



# TOWN OF ST. JOHNSBURY

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## **Meeting of the St. Johnsbury Select Board June 28, 2021 at 6:00 PM Select Board Meeting**

Present-

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

Staff: Chad Whitehead, Rachel Waterhouse, Joe Kasprzak (via zoom)

Press: KATV, Todd Wellington

Public: Don Smith (via zoom), Stephanie Clark (via zoom), Joe Weith (via zoom), Elizabeth Emmons, Gillian Sewake

### 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.

### Armory Update:

- Joe Kasprzak, Assistant Town Manager provided an update on the CDBG grant funding. The Town was denied the grant in the amount of \$500,000 this time around.
- Stephanie Clark from White and Burke provided the Select Board with an update on the Armory project. Provided most up to date rendering from the Architect. Plans still remain in the design and development stage.
- Joe Weith from White and Burke explained he has been working with the historical preservation and the state as required by the EPA clean up grant. Close to sign off on the Section 106 preservation act. Meeting next week for feedback then historical consultant will prepare draft report for review and approval by the state.
- Plans have been presented to the Design Advisory Board and will be going to the DRB next.
- The Town of St. Johnsbury has been denied the \$500,000 CDBG grant. However the Town plans to reapply in November 2021. Continue to seek other funding sources such as historical preservation, USDA and BGS grants.
- Current timeline for the project is as follows.

- May 2023 open the doors
- Summer 2022 begin construction
- Spring 2022 begin remediation
- Winter 2021 bid construction
- Fall 2021 bid remediation
- Public input sessions will be scheduled for July/August 2021.
- Daniel asked if the estimates numbers will be worked again before the bond vote since the costs have been increasing due to COVID. Joe Weith explained that the last estimate was completed in Jan/Feb. of 2021 and was based on the design recommendations at the time. But yes another detailed look at the cost estimator will take place before going to a bond vote. Stephanie explained that a sizeable cost contingency was built in.
- Dennis mentioned a recent article in the paper regarding eliminating the gambler roof. Dennis asked if this was still being discussed. Joe Weith explained that after discussions with the DAC, PRB, historical preservation and stake holders it was concluded that keeping the gamble roof was not the way to go as it creates an awkward look and better preservation could be obtained with a different type of roof. Plans have been sent to the hospital preservation last week and a meeting with them is scheduled next week. We will go from there.
- Todd Wellington commented that he was unable to hear the people attending the meeting through Zoom and asked that the sound be sent through the speaker.

#### St. Johnsbury Chamber/ Designated Downtown Update:

- Gillian Sewake, Director of the St. Johnsbury Chamber provided an update on the Downtown.
- Gillian provided the Select Board with an overview of what the chamber does
- Current projects include the St. Johnsbury Public Wi-Fi Network which will provide an entirely free Wi-Fi network with 6 access points in the downtown. Chamber website has been redesigned with the help of Neal and Janice from Raphel marketing and Downriver Media.
- Daniel asked if the website will be able to track clicks. Gillian said currently it is too soon. But hopefully next month will have some good data.
- Welcome Center will be staffed during the summer on Saturdays from 9 am to 5 pm.
- Continue to see positive changes in the downtown retail store fronts. 6 news businesses in the last two month and a potential for 9 more in the coming months.
- Chad commented on what a pleasure it is to work with Gillian.
- Janice commented that it was a pleasure to work with Gillian on something for their home town.
- Neal explained he hopes to see metrics really soon. Will also be conducting advertising for the website through social media.
- Daniel commented that this a move in the right direction. Kevin and the board thanked Gillian.

#### Long Term Control Plan CSO:

- Elizabeth Emmons from the Dufresne Group provided an overview of the Town's current Long Term Control Plan CSO.
- Long Term Control Plan CSO is required to be re-evaluated every 5 years by the state.
- Currently the Town has 16 structures to discharge waterways or designated storm discharge to waterways. The Town of St. Johnsbury has the most structures in the state.
- Reviewed the EPA 9 minimum control measures.
- Additional funding has become available for more monitoring devices.
- Reviewed wastewater vs. storm water treatment requirements.

- Proposed Green Storm water Treatment consideration for Portland Street in the future.
- Proposed following schedule for systems
  - Spring 2021 increase maintenance
  - Spring 2021 Cap overflows/disconnects
  - Summer 2021 add more flow monitoring equipment.
  - 2025-20262 address the Caledonia/ Washington Street Area.
- Recommended asking more questions during permitting process with regards to wastewater and storm water.
- No questions from the board or the public.
- Select Board Thanked Elizabeth.

#### Water Treatment Facility Construction Loan Application:

- Chad Whitehead, Town Manager provided the board with an overview of the next steps in the State Revolving Loan Construction Application process. Asked the board to consider approval for the Town Manager to apply for the State Revolving Loan in the amount of \$8,377,015 for step 3 clean drinking water.
- On a motion by Dennis and second by Frank to authorize Chad Whitehead as the representative for the Water Treatment Facility Construction Loan and to apply for \$8,377,015 on the Town's behalf. All in favor.

#### Local Hazard Mitigation Plan:

- Chad Whitehead, Town Manager provided the Select Board with the annual updated Local Hazard Mitigation Plan that was put together by Fire Chief Bouffard.
- On a motion by Dennis and second by Frank to approve the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and authorize Kevin Oddy as the Chair. All in favor.

#### Town Manager's Report:

- Chad Whitehead, Town Manager provided the following Town Manager's Report.
- Current water main break on Bay Street is almost complete. Expecting to have water back within an hour. Not expecting a boil water notice. Updates will be provided on the website.
- Passumpsic Land Trust still working on the Knob property. The Trust will be looking for a formal resolution in July. Chad will be working to determine the budget required to own and maintain such property. Cemetery commission has also expressed some interest in the property and future expansion of the cemetery.
- Closing in on the year end.
- July 10<sup>th</sup> is the next #GetDownTown events. Celtic theme.
- Peasant and Gilman bid opening was postponed until June 29<sup>th</sup> at 1 pm at the Welcome Center.
- 955 Portland Street is now vacant. Working on clean up and next steps.
- Dennis asked if the Town had any additional information on the corrections placement. Chad explained that continuum of care meetings continue and FAQ sheet is being developed to help answer what is going on and why. Once Chad gets more information he will share it with the board. 30 people between St. Johnsbury and Lyndonville that will be out of the hotels by July 1.

- Dennis asked if the Town Offices are open full time. Chad said yes open full time. Working on defining work from home policy. Will be presenting personnel manual to the board within the next month.
- Todd Wellington asked about the need for an executive session. Chad explained it is for the Select Board to review a collective bargaining agreement.

Other Business:

- None

Executive Session:

- On a motion by Dennis and second by Frank the board voted that there was a need for an executive session to discuss a contractual matter that premature general public knowledge would place the Town at substantial risk. All in favor.
- On a motion by Dennis and second by Brenden 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 Brendan the board adjourned by unanimous decision.