

**MINUTES  
REGULAR SELECTBOARD MEETING  
NOVEMBER 8, 2010 – 7:00 PM  
MUNICIPAL BOARD ROOM**

ATTENDANCE: Chairman Jim Rust, Rodney Lamotte, Bryon Quatrini, Bernard Timson, Daniel Kimbell and Town Manager Ralph Nelson.

Also present: Secretary Ida Rainville, Tim Persons, Jay Wood, Joe Benning, Gary Reis, Bob South, Jane Kitchell, Jon Beck, Diane Beck, Brian Christman, Al Dunn, Sean Jewell, Jim Impey, Nancy Cohen, Mike Fortier, Bruce Corrette, Taylor Reed and the News 7 crew.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge at 7:00 pm.

**Public Comment** – Bruce Corrette asked if the Selectboard had developed any plans for the land in St. Johnsbury Center that was turned over to the Board from the School Board several years ago. He also was concerned with the use of 8 acres owned by the town next to the Passumpsic River. Mr. Nelson assured Mr. Corrette that the Board will be looking into both areas.

**Minutes** – On a motion by Rod Lamotte, seconded by Bernard Timson, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of 10/25/10 as presented.

**Warrants** – On a motion by Bernard Timson, seconded by Rod Lamotte, the Board voted unanimously to approve and sign the following warrants:

Accounts Payable Checks #	65341 – 65364	\$ 44,025.05
	65365 – 65410	\$127,562.75
	65411 – 65472	\$116,989.40
	65473 – 65511	\$374,707.09
Grant Funds	Check # 2274	\$ 4,307.23

**State Office Holders – Priorities** – Chairman Rust introduced the four senators and state representatives for the Town of St. Johnsbury, and distributed a list of concerns that the Selectboard had designated of particular interest to the Town in the next legislative session. The following matters were on the list:

1. Business Development (state regulations and timeline discourages business in VT)
2. Downtown Development – appreciate support on the Railroad street project going out to bid.
3. Highway Funds – Try to make sure the highway funds are not delayed this year.
4. Transportation Path Funding – Is the funding dependent upon the rail trail being completed?
5. Infrastructure Projects – Increased funding required for Portland Street Bridge due to older study used. Any possibility of getting local match reduced?
6. Regional Recreation Facility – Looking for any available funding to assist with development of local facility. Need to get agreements from surrounding towns that will buy into the facility.
7. Electrical Rates – Great concern over increased rates, possibly caused by Vermont Yankee closing – would cause hardship to local industry and agriculture.
8. Jail/Work Camp – Concern over the future of the work camp, and what it would mean for local jobs and economy if it closed.
9. Taxes/Reappraisals – Ask the State to stop raising the school taxes – making it difficult for people to keep up on taxes they have no control over.
10. Park and Ride – Upgrades to the US Route 2 park and ride have been pushed out to 2013. There is heavy usage now, and could be better with bus stop there.
11. Schools – Concern over increased tax burden, taxes and staff increasing while student population is going down.
12. Better Communication – Need to keep the avenues of communication open, more often than twice a year – to keep legislators informed of concerns to the Town, and keep the Town informed of what is coming up in the legislature.

Gary Reis pointed out that the \$112,000,000 deficit will dictate some priorities for the legislature, and will require more cuts to spending. Joe Benning agreed, saying the deficit is likely to climb, depending upon the result of Vermont Yankee, and if a single payer health policy is adopted. Bob South vowed that the Northeast representatives will work together to try to accomplish more for this area of the state, in light of the disparity of population between the Northeast and Chittenden County.

Ralph Nelson said it was most important for the lines of communication to be kept open and information flowing back to the Towns. Jane Kitchell pointed out that Act 250 has been around a long time and has changed considerably, adding new requirements every year along with local restrictions. Joe Benning asked for more local input on specific areas as they come up in the legislature. It was agreed that everyone's budget will be affected by increased taxes so the legislature needs to try to keep them to a minimum.

**Special Appropriations** – There was some discussion over whether or not the organizations requesting special funds will have to petition for inclusion on the March, 2011 ballot. General agreement that any organization wanting an increase in appropriation would need to petition, and the Board would like to personally hear from all organizations, with updates of their required funding. Ralph Nelson will contact the organizations and ask someone to present to the Board at the next few meetings.

**Manager's Report** – The Manager reported that bids from the repair/removal of the Murphy Electric roof, in conjunction with the Portland Street Bridge project, came in from three sources. The winning bid was from Winterset at \$5,600. Other bidders were D & G at \$18,500 and Rodd Roofing at \$12,500.

Mr. Nelson reported that the labor union negotiations are going forward. Also the transfer of retirement funds from the Town Retirement Fund into the VEMRS fund will take time, but he is moving forward with the process.

With the approval of the MOU with St. Johnsbury Academy's operation of the Recreation Department, Mr. Nelson reported that Town Attorney Ed Zuccaro has also prepared an amendment to Chapter 9 of the Town Statutes, and Mr. Nelson will ask the Board to sign in executive session.

Mr. Nelson reported that Kingdom Gymnastics, opened at the Green Mountain Mall by Donna Reed and her business partner, has had outstanding success.

Mr. Nelson said he will take over monitoring parks and the Welcome Center for now, and the Academy has agreed to maintain the parks through their student programs. Joe Fox had agreed to take care of the Welcome Center until December 31, 2010.

Jim Rust reported that the Board may consider dropping personal property tax, since it could help to encourage business to the area, and other towns in the Northeast, including Newport have discontinued the personal property tax. The Town of Lyndon is also considering the discontinuance of personal property tax. Mr. Nelson reported that it generates approximately \$155,000 per year.

At 8:15, the Board voted unanimously to go into executive session to discuss legal, personnel, and contract matters. At 8:24 pm, on a motion by Bryon Quatrini and seconded by Bernie Timson the Board voted unanimously to come out of executive session and adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ida W. Rainville  
Executive Secretary