

**MINUTES
REGULAR SELECTBOARD MEETING
NOVEMBER 22, 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, Brian Christman, Gary Lunderville, Larry Sharer, Lisa Briggs, Mike Fortier, Jane Alper, Al Dunn, Jon Beck, Diane Beck, Bob Butterfield, Nancy Cohen, Marion Stuart, Mary Grant, Susan Shaw, Taylor Reed and the News 7 crew.

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

Public Comment – Brian Christman questioned the Town Manager about meetings the Manager reportedly had been attending on a weekly basis with two Board members at the Passumpsic Bank. Mr. Christman questioned the transparency that Mr. Nelson had promised the Town in matters of public governance. Chairman Rust and Mr. Nelson both answered that communication between the Town Manager and Select Board members was essential to the operation of the Town, and that the Town Manager also met with other members of the Board on a regular basis. Chairman Rust also pointed out that a meeting of three or more Select Board members would be considered a public meeting, and would be illegal if not warned in advance. When Mr. Christman continued to question the Town Manager and ask if he had been “ordered” to attend such meetings, Mr. Nelson indicated that, in light of Mr. Christman’s specifying dates and times of meetings, he felt that he was being stalked by Mr. Christman, which was an illegal activity.

Minutes – Daniel Kimbell pointed out in the Minutes of 11/08/10, VEMRS should read “VMERS”, being the Vermont Municipal Employees Retirement System. Also, Mr. Kimbell pointed out that the Board is considering a transfer of retirement funds into the VMERS system, and looking at all the ramifications of such a move. This has not been officially determined as was indicated in the 11/08 minutes. On a motion by Daniel Kimbell, seconded by Bryon Quatrini, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of 11/08/10 as corrected.

Warrants – On a motion by Daniel Kimbell, seconded by Bernie Timson, the Board voted unanimously to approve and sign the following warrants:

Accounts Payable Checks #	65512 – 65552	\$ 73,752.34
	65553 – 65581	\$134,519.02
Grant Funds Check #	2275 - 2276	\$ 22,493.55
	2277 – 2278	\$ 341.00

Special Appropriations – Manager Ralph Nelson clarified the request from the Select Board to have representatives from organizations requesting special appropriations from the Town to update the Board and public to the type of organization they are and how the funds may be used.

Susan Shaw, from the Good Living Senior Center at the St. Johnsbury House, reported all the activities available to seniors and presented a packet of information which included the mission statement, vision for the organization and annual budget. Susan reported that there were 950 client visits in March and April to at least 23 activities. This included St. Johnsbury residents from the age of 55 to 90+. Al Dunn pointed out that the Senior Center also works with the Recreation Department. Nancy Cohen and Diane Beck questioned why the Senior Center needed money, since according to them the Lyndonville Senior Center (for instance) operates solely on volunteers. Susan Shaw explained that in her experience every senior center operates differently.

Rural Community Transport (RCT) – Mary Grant distributed the budget for 2011 and audit from 2010, along with lists of routes and ridership on various routes. Ms. Grant explained that RCT operates on grant money from federal, state, and local funding from area towns. The new US 2 Commuter bus has been well-received, and Mary said the run from St. Johnsbury to Lyndonville is often full. She indicated that their in-kind services and town

contributions we important to continue to receive the federal and state funding. Mike Fortier wanted to know how it would affect RCT's budget if they were not awarded the \$13,000 from the Town. Ms. Grant indicated they would probably be questioned by the State about the interest of the town in keeping the program operating.

Marion Stuart from Northeast Kingdom Youth Services presented an overview of the Youth Services program which was started in 1975. The main goal of the organization is to try to keep families together, but when not possible, to assist young people with life skills and learning to live on their own. The NEK Youth Services provides the Living Room during the daytime where young people can get assistance in everyday living and the shelter on Elm Street. Funding comes from federal, state, and private funding, as well as fund-raising activities put on by the Youth Services. Marion said that the contribution from the Town of St. Johnsbury equals .5% of the total budget. Much of the town's contribution is put against utility costs, since federal contracts require a cash match for utilities. They have 140 volunteers in the diversion program, community members, and mentors.

Liquor License Approval – On a motion by Bernie Timson, seconded by Rod Lamotte, the Board unanimously approved catering permits for Sodexo and Elements.

Liquor License Procedures – Larry Sharer presented a plan for the Town Clerk's office to be able to sign approval on catering permits for any liquor license recipient that had previously been approved by the select board. This would eliminate the need to track down board members for signatures between meetings. There was some discussion as to why the catering requests couldn't come in at least a month in advance so there would be plenty of time to get the permits to the Board for signatures. Larry Sharer pointed out that legally the forms do not have to be in before 5 days prior to the event, and many times the plans are not final a month or more prior to the event, making it difficult to get applications into the office. Mr. Sharer contacted the liquor control board and confirmed that it would be legal for the clerk or assistant clerk to sign the permits, and he said they would be willing to bring the permits before the board at the following meeting. Lisa Briggs indicated she did not think the Clerk's office trustworthy of handling this responsibility. Bernie Timson said he is easily contacted and did not mind having to come in to the office to sign at off times. Mr. Timson also felt that the organizations could work harder to get the applications into the office in a timelier manner. Chairman Rust asked if a permit had ever not gotten approved because of lack of signatures. Larry Sharer said not to his knowledge. On a motion by Bernie Timson, seconded by Rod Lamotte, the Board voted unanimously to table this matter to the next meeting.

Downtown Improvement Commission – The Downtown Improvement Commission requested the Board suspend parking meters from November 26 through the end of the year for holiday shopping. On a motion by Daniel Kimbell, seconded by Bryon Quatrini the Board voted unanimously in favor of the proposal.

Mr. Rust had a recommendation from the Downtown Commission to maintain the common area fees at \$500 per property owner. Mr. Nelson reported \$45,000 left on the loan for the parking lot after this year, so there is just over 2 year left on the payment schedule. On a motion by Rod Lamotte, seconded by Bernie Timson, the Board voted unanimously to impose a \$500 fee in 2011, unless other arrangements can be made to reduce the debt sooner.

Town Manager's Report – Mr. Nelson reported that he had met with the HUD investigator on the Jay Lyn fund. The matter has been sent to a Federal Grand Jury and any further work to be done at this time is confidential.

The Manager said he had met with NVDA and the Transportation Advisory Council (TAC), and with Shawna Clifford from the Agency of Transportation to find out about funding available for structures and Class II roads. Mr. Nelson indicated there are VTRANS grants available by region for \$400,000 to \$600,000 per year for structures, and \$600,000 to \$800,000 for Class II roads. The total available per project would probably be around \$72,000, with a 10% required match. Applications need to be in by February for spring projects.

The final easements have been signed on the bike path and the right of way certificates sent to the state of Vermont right of way coordinator. The engineering plans are ready to be finalized and the bid could go out as early as January 1 for construction next spring. Mr. Nelson also spoke to Mike O'Hara from the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail and was assured federal funding was in the works. Mike Fortier suggested someone official from the Town should try to get involved with the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail meetings, to which Chairman Rust agreed. Brian Christman wanted to know if the TAC funds could be used to demolish a bridge – namely the South Main Bridge that will come down with the construction of the bike path, to cut some of the expense of the bike path.

Other Business – Lisa Briggs said she had an issue with having to go to a Catholic school to vote. She is not Catholic and is uncomfortable with the Catholic surroundings of the school. Jim Rust said that could be addressed for the future.

Mike Fortier asked where matching funds come from with all the grants the Town receives. Jim Rust explained that sometimes the grants are planned for and built into the capital budget, sometimes the match is met by in-kind work, and sometimes it is taken from the existing budget, replacing other projects. It would depend upon when the grant is issued and where the funds for match are available.

On a motion by Daniel Kimbell, seconded by Bryon Quatrini, the Board voted unanimously to go into executive session at 8:35 PM, to discuss contracts and personnel.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ida W. Rainville
Executive Secretary