

**MINUTES
ST. JOHNSBURY SELECTBOARD
MONDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2009**

The St. Johnsbury SelectBoard held their regularly scheduled SelectBoard meeting on Monday, December 28, 2009 beginning at 7:00p.m. in the Board Room of the Municipal Building.

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

Others Present: Brian Christman, Steve Smith, Mary Smith, Larry Sharer, Laurel Ruggles, Diane beck, Jon Beck, Tim Angell, Priscilla Messier, Joel Schwartz, Albert Dunn, Joan Brown, KATV, and Mike Welch.

Chairperson Kimbell opened the meeting with the Pledge at approximately 7:00p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Brian Christman, St. Johnsbury, said that he wanted to make a correction on a statement that he made at the last meeting. He said that eliminating the top 3 employees would not reduce the budget by \$750,000 – he meant to say the top 10 employees.

Laurel Ruggles, Glover, representative of Friends of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, said that she has heard the St. Johnsbury Bike Path called the path to nowhere. She said that the St. Johnsbury bike path is the beginning or the end of the 92 mile Lamoille Valley Rail Trail that crosses Vermont from St. Johnsbury to Swanton. Laurel Ruggles said that VAST has received a \$6,000,000 grant for the trail. Laurel said at their annual meeting, VAST has agreed to meet the 20% match requirement of the grant with their existing reserves. Laurel Ruggles presented members of the Board with a map of the Rail Trail. Laurel Ruggles said that the engineering is completed, and permitting work on the trail has begun. Laurel Ruggles said that Swanton has already completed a portion of the trail in their community and the Town Manager has extended an open invitation to anyone from St. Johnsbury who would like to visit the Swanton trail.

MINUTES - It was moved by Jim Rust, seconded by Bryon Quatrini, and voted (5-0) to approve the Minutes from the December 14, 2009 SelectBoard meeting as presented.

EXPENDITURE WARRANTS – A majority of the members of the SelectBoard reviewed, approved, and signed expenditure warrants as follows:

Grant Fund	2224 – 2226	\$10,626.00
	2227 – 2227	1,182.96
	2228 – 2228	3,800.00
General Fund	63444-63505	\$722,065.15

63506 – 63506 432.45
63507 – 63553 1,955,795.63

FAIRPOINT POLE PERMITS – Members of the Board reviewed, approved and signed pole permits for Fairpoint for West Hill Road, and Tilton Road.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY GRANT – Joel Schwartz was present to review a proposed application for an Energy Efficiency Grant. Joel said that the Town has been invited to submit an application that is due in February, 2010. Joel stated that the pre-application that he prepared focused on the St. Johnsbury Municipal Building to include an energy audit – and look at upgrades for the windows, overhead doors, and possibly the heating system. The total grant amount would be \$50,000 with a 10% match requirement. Joel said he has recommended to the manager that \$10,000 be budgeted for the match. Joel said that NVDA does have funds that can be used toward the \$1,800 energy audit cost. Jean Wheeler asked if this could be counted toward the local share – Joel said that it is possible that it could be. Joel stated that the upgrade of the heating system is a very expensive item, and he was not certain whether or not there would be much of a payback in terms of energy savings. Joel said that the Board can decide anytime before 2/23/2010 not to submit the application. Jim Rust suggested that Joel should get more information and report back to the Board within the next couple of weeks. Bryon Quatrini said it would certainly make sense to look at the windows. Gary Reis suggested if there are improvements that any homeowner would make to improve efficiencies, because they are cost effective and make sense, then we should be looking at those. Joel said that historic preservation standards will apply. Joel said he would report back to the SelectBoard at their meeting on January 11, 2010 relative to the availability of audit funding. Diane Beck asked why storm windows are in the basement instead of on the building. Joel said that the window casings are in such poor condition that the storm windows will not seal properly – and an improper installation could create more problems.

WAGES 2010 – NON-UNION EMPLOYEES: The Town Manager presented a spreadsheet to the SelectBoard indicating the net effect per employee of a 3.5% payroll increase for office staff, and a 2.5% salary increase for department heads. The Manager said that he wanted to make it clear that even though the base increase for the Firefighter Union is 3.5% for 2010, some employees will see a larger wage adjustment due to steps that have been included in the union contract. The non-union employees would also participate in the increase for health insurance premium from 12% to 14%, and increase in the pension contribution from 1% of base to 2% of base. Bryon Quatrini recommended that the Board take no action on wage adjustments for the non-union employees until the Board has a clearer understanding of the 2010 municipal budget impacts. Daniel Kimbell recommended that the Board review this item again at the budget workshop scheduled for January 4, 2010.

The Manager presented the Board with a comparison of Department Head hourly wages taken from information included in the Vermont League of Cities and Towns 2009 Salary Survey.

2010 MUNICIPAL BUDGET REVIEW - The Town Manager reviewed the current summaries of the General Fund, Highway Fund, and Special Services Fund budgets with the members of the Board. The Manager provided the Board with an updated estimate of 2010 property tax requirements for these three Municipal Funds based on the estimated revenue projections for 2010, estimated reserves, and 2009 grand list as revised by BCA appeal determinations. The Manager stated that the intention of these presentations is to provide members of the Board with information relative to the estimated property tax impact of the budgets as currently drafted.

The Manager stated that a \$.05 increase in the property tax (for the Special Services District) is \$100 per year on a \$200,000 home.

Bryon Quatrini said that any adjustments in the property tax have to be looked at in terms of the overall impact on taxpayers – including increases in the water and sewer rates that most residents in the former village area will be facing.

The Manager stated that the Finance Committee has scheduled a meeting for Tuesday, January 12, 2010, at 5:45p.m. in the Board Room of the Municipal Building, to discuss the draft Water/Sewer Budget and Rates for 2010.

Daniel Kimbell recommended that the SelectBoard begin budget discussions with Zoning/Planning, Economic Development, Town Clerk/Treasurer, Town Manager, and Assessor – during the budget workshop scheduled for Monday, January 4, 2010. Members of the Board agreed to start the meeting at 6:00p.m. in the Board Room.

MUNICIPAL BUDGET - 2010
ESTIMATED BUDGET & TAX SUMMARY

<u>December 28, 2009</u>	Approved	Actual	Approved		Tax Rate	Proposed		Estimated	
	Budget	Tax	Budget	Variance	2009	Budget	Variance	2009	Tax Rate
<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>Grand</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>Grand List</u>	Increase
					<u>List</u>				
GENERAL FUND									
Total Expenditure Budget	2,298,088.00		2,355,560.00	57,472.00		2,457,727.00	102,167.00		
Community Justice Center				0.00			0.00		
Less Revenue	-485,150.00		-552,100.00	-66,950.00		-556,750.00	-4,650.00		
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	1,812,938.00		1,803,460.00	-9,478.00		1,900,977.00	97,517.00		
Less Justice Center Grant				0.00			0.00		
(Surplus) or + Deficit	-21,935.00		-25,000.00	-3,065.00		-25,000.00	0.00		
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General Fund Taxes (without Appropriations)	1,791,003.00		1,778,460.00	-12,543.00		1,875,977.00	97,517.00		
Recreation Deficit (Special Article 2007)	35,510.00		35,510.00	0.00		35,510.00	0.00		
Special Appropriations	340,752.00		282,191.00	-58,561.00		290,161.00	7,970.00		
Total Property Tax (with Appropriations)	2,167,265.00	.61	2,096,161.00	-71,104.00	.3657	2,201,648.00	105,487.00	.3863	.0206
Local Agreement Rate (Veteran Exemption)		.0009			.0005			.0005	0
HIGHWAY FUND									
Total Expenditure Budget	1,997,565.00		2,084,545.00	86,980.00		2,141,930.00	57,385.00		
Less Revenue	-216,000.00		-199,000.00	17,000.00		-199,000.00	0.00		
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	1,781,565.00		1,885,545.00	103,980.00		1,942,930.00	57,385.00		
Less Reserves	-32,145.00		-35,000.00	-2,855.00		-35,000.00	0.00		
Less Surplus				0.00			0.00		
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Net to be raised Property Tax	<u>1,749,420.00</u>	.4950	<u>1,850,545.00</u>	<u>101,125.00</u>	.3224	1,907,930.00	57,385.00	.3337	.0113
	3,916,685.00	1.1059	3,946,706.00	30,021.00	.6886	4,109,578.00	162,872.00	.7205	.0319

SPECIAL SERVICES FUND

Total Expenditure Budget	1,054,600.00		1,076,480.00	21,880.00		1,115,895.00	39,415.00		
Less Revenue	-35,000.00		-40,200.00	-5,200.00		-30,200.00	10,000.00		
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	1,019,600.00		1,036,280.00	16,680.00		1,085,695.00	49,415.00		
(Surplus) + Deficit	-28,068.00		-14,000.00	14,068.00		-14,000.00	0.00		
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Net to be raised Property Tax	<u>991,532.00</u>	.6050	<u>1,022,280.00</u>	<u>30,748.00</u>	.3862	1,071,695.00	49,415.00	.4056	.0194
	4,908,217.00		4,968,986.00	60,769.00		5,181,273.00	212,287.00		
Combined Municipal Tax Rate		1.7109			1.0748			1.1261	.0513

Description	2008	2008	2009	2009	2010	Budget	%
Expenditure Summary	<u>Approved</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>To Date</u>	<u>Request</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>Variance</u>
<i>December 28, 2009</i>				12/23/09			
General Fund							
Town Manager	136,985	137,450	143,225	140,450	149,960	6,735	4.70
Town Clerk	261,985	257,420	246,950	235,793	261,910	14,960	6.06
Health Officer	1,000	507	1,000	1,511	1,000	0	0.00
Board of Civil Authority	13,100	12,109	14,530	11,525	13,385	-1,145	-7.88
Listers	85,695	97,637	67,225	118,163	53,885	-13,340	-19.84
Economic Development	100,460	94,127	101,200	96,554	104,704	3,504	3.46
Zoning Board & Planning	88,600	129,928	99,190	94,613	100,961	1,771	1.79
Emergency Management	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Municipal Building	55,500	83,689	53,425	51,219	53,910	485	0.91
Community Center (Armory)	40,400	39,212	49,150	30,043	32,000	-17,150	-34.89
Dog Control	13,400	7,056	10,400	7,433	10,400	0	0.00
Board of Selectmen	7,745	7,643	6,900	5,891	7,300	400	5.80
Dispatch Center	175,225	170,538	178,705	181,154	191,191	12,486	6.99
Fire Department	925,440	841,814	940,235	892,679	1,032,996	92,761	9.87
Health & Welfare	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Solid Waste	33,300	29,712	33,300	31,441	33,300	0	0.00
Community Justice Center	67,250	96,640	85,000	83,138	89,800	4,800	5.65
Offender Re-Entry Planning	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
DART	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Welcome Center Exp				38,416	42,410	42,410	0.00
Culture & Recreation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Debt Service	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
General Fund Expense	65,440	35,673	63,900	29,340	56,800	-7,100	-11.11
Computer/GIS	23,088	23,458	24,025	25,114	25,290	1,265	5.27
Dues & Misc	106,525	97,555	115,825	116,602	119,575	3,750	3.24
Interfund - Recreation/Pomerleau	132,460	319,568	156,885	131,969	112,460	-44,425	-28.32
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Total General Fund	2,333,598	2,481,737	2,391,070	2,323,049	2,493,237	102,167	4.27

Special Services

Police	848,675	832,110	866,955	896,576	893,695	26,740	3.08
Park & Trees	0	0	0	274	0	0	0.00
Beautification	12,200	8,021	10,000	6,446	10,000	0	0.00
Special Service Exp	193,725	191,255	199,525	196,008	212,200	12,675	6.35
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Total Special Service Fund	1,054,600	1,031,386	1,076,480	1,099,304	1,115,895	39,415	3.66

Highway Fund

Garage & Equipment	398,260	532,203	495,640	491,732	513,390	17,750	3.58
Summer Maint	877,790	957,323	849,280	922,313	852,175	2,895	0.34
Winter Maint	526,015	621,908	549,400	502,514	561,665	12,265	2.23
St Safety	116,100	128,503	118,100	120,239	115,000	-3,100	-2.62
Highway Fund Exp	79,400	65,964	72,125	62,610	99,700	27,575	38.23
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Total Highway Fund	1,997,565	2,305,901	2,084,545	2,099,407	2,141,930	57,385	2.75

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES – Members of the Board discussed legislative priorities. The Manager stated that in discussions with VLCT representatives’, municipalities will be looking toward trying to maintain existing programs that support local government including transportation state-aid, class 1 & 2 highway programs, structures grants, pilot program, and correctional pilot program. The Manager said that VLCT is also trying to keep a close eye on reductions in state services or programs that may result in an increase on demand for local services. Gary Reis stated that one of the primary issues that will be considered is transferring the teacher’s retirement fund to the education fund – which will have a direct impact on property taxes. Bryon Quatrini said that the relicensing of Vermont Yankee is major consideration for existing industry, and future economic development for Vermont. Chairperson Daniel Kimbell recommended that we ask the members of our legislative delegation to meet with the St. Johnsbury SelectBoard during the regular meeting on Monday, January 11, 2010 at 7:00p.m.

MANAGER’S REPORT – *First Night 2010* – The Manager said that plans are finalized for St. Johnsbury First Night. Buttons are available, and the schedule can be found at www.firstnightstj.com

Veteran Request - The Board considered the correspondence requesting that the SelectBoard consider placing a question on the ballot to increase the exemption for Veteran’s from \$20,000 to \$50,000. Daniel Kimbell recommended that the Town Clerk’s Office provide information relative to the number of current exemptions, and the estimated cost of the exemptions.

Legislative Breakfast – Scheduled for Monday, January 25th beginning at 8a.m. at the St. Johnsbury House.

OTHER BUSINESS – ***Water/Sewer Consumption*** – SelectBoard member Jim Rust provided members of the Board and public with a breakdown of consumption data by billing group for water and sewer over a three year period. Jim Rust said that this breakdown helps to identify the specific users where consumption has been reduced. Larry Sharer compiled a detailed 3 year history on consumption data and revenue, by month, for use by the Board and the Finance Committee.

St. Johnsbury Development Fund – Daniel Kimbell said he got a call from St. Johnsbury Development Fund asking about Town representation, and without objection he and Gary Reis would continue as representatives.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – Daniel Kimbell asked that the Board consider entering a brief executive session to discuss a personnel matter, and to include the Town Manager. It was moved by Gary Reis, seconded by Bryon Quatrini and voted (5-0) to enter into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter at approximately 7:50p.m.

It was moved by Gary Reis, 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 Jean Hall Wheeler, and voted to adjourn at approximately 8:10p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Welch
Town Manager

