



TOWN OF
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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NEW LONDON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, March 26, 2026
Whipple Memorial Town Hall
5:30 PM

PRESENT:

Bebe Hammond Casey, Chairman
Janet Kidder, Selectman
Richard Anderson, Selectman
Ashley Seybold, Town Administrator
Emily Cobb, Police Chief
Will Kidder, Town Clerk
Kris McAllister, Chief Assessor

ALSO PRESENT:

Peter Nichols
Rich Epstein
Karen Epstein
Colin Beasley
Tom Carley
John Ellis

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

Appointments

Kris McAllister, Chief Assessor- Land Use Change Tax for Secret Cove LLC

- **Purpose:** Discuss two land use change taxes for Secret Cove LLC properties on Davis Hill Road.
- **Property Details:** Property is mostly in current use. Changes to land (excavation, etc.) require removal from current use and incur penalties.
- **Penalty 1: Fire Cistern and Excavation**
 - **Location:** Property without waterfront.
 - **Change:** Installation of a fire cistern (for public benefit) and excavation of a 100x100 ft area for granite to be used in a stone wall replacement.
 - **Penalty Amount:** ~\$864.
 - **Note:** Assessor reserves the right to issue further penalties if more development occurs.
- **Penalty 2: Dock Installation**
 - **Location:** Additional lakefront parcel owned by Secret Cove LLC.
 - **Change:** Former property manager installed a dock.
 - **Valuation:** Parcel valued at \$260,000 based on comparable boat slip sales.
 - **Penalty Amount:** \$26,000, to be split between the general fund and conservation.

- **Board Action:** Board of Selectmen to sign off on the land use change taxes after the meeting. No motion required as it's a routine signing folder item.

Kris McAllister, Chief Assessor- Equalization Ratio Update

- Estimated state equalization ratio for New London is at 79%, indicating continued property appreciation despite market slowdowns elsewhere.
 - New London and Sunapee revaluation due in 2028, Newbury in 2029.
 - Concern over Pleasant Lake property values driving down the overall sales ratio due to rapid appreciation, now nearing Lake Sunapee values.
 - Assessor emphasized that off-revaluation years involve "catch-up" work, inspecting properties for changes not requiring permits (e.g., inline generators) to maintain accurate data for state reviews.
- **Public Questions**
 - **Peter Nichols (Resident):** Asked about a "stable" equalization rate.
 - **McAllister:** Normal guideline is 90-110% of market value. Current times are abnormal. The key is consistent assessment levels across all property types (equity), rather than the ratio itself.
 - **John Ellis (Resident):** Asked about the fire cistern on the Davis property.
 - **McAllister:** Cistern is roadside for fire department access and intended to service the entire road. Specific capacity records are on file at the town.

OLD BUSINESS

Dispatch Study RFP Discussion and Approval

Meeting Structure Proposal

- i. Town Administrator Seybold and Police Chief Cobb to explain the draft RFP.
 - ii. Open for public comments.
 - iii. Board to discuss and suggest changes.
 - Goal: Approve the RFP tonight if possible.
- **Ashley's Presentation of Draft RFP:**
 - Framework: Based on focus areas outlined in February.
 - Public Comments: Incorporated themes from public questions into the scope.
 - RFP Sections:
 - Project Background and Purpose: Independent evaluation of current emergency communications dispatching (operational & financial).
 - Service Requested, Qualifications, Submission Requirements: Standard RFP elements.
 - Scope of Service: Operations, staffing, facilities & technology, call handling & dispatch protocols, financial analysis, infrastructure & asset ownership, peer & benchmarking analysis, split dispatch scenarios, public engagement, project management.
 - Deliverables and Objectivity.
 - Fee Proposals.
 - Submission Details.
 - Selection Evaluation Criteria.
 - Qualifications and Contact for Questions.
 - Supplemental Document: All submitted questions with responses provided.
 - **Public Comment Section:**

- **Rich Epstein (Resident):**
 - Strategic Committee: Asked about the status of the strategic committee, believing it could play an important role in analyzing the study's findings and aligning it with overall town strategy and costs. (Deemed off-topic for RFP scope by Chair Casey.)
 - Data Analysis: Stressed the need for consultants to thoroughly analyze detailed spreadsheets on dispatch usage (e.g., why New London pays more than other towns combined). Suggested this data analysis time should be factored into contractor quotes.
 - NFPA 1221: Recommended explicitly listing NFPA 1221 (National Fire Protection Association standard) as a required familiarity for consultants.
 - Next Generation 911 (NG911): Highlighted NG911 as a critical future technology, emphasizing the need for the study to assess if a dispatch center the size of New London can keep up with technological advancements, expertise, and associated costs.
- **Tom Carley (Resident):**
 - Timing of Deliverables: RFP lacks timing for deliverables. Requested the Board commit to completing the study before the FY28 budget cycle.
 - New Police Station Dispatch Costs: Emphasized the need to include estimated costs for a dispatch center in a new police station (capital expenditure) in the RFP, as this could be significant (\$3-5 million) alongside operating costs.
- **Colin Beasley (Resident):**
 - Agreed with Tom Carley on the two-part cost analysis (current operating/future ownership vs. outsourcing). Believed consultants could model space and technology costs using benchmarking.

Town Administrator Seybold's Concern (RFP Complexity): Expressed concern that a 7-page RFP might deter consultants, potentially leading to few responses.

- Data Collection & Analysis: Emphasized greater specificity in the RFP for data collection and analysis, particularly distinguishing emergency vs. non-emergency calls, sources of transactions (phones, radios, etc.), and benchmarking against other communities. Stated 911 calls represent only 3.4% of total calls for service in New London (resident's own analysis).
- Proposed Framework: Suggested tweaking the RFP's structure to better organize the analysis of technology, operations, service performance, and financial aspects across different scenarios (best practice, New London as-is, New London only, alternative providers, split configuration). Advocated for vendors to consider transition costs and technology compatibility (e.g., NH North County Interoperability Consortium).
- Vendor Recommendation: Disagreed on asking the vendor for a recommendation, preferring objective data and analysis of trade-offs for the Board to make the final decision. Stated that consultants often provide the answer they believe the client wants.

Selectman Anderson: Expressed concern that *not* getting a recommendation might lead to accusations of the Board having a preconceived idea.

Mr. Beasley's Response: Believed objective data would lead to an obvious decision.

- Board Discussion & Edits to RFP:
 - General Consensus: The Board feels the current RFP is comprehensive.

- Technology Section: Agreed to add "future technological opportunities and capabilities/developments" under the technology assessment section to address NG911 and future changes.
- Confidential Interviews: Agreed to add "confidential" to the description of stakeholder interviews to ensure candid input, particularly for operational personnel. NOTE: asking counsel if this conflicts with 91-A.
- RFP Issue Date: Changed to April 6th (from March 30th) to allow for final tweaks.
- Submission Deadline: Extended to May 15th (5 weeks) due to school vacation and to encourage more responses.
- Project Start Date: Kept as summer of 2026 (Q1 FY27), aligning with budget and available funds.
- Report Completion Timeline: To be determined during vendor interviews, acknowledging Tom Carley's desire for completion before FY28 budget, but also the aggressive nature of an 8-week timeline.
- Cost of Study: A 2017 comparable study was \$29,000, but less robust. Expectation that the current study will be significantly higher.
- Vendor Engagement: Chief Cobb will work closely with the selected vendor. Town Administrator Seybold will keep the Board updated. The selected vendor will be asked to review the public comments during the current meeting.
- Final Decision: The Board will make the final decision based on the consultant's objective analysis of data and trade-offs.

NEW BUSINESS

Jane Smedley Easement

- Request: Ms. Smedley requires an easement from the town for a new septic system on her property across from Elkins Chapel, due to lot configuration.
- Prior Discussion: Janet recalled a past discussion about swapping town-owned land (which is a right-of-way to Pleasant Lake) for Ms. Smedley's adjacent property to expand the Elkins parking lot.
- Adam's Response- Via sms text: The land was a gift to the town, so any swap would require approval at a town meeting.
- Decision: The Board will approve the easement for Ms. Smedley to avoid delays in her septic installation but will explore the property swap for the parking lot at the next town meeting.

New Board of Selectmen Chair:

- **Appointment:** Janet was nominated as the next chair.

IT WAS MOVED (Richard Anderson) AND SECONDED (Bebe Casey) to nominate Janet Kidder as the next Chair of the Board of Selectmen. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Other Boards, Committees, and Commissions:

- **Budget Committee:** Rich will continue as Selectmen representative.
- **Planning Board:** Janet will continue as Selectmen representative.
- **Board of Firewards:** Bebe will be the Selectmen representative.
- **Water Precinct:** Bebe will be the Selectmen representative.
- **Bike & Pedestrian Committee:** Bebe will continue as the Selectmen representative.

Summer Meeting Schedule:

- **Decision:** Keep meetings on Thursdays (second and fourth Thursdays monthly). Individual conflicts for May 22nd (Kidder) and November 5th (Casey) will be adjusted.

Fireworks Dates:

- **Proposal:** June 26th through July 5th.
- **Pleasant Lake Fireworks:** Scheduled for Wednesday, July 1st, due to contractor availability and cost for July 3rd/4th.
- **Decision:** Approved June 26th through July 5th for personal fireworks displays.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

- 30 individuals with terms expiring this year. Town Administrator Seybold is in the process of confirming reappointments and reviewing volunteer application forms with Committee Chairs for new appointments. The goal is to have a mass reappointment/appointment at the April 23rd meeting.
- New guidelines and applications available on the website for the use of Town property.
- Elkins Fish and Game has requested a proclamation celebrating the 200th campership to the Barry Conservation Camp.

IT WAS MOVED (Richard Anderson) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve a proclamation. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

- Elkins Fish and Game has requested a proclamation celebrating the 200th campership to the Barry Conservation Camp.
- Karen Welch, a Public Works employee, will be retiring later this spring after 44 years with the Town of New London. She is New London's most tenured employee.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS & REPORTS

• Fire Wards Committee:

- Fire Chief Search: Interviewed two candidates. Offered the interim chief position to Brandon Adams.
- Interim Period: 30 days, during which Firewards and Brandon will negotiate compensation with Lynn and Ashley for Board approval.
- Brandon Adams' Qualifications: Credentials as a firefighter (numerous classes, EMS certification), experience with Franklin and Handover Fire Departments (extensive network), accounting background, strong communication skills.
- Current Staffing: Need two more firefighters due to Jay's departure and the town meeting vote.
- No External Search: Decided not to look at external candidates, confident in Brandon internally.
- Discussion: Potential for citizens and general fire department members to interview Brandon to ensure buy-in. Brandon is open to discussing new staffing structures for the fire department based on call data (medical vs. fire/mutual aid).

MEETING MINUTES: Approvals will be done at the next meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS:

APPROVAL OF PAY VOUCHERS, PERMITS etc.

Items to be signed:

- Payroll Authorization Vouchers and Accounts Payable
 - 3/5/26
 - 3/12/26
 - 3/19/26
 - 3/26/26
- 2025 Municipal Assessment Data Certificate
- MS-232

Applications Approved &/or Denied

Building/Zoning Permits – Approved

- Cynthia Hunt – Wallula Rd. – 033-019-000-BP 26-09 – New Build
- Elizabeth Niehaus – 16 Green Lane – 082-020-000-BP 26-15 – Renovations
- Spencer & Aurelia Beane – 202 Sargent Rd. – 086-008-000-BP 26-16 – Renovations
- Melvin Furbush & Tami Porter – 37 Tracy Rd. – 117-005-000- BP 26-17-Renovations
- Joseph Wallace – 292 County Rd. – 072-016-000 -BP 026-18– Metal Roof
- Christopher Caron – 240 Bunker Rd. – 062-036-000-BP 26-19 – Renovations
- New London Hospital – 273 County Rd. – 072-018-000 –ZP 26-03- Partial Demo
- Colby-Sawyer College – 541 Main St. – 085-033-000- Replace 3 Antennas-ZP 26-04
- Richard & Karen Epstein – 350 Barrett Rd. – 096-037-000-BP 26-21-Remodel
- Thomas & Vicky Mills – 40 Andover Rd. – 122-001-000-BP 26-20-Solar

Application for property tax credit/exemption

- Brian & Alicia Simoneau – 65 Edmunds Rd. – 095-021-000-Solar
- Robert Martin & Carol Thrane – 133 Lighthouse View Rd. – 126-013-000-Solar
- Jennifer & Andrew Hoss – 408 Bunker Rd. – 062-028-000-Solar

Application to Use New London Town Property – Approved

- New London Barn Players - Whipple Hall- 7/24/26 & 8/14/26 – 8:15- 4:30 PM – Summer camp performance
- Liz Stikeman – Town Common & Bandstand – 3/28/26 – 11:30-2:30 PM – No Kings 3 Gathering
- Elkins Fish & Game Club – Town Common – 5/23/26 – 9:00- 2:00 PM – Fly Fishing on the Green

Application for Land Use Change Tax (LUCT)

- Secret Cove – Davis Hill Rd. 068-006-003
- Secret Cove – 143 Davis Hill Rd. 068-006-004

Application for Septic Waivers- Various Properties

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Richard Anderson) to adjourn. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 7:31 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.