



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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NEW LONDON BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, January 22, 2026

Whipple Memorial Town Hall

5:30 PM

PRESENT:

Bebe Hammond Casey, Chairman
Janet Kidder, Selectman
Richard Anderson, Selectman
Ashley Seybold, Town Administrator
Lynn Lewis, Finance Officer

ALSO PRESENT:

Bruce and Marilyn Soper
Peter and Karen Hoglund
Jerry Coogan
David Crandall
Colin Beasley
Will Kidder
Putnam Kidder
Ken Jacques

Joe Cardillo
John Ellis
Peter Nichols
Amy battles
Brandon Adams
Gene Weber
Bob Bowers

Chair Casey called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

Ken Jacques and Peter Hoglund- Water Precinct Commissioners.

• Discussion:

- The Commissioners provided an update on the evaluation of new water sources, specifically focusing on Colby Point.
- A proposal from GZA/Underwood Engineers for the next phase of evaluation on Colby Point is estimated at \$50,000.
- This next phase will assess existing infrastructure, explore new exploratory wells, and evaluate upgrading current wells.
- The Commissioners have voted to put a warrant article for \$50,000, funded through the unappropriated fund balance, on their annual meeting warrant.
- If approved by voters, work would commence before Memorial Day.
- The Commissioners have not yet discussed this with the Cleveland Corporation (landowners of Colby Point), but plan to do so.
- Future engineering steps beyond the \$50,000 will likely be significantly more expensive, potentially requiring town participation.
- The Water Precinct's annual meeting will be the day after the town's business meeting.

• Town Involvement Request:

- The Water Precinct requested the Board of Selectmen discuss collaborative funding efforts for new water sources.

- The argument was made that increasing density and zoning changes (e.g., institutional and cottage courts) drive the need for more water, making it a town-wide issue, not solely a precinct responsibility.
- Historical precedent from the 1980s, where a committee concluded the precinct should remain an independent entity but needed help finding water, was referenced.
- The precinct emphasizes that its existing customer base should not bear the full financial burden for future growth driven by town zoning changes.
- Concerns were raised about the financial capacity of the precinct alone to fund multi-million-dollar projects.
- **Public Comment – Colin Beasley:**
 - Agreed that water infrastructure is critical for the town's financial and development future.
 - Suggested revisiting past decisions on town/precinct relations given current financial realities.
 - Proposed the town partner with the precinct, potentially funding water flow measurement devices (\$1M previously identified) and letting the precinct manage it.
 - Outlined a potential long-term scenario including asset transfer and absorption of precinct employees, similar to the sewage model with Sunapee and New London.
 - Emphasized the importance of a committee with financial, operational, and water expertise to lay out options and cost/benefits.
- **Water Flow Measurement:**
 - The precinct currently monitors wells manually.
 - Automated monitoring and transducer systems were cut during initial construction due to budget overruns (e.g., unexpected ledge excavation).
 - Manual monitoring has led to delayed discovery of issues (e.g., worn pump impellers).
 - Automated systems would allow for remote monitoring, trend analysis, and a better understanding of well status.
- **Grant Opportunities:**
 - The precinct continuously monitors viable grant opportunities with support from DEES.
 - A recent opportunity from Congresswoman Maggie Goodlander regarding the Water Resource Development Act (WRDA) was discussed.
 - DEES indicated WRDA typically funds large-scale infrastructure like levees and wetlands, not drinking water development. Initial conversations were not promising for direct funding.
 - The Board suggested still reaching out to Congresswoman Goodlander, given previous direct conversations about the water situation.
- **Public Comment - Jerry Coogan:**
 - Supported town involvement in the water precinct.
 - Proposed the town sewer funding model (2/3 users, 1/3 non-users) as a potential model for water improvements.
 - Emphasized water as a prerequisite for town growth and housing development.
 - Mentioned other grant opportunities (Community Development Block Grants, Northern Border Grants) and encouraged aggressive town leadership.
 - Suggested a non-binding warrant article to gauge public interest in financially supporting water improvements.
 - Advocated for rethinking the relationship and potentially exploring the town taking over precinct duties in cooperation over time.

- **Water Precinct Stance:**
 - The precinct is not looking to become part of the town of New London, nor do Springfield residents want to become New London customers.
 - Expressed skepticism about non-binding articles without clear financial implications for voters.
 - Highlighted the "cheap water" perception, noting that property taxes often cover capital costs, making the true cost higher than just the water bill.
- **Board of Selectmen Response:**
 - Acknowledged the town's support for ensuring clean water.
 - Stressed the need for town oversight on any monies contributed.
 - Agreed on the need for a collaborative group to address the issue.
 - Recognized the qualitative difference between funding existing infrastructure (e.g., Main Street line replacement) and funding for future growth/customers.

PUBLIC COMMENT

John Ellis – Ice Storm Response Inquiry

Ashley Seybold, Town Administrator Response:

- During a recent ice storm, generators at the Academy building and Whipple/Buker failed, but were restored the same day.
 - Whipple was out for approximately 15 minutes.
 - Dispatch handled a high volume of calls, with Lieutenant Keith and Chief Cobb assisting.
 - Post-storm, there were technical issues due to power surges, including a printer connectivity issue that required manual writing but did not impact dispatch service directly.
 - Calls could still come in during the outage.
 - The town has a comprehensive emergency management plan with backup and redundancies, but details are confidential for security reasons.
- **Action Item:** Inquire with Chief Cobb for specific details regarding dispatch operations during the outage and manual processes.

OLD BUSINESS

Richard Tutwiler, Library Director - Library Budget Approval

- **Discussion:**
 - The budget (unchanged since September) includes a 3% COLA and 2.5% step increase for staff, aligning with other town departments.
 - Projected nearly 10% increase in library income due to well-managed trust funds and increased grant funding (\$15,000 for capital projects).
 - The appropriation request is \$789,618 (4.4% increase from last year).
 - Total budget is \$848,218 (4.7% increase from last year).
 - Main cost drivers: personnel (COLA/step increases) and health benefits.
 - Introduced new employee, Megan Flanigan (MLIS certified), replacing an outgoing staff member.

IT WAS MOVED (Janer Kidder) AND SECONDED (Richard Anderson) to approve the library budget in the amount of \$789,618. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Ashley Seybold, Town Administrator - Transfers to Capital Reserves

- **Discussion:**
 - Total initial proposed transfers: \$960,000.
 - Updates:
 - Communications equipment reduced to \$50,000 (from \$100,000), to be split over two fiscal years.
 - Energy projects: Budget Committee proposed \$80,000 (an additional \$30,000 from the initial placeholder of \$50,000).
 - Board discussion on energy projects: Concern that \$80,000 leaves only \$7,000 of wiggle room. Selectman Anderson proposed increasing to \$100,000 to provide more flexibility.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Richard Anderson) to approve \$1,010,000 for transfers to capital reserve accounts. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

- **Note:** The total budget amount, incorporating all adjustments, will be finalized by Lynn and voted on at the next meeting.
- **Budget Committee Adjustments:** Noted the Budget Committee's decision to re-include the full-time firefighter position and reduce fire department training/incentives by \$20,000 (from \$32,300 to \$12,200).
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NEW BUSINESS

Ashley Seybold, Town Administrator - Keno and Games of Chance

- **Discussion:**
 - House Bill 737, passed last year, involves Keno and Games of Chance.
 - These are two separate gaming opportunities and potentially two separate warrant articles.
 - Take effect July 1, 2027.
 - Town Council advised that many towns are putting warrant articles on now, as businesses/nonprofits can start applications.
 - If no action is taken, Keno and Games of Chance will be automatically allowed in the municipality.
 - Keno benefits businesses; Games of Chance benefit local nonprofits.
 - Board expressed strong opposition to Keno, citing concerns about gambling.
 - Games of Chance: Discussion around the nature of "games of chance" (e.g., lotteries, slot machines, bingo, roulette, card games) and whether they are distinct from Keno. Questions arose about the minimum/maximum number of events (7-10) and whether it includes activities like turkey raffles.
 - Consensus that more research is needed on "Games of Chance" before a decision.
 - A public hearing would be required for any warrant articles.
- **Decision:** To pursue a warrant article to prohibit Keno. Postponed decision on Games of Chance for further research.
- **Action Item:** Ashley Seybold to conduct further research on Games of Chance implications and models. Ashley to provide proposed warrant article language for Keno.

Ashley Seybold, Town Administrator - Mildred C. Tunis Archives Fund

- **Discussion:**

- Request to accept a \$3,000 donation to establish the Mildred C. Tunis Archives Fund in honor of the first town archivist on the 50th anniversary of the New London Town Archives.
- The donation was from Mildred's descendants, who intend to provide additional funds as expended.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Richard Anderson) to accept the \$3,000 donation to establish the Mildred C. Tunis Archives Fund. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Ashley Seybold, Town Administrator - Dedication of Town Report

- **Discussion:**

- **The proposed individuals for dedication are** Jon Barselle, Annie Ballin, Dan Allen, Jim Granger, Janet Royle, and David Cook.
- **These individuals were chosen for their significant contributions to the town over the years.**

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Richard Anderson) to dedicate the 2025 annual report to the six listed individuals. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Ashley Seybold, Town Administrator - Town-Wide Projects Roadmap

- **Discussion:**

- A new roadmap outlining high-visibility or cross-departmental projects was presented, aimed at managing workloads and priorities. This does not include department-specific or day-to-day tasks.
- **Q3 (Current):** Dispatch study RFP, review of contracts for DEI language (due Feb), Academy Building remodel, website upgrades for ADA compliance (must be spent by end of June), DPW design and engineering.
- **Q4:** Hilltop street renumbering (due to emergency service access issues, will involve state and emergency management teams), personnel policy revamp, ADA transition plan (town-wide, forming a committee), Whipple technology upgrades (addressing cumbersome system, need for shared employee ownership).
- **Q1 (Next Fiscal Year):** Continue personnel policy and ADA transition plan, begin short-term rentals review, continue dispatch study.
- **Q2:** Continue dispatch study and ADA plan, budget season.
- **Q3 (Next Year):** Town meeting, town report, budget season.
- The plan is a framework, flexible to new priorities.
- **Personnel Policy & Compensation:** The personnel policy revamp will address areas like fire department shifts and time off. A separate, ongoing discussion among department heads is addressing overall compensation packages.
- **Public Comment – Bob Bowers:**
 - **Digitization of Records:** Asked for an update on records digitization, noting prior funding (2014, 2021) and the importance of considering annual costs.
 - **Records Retention Policy:** Inquired about the execution of the existing records retention policy to reduce storage needs.
 - **Will Kidder, Town Clerk Response:**
 - Records retention committee has not met recently, but plans to start again this quarter (likely after the town meeting).
 - Current records retention policy mirrors state RSA.

- Digitization is complex; consider starting with current documents and then tackling historical records.
- **Will Kidder, Town Clerk - Whipple Technology Comments:**
 - Technology for Zoom exists but requires a clear Zoom policy (defining meeting participation rules).
 - Full Zoom participation would require a dedicated person to monitor, not just Ashley or other staff, as it's time-consuming (2+ hours post-meeting work).
 - Current equipment is expensive and prone to issues when multiple people interact with it.
 - This is a Selectmen's office responsibility to decide on staffing/stipends for this role.

TOWN ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

COMMITTEE MEETINGS & REPORTS

- Planning Board: Met last week and will meet again on Tuesday, 6:30 PM, for the last public hearing on warrant articles regarding zoning changes.
- Budget Committee: Met last night.
- Housing Commission: Met today.

MEETING MINUTES:

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Richard Anderson) to accept the minutes of the December 18, 2025, meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

OTHER BUSINESS:

APPROVAL OF PAY VOUCHERS, PERMITS etc.

Items to be signed:

Applications Approved &/or Denied

Building/Zoning Permits – Approved

- Bruce Hutchinson – 98 Blueberry Lane – 087-004-000 BP 26-03
- Aisner – 67 Moyer Lane – 103-008-000 – BP 25-88
- Ausbon Sargent – 71 Pleasant St. – 073-083-000 – ZP 26-01
- Town of New London – 184 South Pleasant St. – 095-048-000 – ZP 26-02

Application to Use New London Town Property – Approved

- Elkins Fish and Game Club – May 9, 2026 – 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM – Whipple Hall

NONPUBLIC: The Board of Selectmen may enter into nonpublic session, if so voted, to discuss items listed under RSA 91-A:3, II.

The meeting adjourned at 6:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Casey Biuso
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.