

MINUTES
REGULAR SELECTBOARD MEETING
MONDAY, MAY 9, 2011
7:00 PM – Municipal Boardroom

The Selectboard met for a regular meeting on May 9, 2011, at 7:00 pm in the Municipal Building boardroom. Present were: Chairman Bryon Quatrini, Alan Ruggles, Jim Rust, Rod Lamotte and Bill Merrow, and Town Manager Ralph Nelson.

Also present were Town Clerk Sandy Grenier, Public Works Director Danny Scott, Secretary Ida Rainville, Bernie Timson, Lisa Carrere, Gary Lunderville, Jon Beck, Diane Beck, Kevin Oddy, Chris Owens, Sam Silverman, Alice Silverman, Justin Crocker, Avery Rowell, Donna Rowell, Brian Christman, Tim Persons, Frank Landry, Klari Emmons, Lucy Haworth, Dan Smith, Shawn Stevens, Tom Cole, Emily Scott, Tyler Smith, Erin Quatrini, Andy Hill, Amanda Hahr, Timothy Scott, Bill Rodd, Cindy Robillard, Willie Nickerson, Joanne Brown, Taylor Reed from the Caledonian Record, and the News 7 team.

The meeting was called to order with the Pledge at 7:00.

Public Comment – There was no public comment.

Minutes – On a motion by Rod Lamotte, seconded by Jim Rust, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of April 25.

Warrants – On a motion by Bill Merrow, seconded by Alan Ruggles, the Board approved and signed the following warrants:

General Fund Check #66646 – 66683	\$174,066.20
Check #66684 – 66708	\$ 53,516.42
Check #66709 – 66733	\$ 44,573.10
Check #66734	\$ 252.26
 Grant Funds Check #2297 – 2299	 \$ 15,138.97

Liquor Licenses – On a motion by Jim Rust, seconded by Rod Lamotte, the Board unanimously approved three catering licenses –Sodexo VT – for Alumni Weekend activities.

Elwin Cross Proclamation – Chairman Bryon Quatrini asked for a moment of silence in memory of former Selectman Elwin Cross, who passed away on May 1. Ralph Nelson read the proclamation in memory of Mr. Cross, and on a motion by Jim Rust, seconded by Alan Ruggles, the Board voted unanimously to approve the proclamation and enter into the Records.

Mt. Vernon Street Water Main – As a follow up to an agreement reached at the April 11 Select Board meeting, on a motion by Jim Rust, seconded by Alan Ruggles, the Board voted unanimously to authorize Ralph Nelson to issue ads for the Mt. Vernon Street water main, and to sign the engineering agreement for the project.

West Side Project – Sidewalks on Spring Street – As a result of a letter from Spring Street Resident Alice Silverman, submitted with a petition signed by more than 50% of the Spring Street residents, the Board discussed their request to maintain sidewalks on both sides of the street instead of eliminating one sidewalk to widen the street and add a parking lane. Ms. Silverman stated she had more signatures that she had received since writing the letter to Mr. Nelson. Willie Nickerson, also from Spring Street, spoke in favor of retaining the sidewalks. Chairman Quatrini suggested a site visit with residents and the Board members to discuss the possibilities. The project has not gone out to bid yet.

Public Works Department – Ralph Nelson reported that he is planning a comprehensive study of the Public Works Department with Danny Scott, looking at staffing, management, budgets and efficiency, comparable towns, and possibly contract options. Bryon Quatrini said he did not recall the Board including the option of contracting out the work at their previous discussion of the study. General discussion centered around the cohesion of the department, whether cross-training is being done, how long it might take to implement a program and training opportunities that would assist the cross training of individuals.

Public Works Director Danny Scott responded to previously stated concerns of over-staffing with comparison maps of actual road maintenance for the cities and towns of East Montpelier, Montpelier, Fairfield, Lyndon and Lyndonville. Danny pointed out discrepancies in the ratio of workers to roads, and said he felt that the previous comparisons made had not been done on an “apples to apples” basis. He also indicated that Waterford roads are probably better than St. Johnsbury’s dirt roads because of the base under the roads that occurs naturally in most of the areas of Waterford.

Dan also made comments concerning the 2.5 people who left the department in 2010, and 2 more people in 2011, and the adverse effect it has had on the operations of the department. He believed that the figures from VLCT could be skewed because of the different ways towns report their personnel positions. Danny agreed that it takes a long time to fully cross train personnel from highway to water/sewer and vice versa, considering many of the personnel have not had any experience in the opposite field. Dan Smith from St. Johnsbury introduced himself as one of the public works people laid off in January, and stated that the layoff was very difficult for him. Bill Rodd spoke in support of the Public Works department and said they were doing a fine job with what they had to work with. The question remained whether or not a current employee who is out on disability will be replaced.

Rod Lamotte moved to assign an in-depth study to Ralph Nelson and Dan Scott, including time studies, equipment studies, comparisons with other towns, looking into new ways to accomplish tasks, and the possibility of contracted services. Jim Rust seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-2 (Rust, Lamotte and Ruggles in favor; Mellow and Quatrini opposed).

Municipal Bond Bank – Ralph Nelson reported to the Board that, in order to apply for bond funding this year, the application has to be in to the Bond Bank by May 15. The (maximum) \$1.4 Million was voted by the citizens for renovations to the Pomerleau Building, to be possibly reduced with the receipt of other funding. Mr. Nelson reported that he and the Board are still pursuing other funding, and in order to have any bond funding, he must apply now, but the Town will not be committed to taking the funds. On a motion by Rod Lamotte, seconded by Bill

Merrow, the Board voted unanimously to authorize Ralph Nelson to pursue application for the \$1.4 Million bond.

Manager's Report – Water project – At approximately 2:30 pm on Sunday May 8 the water was turned off to the western side of the Town with a projected 24 hour time line. The water was back on by 8:00 am May 9, and Ralph said the project was going well. The next shutoff is tentatively scheduled for midnight on May 21. Of the 134 easements necessary for the second phase, there remain 57 to be signed.

Bike Path – There was a pre-bid meeting last week, with projected start date of the first or second week of June. The Portland Street Bridge repair was re-started today and will be in under budget.

Police Department – The Police Department purchased a new cruiser to replace an old one that was beginning to cost a lot in repair. However, the oldest cruiser will be used this summer for the police department to monitor traffic during the Westside Project. The Police Department got the contract for the job, with the ability to use off-duty officers, and it will generate a good amount of money for the Department. Mr. Nelson planned to start advertising for a new police chief within the week, and expected at least two applications from in house.

The Town was not successful in getting the \$300,000 for rehabilitation of the Depot Square Park because of the competitive bidding on the funds available.

Executive Session – On a motion by Jim Rust, seconded by Rod Lamotte, the Board voted to go into executive session at 8:40 p.m. to discuss legal, contract, and personnel issues. The Board voted to come out of Executive Session. With no further business to transact, the board voted unanimously to adjourn (Rust/Merrow).

Respectfully submitted,

Ida W. Rainville
Executive Secretary