

**MINUTES  
ST. JOHNSBURY SELECTBOARD  
MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2009**

The St. Johnsbury SelectBoard held a special SelectBoard meeting on Monday, January 5, 2009 beginning at 7:00p.m. in the Board Room of the Municipal Building.

**SelectBoard Members Present:** Chairperson Bryon Quatrini, Gary Reis, Daniel Kimbell, and Jim Rust.

**SelectBoard Members Excused:** Jean Hall Wheeler

**Others Present:** Mike O’Hara, Stan Wilkins, Gary Lunderville, Bernie Timson, Russ Hutchins, Sandy P. Grenier, Taylor Reed, Jon Beck, Diane Beck, Town Manager Mike Welch, and KATV.

Chairperson Bryon Quatrini called the meeting to order with the Pledge at approximately 7:00p.m.

**Expenditure Warrants:** The SelectBoard members present reviewed, approved and signed Expenditure Warrants as follows:

General Fund	60934	\$612.51
	60935 – 60977	\$19,185.85
Grant Fund	2152	\$65.58

The following expenditure warrants are pending review by SelectBoard Representative Daniel Kimbell:

General Fund	60869 – 60869	\$310.21
	60870 – 60933	\$379,037.11
Grant Fund	2150 – 2151	\$2,241.06

**Liquor License** – The members of the Board reviewed, approved, and signed a Liquor License for Dylan’s Café on Railroad Street. This application has been reviewed and approved by Fire Chief Troy Ruggles and Police Chief Richard Leighton.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – **St. Johnsbury Center Sidewalk** - Chairperson Quatrini asked if there was any public comment. Mike O’Hara, St. Johnsbury Center, requested that the SelectBoard consider plowing the sidewalk in St. Johnsbury Center, as this is a safety hazard with people having to walk in the road. The Manager stated that he did discuss this with Larry Gadapee and the Town plowed the sidewalk about 15 years ago, by driving the sidewalk plow the entire route of Breezy Hill. This is a very narrow strip of asphalt along the State Road – the roadway is plowed by the State of Vermont. Chairperson Quatrini suggested that the Town contact the State of Vermont and request that they wing back the snow from this walkway as they are plowing.

**Australian Ballot Voting** – Russ Hutchins asked about the status of the Australian Ballot article. The Manager said that Charter Amendments have different notification requirements from regular Town Meeting procedures. The SelectBoard needs to scheduled two public hearings, the first public hearing has to be at least 30 days before the Town Meeting. Notification of this Public Hearing needs to be posted at least 30 days before the hearing – so a notice was required to be posted on or before January 2, 2009. The Manager stated that he did not look at the municipal calendar until this morning, and did not post notice of the Public Hearing until Monday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The Manager said that he discussed this with Edward Zuccaro, and has sent an e-mail to Deborah Markowitz, to discuss. The Manager said that it is possible that this may not be viewed as a significant flaw in the process – and he would try to get confirmation from the Secretary of State. The Manager said that it is possible that given this delay in posting, that the legislature would not consider the Charter Amendment, and would require the Town to vote again. The Manager apologized for his delay in posting of the public hearing notice. Public hearings on the proposed Charter Amendment have been warned for Monday, February 2, 2009 at 7:00p.m., Board Room, Municipal Building, and for Monday, February 9, 2009 at 7:00p.m., Board Room, Municipal Building. Bryon Quatrini recommended that the Board proceed with the public hearings and the charter amendment vote.

**William Merrow** – SelectBoard member Daniel Kimbell noted the resignation submitted by William Merrow from the Planning Commission. Daniel Kimbell said that William Merrow taught him a great deal when he served on the Planning Commission, and that Bill’s many years of service are deserving of recognition by the SelectBoard. The Manager will prepare a correspondence for consideration by the Board.

**MINUTES – DECEMBER 22, 2008** - It was moved by Daniel Kimbell, seconded by Gary Reis, and voted (4-0) to approve the Minutes from the Regular SelectBoard meeting held on December 22, 2008 as presented.

**MUNICIPAL BUDGET 2009** - The Manager provided members of the St. Johnsbury SelectBoard with an updated summary of the Town General Fund, Highway Fund, and Special Services Fund budgets as approved by the Board at their last meeting. The Manager said that he has now received information from Caledonia County on the 2009 County Tax – and that he will need to increase the County Tax amount by \$2,120 to a total of \$59,120 in the 2009 General Fund Budget proposal.

	Expense Budget Approved 2008	Expense Budget Proposed 2009	Variance	%
General Fund	\$2,333,598	\$2,385,020	\$51,422	2.2%
Highway Fund	\$1,997,565	\$2,084,545	\$86,980	4.35%
Special Services	\$1,054,600	\$1,076,480	\$21,880	2.07%

The estimated Property Taxes required to fully fund these proposed budgets are:

	<u>Approved 2008</u>	<u>Estimated 2009</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>%</u>
General Fund	\$1,826,513	\$1,807,920	(\$ 18,593)	(1.0%)
Voted Appropriations				
Estimated	\$ 340,752	\$ 328,000	(\$ 12,752)	(3.745)
Highway Fund	\$1,749,420	\$1,850,545	\$101,125	5.6%
<b>Town Tax Est.</b>	<b>\$3,916,685</b>	<b>\$3,986,465</b>	<b>\$ 69,780</b>	<b>1.78%</b>
Special Services (SS)	\$ 991,532	\$1,022,280	\$ 30,748	3.1%
<b>Town &amp; SS Tax Est.</b>	<b>\$4,908,217</b>	<b>\$5,008,745</b>	<b>\$ 100,528</b>	<b>2.05%</b>

Jon Beck questioned the 33% increase in the Town Pension contribution. SelectBoard member Daniel Kimbell explained the calculation of the Town contribution to the defined benefit pension plan is 16.1% for 2009 up from 12% in 2008. Jon Beck asked how much of the budget was dependent on State funds that may not be available. The Manager stated that very little of the General Fund or Highway Fund budget depends on State Funding – and the Town has projected an 8% reduction in state aid for highways in the 2009 budget as proposed.

The Manager stated that Fund Balances and Reserves will need to be reviewed by the SelectBoard once the 2008 books are closed, and fund balances are determined.

**BAART – TREATMENT FACILITY PROPOSAL** - The Manager stated that Zoning Administrator Priscilla Messier has received an application from BAART to have a treatment center at their facility on Portland Street. The Manager said he has requested information from Alan Aiken about this proposal, and would schedule a meeting of the Community Advisory Board to discuss this proposal. The DRB is scheduled to meet on Tuesday, January 20, 2009 to consider this application.

**WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT** - The Manager presented a revised Bond Question suggested by Robert Dufresne:

Bond Vote: Shall general obligation bonds or other indebtedness of the Town of St. Johnsbury in an amount not to exceed \$3,000,000.00 be issued expressly conditioned upon the Town's receipt of no less than **\$9,000,000 300% matching funds** in the form of construction grants in aid for the purpose of financing the Town's share of making infrastructure improvements ~~as~~ at an estimated total cost of \$12,000,000.00?

The Manager stated that Paul Giuliani, Bond Counsel, has agreed that this language is acceptable. The Manager stated that he will be working with Dufresne to estimate rate impacts and repayments, and present that information to the Board.

Russ Hutchins asked that the Town make sure we are in a position to access federal economic stimulus funds. Bryon Quatrini stated that that is the reason why the Town is attempting to prepare questions for consideration by the voters that will provide us the greatest flexibility for maximizing funding.

### **MANAGER'S REPORT:**

***Loan Resolution*** – The Board reviewed, approved and signed a Resolution for a note in the amount of \$450,000 at 1.59% with Passumpsic Savings Bank in anticipation of collection of delinquent taxes. Daniel Kimbell did not sign the resolution in order to avoid any appearance of a conflict of interest.

***CARE*** - The Manager stated that CARE has been linked to the Town's website, as requested – and information was provided to the Board relative to the Brandon Cat program.

***Energy*** – The Manager said that Jim Wuertele's energy information has been forwarded for inclusion on the Town website.

***Subdivision*** – The Manager informed the Board that the DRB would consider a subdivision for the Hudson property on Portland Street. The Town will acquire a small portion of property at this location as part of the water system improvement project.

***Pedestrian Signals*** – The Manager provided a copy of a quote from Highway Tech related to the restoration of pedestrian signals at the intersection of Concord and Portland. The Manager said that the neighborhood planning group has brought the lack of these pedestrian signals up as an issue.

***Coin Drops*** – A copy of a letter relative to a coin drop request was enclosed in the packet. The Board agreed to revisit their position on Coin Drops at a future meeting.

### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

***Town Caucus*** – Daniel Kimbell asked about the status of a Town Caucus. The Manager said that if the chairpersons of the two political parties do not agree to warn a bi-partisan caucus – then a bi-partisan caucus could not be scheduled. If one party or the other decides to advertise a caucus – then that would be a "party" caucus – and the Town should not be directly involved in it. Sandy Grenier stated that any person who wishes to run for local elected office should contact the Town Clerk's Office to get a copy of a nominating petition. Those people who wish to run for office, and have their name appear on the ballot, need to have 30 registered voters sign a nomination petition, and return that to the Town Clerk's Office by Monday, January 26<sup>th</sup>. Daniel Kimbell suggested that we need to get this information out to the public.

***Interstate Weight Limits*** – Bryon Quatrini asked about the status on communities that have passed the Interstate Weight Limit Resolution. The Manager said he would get that information from the VLCT.

***Reappraisal*** – Russ Hutchins asked about the status of the Reappraisal. The Manager said that Peter Whitney hired several data collectors who have been completing residential inspections. Peter has contracted with an appraisal consultant to assist with Commercial and Industrial valuations – and Peter Whitney has indicated that he feels that we are in a good position to complete the reappraisal for 2009. The Manager said he would ask Peter Whitney to provide an update to the Board.

Having no further business or requests, it was moved by Gary Reis, seconded by Daniel Kimbell, and voted (4-0) to adjourn at approximately 7:30p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael A. Welch  
Town Manager