

**MINUTES**  
**ST. JOHNSBURY SELECTBOARD**  
**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2009**

The members of the St. Johnsbury SelectBoard held their regular SelectBoard Meeting on Monday, February 23, 2009 beginning at 7:00p.m. in the Board Room of the Municipal Building.

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

***Others Present:*** Kevin Oddy, Sandra P. Grenier, Gary Lunderville, Dan Scott, Robert Dufresne, Jon Beck, Diane Beck, Martha Hanson, Tina Wood, Russ Hutchins, KATV-7, Taylor Reed (Caledonian-Record), and Town Manager Mike Welch.

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Community Center Evaluation – Jon Beck asked for the status of the report relative to the Recreation Center. The Manager stated that Mark Wheeler of EH Danson has advised that the report is nearly complete, and he plans to present to St. Johnsbury SelectBoard after Town Meeting on March 9<sup>th</sup>, or on March 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**MINUTES – FEBRUARY 16, 2009** - It was moved by Daniel Kimbell, seconded by Jim Rust, and voted (5-0) to approve the Minutes from the SelectBoard Meeting held on Monday, February 16, 2009 as presented.

**BOND INFORMATIONAL MEETING – WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT BOND - \$5,250,000 – WEST SIDE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT** - Robert

Dufresne, PE from Dufresne Group, was present to review the proposed West Side Infrastructure Project. Mr. Dufresne outlined the project area. Dufresne stated that all of the waterworks improvements for this area have already been designed and are ready for bid. Mr. Dufresne stated that the Town of St. Johnsbury has warned the Bond Vote to attempt to take advantage of new funding, through the Federal Stimulus package, that will be available through the Vermont Drinking Water Fund, the Department of Environmental Conservation Wastewater Funding, and/or additional Grant/Loan funds that will be made available through USDA Rural Development. Dufresne said that all of the funding agencies are beginning to work through the requirements of the stimulus funding in order to develop grant/loan ratios. Dufresne said that the Bond Vote is the Town's "trump card" as "readiness to proceed" is one of the primary criteria, and having a favorable Bond Vote is a vital step. Dufresne said that it is anticipated that St. Johnsbury will be eligible for up to 75% Grant Funding for the Water/Sewer and CSO components of this project. The reconstruction of streets and sidewalks are an ineligible expense. However, the cost of repairing the trenches where new water, sewer, and storm drain lines are replaced will be eligible. Dufresne said that he has estimated that a total of 65% of the overall project cost would be eligible for grant funding – and the balance of

the local share would be through low interest bonding. The total project cost is estimated at \$15,000,000. Dufresne reviewed the rate impacts of the project and stated that water rates would need to increase by approximately 22.8%, sewer rates would need to increase by approximately 11.4%, and the property taxes for the road/sidewalk portion of the project would be increased by \$120,360 or approximately 4 cents on the tax rate based on the 2008 Grand List. SelectBoard member Jim Rust pointed out that it is much easier for the public to understand the cost of these improvements if the increases are broken down. Based on the cost estimates provide by Dufresne – SelectBoard Member Rust said that the average water bill would increase approximately \$.205 cents per day; the average sewer bill would increase \$.16 per day; and the average tax bill on a \$100,000 home (based on current grand list) would increase \$.11 per day. Dufresne said that depending on the final funding requirements, the local share could change based on interest rates available and total amount of grant funding.

Russ Hutchins asked if the approval of federal Stimulus funds could provide additional funding for this project – up to 100% grant funding for some components. Mr. Dufresne said that was possible – but discussions that he has had with state and federal officials indicate that programs will likely be a maximum of 75% grant funding.

David Brown asked if the Town was actually in a worse position by having a favorable bond vote – as that shows that people are willing and able to spend the money vs. needing more assistance from the Federal and State Government. Robert Dufresne said that “readiness to proceed” is going to be one of the primary considerations for funding – and an approved bond vote is one of the first criteria funding agencies will look for in terms of readiness to proceed. David Brown asked why a pump station had to be placed at Overcliff Tanks. Mr. Dufresne said that many customers in vicinity of the tank do not meet minimum water pressure, as required by the State of Vermont standards. Mr. Dufresne said that the pump station will eliminate this pressure problem.

Gary Lunderville asked how many towns in Vermont will be ready with bond votes after Town Meeting. Mr. Dufresne said probably less than 10. Tina Wood asked what would happen if we do not have a favorable bond vote and are not one of the first in line for funding. The Manager said that the work will still eventually have to be completed – and the Town would probably look at scaling back the project for reconsideration by the voters. Gary Lunderville asked how long it would take to begin work. Mr. Dufresne said that it will depend on permitting, but the State has indicated that they are serious about getting projects approved once funding limits are defined. Gary Lunderville asked if consideration has been given to breaking the project up into smaller projects so that local contractors would have a better opportunity to bid. Robert Dufresne said that can be looked at. Dufresne said it does get difficult to manage if you get too many contractors working in the same general area on different components of the project.

Bryon Quatrini recommended that the Town Meeting PowerPoint include a slide on the West Side Improvement Project – detailing a breakdown of the costs per day as recommended by SelectBoard Member Jim Rust.

**INTERSTATE WEIGHT LIMITS – S93** – Chairperson Bryon Quatrini advised the Board that the Vermont Senate has passed S93 that will set a \$1.00 fine for those overweight vehicles that would be allowed on the State Highways, but are traveling on the Interstate. David Brown asked why they didn't set a higher fine. Bryon Quatrini said that our federal delegation was not interested in gaining for Vermont those same Interstate Weight waivers that are enjoyed by neighboring states – so he appreciated the fact that the legislature has tried to address this issue through the state fine structure. SelectBoard Member Gary Reis said that this end run around the Interstate weight waiver will not made federal authorities happy. Gary Reis said that he expects that the House will consider and pass this bill within the next week. Bryon Quatrini suggested that information relative to S93 be forwarded to St. Johnsbury Academy officials – so that they are aware of this effort. Following discussion, it was moved by Jim Rust, seconded by Gary Reis, and voted (5-0) to approve and sign letters to the members of the Senate Transportation Committee expressing appreciation for the passage of S93.

**2009 MUNICIPAL BUDGET PRESENTATIONS** - Chairperson Bryon Quatrini said that he spoke with Rick Mallon about additional TV screens for the St. Johnsbury School Gym to improve the presentations for PowerPoint. The Manager provided a draft of a PowerPoint presentation and asked members if they would like to take responsibility for presenting different parts of the budget and articles to be discussed at Town Meeting. Daniel Kimbell said that he thought that the original handout was better than the PowerPoint. Daniel Kimbell said that if we present different information in two different formats it will get confusing for people. Jean Hall Wheeler suggested that the PowerPoint presentation be modified to include the highlights of the Town Manager's Report. Following discussion it was agreed by members of the SelectBoard that they would take individual responsibility for budget and public question articles as follows:

Bryon Quatrini – Article 03 & 04 – General Fund Budget & General Fund Tax

Jean Hall Wheeler – Article 05 & 06 – Highway Fund & Highway Fund Tax

Daniel Kimbell – Article 07 & 08 – Special Services Dist. Budget & Tax

Jim Rust – Article 10 – Use of Current Bonding Authority – Water

Gary Reis – Special Warning Article 01 (Vote on Tuesday) – West Side Infrastructure Improvement Bond (\$5,250,000).

The Manager stated that he would revise the PowerPoint, and update the Handouts for Town Meeting, and forward to the Board members in advance of the Town Meeting.

**MANAGER'S REPORT** – *Amendment # 2 – St. Johnsbury SB VT 03(002) – CA0172* - The Board reviewed Amendment # 2 to the Scenic By-Ways Grant. The Manager said he has reviewed the amendment with Joel Schwartz, and Joel has approved the amendment language. The Manager said he could get more information for the Board relative to the Amendment, or the Board could take action. It was moved by Gary Reis,

seconded by Daniel Kimbell, and voted (4-1 Jim Rust opposed) to approve and sign Amendment #2 to the St. Johnsbury SB VT 03(002) CA0172 Grant Agreement.

**Town Reports** – The newsprint edition of the Town Report is now available. Copies are available in local banks, at the Town Office, at the St. Johnsbury School, were inserted in the Caledonian-Record on 2/21/09, and will be available at Town Meeting.

**Liquor & Tobacco Licenses** – The members of the Board reviewed, approved and signed Liquor licenses for the VFW and Wine Gate, approved and signed catering permits for Sodexo at Black Bear, and approved and signed Liquor and Tobacco license for the St. Johnsbury Country Club.

**Expenditure Warrants** – The members of the Board reviewed, approved and signed Expenditure Warrants as follows:

Grant Fund	2163-2163	\$225.39
	2164-2164	\$275,000.00
General Fund	61218-61270	\$303,317.73
Jay-Lyn Fund	45 – 45	\$600.00

**OTHER BUSINESS: Jay-Lyn Fund VCDP Liability** – SelectBoard Member Jean Hall Wheeler said that she had received phone calls raising questions about the Town’s liability exposure for repayment of grant funds in the event of default on loans made through the Jay-Lyn Revolving Loan Fund. The Manager said that he would get a written response relative to this issue.

***Contribution of SelectBoard Pay*** – SelectBoard member Jim Rust stated that he had received a call about cashing the check for his SelectBoard pay. SelectBoard member Rust stated that he wanted to turn-over this pay to the Municipal Building Reserve Fund to be used toward expenses associated with investigation of renovations to the Municipal Building/Fire Station. SelectBoard member Rust said that he would work out the best means for turning this money over with Town Clerk Sandra P. Grenier. The members of the Board expressed appreciation to SelectBoard Member Rust for this contribution.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** – It was moved by Daniel Kimbell, seconded by Gary Reis, and voted (5-0) to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing a real estate purchase option. The Board entered Executive Session at approximately 7:50p.m. It was moved by Daniel Kimbell, seconded by Jim Rust, and voted (5-0) to return to Regular Session at approximately 8:10p.m. It was moved by Gary Reis, seconded by Daniel Kimbell, and voted (5-0) to adjourn at approximately 8:10p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael A. Welch, Town Manager

