

**JOHN A. CANNON**

May 8, 2022

Nancy R. Rollins, Chair  
Board of Selectman, Town of New London  
375 Main Street  
New London, NH 03257

Dear Selectman Rollins,

I am writing to express my serious concern and strong opposition to the proposal by Selectman Helm to restructure and eliminate the Selectman's positions from various committees.

It is difficult to see the logic behind these proposals considering some justifications presented were work that the Committee's are doing and have already done. It is also non-sensical to eliminate citizen involvement and participation when a major theme surrounding the elections were the conflicts and divisions within the Town. The strong turnout for the election and at the Community Forums show there is both desire and need for citizen involvement and participation. Eliminating certain committee's for no valid reason is certain to reduce such participation.

I am strongly opposed to removing a Selectman's representative from various committees. It is a valuable testament to the participation of the Selectman and Budget Committee in presenting a single unified budget for many years now. It is by having someone in the room during these deliberations that allows for an understanding of the thought process involved around particular decisions and provides transparency for everyone.

Assuming these proposals are genuine and not based on political animus towards committees or their recommendations I will explain how these proposals run counter to the stated intent.

Having a Selectman on a particular committee is very useful. First, the Selectman's representative will generally have more institutional memory and understanding behind a specific issue. The Selectman will also be able to make a clearer explanation of the views and thoughts of the committee.

I fail to see the reasoning behind removing Budget Committee members from other committees. Being a Selectman and the Representative to the Budget Committee for three years, it is easy to observe the learning curve for new budget committee members each year. I feel it is extremely helpful for a Budget Committee member to be serve on other

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committees. They gain a much stronger understanding of the process and reasoning behind many decisions.

It truly defies logic that the justification for time limited, small advisory “panels” such as the 2021 Fiscal Policy Committee is to provide project management for various town facilities, inventory and planning of town facilities and assets. Given the work the Building and Facilities has done over the past three years, it is difficult to see how a time limited, small advisory committee would work. Their work is being done and has been done on a voluntary basis by current members of the Building and Facilities Committee since its inception three years ago. A tremendous amount of work was done on the repairs to the Buker Building by truly qualified and experienced engineers and project managers. New London is fortunate to avail themselves of the service they provided voluntarily.

The Building and Facilities Committee has worked closely with the Solid Waste Management Committee and Public Works Director Harrington on the issues of concern.

The Building and Facilities Committee will also provide the same quality advice and recommendations on future uses of Buker once such future uses are identified and approved by the voters. It is also very insulting to the members of the Police Station Sub-Committee that is working diligently on this difficult issue to now be told your work is no longer necessary.

As I reflect on these reputed justifications for the changes, I may have been naïve in the assumption that there is no political animus behind them. It is difficult to see otherwise. I would hope that in a time where division and conflict were major themes in the election, and that a very close race with a strong turn-out, would indicate there is not a “mandate.” Without a mandate, it is much wiser to seek consensus and respect the input of those appointed to provide input and counsel. Nothing will eliminate involvement and participation faster than saying we don’t like your ideas; we’ll find someone to give us an opinion we like! Or maybe that is the goal?

Sincerely,

John A. Cannon  
13 Sawyer Lane

Cc: Kim Halquist, Town Administrator