



# TOWN OF ST. JOHNSBURY

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## Meeting of the St. Johnsbury Select Board August 10th, 2026 @ 6:00pm

### Present-

Select Board: Frank Empsall, Ellen Burt, Dennis Smith, Steve Isham, Brendan Hughes

Staff: Chad Whitehead, Joe Kasprzak, Stacy Jewell, Kate Bent, Lisa Young, Chief Wilson

Public: KATV, Steve Dolgin (via Zoom), Jim Brown, Deb Dolgin, Dana Gray, Bill Gilding, Richard Boisseau, David Roth, Mike Sullivan, stop taxing us to death (via zoom), David Magnus (via zoom), Michael Miller (via zoom), Tim Angell, Dan Hughes

### Agenda Amendments:

- None

### Public Comment:

- David Roth questioned whether the citizen advisory group on public safety was going to be created. He stated Chief Pierce had described it as an ongoing initiative of the police department before going on medical leave. He said residents and business owners want to help the issues happening in Town. Chad responded to David that the subject has come up, and he had discussed organizing a forum for businesses with Gillian. Chad said he will follow up with the group already meeting on public safety to arrange a format where the community could hear what is being done and contribute ideas. Chad also stated the Town should be a voice to the legislator.
- Bill Gildings spoke on the on-going operation of the trash business happening on Gilman Ave, in a residential zone. Bill said since the last Selectboard meeting there have been no changes or follow-ups and requested for the Town's Attorney to get involved. Chad responded that he sent the correspondence and details to a land use attorney. The two courses of action that could exist through zoning and through the municipal ordinances. Chad stated that the Code Compliance Officer visited the property numerous of times without observing trash present. Chad shared the Town's current municipal ordinances are not strict and said the Town could adopt stricter ordinances if the board wishes. Chad is also waiting on the zoning question to be answered before proceeding.
- Dan Hughes also expressed concerns on public safety with the issue's happening in Town. Noting that he has been asked for money, and people sleeping on the Distillery stairs. Both David and Dan expressed issues with business operations and the public safety issue's happening Downtown.
- Dana Gray asked about the search for a new Police Chief. Chad said the posting will be done by the end of this week, through a nationwide subscription specific to policing. The process could

take three months. Chad expressed he hopes Chief Wilson applies. Chief Wilson has stepped in as interim Chief and currently holds the authorities and responsibilities of the position.

- Jim expressed the positiveness of the beautification group's assistance to businesses and encouraged volunteers to help clear weeds along curbs and sidewalks.

#### Minutes:

- On a motion by Brendan and second by Steve to approve the meeting minutes from July 27<sup>th</sup> 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/ Tobacco Licenses:

- None

#### Grand List Update:

- On a motion by Brendan and second by Dennis to table the Grand List Update. All in favor.

#### Set Tax Rate:

- Stacy Jewell shared the new rates which included:

GF Budget-\$0.4571

H.F Budget-\$0.2895

Local Agreement-\$0.0019

Special Services-\$0.4140

Special Appropriations-\$0.0397

SS-\$1.2022

OS-\$0.7882

Homestead- \$1.1188

Nonhomestead-\$1.1954

- On a motion by Dennis and second by Ellen to approve the Set Tax Rates as presented. All in favor.

#### Private Road Names:

- Frank read a letter on behalf of Greg Brown who was unable to attend. Cool Wine LLC owns land at the corner of Mount Pleasant and Mooney Road. The road has been extended, and he wishes to subdivide the property for the house lots pending a Development Review Board decision scheduled for August 27<sup>th</sup>. For 911 purposes the road requires a name. The two proposed names were Vermont View Drive or Sunset View Drive. Due to the already existing Sunset Road name to make it less confusing, the board voted on Vermont View Drive.
- On a motion by Dennis and second by Brendan to approve the Private Road named Vermont View Drive. All in favor.

#### Town Manager's Report:

- Chad reported that the public safety work has taken much of his time.
- Work continues with monthly task force group that reviews the prior two weeks of call data to identify individuals with more than three calls to the PD so that service providers can conduct outreach to them.
- The PD identified encampments on Green Mountain Power property, which is privately owned. At the owner's request the town followed the process in its encampment policy, and the campers

were given seven days' notice to move. The PD returned with assistance from the Fire Department and Public Works to clear the sites. One camper remained and then moved on their own.

- The roadside mower has gone out. The Department of Public Works remains somewhat short-staffed with some employees out on injury but is not work related. Summer crews are maintaining cemeteries and parks.
- Joe reported that he is finishing fiscal year reporting and requisitions.
- Auditors will be here next week, and Lesley will be working with them.

#### Other Business:

- Steve asked if the next meeting is set for approving the short-term rentals. He has not received the notice. Chad said he will forward it to the rest of the members.
- Frank thanked the HALO academy students on the community lunch last week. Frank expressed he thought the lunch gave life to the park.

#### Executive Session:

- On a motion by Dennis and second by Brendan to adjourn. All in favor.

#### **August 10<sup>th</sup> Select Board Meeting Video:**

**[https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A\\_\\_us02web.zoom.us\\_rec\\_share\\_kcSIF5mnSR-5Fj9xtbEbapRssLy-2DLEL4GoBB1MJTa5OJGSfvHWaCTxB0UxtJb4lGAF.qgC2Zqv2lxF3uvny&d=DwMFAw&c=euGZstcaTDllvimEN8b7jXrwqOf-v5A\\_CdpgnVfiiMM&r=Ju1b0XBILvfVAGEVrHqulCPACXIn\\_2b1lVTCCbe\\_28U&m=YeoMB\\_StZGwKcmJWkDyMXmE\\_DqmGLR3xltCQ2Sc3Rabdc9P-6sk1Z8sbJa8U7Om2&s=Y5ySbE7nvKZDKpY0KTL3HUOSCAIKP9wDv3bcUZFAxRI&e=](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__us02web.zoom.us_rec_share_kcSIF5mnSR-5Fj9xtbEbapRssLy-2DLEL4GoBB1MJTa5OJGSfvHWaCTxB0UxtJb4lGAF.qgC2Zqv2lxF3uvny&d=DwMFAw&c=euGZstcaTDllvimEN8b7jXrwqOf-v5A_CdpgnVfiiMM&r=Ju1b0XBILvfVAGEVrHqulCPACXIn_2b1lVTCCbe_28U&m=YeoMB_StZGwKcmJWkDyMXmE_DqmGLR3xltCQ2Sc3Rabdc9P-6sk1Z8sbJa8U7Om2&s=Y5ySbE7nvKZDKpY0KTL3HUOSCAIKP9wDv3bcUZFAxRI&e=)**

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