



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES October 17, 2011

PRESENT:

Mark Kaplan, Chair, Board of Selectmen
Tina Helm, Selectman
Peter Bianchi, Selectman
Kimberly Hallquist, Town Administrator

ALSO PRESENT:

Hardy Hasenfuss, New London Resident
Bruce Hudson & Renate Kannler, New London Residents
Dave Seastrand, Police Chief
Jim Wheeler, Budget Committee Chair
Merry Armentrout, reporter for *The Intertown Record*
Ben Cushing, Budget Committee member (arrived at 7:00pm)

Chair Kaplan opened at 6:00pm.

Approval of Minutes of October 3, 2011

IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Tina Helm) to approve the minutes of October 3, 2011, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Amendments were:

Jim Parsons should be changed to "Bruce Parsons."

Ms. Helm indicated that on Page 5, the paragraph that begins: "Mr. Bianchi...an interesting structure in town who work independently" should be amended to read: "New London has an interesting structure in the town; there are boards and trustees who work independently, therefore more communication between the independent boards and the Board of Selectmen should exist."

Upcoming Budget Preparation – Discussion for Department Heads

Ms. Helm felt the Board of Selectmen were successful last year in setting a parameter for the Department Heads to consider while creating their budgets. Mr. Bianchi agreed and asked if they were only talking about the operating budget, not including salary and benefit expenses. Ms. Helm agreed and noted that she felt it would be good to have the Board of Selectmen give parameters to the Department Heads for the things that they (department heads) actually have control over, and then the Board of Selectmen would study and make recommendations for the things that the selectmen control, such as wages and benefits.

Chair Kaplan felt that it would make the most sense to ask the Department Heads about what their next year looks like. He felt that wage increases should be included in their discussion. By doing this, the Department Heads have greater input. He noted that it is the Department Heads who know what they need and once they come in and explain it to the Board of Selectmen, there can start a discussion. Ms. Helm and Mr. Bianchi felt that this was a difficult way to do it.

Hardy Hasenfuss said that the town is like a business, which, when creating a budget has the CEO set out a vision. He thought the Department Heads should be given a vision and to also look at what is feasible considering the current economy. He noted that he missed the recent CAC meeting that addressed the budget and taxes but informed the Board that a neighbor of his wondered why the taxes keep going up in town. Chair Kaplan said that the town's portion of the taxes has actually gone down the last three years but it is the school and county taxes that go up, which they have no control over.

Mr. Wheeler agreed that people in the town want the town to continue being maintained. But, do they want their taxes to go up and up regardless of the level of maintenance? No. He gave some historical data: taxes in New London have gone up 75% over the last 10 years, with the last two years remaining level. With regards to Mr. Hasenfuss' neighbor's question about what a reasonable increase was, it was his opinion that 4.5% per year would be a good estimate, which would fluctuate depending on the year. To get to an average of 4.5% for the period of 2000-2016 they'd have to keep a level budget between now and 2016. Chair Kaplan again stressed that the town portion of the budget has been going down and that the increases being discussed are mainly due to school and county increases that the town officials have no control over.

Ms. Helm wanted to hear from the Department Heads, but what she has heard from them already is that they appreciated the guidance they received last year. This saves them time when creating their budgets and gives a reasonable starting point for them to keep their budgets within a certain percentage.

Mr. Bianchi didn't think the Department Heads should come in and specify what they want for raises and insurance. They should only come in to explain what they need to do their work. Chair Kaplan had no problem with this. He thought it best to give them advice on which portions of the budget should be worked on. Ms. Hallquist said she could take out the wages and benefits portions from the budget print out for Department Heads to work from. Mr. Bianchi thought they should give a broad guideline to the Department Heads for what they should keep in mind while creating their budgets.

Mr. Hudson said he was pleased last May at the informational meeting when it was noted that the departments and the Board of Selectmen would work together to make reasonable budget reductions. He understood that it is a small percentage of the total budget for the town, considering the school and county budgets. Mr. Hudson felt that after those meetings, there were still "needs" that weren't stressed very much, but that there were "wants" that were stressed a lot. He noted as examples the drying racks at the fire station and the sailboats at Bucklin Beach. Mr. Bianchi said that one person's "want" is also someone else's "need." Ms. Helm said over the years the Town has been very responsible in trying to get a good balance and to work together. She definitely got that feeling from the CAC meeting on Saturday that people agree with this need for balance. Ms. Kannler said that people seemed to be very frugal and wanting to stretch their dollars.

Mr. Bianchi recommended that for the operating budget they should shoot for a 2% decrease over the current budget. Ms. Helm didn't think that was acceptable. She modified what she had said at a previous meeting and thought they should remain flat. Chair Kaplan agreed with Ms. Helm.

**IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Tina Helm) to advise Department Heads to come forward with a 2% decrease in the budget. THE MOTION WAS NOT APPROVED.
(Yes- Bianchi, No- Kaplan, Helm)**

**IT WAS MOVED (Tina Helm) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to advise the Department Heads to come forward with a flat operating budget.
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED (Yes- Helm, Kaplan, No- Bianchi)**

Mr. Bianchi asked if the bids for the curbing for the Pleasant Street sidewalk had gone out. Ms. Hallquist said no, she did not believe so but indicated that Mr. Lee has sent in the bid documents to the State but they are waiting on the State approval to proceed, which is apparently being held up by lack of approval from the Federal Government. In contrast to this, Ms. Hallquist noted that the Elkins project has already received the “notice to proceed” for the engineering RFQ.

Resignation from Bob & DJ Lavoie from the CAC

It was noted that Mr. & Mrs. Bob Lavoie are moving to San Diego, CA in the next few weeks and thus resigning from the CAC. They submitted a nice letter to notify the town of this. Mr. Bianchi suggested that Ms. Hallquist draft a thank-you note to thank the Lavoies for their ongoing participation in the town’s government. Ms. Hallquist agreed to do so.

IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Tina Helm) to have Ms. Hallquist draft a letter of thanks to the Lavoies and for Chair Kaplan to sign the letter on behalf of the entire Board of Selectmen. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Appointment of Representatives for the Rural Water Supply Project – UVLSRPC and LSPA

Chair Kaplan suggested contacting Terry Dancy and John Clough to see if they would be interested in serving, as they had served in similar capacities in the past.

Pine Hill Ski Club Request for Use of Town Property

IT WAS MOVED (Tina Helm) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to allow Pine Hill Ski Club to use town property as they have in prior years, following the same terms. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED. (Yes – Kaplan and Helm, No – Bianchi)

Mr. Bianchi wondered if because they allowed it before, would they be setting a precedence of allowing others to use town property for a commercial group. If they charge money to use town property, that raised some concern with him. Chair Kaplan said they have allowed this land use for many years.

Request of Food Pantry Collection Box at Transfer Station

Ms. Hallquist said that Linda Limburg was requesting this on behalf of the people who collect food for the food pantry. Mr. Bianchi said they allow the Planet Aid box on the way out of the transfer station, which doesn’t seem to interfere with the traffic flow. Having food being collected inside near the broken bottles, plastics and paper would not be ideal as it could get congested. Ms. Helm wondered what the Health Officer would say about this even though they mainly collect canned goods. Mr. Hasenfuss asked if they could try to have a collection box outside. Mr. Bianchi said that a box near the Planet Aid box would be out of the way. He also thought John Early should be consulted, as he runs the transfer station. Ms. Hallquist said she would do some more investigation and this would be discussed at the next meeting.

Discuss Energy Committee Memo for Direction from the Board of Selectmen

Jack Harrod, Chair of the Energy Committee, wondered if there was anything the Board of Selectmen would like them to address. His memo gave a brief listing of what has been done previously as well as other things that may be pursued.

Mr. Bianchi said that he agreed with the findings of the energy audit that there isn’t enough insulation upstairs in the Town Office building. He hasn’t seen any costs for doing this, however. He would like to see these costs before moving forward. Russ Aney had been working to get these numbers, including payback estimates for this upgrade, but it has not been completed. Mr. Bianchi thought the work the

Energy Committee does was good and if they can save money by doing this insulation project, they should go forward with it.

Surplus Property Sale

Chair Kaplan noted that they would be receiving \$10,000 for selling the Town's used equipment. Mr. Bianchi was surprised that they received \$7,626.00 for the dump truck. He noted that this money would not go into the Capital Reserve Fund. Mr. Wheeler said that if the vehicle was traded in, it would. This money will go into the General Fund.

IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Tina Helm) to accept the highest bids for the surplus property. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Request for Capital Reserve Funds: \$4979.09 for Ladder Truck repairs

It was determined that this money is available and that the Board of Selectmen is authorized to expend the money from the account.

IT WS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Tina Helm) to approve the use of the capital reserve fund in the amount of \$4,979.09 to repair the ladder truck. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Town Administrator Report

Ms. Hallquist reported that she had asked Don Jutton from MRI if they would be submitting a preliminary report on the ambulance study to the Board during the week of the 17th, as indicated when they met with the Board on September 19th. She was told that the next meeting of MRI and the steering committee would be on October 24th, at which time the preliminary results would be presented. The meeting is at 4:30pm and the Board of Selectmen is invited to attend the meeting.

Joint Board of Selectmen's Meeting

This meeting will be held on October 24th in Sutton. Ms. Helm and Mr. Bianchi would be attending.

Meeting with Charlie Bass

Ms. Hallquist said a congressional aid has noted that Rep. Bass wants to meet with the Board of Selectmen and say hello. It would be on Friday, October 21st from 4:45pm - 5:15pm. All selectmen will attempt to be present to meet with Congressman Bass.

Mr. Wheeler asked what part of the surplus they would use to lower the tax rate. He said that the DRA sets the total tax rate so they would need to know this. Chair Kaplan said that they would do it afterwards the DRA set their rate. Ms. Hallquist said they could actually do it either way, but the official rate will not be certified by the DRA until the surplus figure is decided upon. Chair Kaplan said they have to know how much the rate would be affected by the different amounts. Ms. Johnson (Finance Officer) would be able to get this information to the Board of Selectmen.

Estimates to Repair Tower on the Town Office Roof

The Board reviewed an estimate to repair the town office roof in the amount of \$8,000-\$10,000. Peter Stanley arranged for the inspection with the use of the ladder truck to get an estimate for budgeting and bid spec purposes. Mr. Bianchi felt there should be more bids secured before a decision is made. Specs should be made available for contractors to bid appropriately.

CAC Meeting – October 15th

Chair Kaplan said it was a very good meeting. The Budget Committee presented and asked for suggestions/comments. Ms. Helm noted some good news that came out at the meeting was from Ms. Hallquist. She shared that the DRA's assessment of PSNH caused New London to actually go up in the Grand List approximately \$200,000 over last year. Ms. Helm thought there were some thoughtful comments, including the need for controlled growth. It was also noted that the Master Plan chapters are on the website. Phyllis Piotrow commented that cuts to the budget need to be age equitable; they need to think in terms of multiple ages in Town and they need to be equitable in how they cut things. They want to attract young people and don't want to leave out any one group. There was also some discussion about the need for someone to maintain and oversee the town's buildings.

Upcoming Meetings

The next Board of Selectmen's meeting is 9am on October 31st.

There would be a CIP meeting at 7pm on October 18th and again at 7:30pm on October 20th.

The next Budget Committee meeting would be at 7pm on October 24th.

The next Planning Board meeting would be at 7pm on October 25th.

Application for Building Permit:

- Charles & Cynthia Lawson, 1549 Little Sunapee Road (Map & Lot 030-007-000) outside pathway, stone steps, and retaining wall – Permit #11-102 – Approved.
- Susan & David Reeves, 39 Sargent Road (Map & Lot 086-004-000) add room over garage w/dormers – Permit #11-103 – Approved.
- Anthony Seminara, 52 Bog Road (Map & Lot 094-002-000) finish addition – Permit #11-104 – Approved.
- Len Dorr, 1365 Little Sunapee Road (Map & Lot 031-007-000) build dormer over garage – Permit #11-105 – Approved.
- Nick Baer & Kristin Smith, 84 Forty Acres Road (Map & Lot 039-004-000) build sugar house – Permit #11-106 – Approved.
- William & Joan Gaffney, 202 Sargent Road (Map & Lot 086-008-000) build detached garage – Permit #11-107 – Approved.
- Colby-Sawyer College, 75 Seamans Road (Map & Lot 085-013-000) interior renovations – Permit #11-108 – Approved.
- Sue Rogers, 31 Dixie Lane (Map & Lot 084-030-000) build garage – Permit #11-109 – Approved.
- Robert & Janet MacMichael, 372 Elkins Road (Map & Lot 077-034-000) add 10 x 16 room to existing home – Permit #11-110 – Approved.
- ADU - Robert & Janet MacMichael, 372 Elkins Road (Map & Lot 077-034-000) Approved.
- Extension - Damian Petry, 132 King Hill Road (Map & Lot 122-017-000) continue with renovations – Permit 10-112 – Approved.

Application for temporary sign permits:

- St. Andrews Church – St. Nicholas's Fair sign at information booth 11/27-12/3 – Approved.

Application for raffle:

- Colby Sawyer College – Athletic department – approved.

Application for use of Whipple Memorial Town Hall:

- New London Recreation dept. – Mondays – 11/7-12/31 3:30-4:30 – Approved.

- Linda Howes, Nourishing Wellness showing movie - Saturday, Nov. 19th, 2011 5PM – 9PM – approved.
- KCB – Tuba Christmas concert – Saturday December 17, 2011 11AM-4PM – Approved.

Other items to be signed:

- Disbursement voucher.
- Application for highway safety grant – approved.
- Surplus Sale Results - approved

With no further discussion, Chair Kaplan called for a motion to adjourn.

IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Mark Kaplan) to adjourn the meeting.
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London