

JOHNSON VILLAGE TRUSTEE BOARD
ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 2017

Present:

Trustees: Gordon Smith, Walter Pomroy, David Goddette, Scott Meyer, Bob Sweetser

Others: Eric Osgood, Rosemary Audibert, Meredith Birkett, Matt Hill, Dan Noyes, about 50 members of the public

Eric Osgood called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. He read the warning.

Article 1. To elect a President and a Clerk.

Gordy Smith called for nominations for president, noting that Eric Osgood was the current president. Eric Osgood was nominated for president. It was moved and seconded to close nominations and the motion was passed. It was moved and seconded to elect Eric Osgood president and the motion was passed.

Eric Osgood called for nominations for clerk, noting that the current clerk was Rosemary Audibert. Rosemary Audibert was nominated and the nomination was seconded. Rosemary Audibert was elected clerk.

Article 2. Will the Village vote to adopt the Annual Report of the Auditors for the year ending December 31, 2016 as printed?

It was moved and seconded to adopt the annual report.

On behalf of the trustees, Gordy Smith presented Cliff Hill with a plaque honoring his 46 years of commitment to Johnson.

The motion was passed.

Article 3. To elect two (2) Trustees to the following terms; or until their successors have been elected by the registered voters of the Village of Johnson, at a properly warned Village Meeting

- a. one Trustee for a term ending in three years (2020).**
- b. one Trustee for a term ending in two years (2019).**

Eric called for nominations for the 3-year trustee position currently held by David Goddette. David Goddette was nominated. Kyle Nuse was nominated. More than 7 voters requested that voting be done by paper ballot.

A voter asked if Kyle could serve on both the selectboard and the trustee board. Eric said his understanding is that she could. Rosemary Audibert agreed.

A voter asked to hear from both candidates.

Kyle Nuse said she feels she would bring a unique perspective as someone who lives and works in the village, a parent and a business owner. She would love to bring that fresh perspective in service to the community, to represent the village people and to keep communication open as much as possible.

Dave Goddette said he got his bachelor's from Johnson State. He owns a house in the village and is going on his 16th year as a member of the Johnson fire department. He believes in being part of the community and serving the community. That is why he accepted the nomination to join this board 3 years ago, to be a voice in the community. He hopes the voters can allow him to continue that journey. The board members have worked well together over the last 3 years. They have accomplished a lot and have a lot to accomplish. Dave asks people to vote for Scott Meyer tonight as well because the board needs to continue its work and the current board members work well together. There have been some hotly debated topics but they can debate and argue and still be friends and work as a team.

A voter asked what Dave does for work. Dave said he is a senior account executive for Vox Radio Group and also a consultant on marketing strategies. He is passionate about promoting the community, businesses and his clients.

A voter said she has known Kyle since she was a girl and has watched her grow up. Kyle has always been a major supporter of the town. The voter said she thinks a set of fresh eyes would be good for the village.

A voter asked Kyle how she would pick whether to favor the town or the village if she served on both the selectboard and the trustee board, since what is in the best interest of one is not always in the best interest of the other. Kyle said it will definitely be a challenge, but she is someone who likes to get all the facts. In the end she will vote based on her conscience and her heart and also on what is best for all of us. The voter said she would be serving two masters. Kyle said she hopes there can be less of the "winners or losers" mentality. She hopes the boards can work towards working better together and making decisions that are good for the whole.

Scott Meyer said he is the other trustee whose position is up for election. He echoes what Dave said. Dave has business practicality and asks questions about what makes good financial sense. There are a few things the board has been working on. Fresh ideas come into the group all the time. Some have been shot down and some have moved forward for good reasons. Everyone on the board has a vision to make this town a place people will want to move to, recreate in and live in. Someone with Dave's knowledge of business is a huge help. The village hasn't raised any taxes. Everyone is working together well and the village has moved forward. Our power company is back in check. Our water and sewer services are good. We have a fantastic village manager. None of that happens without people putting energy into it and Dave gets a lot of the credit.

Voting was by paper ballot. Dave Goddette was elected 34-28.

Eric called for nominations for the 2-year term, currently held by Scott Meyer.

Cliff Hill nominated Scott Meyer and the nomination was seconded. It was moved and seconded to close nominations. A voter asked to make another nomination. The motion to close nominations failed based on a show of hands. Jasmine Yuris was nominated.

More than 7 people asked for voting to be done by paper ballot. Voters indicated they would like to hear from the candidates.

Jasmine Yuris said she moved here to attend Johnson State college. She graduated in 2012 and just bought a house in the village. She is vested here. She is young and has little experience but is willing to learn. She has worked in town at a café and a pizza place. She feels as though she would bring a different point of view. She is a young mother. She would be a voice for young women in this town.

Scott Meyer said he has lived here since the mid 80's. He has been on the board for 2 years now. He has an environmental health background. He works for the state. In the time he has lived here, Johnson has ebbed and flowed. It has come close to success, then dropped off. He was excited to get on the board and move forward to make this a good place for people to live and visit. With this board and the new administrators he feels we can start moving forward. He and Dave have things they would still like to do, such as incorporating JSC and the Vermont Studio Center more into our community. The state has mystifying vocabulary and a lot of complex rules that are coming out. Working for state government, he is able to understand the language and translate it for Johnson's community. The trustees promised 2 years ago to keep our power company in town and they have done that. A lot of people didn't think they could pull it off but they worked it out. We have a good sewer and water plant. We are pulling this off without increasing funds too much. He is proud of that. He is looking for support to get Johnson on the map where it belongs.

Jennifer Burton, who is not a village voter, asked for permission to speak. By unanimous consent, she was granted permission. She said the women who get up and speak tend to be more quiet, while the men speak more loudly and confidently. She wants people to be cognizant that the trustee board is an all male board. When thinking about different points of view she thinks the gender of board members should be considered.

Cliff Hill said Scott Meyer is a good guy. He has helped the utility get back on track. He gives employees safety information.

Dave said he wants to repeat what he said before about how the trustee team has worked together closely. He feels strongly that keeping the board together as it is is the best vision for our community. Scott brings knowledge on state issues to the board. He is an asset to our community.

It was moved and seconded to cease nominations and the motion was passed.

Paper ballots were distributed and counted, but the number of votes cast was greater than the number of voters who had registered, so Eric asked all voters to be checked off the checklist again and ballots were handed out and counted again.

Scott Meyer was elected 38-24.

Article 4. To elect a Treasurer for one year.

Eric called for nominations for treasurer, noting that the current treasurer is Rosemary Audibert. Rosemary Audibert was nominated and the nomination was seconded. Rosemary Audibert was elected treasurer.

Article 5. To elect two (2) Auditors to the following terms;
a. one Auditor for a term ending in three years (2020).
b. one Auditor for a balance in term ending in one year (2018).

Eric called for nominations for the 3-year auditor term, currently held by Kim Marble.

Cliff Hill nominated Kim Marble to the 3-year auditor term and the nomination was seconded. Kim Marble was elected for the 3-year auditor term.

Eric called for nominations for an auditor for the balance of a term ending in 2018. The position is currently vacant. A voter nominated Bobbie Moulton, saying that he had agreed to serve. The nomination was seconded. Bobbie Moulton was elected for the auditor term ending in 2018.

Article 6. Will the Village authorize the Trustees to appoint a Tax Collector? If not, to elect a Tax Collector for one year.

Cliff Hill moved to authorize the trustees to appoint a tax collector and the motion was seconded and passed.

Article 7. Will the Village authorize its Trustees to appoint a Water and Light Commissioner? If not, to elect a Water & Light Commissioner for one year.

Cliff Hill moved to authorize the trustees to appoint a water and light commissioner and the motion was seconded and passed.

Article 8. Will the Village vote to set the rate of compensation of its Officers and Employees? If not, to authorize its Trustees to set such salaries and wages.

Cliff Hill moved to authorize the trustees to set the rate of compensation of its Officers and Employees and the motion was seconded and passed.

Article 9. Will the Village vote a budget to meet the expenses and liabilities of the Village?

Gordy Smith moved and Walter Pomroy seconded to authorize a budget of \$425,977 with an estimated amount of \$112,831 to be raised by taxes.

A voter asked if a board member can second a motion. Eric said anyone who is a voter can.

Eric asked if there was any objection to allowing Meredith Birkett, who is not a village voter, to speak. There were no objections.

Kyle Nuse asked Meredith if she could talk about the reasons for some jumps in the budget. The first jump she noticed was for consultant services, which increased by \$2500. Meredith said that is the village's portion of the local match for a marketing grant the town and village are getting.

Kyle asked about the increase for postage. Meredith said the amount budgeted was the same as the amount budgeted in 2016, which was higher than the actual amount spent in 2016 but similar to 2015 actuals. It was felt that 2016 actuals were unusually low so it would be more appropriate to keep the same number.

Kyle asked about the increase for building maintenance. Meredith said that line item includes the general fund share of repairs to the municipal building and other properties and some additional money for trash collection. The village hasn't budgeted for trash collection in the past.

Kyle asked about the increase for heat. Meredith said the amount budgeted is a little less than what was budgeted for 2016. Actuals were quite low in 2016. Fuel prices have been low but the board didn't want to bank on them remaining quite that low.

Kyle asked about the increases in lines 145 and 146. Meredith said line 145 has about \$7K to do some temporary work at the intersection of Pearl Street and School Street to bump up the pavement to separate the road and the sidewalk. It will help keep water from going toward homes. Work will also be done on two catch basins in that area. Line 146 is money being put aside for a bigger future project. We know that whole section of sidewalk needs work. The board is putting aside money for a match for a grant. The Pearl St./School St. area is being targeted but the trustees could decide to put the money toward a project in a different area.

Kyle asked, what about the crosswalks? Meredith said nothing has been budgeted specifically for enhancements to crosswalks. Kyle said all the white is gone. They are not well marked. Gordy said Troy Dolan's crew will stripe the sidewalks once weather conditions improve and the town and state are done sanding. Walter Pomroy said they get striped every year and every winter the stripes get worn off. There is no permanent solution.

A voter asked about catch basins on Railroad Street. Is the village going to raise them? Some are way below the pavement. Meredith said the village will have to look at those to see if they need to be raised.

The motion was passed.

Article 10. To do such other business as may properly be brought before this meeting.

Eric said legislators Matt Hill and Dan Noyes are here and willing to take any questions on state issues.

Cliff Hill moved to adjourn at 8:45 and the motion was seconded and passed.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths

UNAPPROVED