

**MINUTES
ST. JOHNSBURY SELECTBOARD
MONDAY, JULY 20, 2009**

The St. Johnsbury SelectBoard held their Regularly Scheduled SelectBoard Meeting on Monday, July 20, 2009 beginning at 7:00 p.m. at the Board Room in the Municipal Building.

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

Others Present: Mike Welch, Sandy Grenier, Ida Rainville, Richard Leighton, Danny Scott, Bob Dufresne, Diane Beck, Joel Schwartz, Peter Whitney, Bruce Corrette, Tina Wood, Jay Wood, Kevin Oddy, Pam Smart, Troy Ruggles, Bernard Timson, Martha Hanson, Randy Goodwin, Justin Hoyt, Kurt Borgstrom, Tim Angell, Taylor Reed (Caledonian-Record), and KATV-Channel 7.

CHECK WARRANTS:

The following check warrant reports were signed by the Board:

General Fund	Check #62294 – 62355	\$	164,891.60
Grant Fund	Check #2205	\$	1,987.89

Liquor Licenses were approved for Timbuktu’s (outside consumption), and Heath Enterprises (d/b/a Ramunto’s).

CALL TO ORDER – Chairperson Daniel Kimbell called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00p.m.with the Pledge.

MINUTES – June 22; July 15 –. It was moved by Jean Hall Wheeler, seconded by Jim Rust and voted (5-0) to approve the Minutes from June 22 and July 15 as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Chairman Daniel Kimbell complimented all persons involved in the containment of the fire that damaged three building on Main Street on July 9. Daniel named 17 surrounding fire departments that responded to assist, including as far away as Newport, VT and Woodsville and Monroe, NH. Chairman Kimbell expressed appreciation on behalf of the Town to all Firefighters, Police, Public Works personnel, and Red Cross volunteers, as well as all other volunteers who responded to the emergency.

REAPPRAISAL UPDATE – Peter Whitney reported that the booklets of new property assessments had been mailed on July 20 from Winooski so property owners should expect to receive their notice of reappraisal within two or three days. Peter also indicated that the entire list of reappraisals has been listed on the Town web site. Peter said that after making several spot checks throughout the list, everything seems to be in line and he planned to host at least two public forums to answer questions. Selectboard Chairman Kimbell clarified that an increased assessment does not necessarily mean increased taxes, and in fact the tax rate will be adjusted to reflect the new assessments and the school rate from the state is an unknown factor. Jean Wheeler asked when the tax rate had to be set. Sandy Grenier said the latest the tax bills could be mailed was October 20 (30 days before the property taxes would be due), and the bills usually go out 60 days before the tax due date.

PUBLIC HEARING – VCDP CLOSEOUT – COMMUNITY CENTER PLANNING GRANT

(Grant # 07110-PG-III-2007-St. Johnsbury-00033) - Joel Schwartz described the planning study of the building with use of Vermont Community Development Funds. The grant covered \$15,000 of approximately \$21,000 of expenditures that include the digitization of the original drawings, photographs of existing conditions, a structural energy study, studies of the mechanical and electrical system, a report from an historic preservation consultant and the work of the architect to meet all ADA and building codes and to bring the building up to current energy conservation standards. Included in the final report was a conservative estimate of all of the costs to accommodate the recommendations of the consultants and architect for use of the building as a Community Center without a major re-configuration of the space. The Town separately obtained an inspection report from a qualified hazardous materials consultant as well.

A separate public forum about the future of the building was held on June 30th at Catamount Arts to provide input to the Board of Selectmen. The public forum was very well attended. Schwartz concluded that the Town or a developer now have all of the information to make decisions about the future of the building. There were no questions.

WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT UPDATE – Bob Dufresne and Danny Scott reviewed the current contracts for the water system improvement project and updated the progress.

Contract 2008-1 Overcliff Water Storage Tanks – Second tank completed and filled. Water to be tested for bacteria and expect to be on line by Thursday, July 23 if the water passes inspection. On schedule and any punch list items to be completed by Aug. 31.

Contract 2008-2 Pump Station Improvements – Currently out for bid with opening on July 23. Estimate \$1,050,000.

Contract 2008-3 Cleaning and Lining – Completed. Was substantially done by July 4, with any punch list items to be completed by Aug. 31.

Contract 2008-4 Airport Hill Road Tank – transferred into Phase 2 project.

Contract 2008-5 Slip Lining – Re-bid and awarded to Kingsbury Contraction of Waitsfield. Contracted awarded at \$448,720 compared to \$385,000 estimate. Project started July 13 and scheduled to be completed within 60 calendar days. Currently about 2 weeks ahead of schedule.

Contract 2008-6 Water Main – Transferred into the Phase 2 project.

Contract 2008-7 Clearwell – Contract executed with a delayed notice to proceed to allow the work to start after the slip lining work is completed.

Force Account Work – as required by Rural Development, additional projects have been completed:

- a) Master Meter Vault at Breezy Hill Booster Pump Station.*
- b) Master Meter Vault at the Water Treatment Facility*
- c) Water Audit Report*
- d) Report on the effect of alum residuals at the water treatment facility.*
- e) Installed two insertion valves at the old water treatment facility*

Phase 2 Rural Development Project: This phase of work is funded with a local share loan of \$775,000 and an RD Grant of \$2,325,000 (75% grant).

Contract 2008-4 Airport Hill Road Tank – Currently out for bid with bid opening on July 23.

Contract 2008-6 Water Main – Awarded to Sicard Construction at a cost of \$868,068, compared to estimate of \$953,000. Construction will start July 21.

Underclyffe Drive project may be completed, depending upon contract openings on July 23.

Contract 2009-2 Fairbanks Drive – Was bid on July 9 by Twin State Construction, at \$225,415, compared to estimate of \$261,500 and the contract could be awarded by the Selectboard at this meeting.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding –Funds have been awarded to the Town of St. Johnsbury in the way of 75% grant funding for the Fairbanks Drive project, Airport tank, and water main improvements. For West Side Improvements, the application for funding has been filed and the Town is awaiting the decision.

Danny Scott gave a report of how the water system responded in the recent fire emergency on Main Street. Danny reported that 2.2 million gallons of water was used to fight the fire. Dan Gray was called in to operate the water filter plant and did an admirable job of increasing production to meet the demand. Some volume was decreased because of only one tank being filled on Underclyffe. Overall the system withstood the emergency use and Danny Scott indicated he did not try to use the Oak Street Well water because it had not been certified by the State, and he was afraid of causing extra pressure to the system and did not trust it. Troy Ruggles clarified that, when Danny asked the firefighters to reduce the water pressure at one point, it did not decrease the effectiveness of fighting the fire. When asked about having another water filter plant operator fully trained to handle the job, Danny Scott said it should be done so they would have a back up for Dan Gray, and Mr. Gray would not have to work seven days a week

After Bob Dufresne recommended the Town award Twin State Construction of St. Johnsbury the Fairbanks Drive (2009-2) project. On a motion by Gary Reis, seconded by Jim Rust, the Board voted (5-0) to award the project to Twin State, pending approval from Rural Development.

POLICE DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT - Police Chief Richard Leighton presented a year-to-date report on Police Department activities, with a breakdown of calls for service. Chief Leighton indicated an increase in calls over the same period last year, the major concerns being increased graffiti and vandalism in the youth population and NEK Youth Services is assisting in repainting areas affected by the graffiti. Jean Hall Wheeler asked if the graffiti seemed to be gang-related “tagging”, but Chief Leighton indicated he did not believe there to be a gang influence in the area. Also on the increase have been bad checks, larceny, alcohol related incidents and others that are generally considered related to the down-turn in the economy. Many disputes have been sent to the Community Justice Center. Chief Leighton also indicated they should meet with bar owners again to reinforce their patrol of the immediate area around the bars and in the parking lot.

RECORDING FEES/RETENTION – Town Clerk Sandy Grenier reported that the fee for recording has increased to \$10 from \$8 effective July 1, 2009. Ms. Grenier said that in the past the SelectBoard had authorized the Town Clerk to retain \$1 of the \$8 fee in reserve for records restoration. She asked that the Board authorize the retention of an additional \$1 from the new \$10 fee to be put into the reserve for records restoration, the remainder being applied to the general fund. Jim Rust suggested that the full \$2 increase should be applied to records restoration, so that the people that use the vault for recording will be paying the fee to maintain the records. On a motion by Jim Rust, seconded by Gary Reis, the Board voted (5-0) to authorize a split of the new \$10 recording fee as \$7 – general revenue, and \$3 – records restoration.

NORTHEAST REGIONAL CORRECTIONAL FACILITY – Mike Welch reported that he has conferred with Dave Peebles and, since the State has put the closing of the facility on hold for the

moment, Mr. Peebles indicated that if the facility is to be kept open, it would need to be operated more efficiently, which would mean probable expansion. Currently the facility constructed to hold 100 inmates is housing 150, so additional beds would probably require construction. Nothing definitive was said, but Mr. Peebles indicated he would like some feedback from the Town. It was generally agreed that the SelectBoard would be open to the suggestion, but would hold off making a commitment until they had more specific information. Bryon Quatrini suggested re-convening the Corrections Committee to discuss this matter.

SUMMERFEST – BLOCK PARTY - Kingdom Recovery requested holding their annual Summerfest as a true block party on Summer Street, which would cordon off Summer Street from Central Street to Church Street. The event is scheduled for 2:00 pm to 7:30 pm. The SelectBoard authorized Michael Welch to allow the Block Party, with the stipulation that the Police Department and area neighbors are agreeable, and as long as Main Street is open to through traffic.

REVENUE AND EXPENSE REPORTS - Mike Welch reviewed some of the figures of the revenue/expense report for the first half of the year. Mr. Welch indicated that the \$8,000 for roof leak repairs was offset by insurance, and the cost of repairing Tower 4 was not included in the report. Parking meter income was down, but personnel costs are also reduced because of the meter enforcement officer working part time in other departments.

Gary Reis and Jim Rust expressed their concern about having another filter plant operator fully trained, and indicated it was difficult to see the current status of the water/sewer department budget.

MANAGER’S REPORT - Town Manager Mike Welch presented a tax anticipation note from Community Bank at 1.7%. On a motion by Gary Reis, seconded by Jim Rust, the Board voted (5-0) to sign and approve the note.

Next meeting is scheduled for August 17 at 7:00 pm.

Ellie Adams had written a letter to the Town concerning signage on Crepeault Hill Road – the intersection of Old Prue Road needs a “Stop” or “Yield” sign for Old Prue Road. Currently no signage controls the traffic entering Crepeault Hill Road. Jay Wood concurred, saying that he had responded to several accidents at that intersection. Also, it was noted that guardrails are needed between Old Prue Road and Sleeper’s River.

On a motion by Gary Reis, seconded by Jim Rust, the Board voted to adjourn at 8:15.

Respectfully submitted,

Ida W. Rainville
Executive Secretary