



TOWN OF
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
July 15, 2014**

PRESENT:

Janet Kidder, Chair
Nancy Rollins, Selectman
Peter Bianchi, Selectman
Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator
Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

ALSO PRESENT:

Ed Andersen, Police Chief
Jay Lyon, Fire Chief
Richard Lee, Public Works Director
Norm Bernaiche & Kris McAllister, Town Assessors
Dr. Konopka, New London Resident
John Wilson, New London Resident
Renate Kannler, New London Resident
John Lewis, New London Resident
Rob Prohl, New London Resident
Phyllis Piotrow, New London Resident
Minette Sweeney, *The Intertown Record*
Natasha Osborne, *The Argus Champion*

Chair Kidder called the meeting to order at 6:00pm and noted that the first item on the agenda was Norm Bernaiche, Chief Assessor, to give an update on a current use assessment.

Current Use Issue: Perkins Property (049-020-000)

Norm Bernaiche referred to a memo he prepared regarding the Perkins property that was in current use until it was recently discovered that it does not qualify for that classification. The property owners disagree and they have been told that they may appeal the decision when they get their tax bill in November. Mr. Bernaiche showed photographs of the Perkins property in question explaining why in his opinion, the property does not qualify for current use. Mr. Bernaiche said there was nothing in the files from the past that showed this parcel should have had current use status. In the past, it was merely a pass or fail decision. He noted that the property belonging to the Perkins family has been used and groomed to go along with the house lot. He recommended that the land be taken out of current use. He noted a case in Charlestown, NH where it was shown that a town that becomes aware of an error in current use classification should correct the error. Ms. Hallquist informed that Board that Mrs. Perkins called and said she could not attend the meeting that night however she does intend to appeal the decision to remove the current use classification and to come before the Board to discuss the matter in more detail when her family could join her.

Selectman Bianchi asked if it was the Town's mistake for not billing the Perkins' appropriately. Mr. Bernaiche said it was. Selectman Bianchi felt they should look at the other parcels throughout the town to be sure their lists are accurate, pointing out that 51% of the town is in current use. He felt that was a high percentage for a town of New London's size. He estimated they could get another 10% out of current use and increase the income of the town.

Mr. Bernaiche replied that firstly, his and Ms. McAllister's job as assessors is to be fair and equitable; not to raise or take away money for a town. Secondly, they have a process in place whereby every five years they check the status of current use properties. Thirdly, they check properties if/when things are changed to be sure of the validity of the current use status. Ms. McAllister noted that Mr. Bernaiche had been on the Current Use Board for a long time and understands it quite in-depth. She wanted it known that they (the assessors) are not picking on the Perkins; this was brought to their attention and they must act on it.

Selectman Bianchi said he put in the septic system in the current use portion of the property. When they wanted to annex the property, they took the system out and he put another one in in another location. He asked why the assessors didn't they think this property in question could be annexed with the property across the road on Lamson Lane. Mr. Bernaiche said it had to do with features of the property, boat storage, property usage, etc. The property and land is groomed and is used to store and use kayaks and he didn't think this was something that only happened this year but felt it was a regularly occurring use of the property.

Chair Kidder didn't feel they would be able to make a decision that night and said they would revisit the discussion when the Perkins are able to come to a meeting.

Dr. Konopka – Dogs on Town Beaches and Other Beach Concerns

Dr. Konopka said for the past 25 years she has lived on Bunker Road. Until now, she did not know that there were rules about dogs on the beach at Elkins until now (the Town Beach Use Ordinance was adopted on June 2, 2009). Dr. Konopka thought the rules should be fair to all citizens. She said the narrow access of the water between the post office building and the un-restricted area for swimmers was a danger. Boats come in and it is too narrow for both boats and swimmers. She said the boats have their own place and doesn't understand why they squeeze into the swimming area.

Dr. Konopka did not feel that dogs are a danger to people, but that boats are. She has had two instances where boats were of danger to her, personally. She understood they don't allow dogs to be allowed on the beach and understood that some people don't like dogs. Dr. Konopka said she always goes on the right-side of the post office to swim and brings her dog on a leash, away from the people. She thought it would be nice if they allow dogs to visit the beach after 5pm, for example.

Chair Kidder said as a board or individually they need to go to the beach area, see the area she is talking about, and see if there is some way to allow dogs to swim that isn't over by the dam. They would consult with the staff at the beach and would get back to her on the topic.

Georges Mills Pump Station – Richard Lee, Public Works Director

Mr. Lee said of all the bids that came in, the engineers from Underwood recommended Keymont Construction, Inc. He asked that the Selectmen vote to approve this choice so they could move forward with the project. The funds for the project will come out of the Sewer Fund. Chair Kidder asked how long it would take to complete this project. Mr. Lee said they hoped to start in September and should be completed the end of October.

IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to approve the bid of Keymont Construction, Inc., for \$132,600 for the work to be done at the Georges Mills Pump Station pending approval by their engineer. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Peter Bianchi asked that they modify the agenda to discuss dispatch, as there were two citizens there that evening who were there for that very topic. Chair Kidder agreed and asked for an update from the Town Administrator.

Ms. Hallquist informed the Board that she spoke with Robert Barry from Primex about doing research on dispatch options. Mr. Barry is the former police chief from the city of Concord, NH and was involved in a similar research in 2008, of which New London was a part. At that time, Concord was thinking of going regional but never did. Ms. Hallquist noted that she met with Mr. Barry to discuss what the Board is trying to accomplish in the research and she felt that he is very capable of doing the work as he is very familiar with dispatching from both a fire and police standpoint. She noted that he has since met with Chief Andersen and Chief Lyon to collect information.

Ms. Hallquist recommended that the Board use Mr. Barry's expertise to compile the information needed to evaluate the options in dispatching. She acknowledged that John Wilson had volunteered his help, along with some others to do this research but she didn't feel that at this time this was something a citizen's committee would be best suited to do. She pointed out that Mr. Barry will have access to the people in the various dispatching centers and police and fire departments to get the necessary information. A citizen's committee would likely not have such access. She noted that if they did not have a resource such as Mr. Barry with his expertise, a citizen's committee would have been the next best solution.

Ms. Hallquist said Mr. Barry will not be giving recommendations; his job will be to gather and present facts. He is not an expert in equipment and will not be offering information on this part. They can get this information from other sources, themselves. He believes he could complete the study in 6-8 weeks, perhaps sooner.

Selectman Bianchi didn't feel waiting another 6-8 weeks was ideal. He thought perhaps the citizens could gather information about equipment while the other study is going on. Ms. Hallquist said this would be fine and she didn't anticipate waiting another 6-8 weeks after Mr. Barry's study to gather information on the equipment.

Selectman Bianchi asked how they were doing with the equipment that was approved at Town Meeting. Ms. Hallquist said they have not signed the PO's yet but need to make sure they get the repeater up and operational by September 30th, before they can go forward with it. Selectman Bianchi thought if other products could be researched, other than what Beltronics could provide, they could get a better deal. Ms. Hallquist said Beltronics has advised them thus far and as far as the grant goes, there is a small window of time they have to work with. She didn't think they could ask for an extension on the grant in order to find a new vendor.

Ms. Hallquist said Beltronics is ready to go as soon as they are given the word to do so. She contacted Homeland Security about this and it was advised that they be sure they can get this up and operational by September 30th. If this isn't done, they don't get the grant and will have to pay for it themselves. If the town is unsure of whether it can be done by the deadline, an extension of one year could be requested.

Chief Andersen said Beltronics informed him that day that they can meet the deadline of September 30th; if the PO is signed and they can order the equipment now, they can have it done by the deadline. He said they wanted to stay with Beltronics because they are familiar with their system.

Speaking to the issue of the console that was approved by town meeting, Chief Lyon said they hoped that a second console could be attained through a grant. They should wait to purchase the console until they know if the grant will pay for the second console (or perhaps pay for both consoles). When asked, Chief Andersen and Chief Lyon were not sure if one new and one old console could be used at the same time. They noted that the repeater would work for both the fire and police dispatching. There would be two pieces of equipment.

Mr. Wilson said he recalled at the Budget Committee hearings (of which he was the Chair) that it would be \$75,000 to put up a repeater, antenna and back-up generator, and another \$16,000 for another antenna for the Police Department. He wasn't sure when this changed and went to two repeaters. He found out the back-up generator is included so they don't have to pay for that. The foregone conclusion with this now is that they will keep dispatch in town, so he wasn't sure why they needed to have someone like Mr. Barry study dispatch. Chief Lyon said they would still utilize the equipment in situations when they needed to, for instance, if he is on Bunker Road or 4-Corners, they are not able to communicate a long distance because of topography. They will still utilize these pieces of equipment, even if dispatching is outsourced. They will still use the new console and they will benefit from it as will the surrounding towns.

Selectman Bianchi said he had a hard time understanding this and felt they had to do something. Mr. Prohl thought it helpful to put down on paper the different scenarios: cost sharing with other towns, dispatching for New London only, or contracting the dispatch services out. He thought perhaps asking citizens to submit questions on the issue might be helpful as well as meeting with the other towns to hear what they have to say about it. Chair Kidder said Ms. Hallquist has suggested these scenarios to Mr. Barry and she felt they really needed an unbiased individual to collect the data and present it to the Town.

Ms. Piotrow thought it important to get an independent, outside fact-finder to gather this information. She was leery about setting up a citizen's committee before getting this fact-finding done. She thought what Ms. Hallquist was suggesting was to move forward, which is what the Budget Committee thought should be done all last year. Chair Kidder agreed and thought the information they get should be totally unbiased. She recommended asking Mr. Barry to commence with his report. Selectman Bianchi agreed they should get Mr. Barry in on the project but didn't feel they knew enough about the hardware. He felt they should find out what other vendors had to offer other than Beltronics.

Chief Lyon said if they want to find the actual cost of what it (equipment needs) will be, he and Chief Andersen could certainly figure it out. Selectman Bianchi said both chiefs have said they want to keep dispatch in New London so they have lost their objectivity. Chief Lyon said the report they gave about dispatch was non-biased and factual. They want to help with the process to make the decision possible.

John Lewis said he agreed with Mr. Prohl about finding out if the neighboring towns were with New London or not. Chair Kidder said, no doubt, that would be part of their fact-finding.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to engage Bob Barry of Primex to research dispatch options for New London. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chief Andersen said he and Chief Lyon would be happy to answer any questions they may have regarding the repeaters and said they are under a time limit. If they are going to go forward, they would need to sign the PO soon so Beltronics can get the equipment. He noted the antenna for both Police and Fire would be needed even if they end up outsourcing. He was concerned that if it doesn't get signed, they are running out of time to be able to get it.

Selectman Bianchi thought they should definitely be planning to apply for the 100% grant for the consoles. Chief Lyon said the grant doesn't open until September and they plan to apply for the 100% grant. Ms. Hallquist said Chief Andersen and Chief Lyon have agreed to write the grant. Chief Lyon noted that Chief Cahill from Sunapee will assist them as well.

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to have Kim Hallquist sign the purchase order for the repeaters (as approved by Town Meeting Article #14). THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Elkins Post Office Lease – 5 year renewal

Ms. Hallquist said Town Counsel reviewed the lease to make sure it is the same as the past lease. One provision that is in the current lease (and in the proposed renewal) that town counsel objected to was the provision that if the building is destroyed the town will have to rebuild it. Town counsel suggested a change to allow the town to make the decision whether or not to rebuild in the event that the building is damaged 51% or more. Ms. Hallquist noted that she spoke with the Post Office representative and that provision cannot be changed. The lease is \$12,505 per year for five years (up from \$12,200 in the current lease).

IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to approve the lease for the Elkins Post Office, as presented. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chair Kidder inquired about the status of the building. Mr. Lee noted that someone was coming to fix the chimney at the end of the month, until then they have barriers to stop people from walking between the post office and the bathhouse. They will also have some painting done and would decide what to do about the skirting around the bottom of the building, as it was starting to decompose. Chief Lyon said the basement isn't in good shape. Chair Kidder thought money should be set aside to be put into that building.

Single-Stream Recycling Committee

Chair Kidder noted one person had declined nomination to the committee so they needed to appoint someone new. It was decided to appoint Aarne Vesilland for the committee. Mr. Vesilland had been on their previous list of people who wanted to be on the committee.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to appoint Aarne Vesilland to the Single-Stream Recycling Committee. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Response from US Congressmen

Chair Kidder noted that in response to town meeting vote on Article 19:

(To see if the Town will vote to approve the following resolution: We the people of New London, NH, know that corporations are not people, and that Citizens United has weakened our democracy and undermined the people's right to open and equal freedom of speech and press. We call on our state legislature and Congress to overturn *Citizens United* and keep our political campaigns and elections safe from the highest bidder. Petitioned warrant article.)

The Selectmen sent letters to the town's US Congressmen to encourage them to sponsor federal legislation to address campaign financing laws. The responses received will be posted to the town's website (under the Board of Selectmen section).

Town Administrator's Report

Planning Board/Conservation Commission Meeting

Ms. Hallquist informed the Board that she recently attended a meeting with Bill Helm (Chair of the Planning Board), Bob Brown (Chair of the Conservation Commission), and Janet Kidder (Chair of the Selectmen) regarding the responsibilities of the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission. One big issue is tree-cutting and the group discussed the role of the Planning Board and Conservation Commission in tree cutting requests.

Ms. Hallquist said Ms. St. John is working on a revised building permit application to free-up some of her time to deal with planning issues. A new application will be coming forth soon. The building permit application will require more information to be submitted up front, so less time is needed asking for more information, thus property owners will get their permits faster. The current permit is not clear and property owners are not sure what they are supposed to provide.

Facilities Manager Position

It was noted that resumes have been submitted and have been reviewed by Richard Lee. Ms. Hallquist estimated that by the first of the following week, the person would be chosen.

Single-Stream Meeting

Ms. Hallquist said she has heard from the members about what dates for meeting work best, so she will set up a meeting with the members as soon as possible to get things started.

Employee Committee

Ms. Hallquist said the Employee Committee would be meeting next on Friday, July 25th at 9am. Selectman Bianchi said they need to discuss merit pay as it was brought up during the budget season. Ms. Hallquist noted that since it was not funded entirely in the budget, she didn't feel it should go forward at this point, unless the Selectmen decided to move funds around and support the program. The Board will await further discussion on this until the Employee Committee can meet and comment on it.

Selectman Bianchi expressed his frustration with the lack of progress the Selectmen have made since Town Meeting on several outstanding issues.

Energy Committee – Requesting Support of a solar energy program

The Board reviewed information from Energy Committee Chair Bill Spear regarding an initiative to encourage solar power. The program is called “Solarize Upper Valley of Vermont and New Hampshire.” Mr. Spear asked for the Board’s support of an application to encourage solar power in New London. Selectmen were all in favor of Mr. Spear going forward with this project, noting that no funds were being requested.

Updated Emergency Operations Plan, 2013

Ms. Hallquist said the Town received a grant to update the town’s plan and it is now complete. The plan has been approved by the Emergency Management Committee. Chief Lyon noted that in order to get grants, they are required to have an up-to-date Emergency Operations Plan. The Board approved the plan.

Meeting Updates

Chair Kidder said the Recreation Commission met on July 8th. She shared that the van is set to go and just needs to be lettered. The Rec Desk software is working well and people are paying online (with a 2% fee) for camp, swim lessons, etc. There was lifeguard training with waterfront staff from New London and Sunapee in Sunapee, and there will be another one held at Elkins beach in which the New London Fire Department will participate. It was noted that the 6HP - 4 stroke motor purchased in 2007 has been stolen from Bucklin Beach. They have reported it missing and will try to get a used one to replace it. One plastic

dock at Elkins has a hole in it and will be disposed of. They will not replace it as there are several docks already and Mr. Blewitt believes they can do without another. The septic tank at Bucklin is pumped every 10 days. Lifeguards and swim instructors are given one bathing suit and have asked for another. An outdoor shower (\$450) will be put in at Elkins beach. On July 11th there was a puppet show at Elkins Beach with a hotdog luncheon, which was well-received. Volunteers are needed for Hospital Days. The Father/Daughter dance well. One rusty grill was removed from Bucklin Beach and was replaced with another that had been in storage. It was noted by the Recreation Commission members that Mr. Blewitt was doing a great job and people appreciate his leadership.

Approval of Minutes of June 30, 2014

IT WAS MOVED (Nancy Rollins) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to approve the minutes of June 30, 2014, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Upcoming Meetings

July 22 7:00pm – Planning Board

July 29 6:00pm – Board of Selectmen

Citizen comments – John Lewis

Mr. Lewis said his attendance at the meeting was something he debated on but decided to come because he didn't like the outcome of the last meeting he attended. He acknowledged that not everyone has the same point of view and understood that this was OK. He read from a book by William Blackstone which spoke of rights of individuals. He said he spoke with the Police Chief Andersen, and found that in New London, they do not have jail cells, rather they are holding cells, which explains their condition. Mr. Lewis complained of the conditions of the Merrimack County jail, of which he has visited three times. He said they only provide plastic mattresses which are laid on the floor, which he felt to be inhumane. He thought the condition of the cells at the Merrimack County Jail should be a concern of the Selectmen. Chair Kidder noted that the Board does not have jurisdiction over the county jail but said they would look into it.

Signatures

Application for Building Permit:

- Robert & Sandra Brown (119-014-000, 449 Forest Acres Road) – Build new 3 bedroom home – APPROVED
- Donald A. Bartlett Jr. (071-017-000, 154 Pine Hill Road) – Replace sunroom roof, change pitch, remove skylights and add double-hung windows – APPROVED
- Ellen Hudson (071-011-000), 169 Pine Hill Road) – Install new 8'x14' pre-built shed – APPROVED
- Dennis & Roberta Aufranc (056-009-000, Otterville & Newport Roads) – Construct portable 3-sided shed (13'x7.5') – APPROVED
- Colin & Elizabeth Beasley (129-005-000, 1405 King Hill Rd.) – Build 10x15 shed, mudroom, remove 5x10 deck – APPROVED
- Richard Deluca Trust (129-013-000, 73 Summit View Road) – Remodel 2 existing bathrooms – APPROVED
- Clinton & Hilda Lyon (146-002-039, #39 The Seasons) – Replace flooring & update kitchen and bath – APPROVED
- Chris Broom (085-042-000, 428 Main Street) – Change Windows and sound-proof existing wall - APPROVED

Other Items to be signed:

Investment Policy, Town of New London

Intent to Cut Wood or Timber – Ben Crowell, Burnt Hill Road

Proposal and Contract for 2015 map/GIS Maintenance Services – CAI Technologies

Emergency Operations Plan, 2013

Updates to Personnel Policy, as approved 5/12/14

Application for Current Use:

- Susan Rives – 217 Burnt Hill Road
- William Cate, Jr. – Route 103A

IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Nancy Rollins) to adjourn the meeting of July 15, 2014. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London