

**SELECTBOARD MEETING
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2003
7:00 PM – MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

A regular meeting of the St. Johnsbury Board of Selectmen was held Monday November 24, 2003. Chairman Gib Handy called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and led the attendants in the pledge of allegiance. Present were Mr. Handy, Dale Urie, Bryon Quatrini, Elwin Cross and Reginald Wakeham. Also present from the town were Town Manager Mike Welch, Economic Development Coordinator Joel Schwartz, Zoning and Planning Administrator Priscilla Messier, and secretary Ida Rainville.

A liquor license for Ken Carpenter d/b/a/ the "Tavern on the Hill" was approved and signed by the Board.

A tax anticipation note with the Passumpsic Savings Bank for the water/sewer department in the amount of \$360,000, 2.39% one-year municipal note, was approved and signed.

The minutes of the November 10 meeting were approved as presented (Quatrini/Wakeham).

Attendees for the public hearing, in addition to the above-mentioned Board members and Town employees: Trevor Colby, Don Welch, Pam Smart, Robert Surrige, Brenda LaCroix, Louis LaCroix, Anne Kimball, Josephine Guertin, Christina Young, Side Judge Roy Vance, Sheriff Michael Bergeron, and Isaac Olsen of the Caledonian Record.

Public Hearing – Block Grant Application for NEKCA Cherry Street project

Don Welch, Trevor Colby and Pam Smart were at the meeting to present the proposed use of a Block Grant application. The plan is to upgrade the NEKCA Cherry Street property to accommodate a transitional housing unit for women coming out of drug rehab who need assistance to work themselves back into a productive lifestyle. The previous plan for this grant was to provide a transitional living site for women coming out of prison who need help re-connecting with their children and getting a job. The new plan would offer housing for a maximum of six people and would be supervised through the NEKCA office next door. Projected maximum stay up to one year, with most able to move out within six months. NEKCA will offer support follow up for a year. Suggested grant amount of \$125,000 to implement the program with renovations to the building, with a maximum of \$150,000. Board suggested several areas must be clarified before the Town will support: architectural and engineering study, funding for future years, public comment, and approval by zoning and planning. It was suggested it might take more than one application cycle to approve the program.

County Budget – Judge Vance and Sheriff Bergeron

Roy Vance went over the budget for the courthouse. They have re-configured the clerk system for the courts and are working on cross training all workers. He indicated the advantage of having the sheriff's department in the building. Insurance costs have increased and personnel will be paying some of the cost. Sheriff Bergeron indicated his department's budget has decreased partly because of decrease in rent to the courthouse. Judge Vance pointed out the \$130,000 surplus of this year includes extra income from notary renewals, which only happens every four years.

Public Hearing – St. J. Center Fire District

The Board reviewed the fire district boundaries for St. Johnsbury Center as re-configured by Dufresne Engineering, and recommended by Edward Zuccaro. The resolution was prepared by Ed Zuccaro and on a motion by Bryon Quatrini, seconded by Dale Urie, the Board voted unanimously to accept the proposed district boundaries and authorize the Clerk to sign the resolution.

Stray Cats

Animal Control Officer Josephine Guertin and Christina Young presented a proposal for taking care of stray cats, now that Companion Animal Care no longer accepts them. Mike Welch reported that the Town had paid Companion Animal Care \$5,360 through the end of August 2003 for the care of 116 cats. Ignoring the problem would not make it go away. The many stray cats in the area cause a health and nuisance

problem, and until the animal shelter is built and operating, Christina said she could house the cats in a building available to her, which has heat and cages. She will test for feline leukemia and aids for a fee of \$35. Any positive test will require the animal to be euthanized. SAD/SAC also helps out with spay/neuter expenses. It was generally agreed to try Christina's proposed program for a few months. On a motion by Dale Urie, seconded by Bryon Quatrini, the Board unanimously voted to authorize town manager Mike Welch to enter into an agreement on cat care with Christina Young.

Depot Square Apartments – Fire Escape

The fire escape on Depot Square Apartments requires repair. To install a proper fire escape it must extend onto town property in the parking lot, approximately even with the barriers that are currently in place, so will not affect existing parking spots. Since it is in design review, the Planning Board will be review the proposal on December 5. Property owners will cover legal and constructions costs, as well as indemnity insurance. The board unanimously authorized Town Manager Mike Welch to enter into an agreement with the property owners to extend the fire escape as required (Cross/Urie).

Reserve Fund – Arlington Woods

On a motion by Reg Wakeham, seconded by Bryon Quatrini, the Board voted unanimously to establish a reserve fund for the upkeep of Arlington Woods, using the \$2,800 donated to the town with the property from Passumpsic Valley Land Trust.

Public Tax Auction

The Board moved to appoint Reg Wakeham to represent the Town's interest in the scheduled public auction on November 25 at 1:30 (Motion by Bryon Quatrini, seconded by Elwin Cross).

Manager's Report

Mr. Welch presented a letter from Dale Sherburne concerning a dog bite he received in St. Johnsbury Center. The Board set a hearing for Monday December 1 at 4:00 PM.

The Board signed a letter in support of the proposed Oncology Center at NVRH.

The next meeting was scheduled for December 8, with no other scheduled meeting for December. Tentatively schedule a meeting for every Monday night in January to discuss budget matters.

Other Business

Bryon Quatrini questioned some areas of street lighting. Mr. Welch reported he had recently reviewed lighting town wide with CVPS representative Paul Sweeney and will have a report soon on CVPS recommendations and proposed cost.

Board voted to adjourn (Quatrini/Urie) at approximately 8:15 pm.

Respectfully,

Ida W. Rainville, Recording Secretary