

Minutes –DRAFT
Meeting of the St Johnsbury Select board
July 25, 2016 at 6:00PM-Pomerleau Building

Present- SB: Jeff Moore, Kevin Oddy, Tom Moore, Tim Angell, Jamie Murphy

Staff- Chad Whitehead, Stacy Jewell, Joe Kasprzak, Clem Houde

Press- Taylor Reed, KATV

Meeting opened at 6:00PM

Public Comment:

- Dave Timson indicated that he encountered a rude driver and feels there isn't any reason for this.
- Al Dunn reminded the board of his concerns of the sidewalks on Eastern Avenue
- Ray Labounty stated that in his industry it was not acceptable to blame lack of funding for unacceptable conditions, and if these main pedestrian throughways need to be repaired it needs to be handled immediately.

Minutes:

- On a motion by Kevin Oddy and a second by Tim Angell the Minutes of July 11, 2016 were approved.

Warrants:

- On a motion by Tom Moore and a second by Jamie Murphy, the Warrants were approved.

Liquor Licenses:

- None.

Tax Stabilization Application

- Joe Kasprzak reviewed the existing policy approved by the board on 5/9/2016 which incentivizes business investment based on stabilization of the incremental increase in value of the property. This was based on a 7 year stabilization program. The current application by Tripplenet LLC to construct a new Chrysler, Dodge, Ram, Jeep dealership, anticipates 26-35 full time employment positions in the \$45,000 - \$65,000 annual income range. Based on their data, from current stores 76% of sales are outside a 20 mile radius creating an estimated 10,000 visits annually. Currently the applicant has been in business for 16 years in St Johnsbury and has more than 80 employees.
- John Lucivio, applicant, addressed the board and indicated that they are looking for resources that can be used to help push the project forward. He indicated that they hope to break ground near the end of September if everything can come together.
- John reviewed the draft plans with the board.

- Joe Kasprzak indicated that based on estimates for final improvement values, if stabilized the business would save \$66,000 and the Town would collect an additional \$66,000 over a 7 year period.
- Jim Impey and John Goodrich of the Tax Stabilization committee indicated that this would show a pro-business attitude from the Town and the number of anticipated visits to St Johnsbury is clearly beneficial.
- Jamie Murphy indicated that it was good to see the program up and running.
- Tom Moore indicated that he had to go to Littleton to purchase their Jeep and would prefer to keep the business in St J.
- John Luchiavo indicated that Chrysler wanted the new facility to open in Morrisville, but he worked to have it opened in St Johnsbury.
- Jeff Moore asked if the 26-35 proposed new jobs was I the new Chrysler store and John verified that it was.
- Al Dunn of St Johnsbury asked if they anticipated future growth and John indicated they did.
- Jeff Moore indicated that the board would review the application, send questions through Joe Kasprzak and would potentially act on an agreement at the next meeting.

Town Wide Police Presentation

- Jeff Moore indicated that the Select Board had asked the Town Manager and Police Chief to put together a presentation to review what Town Wide Police Coverage would be.
- Chad Whitehead and Chief Clem Houde reviewed the presentation which identified existing police coverage provided inside and outside of the special services district (copy attached).
- Chief Houde indicated that if the Town desired police coverage, he would support that, and the police department would be able to provide the service given the right resources, but he would not support a proposal that lowered the level of service currently provided in the Special Services District.
- Matt Amadon and Lt Mike Henry of the Vermont State Police were in attendance.
- Jamie Murphy asked Lt Henry what the current cost was for police services to St Johnsbury and Lt Henry indicated there was no charge beyond our State Tax Dollars.
- Lt Henry indicated that with the additional services that the VSP is being asked to do with their special teams their availability for general police services is being diminished.
- Jeff Moore asked if the Town were to provide town wide coverage, how much funding was available from the State of Vermont to offset the costs and Lt Henry indicated there was no funding available.
- Tim Angell asked if the proposal for 5 new officers and 2 dispatchers was for a Town Wide expansion of just expanding up Route 5, and Clem indicated that it was for Town Wide. Tim asked if capital improvements were needed at Dispatch to meet this requirement and Clem indicated that it was, but these improvements are necessary regardless.
- Robert Barnett of St Johnsbury asked VSP of the 1200 calls, were any of these iwthin the existing special services boundaries and Clem indicated less than 5%.
- Len Girardi of St Johnsbury (outside of the SS District) asked what caused this to come up as a topic now, and Kevin Oddy indicated that he had brought this up as he has heard from people on both sides of the debate on the topic, and with the challenges that VSP was facing he felt it was a discussion worth investigating.

- Dave Timson of St Johnsbury indicated that the cost were had to swallow and people are currently on tight budgets.
- Gil Roberts of St Johnsbury indicate that this has previously been brought to vote and it was determined that tax payers could not afford it and it was voted down.
- John Goodrich of St Johnsbury indicated that he supports the Chief, St Johnsbury PD as well as VSP, but he was not anxious to pay additional taxes for what will not be much more calls. John asked Kevin Oddy what will he do with the non-binding referendum and asked if there will be a following binding referendum. Kevin stated that the intent would be to have a second vote which would be binding.
- John Goodrich asked if the voters outside the SS district would be able to vote separately and Kevin Indicated that the board intends to have an exit poll to gather that data.
- Tom Moore asked if the number of calls included calls on the Interstates and Trooper Amadon indicated they do.
- Jamie Murphy asked Trooper Amadon if there were a large volume of calls in any particular area, and Trooper Amadon indicted that the business district had higher call volumes.
- Diane Gilman of St Johnsbury indicated that responses to the business district was one thing, but if there were a robbery far outside the existing SS district, any response would be to long to stop a robbery.
- Ernie Thurston, of St Johnsbury indicated that properties he owned outside the SS District were purchased with less taxes factored in because they did not pay for street lights, sidewalks and the PD.
- Jeff Moore indicated that the SS District paid for the PD on their own, but street lights and sidewalks are not specific to the SS District.
- Len Gerardi asked if this would require a Charter Change, and how it would get to vote. He also suggested having the article for just SS Districts and a Town Ballot, then do the math to determine how each area voted.
- Bill Thurston asked about the number of voters inside and outside the SS District.
- Stacy Jewell indicated that it was similar, but estimates that $\frac{3}{4}$ of the active voters lived inside the SS District.
- Alison Barkley asked if the Town had considered only part time coverage outside of the SS District and Chad and Clem indicated that this has been considered
- Jeff Moore indicated that there would be a public hearing next month to continue the conversations.

Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Adoption

- On a motion by Jamie Murphy and a second by Tom Moore the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan was approved.

Water Sewer Rates Review

- Chad Whitehead reviewed a presentation on the water rates. The board had requested a review of the fixed rates, and the stages of each rate.
- Chad asked if some board members would be available to help evaluate the rates and Jamie Murphy and Tim Angell indicated they would be available.

Manager's Report:

- The Contract Signing for Railroad Street was scheduled for Tuesday at 1:00 at the Town Manager's office and we anticipate construction to start immediately following.
- The grant for inclusion of the street lights deducted for the project was submitted to VTtrans on July 15, 2016.

Other Business:

- Kevin asked about the audit for the Grove Cemetery and Chad indicated that it has not been done yet.
- Dave Timson asked if Old Home Day was this last weekend, and Chad indicated it was and it had about 80 residents in attendance despite the weather.

Executive Session:

- On a motion by Kevin Oddy and second by Tim Angell, the board voted the need to go into executive session to discuss a contract matter under the provisions of Title 1, Sec. 313(3)(a)(3) of the Vermont State Statutes.
- On a motion by Kevin Oddy and second by Tim Angell the board voted to enter executive session, and invited the Town Manager.
- On a motion by Kevin Oddy and second by Tim Angell, the board voted to come out of executive session. The chair had nothing to report.

The meeting adjourned on a motion by Tom Moore and second by Kevin Oddy.