



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

375 MAIN STREET • NEW LONDON, NH 03257

SB-2 Study Committee Meeting Minutes For: July 16, 2025

Attendees:

Colin Beasely
Laura Davis
Debbie Stanley

Ashley Seybold
Rich Epstein
Karen Epstein

The meeting started at 10 AM

Minutes for the July 2nd meeting were approved, subject to one minor edit to the draft.

The committee reviewed the action items of past meetings. Regarding the action item from the June 11th Meeting (Kim Hallquist to identify whether there is any source of information that would identify those towns that proposed a change to SB2 but were not able to secure sufficient voter backing), Ashley did not have any follow-up from Kim before Kim retired. After further discussion, the committee decided that having this information was not so critical to require further exploration, so this action item will be closed.

From the July 2nd Meeting, Colin provided a status of the HB 475 exploration and indicated that it was still a work in progress requiring more clarity; this action item will remain open. Colin provided a definition of the two forms of government in the draft PowerPoint presentation, which will get further review/editing when the committee reviews that presentation; this action item will be closed.

The committee discussed the proposed template Debbie created to capture the research/interviews of other towns. It was agreed that the template will be expanded with more data points, and the comment section of that template will be broken out into a separate page. The committee will populate that final template (the goal being before the next meeting), each with their own interview/research data, and then look at the final consolidated output to determine what findings, if any, come from that data. This action item will be closed and incorporated into the PowerPoint presentation development. Regarding the action item to research/document the implementation steps with transitioning to the SB2 form of government, there was a brief discussion focused on the Department of Revenue 2025 schedule of meetings and how the SB2 form of government pushed up the need for budget information by about 4-5 weeks relative to the traditional town meeting form of government.

Comparing these two schedules demonstrates this 4-5 week schedule difference; the links to those two schedules are:

- SB2 2025 Meeting Schedule

<https://www.revenue.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt736/files/documents/timeline-for-sb2-annual-meeting-march.pdf>

- Traditional Town Meeting 2025 Schedule

<https://www.revenue.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt736/files/documents/timeline-for-traditional-town-meeting-march.pdf>

There was also a brief discussion on the possible impacts on the finance department and the town clerk's function. Further discussion will be needed, starting with the interview of various town staff, which should formalize those impacts; results of this additional work will be captured in the PowerPoint presentation so that this action item will be closed.

The committee discussed conducting town staff interviews, agreed to an initial list of 4 people, and to target a meeting for August 1st, committing 30 minutes for each interview. The committee also discussed how much information should be provided in advance; it was agreed that some basic definition and timeline information should be provided in advance of the interview sessions. Colin took the action item to set up those sessions and to distribute the information. It was also agreed that interviewing the Budget Committee chair would be appropriate, and it will be scheduled once the Budget Committee elects their Chair, expected at their next meeting. Action Item: Monitor Budget Committee calendar and schedule an interview with the elected Budget Committee Chair.

The committee agreed that the interviews should cover the following:

- First, determine whether the town staff is a New London resident/registered voter.
- Request that the interviewee separate their personal views from their professional view to the extent possible (each will be asked for their personal view at the end of the interview session).
- Questions:
 - Are you familiar with the SB2 form of government? If so, how?
 - Do you have any experience with SB2 towns?
 - Do you have any facts associated with SB2 adoption, generally, and specifically as it relates to your job responsibilities?

- What professional view (for or against), if any, do you have about New London adopting the SB2 form of government, and why?
- Please share your personal view as a citizen (not as an employee).

The committee then discussed the need for the town to make available information to the public on matters to be voted on and collectively expressed concerns about misinformation. More work to cull out options for communication development and dissemination will be addressed at future meetings.

Another area discussed was possibly interviewing New London citizens, raising the possibility that the representation of citizens' views could be biased by the committee selecting citizens who they know have one position or another. More discussion on how to approach this will be addressed at future meetings.

Finally, the committee agreed to meet on August 4th and August 27th. Colin requested that the committee review the draft presentation and think about how we can focus on it as a way to bring closure to the discussions and to bring the work product to the SelectBoard. Action Item: Reserve meeting room for these meetings.

The meeting ended at 12:05 AM

Action Items:

From June 11 Meeting:

Kim Hallquist to identify whether there is any source of information that would identify those towns that proposed a change to SB2 but were not able to secure sufficient voter backing.

CLOSED

From July 2nd Meeting:

Colin to contact Lynn Lewis regarding HB 475. **OPEN**

Colin is to document the definition of the two forms of government. **CLOSED** (Incorporated into the PowerPoint presentation; to be reviewed/edited when the committee reviews the presentation).

Debbie to propose template to capture town research/interviews. **CLOSED** (Final template to be incorporated into PowerPoint presentation development and review)

Debbie to research/document the implementation steps associated with transitioning to an SB2 form of government. **CLOSED** (Final analysis to be incorporated into PowerPoint presentation development and review).

New Action Items From July 16 Meeting:

Colin to monitor Budget Committee calendar and schedule interview with elected Budget Committee Chair.

Colin to reserve room for meetings on August 1st, 4th and 27th.

Colin to coordinate interviews with selected Town staff on August 1st (30 minutes each) and distribute some info in advance of those sessions.