

**MINUTES
REGULAR SELECTBOARD MEETING
DECEMBER 27, 2010 – 7:00 PM
MUNICIPAL BOARD ROOM**

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

Also Present: Lisa von Kann, Matt Powers, Michael Wright, Erin Quatrini, Matt Choate, Jim McGregor, David Hare, Gary Aubin and Werner Heidemann, KATV camera crew, and Todd Wellington from the Caledonian.

Public Comment: None

Minutes: November 22 and December 13, 2010 – Chairman Rust made a correction of the minutes from November 22, 2010 that the suggestion of \$500.00 common area fee from the Downtown Commission came from a meeting between the Commission and Town Manager Ralph Nelson, not from Mr. Rust. On a motion by Rod Lamotte, seconded by Bernie Timson, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes as corrected.

Warrants - On a motion by Bernie Timson, seconded by Bryon Quatrini, the Board voted to approve and sign the warrants as presented.

Liquor License – None.

Caledonian Record Decision – Chairman Jim Rust briefly reviewed the Court’s decision on the release of documents connected to the final applicants for the position of Town Manager (complete written decision attached to these minutes). The Court declared that the information contained in the applications from the two remaining finalists for the position (other than Town Manager Ralph Nelson) could be made public after redaction of the names and identifying information from the packets, thus protecting the applicants from adverse consequences at their current places of work. Also, the Court did not award attorney fees, since it found the Town’s position was reasonable.

Union Contracts – Ralph reported that after 4 meetings and other correspondence, the Firefighters Union is within a few points of an agreement. On the contract with Police Department and Public Works, Mr. Nelson said he is in early stages of talks and still trying to standardize boiler plate language. He has had two meetings with the Police Department and scheduled the first meeting with Public Works for December 28. Mr. Nelson felt that the language should be more easily resolved with the Public Works since the same attorney represents both the Police and Public Works. Mr. Nelson continued to state that he appreciated the Firefighters’ understanding of tough economic times and the Town is well-protected by contract language. Bob South questioned the term “boiler plate”. Ralph indicated certain aspects of contracts could be standardized, even though some areas are germane to individual department.

K-9 program – The manager reported that Officer Justin Hoyt has stated that the project is proceeding. Nothing new to report.

Special Appropriations – Athenaeum – representatives Lisa von Kann and Matt Powers, exec director. Mr. Powers read the dedication of the Athenaeum to the Town from Franklin Fairbanks. The Athenaeum will be celebrating its 140th anniversary in 2012. The Athenaeum is committed to furnishing its cultural resources to the Community and exists for educational purposes as non-profit. All money earned must be used for expenses of operating and upkeep. Lisa von Kann said the Athenaeum acts as a community center where groups can meet, and offers space for daily and after-school use. They are asking for \$103,500, remaining at 2004 levels or slightly below. The town appropriation accounts for 22% income for the year - \$13.25 per person. Lisa went into more detail on programs offered, especially for children.

CALEX Ambulance – Michael Wright, Erin Quatrini, and Matt Choate reported that CALEX provides local transport, of course, but is also one of the largest training centers for CPR and first aid in Vermont. Calex has 7 full time and 12 part time employees, averaging at least 5 years of experience each, some as many as 20 years. They also provide critical care EMS transfer services, cover 7 local towns and handled 2,050 calls so far for 2010.

generally split 70/30% by 911 calls/transport. This includes an area of 250 Sq. miles. Calix is requesting the same appropriation as last year - \$27,320, \$3.64 per capita. Staffs of 2 full time crews are on duty during the day, one at night. Three ambulances available are needed, the extra for emergencies like one breaking down, or on a transport for several hours.

St. J. Band – Jim McGregor, David Hare, Gary Aubin, seeking same level of appropriation, \$770. Jim McGregor reviewed the mission statement and history of the band, back to 1912. Original appropriation was \$1000, which would breakdown to \$20,000 today – but they are holding at \$770. David Hare reviewed the band budget and indicated the Town’s appropriation is 19% of their total revenues. Local concerts and donations provide the rest. Concerts outside of St. J. accounts for 42% of revenue. The St. J. Band is the oldest organization in town. It is open to new members, and they have a good crowd at concerts.

No one from Umbrella or Together Works attended.

Budget – Ralph Nelson said he hopes to have Union contracts settled enough to get an idea of the budget by Wednesday, and will work forward from information already established in a spreadsheet. The Chairman and the manager asked the Selectboard members to forward any instructions prior to beginning work on the budget to them.

Manager’s report – Jim Rust and Ralph Nelson went to Montpelier to see Vtrans and Economic Housing and Community Affairs to get updates on various grants and community projects, especially the bike path, CT River by-way grant, and Railroad Street enhancement. Ralph reported they are awaiting two small details on bike path, should have the bidding ready within 45 days of beginning of 2011. Also the CT by-ways grant for the park in front of Welcome Center – still waiting to hear on that. Enhancement grant – engineering study done, but not quite enough money in project to do the work hoped for. The Town will be looking at other options so that the project can begin.

Downtown Organization – Ralph Nelson reported that he and the Board are exploring opportunities available to the Town for economic development connected with the Downtown Designation. He had a meeting with VT Coordinator of Downtown program Leanne Tingay, and Joss Besse, director of Economic Development and Community affairs. Will continue to work with ST. J Chamber to maintain Downtown designation.

Met with Portland Street Bridge engineering and construction group – anticipate 3 weeks of work remaining. The project is shut down for winter.

Received state equalization study. CLA dropped .5% from last year to 103.9. Over 120 or under 80 triggers re-appraisal. COD – fair distribution of taxes within the town – 10.5, which is down approx. 5% from last year. DRD should be around 1.00, ours is 1.01.

On a motion by Bernie Timson, seconded by Rod Lamotte, the Board voted to go into executive session to discuss personnel issue at 8:00 PM.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 with no further business transacted.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ida W. Rainville
Executive Secretary