

**MINUTES  
ST. JOHNSBURY SELECTBOARD  
SPECIAL MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 2009**

The St. Johnsbury SelectBoard held a Special SelectBoard Meeting on Wednesday, July 15, 2009 beginning at 7:30a.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:** Joel Schwartz, Troy Ruggles, Bernie Timson, KATV-7, Sandra P. Grenier, and Mike Welch

Chairperson Kimbell called the meeting to order with the Pledge at approximately 7:30a.m.

**PORTLAND STREET BRIDGE – ARRA AWARD** - The Manager informed the Board that the Portland Street Bridge has been selected as a candidate for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Funding. The \$1,060,000 project will include:

PORTLAND STREET - PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE

JACK, SHORE, REPLACE BEARINGS	12 X \$ 38,000.00 =	\$ 456,000.00
CONCRETE SURFACE REPAIRS	1 X \$150,000.00 =	\$ 150,000.00
STEEL REPAIRS EAST TOWER	1 X \$135,000.00 =	\$ 135,000.00
CLEAN AND PAINT E. & W. STAIR TOWER	1 X \$120,000.00 =	\$ 120,000.00
FOUNDATION REPAIRS E. STAIRS	1 X \$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
TRAFFIC CONTROL	1 X \$ 25,000.00 =	\$ 25,000.00
MOBILIZATION	1 X \$ 71,200.00 =	\$ 71,200.00
	SUBTOTAL \$	961,200.00
	(10%)	\$ 96,120.00
		<u>\$ 1,057,320.00</u>
	<b>USE</b>	<b>\$ 1,060,000.00</b>

The Town will be responsible for 5% of the total project cost. Bryon Quatrini asked what was not included in this project. The Manager said that the work on expansion joints on the bridge was removed – but replacement of all bearings was included. Following discussion, it was moved by Bryon Quatrini, seconded by Gary Reis, and voted (5-0) to accept the conditions of ARRA Funding for Portland Street Bridge in the amount of \$1,060,000 – and to sign the participation agreement.

**USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT – LOAN RESOLUTION** – the Board reviewed a copy of the USDA Loan Resolution in the amount of \$775,000, for the \$3,101,000 Water System Improvement Projects approved by voters at March 2009 Town Meeting. This project will include construction of the Airport Tank, Fairbanks Drive Water Line, and Construction of Water Main and Pressure Reducing Valves. Total USDA Grant funds for this project will be \$2,325,000. Following discussion, it was moved by Gary Reis, seconded by Jim Rust, and voted (5-0) to approve the USDA Loan Resolution in the amount of \$775,000, and to authorize Chairperson Daniel Kimbell to sign the Resolution of behalf of the Town.

**REPORT ON MAIN STREET FIRE** – Fire Chief Troy Ruggles provided the members of the Board with a report on the Main Street Fire. The Fire Call came into the station at approximately 10:30p.m. on Thursday, July 9<sup>th</sup>. The Chief said that firefighters immediately worked on rescue to make sure that everyone was out of the building. One individual had to be taken down by ladder from the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. The Chief said that a total of 16 Fire Departments responded to the scene. A total of 6 Tower and Ladder trucks were used at the scene. The Chief stated that due to metal ceilings in the building the fire spread horizontally very rapidly. The Chief said that the fire was not totally extinguished until Saturday afternoon – July 11<sup>th</sup>. A crane was called in on Friday, July 10<sup>th</sup> to begin demolition work in order to completely extinguish the fire. The Chief said that the fire was stopped at the St. Johnsbury Pharmacy Building, and at the Passumpsic Bank Building. The Bank did have a lot of water damage – as firefighters kept the building from becoming involved in the fire. The Chief said that one small corner of the roof of the Passumpsic Bank Building was damaged by fire. The Chief stated that insurance companies have been on the scene since the fire working out the details for demolition and repairs. The Chief indicated that a structural engineer was at the Pharmacy Building yesterday – due to concerns that have been expressed about the integrity of that building. Chief Ruggles said that water supply was adequate, and that Public Works Director Danny Scott was on scene to monitor tank levels and make certain that pumps were running at the filter plant. Bernie Timson asked why the Oak Street Well was not used. The Manager stated that he could not answer that question, and would need to defer to Danny Scott. Troy said that it is important that the Town maintain adequate storage on the water system. Troy said that USDA officials have tried to downsize storage tanks. Gary Reis asked if this issue had been resolved. The Manager said that the Higgins Hill Tank has not yet been designed, and the new Airport Tank is smaller – but the total system storage capacity is being maintained.

Jean Hall Wheeler asked Chief Ruggles if he had a sense of how the response to this incident would have been different with a volunteer fire department. Chief Ruggles said that the on-duty firefighters were on scene in about 30 seconds. The Chief said that off duty personnel and on call personnel take between 9.5 and 10 minutes to respond. The Chief said that another 9 or 10 minutes in a fire like this would have made a significant difference in terms of personal injury and additional property damage.

Bernie Timson said that the Fire Chief did an outstanding job coordinating this emergency response. Sandy Grenier complimented all of the crews that worked together

on the fire scene. Members of the SelectBoard expressed their appreciation to Troy and the Firefighters. Chairperson Kimbell asked for a listing of responding departments – so that the Board can express their thanks to these firefighters. The Chief expressed his appreciation to all of the Town Departments for their cooperation and assistance during the emergency including Highway, Water, and Police. Troy said that the Red Cross did an outstanding job – and we received support in the form of food, drinks, etc. from the Academy and several local businesses.

Gary Reis asked about the meeting with Tayt Brooks, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Housing & Community Affairs. The Manager stated that he did speak with Mr. Brooks, and also with Josh Hanford at VT Community Development. Joel Schwartz and the Manager met with representatives of some of the funding agencies on 7/14/09 – and it was agreed that people really needed to wait to find out what the property owners are interested in doing. Joel will be discussing some of the opportunities with the owners, and business owners involved. Gary Reis asked for an update on status at the next Board meeting.

**EXPENDITURE WARRANTS:** The members of the SelectBoard reviewed, approved, and signed expenditure warrants as follows:

General Fund	62144 – 62223	\$233,518.78
	62224 – 62260	\$ 15,938.58
	62261 – 62292	\$179,915.39
	62293 – 62293	\$ 3,728.76
Grant Fund	2202 – 2204	\$ 4,651.14

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

*Water Supply/Public Works* – SelectBoard Member Jim Rust asked that Public Works Director Danny Scott be invited to the next SelectBoard meeting to provide his input on any concerns that he had relative to water supply or any other matters, related to the fire, at the next regular Board meeting.

*Next Meeting* – The next Regular SelectBoard Meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:00p.m. in the Board Room of the Municipal Building.

Having no further business or requests, it was moved by Gary Reis, seconded by Jean Hall Wheeler, and voted to adjourn at approximately 8:05a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Welch  
Town Manager

