

Johnson Planning Commission Meeting Draft Minutes

Johnson Municipal Building

Tuesday Oct 1st, 2019

Board Members Present: David Butler, Kim Dunkley, Charles Gallanter, Kyley Hill, Rob Rodriguez,

Other visitors: Town of Johnson Administrator; Brian Story, and Daryl West

1. David called the meeting to order at 7:15
2. David moved to accept the minutes from the sept 3rd meeting with only one change, that being to correct the date, Rob seconded Motion passed unanimously
3. Brian Story was given the floor. He presented the members with a draft of a new social media policy. He explained that the select board is looking for feedback from the planning commission. Members can send comments to either David or Brian via e-mail. The planning commission should create a formal response at our November meeting and pass it on to the select board.
4. Brian brought up the need for more formal reporting to the select board. David will figure out how to attend select board meetings again and give verbal reports.
5. There was a long discussion on the maintenance and repair of class 4 town roads. Consideration was given to the fact that property owners who access their property using class 4 roads pay property taxes to the town. It was mentioned that residents or property owners are doing limited maintenance (such as smoothing or filling washouts and cleaning ditches) on the class 4 roads on a regular basis without obtaining a permit first. It was mentioned that even if this practice was procedurally incorrect, it was in the best interest of the town to allow this to happen as long as there is no damage to the road structure because whoever is doing the work is repairing a town asset and not charging the town for the work. After considerable discussion of the issue, it was the consensus of the commission that permits for surface work or snow plowing should be basically a notification process to the town so the town road foreman knows what's going on and who is responsible for it. That any work which involves altering the base structure of a class 4 town road should require a permit. This permit could have a fee payable with the application and should require proof of liability insurance for the permittee and possibly a performance bond to protect the town from incurring expenses to repair something that was done incorrectly.

The discussion moved on to what happens in the case of a catastrophic event making the road unpassable. It is understood that by state statute the town is not responsible for the maintenance or repair of class 4 town roads with the exception of culverts and bridges. Brian brought up the idea of a road association which would be responsible for the repair of the road they use to access their property. This idea was not well liked. Brian brought up a second idea in

which landowners, residents or other interested parties could share in the expense of the repair, either with material or cash or equipment time. Daryl mentioned that in the case of a wash out on Reservoir rd., if the town supplied and delivered whatever gravel was necessary for the repair, he would be happy to spread it and pack it with his tractor. Further discussion of this concept resulted in what might be the beginning of a workable solution. The Select Board already has a line item in the budget for the repair of class 4 roads. This line should be funded and used for the annual repair or maintenance of class 4 roads. That in the case of an event making the road suddenly impassable, the town would work with the landowners, residents or interested parties to do what's necessary to make the road passable again. In the case of multiple events, the town would give priority to those roads which have year round residences. In the case of non-emergency maintenance, a landowner, resident or interested party can petition the Select Board to spend that money to repair a particular section of a class 4 town rd. The petition should include a description of where the project is and what the project is, and why it is necessary. The petition should include what and how much the petitioner is willing to provide for the repair. This could vary from nothing to almost all the work involved. The Select Board could create a list of criteria to be considered prior to the granting of a petition or the allocation of funds. Such a list could include but not be limited to items such as: the condition of the road, the amount of use the road gets, the amount of work being requested, the amount of money material or work the petitioner is willing to share, are there camps on the road, are there year round residences on the road etc.... By use of these criteria, the Select Board could allocate funds if any to the projects which are deemed to be in the best interest of the town.

6. Discussion moved on to the subject of penalties for damage to or infraction within class 4 town road and Legal trail rights of way. There was not much time to spend on this and it will be taken up in the next meeting.
7. It was decided that the next regularly scheduled meeting will be November 5 at 7 pm.
8. Kim moved to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm

Respectfully submitted
David Butler