

**SELECTBOARD MEETING
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2002
7:00 PM – MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

A regular meeting of the St. Johnsbury Selectboard was held Monday, November 12, 2002, at 7:00 PM in the boardroom of the municipal building. Present were Chairman Reg Wakeham, Gib Handy, Bryon Quatrini, and Dale Urie. Absent with excuse was Elwin Cross. Also present from the Town were Town Manager Mike Welch, Zoning Administrator Priscilla Messier, Town Clerk Sandra Grenier, Student Representative Shawna Wakeham, and Recording Secretary Ida Rainville. Those attending in the audience included: Russ Hutchins, Claude Donna, Tom Lovett and Bruce Johnson from St. J. Academy and students Zach Hoppe and Meredith Classen, Michelle MacDonald and Paul Bengtson, Marlene Rock, Kim Achilles, the LSC-TV news team and the Channel 7 news team.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Wakeham at 7:00 PM, who led the assembly in the flag salute. Approval of minutes from October 28 was tabled until the next meeting.

Caledonia County Budget

Assistant Judge Bill Kennedy and Caledonia County Sheriff Mike Bergeron presented the county's proposed budget for 2003-2004. Judge Kennedy reviewed the figures for the courts, and stressed the importance of having the Sheriff's department in the same building. He reported that the amount paid from each town is based on the grand list figure.

Sheriff Bergeron reviewed the figures presented for the Sheriff's department budget. It was noted that the total budget as presented represents only a portion of what the courts and Sheriff's department needs to operate. Other revenues come from the State and from billings.

Town Forest and Nature Trails – St. J. Academy

The Forestry class at St. Johnsbury Academy has been working on a project to develop hiking trails through the town forest. Teacher Bruce Johnson and academy students Zach Hoppe and Meredith Classen presented a map of the proposed trails and how they would incorporate with existing trails along the river near Fred Mold Park. Mr. Johnson advised that, since the forestry course is taught only in the fall, other community and civic groups (Rotary, Kiwanis, Churches, Scouts, etc.) may wish to contribute time and energy into developing the trails so to complete the project sooner. The general agreement was that the forest is a great resource and the project will make a welcome addition to the community. On a motion by Bryon Quatrini, seconded by Gib Handy, the Board voted unanimously to authorize the project to go forward.

Australian Ballet – Budget Vote – Russ Hutchins

Information from the Secretary of State's office indicated the language of the petition, which Mr. Hutchins had previously circulated, would not legally put the question on the ballot. Because of the way the Charter is written, the question must come before the town meeting, not be put on a ballot vote. Claude Donna spoke to the Board about the inability of elderly and/or disabled persons to attend the night meeting, and requested that the budget be put on a ballot to be voted Tuesday. Mr. Donna indicated he might bring suite of discrimination on the Town. Mr. Hutchins said he would be willing to re-circulate petitions with corrected language, working with the Secretary of State's Office, to change the Town Charter to put the budget on a ballot vote.

Community Health Commission – Paul Bengtson

Mr. Bengtson reported that the Commission has been working on the Needle Exchange Program issue, and has scheduled a community informational meeting for December 4 at the Morse Center for Performing Arts at the St. Johnsbury Academy. The Commission is also looking at other long-term issues. The Board asked if a back up location could be in place in case there are more than 150 people who show up for the meeting.

Design Review Committee

The Selectboard accepted the resignation of Gay Costa from the Design Review Board. Mrs. Costa had served on the board since its inception in 1976. The Board issued a resolution of thanks to Mr. Costa.

To fill the position on the Design Review Board, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Mark Desrochers to fulfill Gay Costa's term (Handy/Quatrini).

Community of Concern – Dale Urie

Dale Urie reported that the various activities sponsored by the Community of Concern have been well received and had good turnout. Mr. Urie also reported that, since most of the events so far have been sponsored and/or held at the St. Johnsbury Academy facilities, he would like to see more support from the town and surrounding towns, perhaps hosting events at other venues. Also, could the Town assist financially in supplying police protection, lifeguards, etc. for future events? Shawna Wakeham suggested a meeting of representatives from each of the surrounding towns that have benefited from these activities and setting up a committee to help plan and sponsor events. On a motion by Dale Urie and seconded by Bryon Quatrini, the Board voted unanimously to authorize Mike Welch to contact surrounding towns and civic organizations to request support for the Community of Concern activities.

Manager's Report

Mr. Welch sent a letter to Jay Wood concerning the cost of dispatching for CALEX and the possibility of CALEX participating in the cost of the service. Mr. Welch pointed out that CALEX does store one of the St. Johnsbury fire trucks in their garage, and participates in medical support training in exchange for dispatch. Currently 20% of dispatch calls received are for ambulance service.

Special appropriations requests have been coming in to the office. So far, the only organization that had been asked to cut their appropriation by 5% and intends to ask for the full amount is the Meals on Wheels program. All other organizations have indicated their intent to cut their request by 5%.

Bryon Quatrini asked if there was any further movement to change the speed limit on a portion of Breezy Hill. Chief Devenger is studying the situation.

Other Business

On a motion by Gib Handy, seconded by Bryon Quatrini, the Board moved unanimously to go into executive session at 8:15, to discuss labor relations. It was moved by Gib Handy and seconded by Bryon Quatrini to return to regular session at approximately 8:25 PM.

It was moved by Gib Handy, seconded by Bryon Quatrini and unanimously voted to authorize the Town Manager to sign an agreement with AFSCME-Police relative to Dispatch Supervisor position in the bargaining unit.

It was moved by Bryon Quatrini, seconded by Dale Urie, and unanimously voted to adjourn at approximately 8:26 pm.

Respectfully, _____ Ida W. Rainville, Executive Secretary