



TOWN OF ST. JOHNSBURY

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Meeting of the St. Johnsbury Select Board May 10, 2021 at 6:00 PM-Via Zoom Select Board Meeting

Present-

Select Board: Kevin Oddy, Dennis Smith, Daniel Kimbell, Frank Empsall

Staff: Chad Whitehead, Lesley Russ, Rachel Waterhouse, Joe Kasprzak, Stacy Jewell

Press: Todd Wellington, KATV

Public: James Brown

Agenda Amendments:

- None

Public Comment:

- None

Warrants:

- On a motion by Dennis and second by Frank to approve the warrants as presented. All in favor.

Minutes:

- On a motion by Daniel and second by Frank to approve the minutes as presented. All in favor.

Liquor Licenses:

- On a motion by Dennis and second by Daniel to approve the following liquor licenses. All in favor.
 - American Legion Post #58- 1st Class Renewal
 - Kham's Thai Cuisine- 1st Class Renewal
 - St. Johnsbury House of Pizza- 1st Class Renewal
 - American Legion Post #58- 3rd Class Renewal
 - St. Johnsbury House of Pizza- Outside Consumption
- Daniel asked if the liquor license were renewals or if businesses were seeing an increase in consumers to bring in enough liquor to serve them. Stacy commented that they are all renewals.

Energy Committee Appointment:

- Chad Whitehead, Town Manager provided the request from the Energy Committee to appoint Ben Deede to the Committee. Chad presented the board with Ben's background in sustainable energy
- Chad Whitehead recommended Ben Deede for the Energy Committee.
- On a motion by Daniel and second by Dennis to appoint Ben Deede to the Energy Committee. All in favor.

April Financials:

- Lesley Russ, Finance Officer provided the board with the April financials.
- 2 months left of fiscal year and overall are in good shape.
- Revenue is ahead of budget in the General Fund and expense are on target.
- Delinquent taxes are down from the end of March. Delinquent tax payments in the amount of \$207,107 were made in April. Bringing the total amount of delinquent taxes owed down to \$318,159.
- Special Services Fund has a surplus of \$26,162. Both revenue and expense are on target overall.
- Highway Fund has a surplus of \$83,182. In April the quarterly state aid highway payment was received. However there are two loan payments that will be made in June for equipment and infrastructure improvements.
- Water and Sewer Funds revenue is under budget due to billing in arrears and expense are on target.
- Parking Fund expenses are on target but revenue continues to lag due to lack of permit sales and tickets. Expecting a 15-20k deficit in this fund however this fund may be able to utilize grant funds to supplement the lack of revenue.
- Dennis asked if the surplus in the general fund and special services fund was due to the Cares Act funding. Lesley explained that in the general fund the surplus is due to both the Cares Act funds and the collection of delinquent taxes. \$73,000 of the Cares Act funding was allotted to the Special Services Fund and \$86,000 was allotted to the Highway Fund. Lesley commented that this is the lowest delinquent taxes she has seen at this time of year since she started in 2014.
- Kevin asked Joe if he plans to dust of the parking meter plan. Joe confirmed it would make sense to revisit and update the parking plan.

2021-2022 Water and Wastewater Budget:

- Chad Whitehead, Town Manager provided an overview of the proposed Water and Wastewater Budget for 2021-2022.
- Since Select Board meeting on April 26th the Town Manager has not received any questions regarding the proposed budget.
- Chad Whitehead met with Kevin Oddy regarding a few budget items.
- Proposed budget would include a 2% increase in sewer rates and flat rates for water.
- No large water projects are currently planned for FY 21-22.
- Increase in septage receiving fee from 10 cents to 12 cents. The Town anticipates increased costs in solids handling in the next few years.
- State of VT Wastewater Division is reviewing land apply. Study will hopefully assist the Town in determining what we should do. Might be a chance to pilot a program with the state. Still in the unknown stages right now. Will know more towards the fall of 2021. Hoping the Town will be successful in obtain grants to offset this potential cost.

- On a motion by Dennis and second by Daniel to accept the 2021-2022 Water and Wastewater Budget as presented including the 2% increase in wastewater fees and 2 cent increase in septage receiving fee. All in favor.

Charter Review Committee:

- Chad Whitehead, Town Manager explained the board previously talked about establishing a Charter Review Committee but never voted on it.
- The following individuals are interested in being a part of it; Kevin Oddy, Chad Whitehead, Frank Empsall, Stacy Jewell, David Reynolds, Scott Beck, Tim Clouatre, David Roth and Otto Wurzburg. Still room for more people to be included.
- On a motion by Dennis and second by Frank to establish a Charter Review Committee. All in favor.

17 3rd Street:

- Chad Whitehead, Town Manager explained that the Town of St. Johnsbury inquired the 17 3rd Street as a part of Tax Sale this spring. Received one bid for the mobile home located at 17 3rd Street from Dan Guest in the amount of \$250. Mobile home has considerable work that needs to be done. He wishes to renovate and rent the place.
- Town Manager recommends selling the mobile home to Dan Guest in the amount of \$250.
- Kevin asked if this would put the property back on the tax list. Chad explained the property would be back on the tax list as of April 2022.
- Daniel asked what the delinquent tax amount on the property is. Chad explained that it is around \$1,200.
- Kevin asked if the \$250 would at least cover the legal fees. Chad said no.
- On a motion by Daniel and second by Frank to accept the bid of \$250 from Dan Guest to purchase 17 3rd Street. All in favor.

Town Manager's Report:

- Chad Whitehead, Town Manager provided the following Town Manager's Report.
- Historian has started for the Amory Project. Given a tour last Friday and took detailed photographs.
- Armory Project on the agenda for the next DRB meeting.
- Electric Charging Stations also on the agenda for the next DRB meeting. Proposed location of the charging stations is the first three angled parking spots across from Anthony's Diner.
- Northern Board Commission Application was submitted on Friday for the Riverfront project.
- More details regarding direction on the Cares Act funds have been released.

Other Business:

- Kevin inquired about the board's pleasure on returning to in person meetings starting the next Select Board meeting on 5/24/21 but still continue Zoom presences.
- On a motion by Dennis and second by Frank for the Select Board to return to in person meetings starting 5/24/21 and still maintain a zoom presence. All in favor.

- Todd Wellington asked if in person meetings would be held at the Welcome Center. And if people would be 6 feet apart. Kevin commented that it is unknown at this time. It is suspected that people will still maintain social distancing.
- Todd Wellington asked what the capacity limit for the in person Select Board Meeting would be. Chad said he was unsure at this time as things continue to change frequently but he will look into it.

Executive Session:

- On a motion by Dennis and second by Daniel the board voted that there was a need for an executive session to discuss labor relation agreements with employees that premature general public knowledge would place the Town at substantial risk. All in favor.
- On a motion by Dennis and second by Frank the board voted to enter into executive session and invite the Town Manager to join them. All in favor.
- On a motion by Dennis and second by Frank the board voted to exit executive session. All in favor.
- The Chair had nothing to report.

On a motion by Dennis and second by Frank the board adjourned by unanimous decision.