



TOWN OF ST. JOHNSBURY

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Meeting of the St. Johnsbury Select Board July 24th, 2023 @ 6:00 pm

Present-

Select Board: Steve Isham, Tracy Zschau, Frank Empsall, Brendan Hughes, Dennis Smith

Staff: Joe Kasprzak, Stacy Jewell

Public: Don Smith

Agenda Amendments:

- None

Public Comment:

- None

Warrants:

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

Minutes:

- On a motion by Dennis and second from Brendan to table to minutes from the July 10th, 2023 meeting. All in favor.

Liquor/Tobacco License:

- None

Authorization to Sign for New Loan Reimbursements:

- Joe Kasprzak, Assistant Town Manager explained that he provided the Select Board Chair is the document necessary to give the Town Clerk/Treasurer Stacy Jewell authorization to be able to process reimbursement for the water treatment plant loans.
- Frank mentioned that this has been done in the past for other water projects.
- On a motion by Dennis and second by Tracy to add Stacy Jewell as an authorized representative for the town for the water treatment plant loans. All in favor.

Town Manager's Report:

- Joe Kasprzak, Assistant Town Manager provided the following Town Manager's Report.
- The flooding event resulted in limited damages in St. Johnsbury and was isolated to downed trees and flooding along the Sleeper's River near Emerson Falls and the Passumpsic River in St. Johnsbury Center. There was also a landslip in the downhill side of Goss Hollow Road. DPW is awaiting permission from the River Management Commission to complete that repair.
- DPW and Fire Crews were deployed for several days to assist Barre and Sutton with road repairs due to these flooding events.
- Staff at the Wastewater Treatment Plant also assisted the Town of Hardwick at their WWTF. All equipment, labor and materials are being tracked and will be eligible for reimbursement through FEMA.
- All positions have been filled at the WWTF and the Town is now conducting operations at the facility. We anticipate the delivery of a new sludge press in the next few weeks and the conveyor approved at the last Select Board meeting has been ordered.
- Pleasant and Gilman Project continues with construction. All water and sewer pipes are now installed and crews are working towards final paving. One section of sewer remains on Gilman Ave as we are waiting for approval from the storm water management division before it can be installed.
- The water treatment plant contract has been fully executed with Penta Inc. Penta is working with material suppliers to develop a project schedule and the projects are anticipated to take two years to complete.
- The Town continues to recruit to fill vacancies within the police department. All dispatch positions are filled at this time. The Town has also advertised for the Police Chief position and have received several resume. The Town will continue to accept resumes until the position is filled. The first round for resume reviews will occur on August the 18th and applicants are encouraged to submit resumes by August 10th.
- All positions are filled within the Fire Department. Fire department members are working on specifications of replacement of engines.
- The Town Manager's Office with the assistance of the Tax Stabilization Committee are reviewing the planning and implementation applications and are planning on bringing recommendations to the Select Board for the first meeting in August.
- The first round of transformational grants have been received and the staff from the Town Manager's Office will be reviewing those and developing recommendations for the Select Board's consideration.
- The St. Johnsbury Fund did submit their application in full on Monday July 24th. We have received it and will add it to the list. Those will be upload as we get an opportunity for your review.
- The preliminary engineering report for the LVRT river front extension project has been submitted for review. We will be requesting permission from Northern Borders Regional Commission to move this project into final design with anticipated construction during the summer of 2024.
- The assessor and the listers completed grievance hearings last Friday and the auditors will be in the office the week of August 7th.
- RHIGP notices have been sent and the STJRGFP notices have been sent.
- The Town of St. Johnsbury just signed a contract with Montrose Environmental Inc. and they will be providing qualified professional environmental duties for the Armory Project. This has become a break in our environmental work but we are still waiting for some additional sampling. Folks that have been working on the project over the past year are now employed with Montrose which should make this a very seamless transition.

- Joe continues to work on the STJRGRP as technical assistances to applicants.
- Frank asked if the Town had received any new applicants for the Police Department. Joe said he believes they are in discussions but can't really say.

Other Business:

- Don Smith approached the Select Board regarding placing a speed meter on Main Street coming in towards the museum. He explained that is a busy intersection with the school, the police station, fire department and local business. He mentioned that it seems that every small town he goes through has one so it cannot be a money issue.
- Frank mentioned that he has seen them all over as well. His concern is with regards to the speed limit as there is a lot going on there. He mentioned that he thought dropping the speed limit to 25 mph in that area might be good. He explained that he thought Don's concern with the speed limit in that area warranted being looked at.
- Don Smith asked how the sidewalk repairs are going. He mentioned that he has not seen any work being done and that the sidewalks are still horrible, especially Eastern Ave coming down the hill.
- Frank asked if Joe knew anything on the sidewalks. Joe said he couldn't speak to that but knew it was a hot topic and would bring the questions to Chad.
- Frank mentioned that it is on many people's minds and agreed with Don Smith that something needs to be done to the sidewalk on Eastern Ave.
- Brendan mentioned that mostly because of Steve Beauregard the Town has been working to build the sidewalk reserve funds. So at least for the future things are looking promising for years to come because that is something the Town never really had before.
- Dennis mentioned that we need to branch out with sidewalk repairs as it has been concentrated in one area and it needs to be shared. He explained that he thinks the big issue is the sidewalk reserve is committed for this year.
- Dennis mentioned that the Town cannot keep kicking the can down the road.
- Steve Isham explained that the Town did increase the sidewalk funds for the FY24 budget. He explained that this on the agenda going forward and that he agrees that the sidewalks in the neighborhoods where people live is important and without repairs it could hurt housing programs.
- Don Smith explained that he was out at the transfer center this morning and thought it ought to have a system like in other Towns where we can pick up yard waste and make a giant compost pile. He explained that in just tree limbs and debris from the winter it costs him \$200 to have it removed. Dennis mentioned that the transfer station is Casella and not the Town. He explained that would have to be taken up with Casella.
- Frank asked where the Town wood is taken. Dennis and Joe explained that the Town allows for some disposal on Oak Street. Don Smith mentioned that he used to take some to Oak Street but he doesn't have a truck anymore. He explained he has more leaves that he can use in his composter. Dennis mentioned that Oak Street isn't always open either. He mentioned that maybe it was something the Town could approach.
- Joe mentioned that he would bring up Don's concerns at staff meeting with department heads tomorrow.

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