



# TOWN OF ST. JOHNSBURY

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## **Meeting of the St. Johnsbury Select Board January 10, 2022 @ 6:00 pm Select Board Meeting**

### **Present-**

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

Staff: Chad Whitehead, Rachel Waterhouse (via zoom), Joe Kasprzak, Anthony Skelton (via zoom), Stacy Jewell, Tim Page (via zoom), Lesley Russ (via zoom), Steve Beauregard (via zoom),

Press: Todd Wellington (via zoom), KATV (via zoom)

Public: Barbara and Darryll (via zoom), Jim Brown (via zoom), Keith Whitmore (via zoom), Tracy Zschau (via zoom)

### Agenda Amendments:

- Dennis asked to add Town Meeting Day to the agenda after public comment.
- On a motion by Dennis and second by Brendan to add Town Meeting Day to the agenda after public comment. All in favor.

### Public Comment:

- None

### Town Meeting Day:

- Kevin Oddy, Select Board Chair read an email from Stacy Jewell, Town Clerk regarding legislature passing a bill allowing Towns to change Town Meeting date if they chose. Currently Town Meeting day is schedule for March 1, 2022.
- Daniel asked how moving Town Meeting Day would affect absentee ballots. Stacy commented that if Town Meeting Day changes all deadline dates change as well.
- Daniel asked if moving Town Meeting Day would cause a shorter window for absentee ballots. Stacy said no there would still be a 20 day window.
- Kevin asked if people wishes to keep it as the first Tuesday in March or move it. He mentioned that last year it seems to cause confusion with voters. Outreach would be important if the date is moved. Kevin asked if talks have taken place with the School about it. Chad and Stacy explained that they are meeting with Brian Ricca at the end of the week to discuss it.
- Frank expressed that the board needs to remain flexible given the needs and needs to be agreeable. Suggested leaving the decision to move Town Meeting Day up to Stacy, Chad and Brian Ricca.
- Kevin agreed that it is a good idea and if Town Meeting Day needs to be moved a Special Select Board meeting can be held to discuss it further.

### Minutes:

- On a motion by Dennis and second by Brendan to approve the Special Select Board Meeting minutes from 01/03/2022 as presented. All in favor. Daniel abstained.
- On a motion by Dennis and second by Frank to approve the Select Board Meeting minutes from 12/27/2021 as presented. All in favor.

### Warrants:

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

### Liquor Licenses:

- None

### 2022/2023 Proposed Budget:

- Chad Whitehead, Town Manager provided an overview of the proposed budget for 2022/2023. Copies of the proposed budget are available on the Town website.
- Explained budget development process and reviewed proposed budget.
- 2022/2023 budget includes the use of \$150,000 from highway reserves and \$150,000 from general fund reserves to help offset increases.
- Also includes a transfer from the general fund to the special services fund to help offset the Police Department budget for services that benefit the whole community.
- Highway budget has an increase in the paving line for the 2022/2023 budget year.
- Dispatch budget includes eliminating a part-time dispatcher position and creating one full-time dispatcher position to help with the increasing call volume.
- Special Services budget includes eliminating the two part-time police officer position and creating one full-time police officer position.
- Board of Civil Authority budget includes an increase due to election costs.
- Select Board budget includes an increase for new equipment.
- 2022/2023 budget includes pilot payments from Town owned Water and Sewer Utilities.
- Based on the current grand list, the proposed budget reflects a 2.40% increase taxes within the special services district and a 3.98% increase in taxes outside of the special services district.
- No questions from the board
- Stacy Jewell inquired about the water and sewer pilot payments. Chad explained that the pilot payments would charge other Town departments for their usage.
- Jim Brown asked Chad if the proposed budget included funds for beautification. Chad said yes it is included in the general funds.
- Stacy Jewell inquired about the transfer from the general fund to the special services fund. Chad explained that the transfer is for Town wide Police services. The transfer to the special services fund will help offset the cost to tax payers in the special services district.
- Stacy Jewell expressed concern that the special services district would then be paying twice for the service. Chad explained that they would not be paying twice and the special services district taxes would decrease due to the transfer from the general fund.
- Frank asked if it was adjusted. Chad said absolutely.

- On a motion by Dennis and second by Brendan to approve the 2022/2023 Budget as presented. All in favor.

#### December Financials:

- Lesley Russ, Finance Officer provided the following December financials.
- General fund at the end of December had a surplus of \$213,280. The Fire Department overtime and contracted services remain an area of concern, along with the overtime in Dispatch. \$21,608 has been spent on plumbing and heating for 1187 Main Street.
- Delinquent tax receivables are \$145,634 verse \$211,901 at this time last year.
- Special Services fund at the end of December had a surplus of \$39,994. Regular salaries and overtime combined are at 45% of those budgeted line items.
- Highway fund at the end of November had a surplus of \$146,939. The paving budget in the summer maintenance has been fully expensed for fiscal year. The semi-annual Westside Loan was paid in December.
- Water fund at the end of December had a deficit of \$347,705. Revenue is under budget due to booking revenue to the prior year during our audit. Expense are on target.
- Sewer fund at the end of December had a deficit of \$631,944. Revenue is under budget due to booking revenue to the prior year during our audit. Town has spent \$248,300 for solid handling at this time.
- Parking Meter Fund at the end of December had a deficit of \$14,428. Expense are on target at this time.
- Kevin asked where the town was with the Solid Handling Plan. Chad said he would get an update. Kevin asked for the updated at the next meeting.

#### Charter Review:

- Chad Whitehead, Town Manager provided the Select Board with an update on the Charter Review updates. Public input meetings will take place on January 27, 2022 at 5 pm at the Welcome Center and February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022 at 5 pm at the Welcome Center. The Charter changes will be on the ballot for Town Meeting day.
- Stacy mentioned that she would post the graph summary now and the remaining at the public meeting. Chad said he would double check with Ed to make sure that was the way to proceed.

#### Readiness to Serve Transfer:

- Joe Kasprzak, Assistant Town Manager explained that at the 12/13/21 Select Board meeting the Select Board authorized the transfer of \$30,000 from the Readiness to Serve payments to the Economic Development Restricted Reserve Fund. He explained he is here now to request the \$30,000 be transferred from the restricted reserves fund to the unallocated fund to be used on the Armory project.
- On a motion by Brendan and second by Dennis to transfer \$30,000 from restricted reserves fund to unallocated funds to be used on the Armory project.

#### Knob Property Reserve:

- Chad Whitehead, Town Manager explained with the transfer of the Knob property came an amount of money specifically to be used on the Knob Property. Requesting that a restricted reserve account be created for the Knob property funds.

- On a motion by Daniel and second by Frank to create a restricted reserves fund for the Knob property and to include funds transferred to the Town by the Vermont Land Trust. All in favor.
- On a motion by Daniel and second by Frank to transfer \$35,848 from the general fund to the Knob restricted reserve. All in favor.

#### Armory Project Update- Design Contract:

- Joe Kasprzak, Assistant Town Manager provided a PowerPoint presentation update on the Armory Project and the design contract.
- Wieman Lamphere Architects has been identified as the preferred firm for the design contract.
- Worked to develop an AIA contract that reflects industry practices, changing construction market and consists of a flat fee of \$245,000 plus \$6,000 for reimbursable expenses.
- Contract includes a 7 day term clause, adequate insurance, site visits, no termination fee, disputes are handled through mediation and then arbitration and the option for the Town to purchase the Architect Instruments of Service for a \$10,000 licensing fee should the wish.
- Timeline as follows:
  - Schematic Design 01/24/22
  - Design Development 03/04/22
  - Construction Documents 06/30/22
  - Bidding/Negotiation 8/1/22
  - Construction Commencement Sept. 2022
  - Substantial Completion July/ August 2023
- Joe provided an update on the environmental Phase 1 and upcoming deadlines. He explained that it is estimated about \$180,000 is needed to keep the project on track and get to the procurement phase. He explained he has had a detailed conversation regarding the financials with the Town Finance Officer. At this point it is recommended that existing reserve funds be used verse bonds or tax notes at this time.
- Joe asked the board to consider to authorize him to enter into the contract with Wieman Lamphere Architects for the Armory Project.
- Frank commented that he is ok with the contract as AIA contracts are higher standards.
- On a motion by Daniel and second by Frank to authorize Joe Kasprzak, Assistant Town Manager to enter into a design contract with Wieman Lamphere Architects and sign the contract. All in favor.

#### DPW Contract:

- Kevin Oddy, explained that changes still need to be made to the contract and a new clean up document needed to be presented to the Town prior to execution.
- Kevin explained that he is not willing to move forward until the document is cleaned up.
- On a motion by Dennis and second by Brendan to table the DPW Contract until the document is cleaned up. All in favor.

#### Town Manager's Report:

- Chad Whitehead, Town Manager had the following to report.
- Legislation is discussing the possibility of virtual Select Board meetings in the future.
- Kevin asked if this was a mandate or a recommendation. Chad explained that it is an allowance.

- Next APRA meeting is scheduled for January 27<sup>th</sup> at 10 am.
- Brad Reed has been appointed as the next Fire Chief for the Town of St. Johnsbury. Interim Chief Christopher Olsen has departed.

Other Business:

- None

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