Kidder. A portion of the cash is at Bar Harbor Bank which is insured by the FDIC which is covered by a home loan bank guarantee which covers up to 5 million dollars. A majority of the surplus money (currently \$2.5 million dollars) is at the New Hampshire Public Deposit Investment Pool (PDIP). Town Treasurer Steve Theroux and Ms. Lewis monitor the status of these investments. They also review their investment information and determined that the risk at this point, is minimal. The town takes the security of money very seriously.

TOWN ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

Kim Hallquist reported that there is currently an opening in the Selectmen's office for the Administrative Assistant. She encouraged people to spread the word and send any candidates to her so they can get that position filled soon.

Ms. Hallquist, along with Town Planner Adam Ricker, attended a helpful workshop on enforcement issues yesterday in Concord.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS & REPORTS

Selectman Helm reported that he attended the monthly New London – Springfield Water Precinct meeting on June 1, 2023. He also attended the Waste Reduction committee meeting on May 25, 2023 and the committee is continuing to work on the expansion of the composting program.

PRIORITIES

- **Wage Survey and Classification Study**

Ms. Hallquist stated that she and the department heads will meet with the consultant this week. They will hear from the consultant how best to fill out job description forms. The job descriptions will help her to determine which towns to compare which positions with. Ms. Hallquist hopes to provide a report at the next meeting.

- **Police Station**

Ms. Hallquist has contacted four video consultants to prepare a video for the Police Station. There should be information to report at the next meeting. The Police Chief will be involved in these discussions.

- **Capital Reserve Funds**

This topic will be discussed with the Budget Committee during this meeting beginning at 6:30pm.

- **Dispatching fees**

Selectman Helm deferred this topic to the next meeting.

John Lewis addressed the Board and stated that he heard that there is the possibility the Police will purchase the Village Heights building (also known as the Broom Building). Selectman Helm commented that the town decides what to purchase, not the Police Department. Mr. Lewis recommends that the town purchase this building for a new police station, noting that the building is set back from the road and that separation is good, aesthetically. Mr. Lewis feels that the present south side of the building should remain unchanged. He feels any new renovations be placed at a distance. Selectman Helm noted that the Board has been aware of the property for a while and if the town decides to pursue this building, many of the issues that Mr. Lewis is discussing will be looked at further. He thanked Mr. Lewis for bringing this before them tonight and for his support.

Budget Committee - Capital Reserve Funds

The Budget Committee and Selectmen met jointly to discuss Capital Reserve Funds.

Chris Lorio informed the Budget Committee that committee member Mark Christensen is out of state and is asking to participate via zoom. In order to participate remotely, the Budget Committee needs to approve this.

IT WAS MOVED (Lou Botta) AND SECONDED (Melissa Leintz) to allow Mark Christensen to participate in the Budget Committee meeting via zoom. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

MEETING MINUTES: Approve Minutes of May 24th

John Wilson stated on page two with regards to elections, it isn't accurate to state there were four votes for a candidate and four votes against. When you have multiple candidates, you vote for them or you vote for another candidate. Kim Hallquist responded she agrees with what Mr. Wilson is saying but what is in the minutes actually reflects what was done at the meeting.

IT WAS MOVED (Lou Botta) AND SECONDED (Melissa Leintz) to accept the minutes of the May 24, 2023 meeting. Mark Christensen: yes, Charles Kelsey: yes, Lyndsay Harkins: yes, Lou Botta: yes, John Wilson: yes, Chris Lorio: yes, Melissa Leintz: yes, Colin Beasley: yes, Hannah Bianchi: yes. Bebe Casey abstained. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Elect Chair/Vice Chair

Chris Lorio stated at the last meeting there were two nominations that did not end in the election of a Chair. Lyndsay Harkins stated she would like to withdraw her name but would like to nominate Chris Lorio to serve as Chair of the Budget Committee.

John Wilson stated he would like to nominate Colin Beasley. Hannah Bianchi asked if Mr. Beasley would be interested in being the Vice-Chair. Mr. Beasley responded, either one is fine, but chair is his first choice.

IT WAS MOVED (Lyndsay Harkins) AND SECONDED (Lou Botta) to elect Chris Lorio as Budget Committee Chair. Mark Christensen: yes, Charles Kelsey: yes, Lyndsay Harkins: yes, Lou Botta: yes, John Wilson: no, Colin Beasley: no, Melissa Leintz: yes, Hannah Bianchi: yes. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED.

IT WAS MOVED (John Wilson) AND SECONDED (Hannah Bianchi) to elect Colin Beasley as Budget Committee Chair. THE MOTION DID NOT PASS.

Chair Lorio asked for nominations for Vice-chair. Melissa Leintz nominated Colin Beasley.

IT WAS MOVED (Melissa Leintz) AND SECONDED (Charles Kelsey) to elect Colin Beasley as Budget Committee Vice-Chair. Mark Christensen: yes, Charles Kelsey: yes, Lyndsay Harkins: yes, Lou Botta: yes, John Wilson: yes, Chris Lorio: yes, Melissa Leintz: yes, Hannah Bianchi: yes. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED.

Capital Reserve Fund Details

Selectman Helm stated the objective tonight is to explore the topic of reserve funds as they are used in New London. Selectman Helm suggested that they briefly review the statutes governing the reserves. Selectman Helm distributed a document that describes the statutes. The town is allowed to establish both capital reserve funds and expendable trust funds. In 1995 the Legislature enacted an amendment to clarify the same provisions apply to both capital reserve funds and expendable trust funds, regardless of what the fund is called or the statutory authority under which it was established. Therefore, the term reserve fund commonly refers to both capital reserve funds and expendable trust funds.

Reserve funds can be established to finance capital projects, capital acquisitions, extraordinary legal fees, and/or to fund maintenance or operational costs. Withdrawing money from a reserve fund requires a vote of the legislative body or town meeting at an annual meeting unless the town meeting has named agents to expend from a reserve fund. If agents to expend have been designated, it does not have to go back to town meeting every time an appropriation is made but it can only be made for which the fund was established. It is important to understand in each case what the purpose of the fund is.

After a purpose for which a reserve fund is established has been determined, no change can be made to the purpose until such change has been authorized by a two-third vote at a town meeting. All reserve funds are held in the custody of the trustees of the trust funds. Trustee of the Trust fund elected officials, Joe Kubit and Jim Steproe attended the meeting.

Joe Kubit stated they are an independent group that manages the funds and determines if requests for money meet the requirements of what the fund was established for. Charles Kelsey asked if funds invested in short-term, interest-bearing instruments. Joe Kubit responded they manage different types of funds that have different purposes. For town money and school district money, they are limited to buying CD's, US Treasury's and government bonds. It is also dependent on having an idea on when the funds will be needed.

Lyndsay Harkins discussed requests that are time sensitive and having to wait for Town Meeting, specifically property acquisition and real estate transactions. Kim Hallquist responded that currently, the Selectmen don't have authority to purchase land without a vote at town meeting. Ms. Harkins asked if this could be discussed again to make a capital reserve fund to purchase land. Ms. Hallquist stated not only would the Selectmen have to be agents to expend for that the capital reserve, but they'd also need to have the ability to purchase land without a vote of Town Meeting. The Selectmen don't have the ability to purchase land without a town vote.

Colin Beasley asked if they could look at the details of all the original warrant articles. He'd like greater clarity for what each of the articles actually say. Ms. Hallquist responded that the document that was created for their review includes the phrases that were pertinent to that warrant article. Mr. Beasley stated he would caution using the words capital reserves, as reserves. Unless the warrant article explicitly states capital, then arguably it could be for either capital or expense. For each account do we want more general language or more specific language. General language opens up the opportunity to use it for other things so when emergencies come about, there is access to it without being constrained by specific terms.

Selectman Helm stated there are five issues that should be addressed, including is the purpose of each existing reserve fund clearly stated and if not, what should be done about it?

Another issue is should any existing fund be closed? Selectman Helm suggested as an example, that the GIS update be closed as it has no balance in it. Chris Lorio said the question would be would there eventually be another GIS update. Selectman Helm responded they would have to go town meeting anyway to appropriate funds for it. Colin Beasley stated they should have a conversation at some point

about consolidating funds to provide greater flexibility. Chris Lorio responded this would need to be voted on. Charles Kelsey feels consolidation makes a lot of sense. One example is building maintenance as there are a lot of buildings that are separated out. If it was a consolidated fund, it would give greater latitude in time of need. He also proposed an information technology reserve fund of which a GIS item might fall within. As we look to the future, there may be more technology opportunities and needs. Information Technology Officer Michael Williams responded there is a non-capital reserve account for computer maintenance. Chair Lorio stated there should be discussion around computers and the cost in general of services and software.

Is the distinction between reserve funds for maintenance, and annual operating budgets for maintenance clear?

Is there a “target fund size” for any of the existing reserve funds? Should there be such targets for any existing reserve funds? Bebe Casey shared with regards to the School Board budget, there are targets for all of their reserve accounts and these were set based on discussions with different department heads. She feels this is good practice. Colin Beasley asked if equipment asset life assumption be looked at as well? Gathering this information in advance would give us a sense of longer-term financial planning. This can help identify, over a number of years, how much money needs to be collected. Selectman Helm responded that they have had that in the form of a spreadsheet that the Finance Officer has provided. The CIP also reviews with department heads the appropriate dollar amounts to put into those funds. Chris Lorio commented that they need to keep in mind that at times, the Budget Committee and the Selectmen have decided to reduce or cut deposits into reserves. We can continue to target dollars but have to hold ourselves accountable to meet those targets even when times are tough. Mr. Beasley stated this was not talked about last year when decisions were made and it’s important to understand the implications of doing that. Chair Lorio stated the department heads are having those conversations and they plan for that as part of their job. The department heads do the long-term planning but they are at the mercy of the Budget Committee and Selectmen during difficult times. Chair Lorio stated if we are going to have target funds, we should try to meet target funds. If there is a year when the target is not met, then when times are better, we should try to put more money in there to meet those funds. John Wilson agrees but has seen years when specific funds have been overfunded and money that is put in there is locked up and trapped. He's hoping the new software can provide running totals to make sure they are properly funded.

Charles Kelsey asked if there was any metric that could direct the total value of capital reserve funds using a percentage instead of setting individual fund targets? To simplify, could a warrant be developed to fund a percentage versus specific items. Chair Lorio clarified it would still be dollars, but then those dollars have to be allocated to each reserve fund. Kim Hallquist stated the amount of money has to be specific at the time of the Town Meeting vote. Voters at town meeting approve the specific amount of money for specific funds.

What additional reserve funds should be established, if any?

- Capital Reserve Fund Info

Selectman Helm wanted to discuss the distinction between funds for maintenance and annual operating budgets for maintenance. Selectman Helm checked with Kim Hallquist to see if there were any real guidelines around what qualifies for which category but she was not aware of any. Chair Lorio stated there may be gray areas and those would have to be discussed. John Wilson would like to review the past 10 years as it would be interesting to see what the flow of capital was. He stated it would also be helpful to have a document that shows projections of replacement equipment with the anticipated price.

Colin Beasley inquired as to whether there is any value in benchmarking the numbers against other towns of similar size. Chris Lorio stated we could, but we would have to dive into each department to know if everything was exactly the same. It could raise a lot of questions we don't have answers to.

IT WAS MOVED (John Wilson) AND SECONDED (Lyndsay Harkins) to close the Budget Committee portion of the meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Selectmen continued with their meeting.

MEETING MINUTES: Approve Selectmen's Minutes of May 10th and 24th

Selectman Helm suggested making an amendment to the May 10, 2023 minutes as follow:
Mr. Jacques confirmed that water for fire suppression will be provided by the precinct for the Continuum and Twin Pines project.

IT WAS MOVED (Bebe Casey) AND SECONDED (Bill Helm) to accept the minutes of the May 10, 2023 meeting as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Approval of the minutes of May 24, 2023 will be deferred until the next meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Selectman Helm proposed the idea of having a summer town gathering. The intent of this would be to update town residents on current priorities of the town.

In follow up to the discussion of the Budget Committee meeting that was just held, Selectman Helm explained that in the past, there were 10-12 meetings that allowed for each department head to come and give a presentation to the Selectmen. This process is then repeated again with the Budget Committee. He would like to propose something different this year and suggested scheduling a full day on a Saturday in the fall for all the department heads to come in to do presentations. This would save time for them to deal with other business in the town. Selectman Casey would just want to be sure that the public is able to attend or listen in so scheduling it on a weekday or evening might work better. Chief Cobb asked if they would consider doing it on a weekday. Selectman Helm responded it can be any day, we just need to decide what works best.

APPROVAL OF PAY VOUCHERS, PERMITS etc.

Items to be signed:

- Payroll Vouchers
- Birthday Cards (June for Bebe to sign)
- Wastewater Warrant

Applications Approved &/or Denied

Building/Zoning Permits – Approved

- Lane & Barton Revocable Trust, TM 123-012-0-0-0. Build 30x30 detached 2 bay garage. BP 23-47. Approved. 5/31/23
- Mary Dowse, TM 070-032-0-0-0. New SFH w/ attached garage. BP 23-48. Approved. 5/31/23
- Stacey Simon, TM 129-029-0-0-0. 12x16 temporary shed. BP 23-50. Approved. 5/31/23

- John & Roberta Hollinger Trusts, TM 063-010-0-0-0. Build 24x30 barn with 1/2 loft & cupola. BP 23-52. Approved. 5/31/23
- Kate & Paul Blount, TM 031-011-0-0-0. Demo 923sqft interior remodel and adding bump out on lake side. BP 23-54. Approved. 5/31/23
- Rebecca Emery, TM 117-020-0-0-0. Build 10x20 shed. BP 23-55. Approved. 5/31/23
- New London Hospital, TM 072-018-0-0-0. Replace existing bulk oxygen tank. ZP 23-07. Approved. 5/31/23

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Trina Dawson
Recording Secretary
Town of New London