

**SELECTBOARD MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 27, 2003
7:00 PM – MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

A regular meeting of the St. Johnsbury Selectboard was held Monday, January 27, 2003, at 7:00 PM in the boardroom of the municipal building. Present were Chairman Reg Wakeham, Gib Handy, Bryon Quatrini, Dale Urie and Student Representative Shawna Wakeham. Present from the Town were Town Manager Mike Welch, Town Clerk Sandra Grenier, Zoning Administrator Priscilla Messier, Fire Chief Troy Ruggles, Police Chief Paul Devenger, Fire Captain Will Rivers, and Recording Secretary Ida Rainville. Elwin Cross was absent and excused.

Also present were Kim Achilles from the Caledonian Record, the news crew from Channel 7, and Marlene Rock.

Chairman Wakeham called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Dale Urie expressed the thanks from the Board to Shawna Wakeham for serving as the student representative for the past three months, and presented her with a bouquet of roses.

Minutes

On a motion by Bryon Quatrini, seconded by Dale Urie, the Board unanimously approved minutes from the meetings of November 25, December 9, December 18, 2002; and January 3, January 6, and January 13, 2003.

Public Hearing – 2003 Budget

Mike Welch reviewed the figures that had been presented at budget workshops, and presented new budget sheets that reflected changes to the original budget presentation. Mike reviewed recommendations for utilization of fund balances:

- General Fund - \$146,655 – Estimate \$20,000 to reduce taxes; \$48,655 to reserve for Economic Development; set aside \$50,000 for re-valuation (estimated cost of \$150,000 to \$250,000) for the near future; returning \$26,625 to the Fire Department for equipment fund.
- Highway - \$46,000 to carry forward for 2003.
- Special Services - \$27,000 to use for capital equipment.

On a motion by Gib Handy, seconded by Bryon Quatrini, the Board voted unanimously to adopt the Special Services Budget as presented, and move the \$27,000 in special services to the equipment fund, and authorize the purchase of a new cruiser. The balance to remain in the special services capital equipment fund.

On a motion by Bryon Quatrini, seconded by Dale Urie, the Board voted unanimously to adopt the general fund/highway budget as presented by Mike Welch, including the \$26,625 to be included in the Fire Department.

Warning

Town Clerk Sandy Grenier reviewed changes in the warning from last year. Under the School District Meeting, Article 3 asks the voters to decide on the proposed use of funds from the sale of school buildings. Under the Town Meeting, Article 13 asks if the voters want to amend the town charter to vote the budget items by Australian ballot. General discussion centered on how it would be presented, and it seemed confusing. Sandy indicated all the workers would be knowledgeable and point out to voters the mechanics of the vote. Priscilla Messier suggested the ballot could be “blown up” in size to demonstrate the voting mechanics at the next Selectboard meeting to be televised and help voters understand how they want to

vote the question. It will also be discussed at the Town Meeting on Monday night. Article 14 questions if the voters are willing to allow the Town Clerk to add names to the checklist, rather than the entire Board of Civil Authority having to review each application on the Saturday before the vote. This would not give the Clerk the authority to remove voters from the list, or add any voters with questionable credentials. These questions would still have to go before the Board of Civil Authority. It was generally agreed that the question could be confusing, and the Selectboard would not have objections to having this question voted at the Monday night town meeting, rather than on Australian ballot.

On a motion by Gib Handy, seconded by Bryon Quatrini, the Board voted unanimously to accept the warning as presented, with the change of voting Article 14 at the Monday night Town Meeting instead of by Australian ballot.

After a brief discussion, on a motion by Gib Handy and seconded by Bryon Quatrini, the Board voted unanimously to dedicate the front cover of the 2002 Town Report to the late Kyle T. Brown, Jr. for his many years of service to the Town as moderator and justice of the peace. It was suggested to have the back cover dedicated to the Community of Concern, and possibly include pictures of the new school and/or school bells in the interior of the report.

Hearing Dates

Public hearings have been scheduled for the Charter Amendment on February 1 at 10:00 AM and February 4 at 7:00 PM. In addition, a panel discussion was taped for St. J. Today prior to this meeting.

Zoning Bylaws Update

Priscilla Messier reported that the Planning Commission had approved the expansion of the Design Control District. A public hearing has been warned for February 19. Projected time for bringing the question back to the Selectboard is March 24. Priscilla handed out copies of the proposed change to members of the Selectboard and requested each member review for corrections and adjustments. She is also sending out notification to all property owners within the proposed area. Gib Handy suggested a separate information meeting for property owners to discuss the proposed expansion.

Manager's Report

Mike Welch presented a question from Senator Doyle requesting a matter be put on the ballot for informational purposes only. It was generally agreed that the Town does not usually put public questions on the ballot, and usually there are surveys available at the polling places for those who wish to participate.

Police Department – High Speed Chase

Chief Paul Devenger was present to answer questions concerning a police chase, which occurred the previous week. The Town police had assisted the State Police in the pursuit of the logging truck that Chief Devenger described as “trying to attract the attention of law enforcement”. Chief Devenger assured the Board that his people are trained to use best judgement in pursuing out of the town jurisdiction. The Town police have jurisdiction throughout the state, and are allowed to pursue into another state until the police from that state can take over. Gib Handy extended the thanks of the Board to Chief Devenger for the professional handling of the situation.

Fire At Rodd Roofing

Chief Troy Ruggles reported that the new thermal imaging camera, purchased two weeks previously, was instrumental in locating the fire in the floors and walls of Rodd Roofing and Old Mill Racquet club facility. He indicated the ability of the firefighters to locate the source of the fire helped prevent the fire from spreading to other areas and causing a great deal more damage. The camera was purchased with the aid of fund-raising and donations, for approximately \$17,000. Chief Ruggles also said it could be used in locating people, either in a fire situation or someone who may be lost. General feeling was it paid for itself in one fire.

Community Development Block Grant

Mike Welch reported on a request for the town to apply for a \$357,500 Community Development Block Grant to loan to Micro Data to assist their expansion in St. Johnsbury. On a motion by Gib Handy,

seconded by Bryon Quatrini, the Board voted unanimously to authorize Town Manager Mike Welch to pursue the application for the grant.

A grant of \$1,000 was received to assist in the development of the walking trails through the town forest. On a motion by Gib Handy, seconded by Bryon Quatrini, the Board voted unanimously to accept the funds.

Mr. Welch reported that a tour of the corrections facility has been scheduled for all interested parties on Monday, February 3.

Recycling – Paula Hemmett

A presentation by Paula Hemmett and the school recycling club will be made at the February 10 Board meeting. Look at ways a viable recycling program can be established in town.

Other Business

Shawna Wakeham thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve as student representative. She said she hoped this program to include students on the board would continue, and felt it was a great opportunity for her and others to participate in local government.

On a motion by Gib Handy, seconded by Bryon Quatrini, the board voted to adjourn at 7:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted _____, Ida W. Rainville, Executive Secretary