

MINUTES
SPECIAL SELECTBOARD MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 23, 2011

The Board of Selectmen met at the Town Offices on Monday, June 23, 2011 at 12:00 Noon for a special Selectboard meeting.

Present were: Chairman Bryon Quatrini, Jim Rust, Bill Merrow, Rod Lamotte, and Alan Ruggles, Town Manager Ralph Nelson

Also present: Town Clerk/Treasurer Sandy Grenier, Secretary Ida Rainville, Lisa Carrere and Dakota, Tom Cole, Brian Christman, Bernie Timson, Lisa Briggs, Mike Fortier, Nancy Cohen, the KATV News 7 reporter, and Jim Jardine from the Caledonian Record.

The meeting was called to order with the Pledge at 12:00 Noon, by Chairman Bryon Quatrini.

Bond Resolution – Vermont Municipal Bond Bank – Ralph Nelson reported to the Board that the Bond Bank has approved the Town’s application for the \$1.4 Million bond, previously approved by the voters at the 2011 Town Meeting, and the bonds will go up for sale next month. The Vermont Municipal Bond Bank requires the Town to commit to the bonds now, before they go up for bid.

The Town Manager reviewed events leading up to the Town’s applications to the Bond Bank for a \$1.4 Million bond. He stated that he had explained, in five separate public presentations, that he felt the \$1.4 Million was the “worst case scenario,” if the project took the full amount to complete, and if there were no other funds available to assist in the funding.

Other factors that may impact the cost are: following historic preservation guidelines, and the decision to replace the roof with slate or shingles.

Other organizations and grants which have been explored for funding are: Downtown Development fund and VT Transportation both of which had previously supported a building project at the Pomerleau Building and therefore did not have additional funding for that site. Ralph also contacted NVDA, Senators Leahy and Sanders, and Representative Welch. Mr. Nelson said that he believed if the Town goes forward with the project and proves to be committed to the project, funding will be more likely become available. Ralph indicated a construction project manager, in his opinion, would be a key component in the project.

Ralph said he believed there would be more funding available to build the current municipal building into an emergency operations center. Ralph continue to say he had contacted both the Bond Bank and the Bond attorney to ask if they had ever had a town come so far in requesting bonds and had them rejected. Neither had had that experience.

Several people spoke at the meeting:

- Bryon Quatrini asked what the next step would be – Ralph said to have Black River put together a design and bid package, look into hiring a construction manager, and hold a public meeting.
- Brian Christman – Who will oversee finances? He felt the current office situation did not work. Mr. Nelson assured him sufficient checks and balances are in place.
- Tom Cole – Wanted to know if Mr. Nelson still felt he had support from outside sources.
- Mike Fortier – Asked why the Board had to approve the bond, since the town had already voted on it – a courtesy? Ralph pointed out the forms to the Bond Bank had to be signed by the Board.
- Nancy Cohen said she felt that, if there were federal funds from some other location that were not accepted, for whatever reason, they still could be available to the Town.

Jim Rust presented the following motion:

I make the motion to accept the 1.4 Million Dollar bond with the following conditions:

- That the funds are put into a separate bank account that can only be used for the Train Station building and cannot be touched without the Select board's approval.
- That Alan Ruggles and Jim Rust work with the Town Manager to ensure that the benchmarks for this project are achieved.
- That meetings with both Senators Leahy and Sanders along with Rep. Welch be conducted within the next 90 days or at least set up.
- Continue to research other avenues of funding.
- Continue to research the issues surrounding past funding strings.

The motion was seconded by Rod Lamotte and approved by the Board (5-0).

Several people voiced concerns about co-mingling funds from the bonds. Mr. Nelson assured everyone that the bond funds would not be used for anything other than the renovations of the Pomerleau Building. The accounting system to the government agencies is such that all expenses must be proven before any funds are given to the Town. Ralph also informed the Board that the Town withdrew their application to the DRB for June 23 because plans have yet to be developed.

The meeting adjourned at 12:45 pm (Lamotte/Rust).

Respectfully Submitted,

Ida W. Rainville
Executive Secretary