

**BUDGET MEETING
TOWN BUDGET – THE WELCOME CENTER
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2011 – 6:00 PM**

The first of four scheduled budget meetings was held at the Welcome Center on Thursday, February 3, 2011 at 6:00 pm. Those present included Town Manager Ralph Nelson, Selectboard Chairman Jim Rust, Daniel Kimbell, Bryon Quatrini, Bernie Timson and Rod Lamotte.

Also present – The School Board – Werner Heidemann, Bruce Corrette, Bill Jackson, Lisa Rivers, Bill Knopf – and Tim Persons, Town Clerk/Treasurer Sandy Grenier, Tony Greenwood, Brian Christman, Joanne Brown, Gary Reis, Nicole Saginor, Kathy Ducharme, Darcy McCann, KATV 7 news team, and Taylor Reed from the Caledonian Record.

Jim Rust opened the meeting and introduced Schoolboard Chairman Werner Heidemann, who presented information on the school budget.

After the school's presentation, Ralph Nelson made a power point presentation of the Town Budget and articles for consideration at Town Meeting. Articles in question included asking the Town to consider discontinuing the personal property tax, which could encourage industry to settle in St. Johnsbury. Also to be considered is the use of town funds to pay off the \$47,000 remaining debt on the Pearl Street parking lot, which would eliminate the extra \$500.00 tax on downtown property owners. The third matter discussed was the bond vote for \$1.4 Million to move the municipal offices from Main Street to the Pomerleau Building (Welcome Center).

Darcy McCann pointed out that, whether the Welcome Center is renovated and used for the municipal offices or not, please keep in mind it is still a valuable asset to the town, and serves upwards of 20,000 visitors per year. However, the Northeast Kingdom Chamber will not take a position in either direction on the building's use. Werner Heidemann said it was a great plan, but if the Town intended to do it, go ahead with it. "Don't let it be another Bike Path." Joanne Brown felt the plan was too ambitious in light of current economic conditions, and the Town should not spend that much money when people are losing their jobs.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ralph E. Nelson, Jr.
Town Manager