

JOHNSON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES  
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 2017

**Present:**

Selectboard Members: Mike Dunham, Nat Kinney, Doug Molde, Kyle Nuse, Eric Osgood (by phone)

Others: Brian Story, Rosemary Audibert, Charles Gallanter

**Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.**

**1. *Call to Order***

Doug called the meeting to order at 5:02.

**2. *Additions, Changes to Agenda***

Nat added discussion of a tour of the Studio Center Church building. Brian added discussion of 2017 projects for the selectboard.

**3. *Make Appointments to the Town Offices***

Rosemary swore in Eric and Kyle, who had been re-elected.

Doug called for nominations for chair. **Mike nominated Eric for chair, Nat seconded, and the board voted to elect Eric chair.**

**Eric nominated Doug for vice chair, Mike seconded and the board voted to elect Doug vice chair.**

The board reviewed current appointments. Nat said Bobbie Moulton is no longer active on the rec committee. A replacement is not needed but the committee is open to having one if anyone is willing.

**Nat moved to reappoint current office holders with the following exceptions: first and second constable positions to be left open for now, Laura Branca to be appointed Green Up Day chair, open Planning Commission seats to remain open, and Bobbie Moulton to be removed from the Recreation Committee. Mike seconded and the motion was passed.**

Brian said Sharon Duffy and David Jones would like to return as constables. Tracy Myers would also like to be a constable. She has a recommendation from Sharon. She is part of the Cambridge Rescue squad. She is AEMT and LT certified. She works per diem for NEMS, volunteers with Morristown Rescue and the Hyde Park fire department and lives in Johnson. She doesn't have experience that Brian is aware of with animal control or health officer duties. We could have her work with Sharon and send her to VLCT training.

**Eric moved to appoint Sharon Duffy first constable, Tracy Myers second constable and David Jones third constable.** Nat said thinks he would vote against this. To explain he would need an executive session for a personnel issue. Mike agreed.

Kyle asked what “first,” “second,” or “third” means for the constables. Brian said he believes it is the call order. The first is called first, the second is called if the first is unavailable, then the third is called. Kyle asked if they are paid per call. Rosemary said yes. Eric said all three have the same authority and powers and none has any power over the others. He would suggest because there is some desire to go into executive session to discuss this that maybe the board should vote the motion down or table it until after the executive session.

**The motion failed.**

The board agreed to have an executive session at the end of the meeting.

It was clarified that Nat’s motion meant Eben Patch, Charles Gallanter and David Butler were reappointed to the Planning Commission. Charles asked if anyone had expressed willingness to be reappointed. Brian said the only one who explicitly expressed willingness was Charles.

Charles said someone has applied for the Planning Commission vacancy. Why not appoint that person? Doug said the board would like to solicit the Planning Commission’s input and then make the appointment. Charles said that process wasn’t followed last year in terms of people interested being brought to the Planning Commission and forwarded to the board. The problem with the process is ongoing. The selectboard should fill the seat with someone who has applied.

Nat said we seem to have a process, but it’s not quick enough. We did ask the Planning Commission to vet this person and they haven’t. We shouldn’t leave the applicant in limbo. The time seems too long between expressing interest and being appointed. He doesn’t know anything about this person so he would be uncomfortable appointing them tonight. But he thinks we have a problem with our process that should be addressed.

Brian said the applicant expressed interest a while ago but he spoke to them and explained we were hoping to get recommendations from the Planning Commission after town meeting and would fill the position then, so they didn’t have an expectation of being appointed before town meeting.

Rosemary said there are some elected offices that had no winner in the election: auditor, LRSWMD supervisor, trustee of public money, grand juror, and agent to convey. JoAnn Benford would accept the auditor position. Rosemary sent a petition to Seth Manchester, who had been LRSWMD supervisor, but he did not return it. She doesn’t know if he is still interested. The previous trustee of public money was Rosemary. We left the grand juror and agent to convey positions vacant last year. Those are positions we could do away with. David Marvin was the previous Plot Cemetery agent. Dave Williams was elected as agent to prosecute and defend suits. Rosemary said the library was looking for a new trustee for a 5 year term. She doesn’t know if anyone came forward. The board should probably send Bob Schulz a thank you letter for all his years of service as library trustee.

Mike said he would be willing to be grand juror. Rosemary said she doesn’t know if a selectboard member can be grand juror.

**Nat moved to appoint JoAnn Benford as auditor, Rosemary Audibert as trustee of public money, and David Marvin as Plot Cemetery agent, seconded by Kyle.** Nat said if Seth is still interested in being LRSWMD supervisor he thinks he would need to let us know. **The motion was passed.**

Brian will check to see if Seth is still interested in being on the LRSWMD board and he will find out if a selectboard member can be grand juror. Doug suggested that Brian present to Mike whether there is any utility to the grand juror position. Brian agreed to do so. Rosemary said she thinks the town can do away with that position.

Eric said the latest application for the Planning Commission came in just before town meeting. In such a case we typically hold off on making an appointment until after town meeting. Charles said he doesn't believe that is correct. David mentioned several meetings ago that Bob Hoag had applied. He thinks the board should confirm his appointment. Eric said the board hasn't heard any recommendation from the Planning Commission yet. Charles said that is because David Butler hasn't brought him forward. Eric said then the board's question to David would be why. It is Charles' right to challenge the chair on why he hasn't brought him forward. Nat said it seems we should reach out to David and hear his thoughts. Kyle agreed. Eric agreed. He said any applicant deserves a fair hearing.

**4. *Tour of Studio Center Church Building***

Nat said Gary Clark invited the community to see the building in its current form while the interior is exposed. He spoke with some others who expressed interest in a tour. Nat would like one. The board discussed possible dates for Nat to suggest to VSC.

**5. *2017 Projects for Selectboard***

Eric said every couple of years or so it is a good idea for the board to review upcoming projects and liaison positions. He doesn't think we need the ambulance board representative anymore. The full board will be involved with the mill house/municipal building work. Howard Romero was the board's liaison to the skate park committee when it was just forming. It is fairly well established now. He doesn't think we need anyone from the board taking an active role. Nat represents the board on the rec committee. Kyle is now president of Johnson Works. It makes sense for her to be the board's liaison. Eric and Gordy have always been the LEPC reps. Brad Reed used to deal with cemetery stones and now Duncan can do that. Nat is the liaison to the sheriff's department. Howard and Duncan are both still engaged with the Historical Society. He thinks they could suffice as the board's liaisons. The full board has been working on the Tatro and Jewett properties. We should decide one way or the other about the Jewett property this year. He also added the Manchester property as another the board may get involved with. Doug has been the LEDC rep. The Johnson 2020 group morphed into the beautification committee. Doug is involved with that. The full board will deal with Class 4 highways. Duncan is no longer on the Transportation Advisory Committee; Brian is. The board should name a revolving loan fund committee this year. This year the full board should work on employee salary steps, branding, the capital equipment plan, the gravel pit, form based code, and the Masonic temple clock. Brian will be involved with the Arts Commission.

Doug asked if the Tatro property is the mill site. Eric said yes, where the town garage is. We always thought we would sell off property we didn't need but the voters voted that down.

Doug suggested that property will be addressed by the Brownfields study. Kyle is a rep on the trustees' committee for that study. We ought to have a presence related to beautification and housing.

Doug suggested that we have Brian Story report on what he sees himself working on regarding economic development. He thinks we should review our old business list and see if there is anything that can be addressed, like stop signs. He suggested that Eric allocate some agenda time for discussion with Brian about economic development work and for discussion about old business. Eric said we could have a meeting dedicated just to looking at old business. *(Eric left at 5:59.)*

**6. *Make Appointments to the Town Offices (continued)***

Mike said he assumes the reason applicant names don't get brought forward to the Planning Commission is that the chairman may have some conflict with those people or some reason he doesn't want to bring them forward. Charles said that would be his supposition. Mike asked, are we saying we will allow the chair of any group to decide on the views of applicants before bringing them forth, or do we want differences of opinion? Nat said he can understand how that is the impression, but he thinks it is more likely just to be neglect. That is why we have to reach out to David Butler. We need to make it clear to groups what our expectation is about the timeline for responding after a candidate applies. Charles said he disagrees with Nat. People who have served as chair of the Planning Commission have been prejudiced against people who disagree with them and have delayed their appointments. He thinks people don't want to volunteer because there are little cliques that run things. To encourage volunteers the board should appoint them when they apply.

Mike moved to appoint Bob Hoag to the Planning Commission. The motion was not seconded.

Doug said we need to be strict with the Planning Commission about getting back to the board regarding applicants. Brian said he will draft a policy on responding to applications. *(Charles left at 6:06.)*

**It was moved and seconded to enter executive session to discuss constable appointments, inviting Brian and Rosemary to remain, the motion was passed and the board entered executive session at 6:06.** The board came out of executive session at 6:17.

**Mike moved to appoint Sharon Duffy as first constable, Nat seconded and the motion passed.**

The board plans to post the open position for second constable.

**7. *Adjourn***

**Nat moved to adjourn, Mike seconded, the motion was passed and the meeting was adjourned at 6:18.**