



# TOWN OF ST. JOHNSBURY

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## Meeting of the St. Johnsbury Select Board January 8th, 2024 @ 6:00 pm

Present-

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

Staff: Chad Whitehead, Rachel Waterhouse, Stacy Jewell, Joe Kasprzak, Chief Joel Pierce

Public: KATV, Jim Brown, Todd Wellington, Kevin Oddy

### 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 Brendan and second by Tracy to approve the minutes from the Dec. 27<sup>th</sup> meeting with the noted correction. All in favor.

### Liquor/Tobacco License:

- Frank presented the following liquor and tobacco renewals:
  - Center Tower- 2<sup>nd</sup> Class
  - Center Tower- Tobacco
  - Center Tower- Tobacco substitute
  - Global Montello Group- Tobacco
  - Global Montello Group- Tobacco
  - Price Chopper- 2<sup>nd</sup> Class
  - The DiSpencary LLC- Outside Consumption
  - The DiSpencary LLC- Restaurant and Bar
- Frank presented the following new liquor and tobacco requests:
  - Torozzi VT LLC- Restaurant and Bar

- On a motion by Dennis and second Tracy to approve the liquor and tobacco licenses as presented. All in favor. Brendan abstained.

#### Grand List Adjustments:

- None

#### NVRH Housing Project Grant Agreement:

- Chad reviewed the proposed grant agreement for the NVRH housing project. He highlighted that the \$100,000 will be used for engagement of engineering, architectural and other qualified professional consultants for the completion of evaluations for a housing development to include analysis of local codes, zoning, permitting and understanding of the theoretical number of unities possible for the 60.48 acre parcel located on Breezy Hill Road which is currently owned by NVRH. The project is also to include cost estimates for infrastructure requirements. It will essentially get the project shovel ready. Chad mentioned that this grant agreement is like the other agreements that have been given out and has been reviewed by the Town Attorney.
- On a motion by Dennis and second by Brendan to authorize the Town Manager to move forward with executing the NVRH Housing Project Grant Agreement in the amount of \$100,000. All in favor.

#### St. Johnsbury Center Cemetery:

- Chad explained that Jamie Murphy, Town Attorney has been working with the current owners of the St. Johnsbury Center Cemetery and VLCT to determine the best way to move forward with transferring the Cemetery and assets to the Town.
- The board will need to determine if they wish to authorize the Town Manager to take the required steps to move forward with the acquisition of the St. Johnsbury Center Cemetery and their assets.
- Dennis asked if the proposed budget included the addition of the St. Johnsbury Center Cemetery as it was only a \$1,000 increase over last year. Chad explained that currently they have only used about \$14,000 annually for mowing and have ended the year with a surplus of funds. The budget was not increased much for this reason and the Town expects to use the full funds moving forward.
- On a motion by Dennis and second by Brendan to authorize the Town Manager to take the necessary steps to move forward with the acquisition of the St. Johnsbury Center Cemetery. All in favor.

#### Town Manager's Report:

- Chad Whitehead, Town Manager provided the following Town Manager's Report.
- Daniel Ellingwood a new Police Officer for the Town of St. Johnsbury was sworn in today.
- DPW is planning for the storms on Wednesday and Friday of this week which are said to include high winds. Green Mountain Power is recommending that people do not travel unless they need to. Downed trees and wind conditions will also hinder snow removal.
- Stacy Jewell, Town Clerk asked Chad about any updates on Rural Edge and the Packard Court Project. Chad explained that funding from the Town is still set aside however Rural Edge was not

awarded HUD funding in the last round. Joe Kasprzak Assistant Town Manager explained that they are seeking other funding and that the project is still moving forward.

- Stacy mentioned that it seemed like 5 years ago this all started.
- Stacy inquired where the updates to the Town Charter stand with legislation. Chad explained that Stacy and he would probably need to go give testimony as they are considering it a new charter not a revision. He explained that he would reach out to them to inquire the next steps however there was a large number of Charters that we not gotten to.
- Stacy mentioned that the Charter changes affect positions and how business is done in the Town and it would be nice to get it completed.

#### Other Business:

- Jim Brown provided an update on the bylaw modernization and how the Planning Commission is currently working to reduce the amount of time for approval of permits. The Planning Commission continues to work to become more efficient and to try and bring more people here.
- Stacy reminded folks that the deadline for appropriations is January 18<sup>th</sup> and the deadline for petitions is Jan. 29<sup>th</sup>. She explained that the ballot will go to the printer either January 30<sup>th</sup> or 31<sup>st</sup> with the hopes to have absentee ballots here by February 12<sup>th</sup>. She explained that it is also a presidential election year. Those who wish to request an absentee ballot can do so by calling the Town Clerk's Office, emailing or requesting online.
- Jim Brown asked if the Town Band had submitted an increase in their special appropriations. Stacy said yes. In the past they had requested \$750 now they are requesting \$7,000.
- Jim Brown mentioned that he was glad to hear they followed up on that.

#### Executive Session:

- On a motion by Brendan and second by Dennis that there was a need for executive session to discuss potential real estate transfers and to invite the Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager. All in favor.

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