

JOHNSON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES  
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
MONDAY, MARCH 26, 2018

**Present:**

Selectboard Members: Mike Dunham, Nat Kinney, Doug Molde, Kyle Nuse, Eric Osgood

Others: Brian Story, Rosemary Audibert, Brian Krause, Lois Frey

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

**1. Call to Order**

Eric called the meeting to order at 7:00.

**2. Additions, Changes to Agenda**

No changes were suggested.

**3. Sign Letters of Thanks**

Board members signed letters of thanks to those who helped during the flooding.

**4. Letter of Intent for Northern Borders Regional Grant for Light Industrial Park Infrastructure**

Brian S. said he attended a meeting last week on this grant program. In order to apply this year we need to submit a letter of intent by March 30. Then we have one month to get in an application. He will seek some assistance on the grant application. The Northern Borders program has a pretty high limit in terms of total contribution – up to a half million dollars – but they will contribute a relatively low percentage of the project cost – only up to 50%. We can use the grant funds to match other funds and we might be able to apply for a state or regional grant to make up the rest of the money. There is a pretty good chance we will be able to go ahead but we can also back out if we have to. We wouldn't have to begin work until next year, so we could apply and if we were granted funds we would have another year to use that to leverage additional funds.

The board agreed Brian should submit a letter of intent to apply for a Northern Borders Regional Grant for light industrial park infrastructure.

**5. Review Current Budget and Overtime Outlooks**

Eric wanted to know what one hour of overtime costs us. Brian S. said 30 hours of overtime costs about \$1000. Each additional hour of overtime costs an average of \$30.72 but most hours go to Ray, who gets a little more than other employees, so a more realistic figure would be \$31 for each hour.

Eric said he understands Brian K. might be looking for the board to authorize a total of 30 additional overtime hours to be spread among employees as he wishes. Brian K. said yes, that is what he is requesting. Mike said we do have temporary help we could use in lieu of overtime. Brian S. said the temporary employees could not use the grader. Brian K. said one of those employees does not have a CDL.

Doug said he thought we were looking for 10 hours between last week and today. Brian K. said we were, as a stopgap. We didn't use it. Now he is looking for some overtime in case we need it for another storm or if we need the grader running on a weekend. He is asking for 30 hours for the rest of the year. Brian S said he doesn't think he or Brian K. could promise this

would be the last time they would come back to the board asking for overtime this year, but it might be.

Eric said the only question is how much we are over budget right now. Brian K. said we are about 25 hours over now. Eric said that is about \$800 or \$1000.

Brian S. said the estimate we have from Tatro on what their bill will be is \$26-27K. Eric said he thought would be more than \$30K.

Nat asked if Brian K. thinks he can find money in the highway department budget to cover the additional overtime cost. Brian K. said yes. Brian S. said we have pretty good control over paving and mud abatement so we can just do a little less of those things and absorb some cost. They thought that was where would find money to cover the additional overtime and the overage from Tatro.

Doug asked if we did mud abatement in this fiscal year. Brian K. and Brian S. said we have spent virtually none of the money budgeted for mud abatement in this fiscal year. The plan was to do it this summer.

Mike said he thinks we need to leave the amount budgeted for roads intact.

Brian S. said he plans, with board permission, to send letters to committees and groups letting them know they should try to spend less the rest of the year and come in under budget. But most committees and departments have already spent a lot of their money. We haven't spent paving or mud abatement money yet. Those items make up the majority of unspent money. Most other funds are committed. Nat said the rec committee tends to wait on large purchases until the end of the year.

Rosemary said she has been working on budget figures and estimated year end figures. She thinks she still needs to add the Historical Society building loan payments as an expense to come up with estimated year end figures. When she does that she gets an estimated year end balance of \$60,335, rather than Brian's figure of \$112,151.29. In the past 3 years the loan payment expense was never included in the estimated year end balance. She doesn't know if she is thinking about it wrong.

Eric said so we will have \$60K less cash on hand than we originally thought. Rosemary said it looks like it. Brian said he and Rosemary are not sure yet if this might be factored in some place they haven't realized yet. But if it is not, it appears we have been calculating the year end amount incorrectly as long as we have had the Holcomb House.

Eric said if we took \$60K out of paving, that would be at least half of the amount budgeted. Brian K. said it would be more than half. Eric said that would mean paving almost nothing this year. And there isn't enough budgeted for mud abatement to make up the \$60K. We have a little time to decide before it would be time to do paving or mud abatement. Every month we can hone in tighter on the actual year end figure.

Kyle said she is confused about why we haven't caught this before. Brian S. said because we haven't been close enough to the line before to notice there was a calculation mistake. Kyle said it seems like such a big mistake. Doug said he could see why we missed it. Brian said Rosemary just found it this afternoon. It is possible that it's accounted for somewhere else they haven't identified yet.

Lois asked what the figure is that is in question. Brian S. said it is the principal payments for the Holcomb House. We calculate the taxes we will raise by finding the difference between revenue and budgeted expenses and increasing that by the amount we have to pay in principal on the Holcomb House. It is done that way rather than showing the loan payments as an expense because of advice from an accountant when we set up the loan. Because it is an asset they want us to count the payments as negative revenue instead of as expense.

Mike asked when the last time was that we had an outside auditor. Eric said we have an audit every two years but they don't catch things like this. Their audit has a very limited scope. Mike said he has heard of municipalities having a thorough audit of every line item. Doug said we would have to increase our budget to have that done.

Brian S. said we show where we are raising the funds but not where we are spending it. It looks like we are spending the money and not accounting for it in our budget.

Eric said Brian K. is asking the board to authorize 30 additional hours of overtime and leaving him the flexibility to manage how it gets doled out. Doug asked, this does not address the overtime that has already been used that went over the 300 hours authorized? Eric said maybe we ought to retroactively approve what has already been used. Brian K. said that was roughly 25 hours.

**Doug moved to retroactively approve the approximately 25 hours of additional overtime already spent, seconded by Mike.** Eric said Ray told the board he was forced to take comp time when he wanted overtime. Eric asked, does this motion pay him for the time? Brian K. said yes; it would zero out his comp bank and he would get paid for the time. **The motion was passed.**

**Kyle moved to authorize up to a total of 30 hours of additional overtime for all highway department employees, for Brian K. to use at his discretion, seconded by Doug and the motion was passed.**

Rosemary handed out current CTO time totals. When Chris retires, we will pay him for 25% of the 3600 hours of sick time he has accumulated.

Mike asked Rosemary if she still likes this CTO system. She said yes. Mike said at one time we were supposed to look into the system. Nat said he was involved in a committee that was looking at it. After examining the current system, he was very happy with it. Eric said it can be a win-win for the employees and for us. Someone like Rosemary is giving us free time she will never be paid for. But if she had a significant illness the catastrophic sick leave bank would keep her paid for a number of months. Doug said it's like an insurance policy. Nat

said it would pinch our budget if Rosemary were out on catastrophic leave and we had to pay someone else to do her job in the meantime.

Nat said he just wanted to see what we would need to pay Chris when he leaves. It will be about \$900. Eric said when Rosemary retires the amount we need to pay will be large.

Rosemary said her plan is to retire in 7 years.

**6. Review Budget Options**

Brian handed out a draft showing possible budget cuts. He said he had incorporated suggestions from the last meeting. He reviewed the proposed cuts. He reduced animal control services back to last year's amount. It had gone up by \$500 because of our desire for increased enforcement. The enforcement strategy to make do with less will be a big push at the beginning of the year.

Brian reduced auditors' salaries to an amount even a little lower than history. Maybe it should be moved back up a little. Rosemary said she thinks so.

Eric said we budgeted to give employees two raises. Do we want to do both? Nat said the first raise is budgeted for 2.5% and second for 3%. It seems unlikely the second will really be 3%, given our partners in the village. Doug said we haven't budgeted to bump up Brian S.'s or Brian K.'s pay. He thinks we will do that in 2018-19. A diminishing spread between supervisors and employees is not something we want to encourage. Eric asked about the impact of the raises on our budget. Brian S. said the 2.5% raise for office employees costs \$4,300. The 3% raise for office employees costs \$2,677. (Less than the other raise because it is only for a half a year.) Eric said that is about \$7K. Nat said the 2.5% was arrived at through negotiation we had with the village and he thinks we should stick with it. Eric said the village already retroactively paid the raise starting in January. Eric said if we decided to cut the 3% raise it would put us back in the same situation a year from now of budgeting 2 raises to try to get raises to start January 1, as employees requested. What if we give the 3% raise in January and don't do the 2.5% raise July 1? Nat said then the village and the town would be paying two different rates. Eric said we are now because the village started their raise January 1. Nat said if we wait until January 1 to give a raise we will perpetually be 2.5% behind the village.

Doug said he thinks we should take all the \$30K we need to cut out of mud abatement. Nat said he would go after the fifth highway employee. Eric said if we were going to find the \$30K in a single big ticket item it could be the fifth employee, mud abatement or not funding any of the non-profits. Brian K. said we wouldn't have to eliminate all the mud abatement. We could take \$15K from mud abatement and \$15K from paving. Eric said but our paving has been underfunded for a number of years. Mike said we should look at things we are paying the village for that we shouldn't be paying.

Nat said mud abatement is a 15-year project. We planned to do a little every year and at the end of 15 years we will have really nice roads. If we skip years it turns into a longer project. The idea is that over the long haul it saves us money on gravel. He thinks mud abatement is a smart thing to spend money on. Doug said he thinks it is the easiest thing to return to spending money on next year.

Mike said he thinks we should stick with the fifth employee and cut the overtime down to 250 hours. With the extra employee overtime should go down. And we should have in the employee manual that just because a certain number of hours of overtime is budgeted, employees don't have to use every single hours. Overtime hours should be kept at a minimum. Brian said cutting 50 hours of overtime for 4 employees saves \$6K.

Kyle asked if we got information from Hyde Park. Brian S. said he hasn't had a real conversation with them. They are also right around 300 hours of overtime. He feels pretty confident we will do better on overtime in the future. We are making better use of sending employees home after 8 hours. Brian K. has been sharing with people that this will be the new normal.

Eric said by state statute we are required to maintain highways and maintain vital records and everything else we do is just community priorities. We don't have to have a rec committee or provide ambulance or police services. Mike said we don't have to spend \$80K for the library. He said if he had his way we would get rid of the 10 cents on the grand list payment to the village. When village trustees make a motion to reduce the town budget by \$30K they should pay for that.

Brian S. said he is open to any proposals. In general his personal preference is to take money away from employees last. He has prepared a budget he thinks distributes cuts fairly well but the bulk of the cuts will come from the highway department. His proposed budget keeps the fifth employee but will have an impact on roads.

Eric said if the voters don't see an impact from taking away \$30K they will do it again next year. Brian said they will see an impact on mud abatement and paving. Eric said we understand that impact but the mud abatement plan is a long range plan. The average person wouldn't see a difference from eliminating mud abatement. Mike said mud abatement is money well spent. Eric said we know that, but does the average person? Brian S. said he thinks there will be a noticeable difference in what paving we can do. We can say what project we didn't do because of the reduced budget but his proposal doesn't reduce paving to an irresponsible level. Eric said he doesn't believe the voters will notice it. Kyle asked what roads we have on deck for paving. Brian K. said Plot Road and Clay Hill Road. Half of Clay Hill still hasn't been topped.

Eric asked Lois if she sees the value in mud abatement and if she thinks the average person does. Lois said she is not sure the average person does. She only does from coming to these meetings. If there have to be highway department cuts, not paving some roads would certainly get people's attention. She has always thought it would be good to have a plan ahead of time of what roads are going to be paved. Maybe the board could tell people the plan at town meeting.

Brian S. continued going through his budget proposal. He increased the amount for auditors' salaries back up to what was in the original budget.

He reduced the Planning Commission salary amount down to \$1200 but he doesn't want to eliminate that item because he wants them to get a minute taker. Nat said he would reduce the amount even more. Brian cut another Planning Commission expense line by \$400.

He zeroed out the line for East Johnson sewer and electricity. He reduced expense for street lights by \$200. Mike asked, why not shut off all street lights we pay for? Brian said he would be concerned about safety. Nat and Donna, who both live in East Johnson, said they personally feel no need for street lights there. Nat said he thinks bridge lights are important. He asked why we are paying for lights in the village. Eric said we only pay for lights on bridges and some lights in East Johnson that are outside the village. Brian S. said there is a scenario where if we reduce our electrical cost we could lose more than we save. Doug said he thinks before we shut off any lights we should stand under them on a dark night. Nat and Kyle said they thought only East Johnson lighting should be reduced. Eric and Mike said they thought lighting should also be reduced on the Pearl Street bridge. Eric said the covered bridge would be dark with no lights, but how many people walk through it at night? The lights are more decorative. Eric said he would support cutting the whole \$2200 for lighting. Mike agreed. All agreed not to budget for lights in East Johnson. Eric suggested we could just cut off half the Pearl Street bridge lights. Mike said he thinks we should discuss the lights at the next joint meeting with the village.

Brian said he cut the amount budgeted for legal expenses by \$1000. We haven't even approached the \$11K we have been budgeting for the past few years. He is comfortable budgeting a little less but not a lot less because we don't know what our new attorney's rates will be.

He reduced the Beautification Committee amount by \$1K. Doug said he is opposed to that cut.

He eliminated the \$500 increase for the Conservation Commission that had originally been budgeted.

He eliminated the increase for office supplies. He cut record supplies to \$250. He eliminated the increase for equipment maintenance and repair since we have a fairly new copier.

He reduced cemetery maintenance by \$2K. We can just do less cemetery maintenance if we want to spend less money

He cut animal control expenses a little (use of the kennel and other related expenses.)

He cut the increase in the Recreation Committee's tax burden by 15%, which at our last meeting they said they could absorb. He targeted a couple of areas as suggestions for the reductions but they can do what they want. He did the same thing for the Historical Society.

Lois asked what he meant by the tax burden increase. Brian said the Historical Society generates some revenue and has expenses. The amount the town pays for the Historical Society is the difference between revenue and expenses. Last year the town had budgeted to

pay the Historical Society \$1850 more than the Historical Society's revenue so the tax burden was \$1850. For 2018-19 the difference between revenue and expenses was \$3085. He took 15% out of that number. He is not touching any of the money the Historical Society gets through fundraising. Their expenses are more than the amount they raise. The only part of their budget he looked at was the part over and above their fundraising revenue. The cut for the Historical Society was about \$150. He assigned the reduction to a couple of specific lines but the Historical Society can decide how to budget.

Eric asked what the 2.5% and 3% raises for the highway department would cost. Brian said with the fifth employee and the raise the increase to highway department salaries is \$51,233. The 2.5% raise accounts for \$5,693 and the 3% raise will be about \$3,500. Eric said the budgeted raises will cost about \$9K for highway department employees and \$7K for office employees.

Brian said he reduced paving by almost \$12K. He reduced annual construction projects, which includes mud abatement, by almost \$6K. For Class 4 road maintenance he cut a little from the expected end of year amount and from the proposed 2018-19 budget. With the increased burden we have for the Municipal Roads General Permit he is reluctant to eliminate that item but he thinks we can afford the reduction he came up with. He cut it in half.

He put some back into gravel and stone.

The proposed cuts total exactly \$30K.

Nat said non-profits have come up as a place to cut. He is loath to cut them. Each is very important. Town groups like the Recreation Committee or Beautification Committee are entirely dependent on the town for money, as opposed to groups like Meals on Wheels or the North Country Animal League. He had previously sent out a proposal to cut non-profit contributions 6% across the board. That would result in total cuts of \$1800. Brian said he thinks that is a pretty good place to get a little more. Lois said she thinks the taxpayers will notice this as a cut. If people think a group is important it is up to them to donate. She thinks it should be individuals, not taxpayers, who donate to these groups.

Doug asked, haven't the voters put money for non-profits back in when we tried to cut it? Eric said we tried to cut contributions to non-profits once and they didn't approve. Doug said he thinks cuts to volunteer groups like Historical Society, the Recreation Committee, or the Beautification Committee are penny wise and pound foolish. He thinks it is better to take money from paving and mud abatement. He thinks people will notice that. He would save the other areas in case we need to do more cuts in the future. He thinks we would be hurting our volunteer structure by making cuts to volunteer groups. Kyle agreed.

Mike said the idea behind mud abatement is that if we do it we save money down the road. Cutting mud abatement is penny wise and pound foolish. Doug agreed. Nat said he thinks every cut we are looking at is penny wise and pound foolish.

Brian K. said he thinks mud abatement is good, but it is not a project that is going to be done any time soon. In the long run cutting what we do just puts the completion date off by another year. Eric said we are looking at maybe not doing mud abatement in the current year because of the current year budget and also eliminating some from next year. The following year, if we are going to try to put \$30K back in it on top of normal inflation it will make our budget increase look bigger.

Mike said cutting 6% from non-profit organizations won't bankrupt them. Rosemary said many haven't had increases to our contributions in 10 years. Doug said what is important to him is their constituency here rather than the effect on their overall budget. He thinks some here want to know that we contribute because they use the groups' services. Nat said he thinks we would still contribute but make modest cuts to our contributions. Overall he agrees that instead of nickel and diming we should cut one or two big things.

Eric said if we eliminated the 2.5% increase on July 1 and kept the 3% increase, that would save us \$10K. Nat said along with the 2.5% increase we were passing on more health insurance expense. Eliminating that raise would be setting employees back double. Eric said we had one employee who said they would rather see that eliminated than the fifth highway department employee. Mike said town employees have a good package compared to many in the community.

Eric said Nat had suggested a cut to board salaries and he would support that. Nat said he not sure we have authority to cut that. Eric said whether we can is a good question.

Brian read a statement from the Lamoille Family Center describing the different services they provide to our community. In 2017 they reached more than 4000 people throughout the Lamoille Valley. In Johnson during 2017 they helped 49 people with a variety of services at a cost of \$24,500. We contribute \$1500 to them each year. They invite us to come for a visit. They would be happy to come to a meeting. They ask us not to cut our contribution to them.

Eric said next year we could put all the non-profit contributions in a separate article.

Nat said the state took the responsibility for poor people from the towns. Helping them is not our main focus. Doug said these programs are doing something the state isn't providing. Nat said he thinks the state funds a good many of them.

Doug said he feels nickel and diming creates more people opposed to the cuts and difficulty putting the funds back next year. If we cut something obviously worthwhile it is easier to put it back next year. Eric said he disagrees. He feels the average person could eliminate mud abatement and they wouldn't see it as a problem. Doug said he would rather explain that we cut money and it is costing us in the long run than make cuts that affect volunteers. Mike said he thinks everything should feel a little of the cut. He thinks we should take \$1000 off the ten cents on the grand list contribution to the village. Doug said that isn't a possibility. Brian said that would be in violation of our agreement. Rosemary said it would be in violation of state law. Eric said if we didn't pay the ten cents we would own the sidewalks and storm drains. Nat said he thinks we just need to do what is best for the overall budget.



Brian said we don't need to make a final decision tonight. Does the board want to see cuts distributed more broadly or more narrowly? Mike said he would like to see the cuts widened. Nat and Doug said they would like to see them narrowed.

Kyle asked about Eric's previous statement that if we cut big ticket items now we may shoot ourselves in the foot in a year or two. Eric said that is his concern. Brian said there is a tipping point beyond which we may significantly raise future expenses by taking too much money out now. Kyle said she feels torn. She doesn't want to punish volunteers and community services but she doesn't want to get us in big trouble and make us look irresponsible.

Doug said he feels we can be more assured of controlling mud abatement and paving and if we make cuts in those areas we will still have other things to cut if we need additional cuts. It is good to control more of the variables. Brian said that is why he likes leaving more money in mud abatement. We won't spend money out of that line item until late in the year so if something happens there is money we have firm control over that we can use for other purposes. We will most likely spend paving money in the early part of the 2018-19 year because we will probably combine it with paving projects at the end of the 2017-18 year.

Eric said if we don't keep up on paving we will pay more in the end. Big items increasing our budget are the fifth employee and the two raises in one year. If we think those are important we will make cuts to something we level funded. Mike said he thinks a majority of board members are in favor of hiring the fifth employee and there is benefit in it.

Brian S. asked Brian K. how he feels about the cuts we have made so far and the possibility of cutting more from mud abatement and paving vs. the fifth employee. Brian K. said he thinks the fifth employee is pretty important if we are concerned at all about the Municipal Roads General Permit. He is hearing Eric talk about future budgets and the concern that if we cut money we may have a hard time getting it back.

Kyle said if we don't have a fifth employee it may be hard to do mud abatement or paving. Doug said we can't spend a smaller quantity on hiring an additional employee so he would hire the person now. We can do mud abatement or paving in smaller amounts next year. Eric said if we eliminate mud abatement for one year that would be the \$30K right there and we would not have to touch anything else. Doug said he thinks that would be the easiest to put back into next year's budget because we can show that it pays. The downside of not doing paving is probably bigger. Brian K. and Eric agreed. Kyle said the few people she has talked to about mud abatement said their road has improved a lot from the work that was done.

Eric said he still wants to cut electricity expenditures. Doug suggested figuring out how much the lights on the Pearl Street bridge cost. Brian S. said he will find out whether we can turn off half the lights.

Eric asked if the board wants to cut from mud abatement. Mike said no. Kyle said Doug was saying taxpayers will want to put the cut money back in next year for mud abatement but

Eric and Brian were saying it will be hard to put it back financially. Eric said it may be hard. It may take years to get the \$30K back. Doug suggested that next year we present a proposal of how much mud abatement we want to do and how much it will cost. Nat asked if it would be a separate article. Doug said it could be. Mike said he feels we can cut a little from mud abatement, but not all of it.

Brian said he is hearing consensus to narrow down the cuts – not taking all the \$30K from one item, but narrowing the scope. He will plan on restoring money first to volunteer groups and on moving a few things around in the highway department. He is hearing that the board wants to focus cuts on mud abatement and not paving. Is the board okay with focusing cuts on the highway department budget?

Mike said he hates that. Eric said he would eliminate the 2.5% increase in July and keep the 3% increase. He would eliminate electricity costs and tighten up some other items and take the remainder from mud abatement.

Brian K. said he feels it would be better to give the 2.5% raise everyone is expecting and if we have to eliminate a raise, eliminate the other one. Eric said the reason he proposed eliminating the 2.5% raise is that next year we will be right back again trying to put 2 raises in the same budget. Brian K. said if that doesn't happen, it doesn't happen. If the board has to choose he thinks it would be better to give the July 1 raise. There would be less pushback about eliminating the other raise. Everyone now is expecting a raise and a new pay scale. They are buying into being scheduled for classes because there is incentive to go to the classes. Brian S. said he agrees with that. He would rather leave both raises but if we take one off the table he would prefer it to be the January 1 raise. Doug said he thinks employees would be really upset if the 2.5% raise disappeared. That should not be done. Nat asked, would it be fair to say take home pay has not increased in the past 3 years since we have asked employees to contribute more? Rosemary said more town employees switched to the cheaper option this year. Brian S. said he doesn't know if it was the case this year but last year inflation and the increased healthcare contribution really wiped out any pay raise. Mike said many in the state probably feel that way.

Eric asked if there is consensus on pulling out the 3% raise. Nat said no. Lois asked if it has to be 3%. Kyle said it probably won't be 3%. It will more likely be 2.5%. Nat said he is against cutting either raise. Doug said he thinks he is too. He wouldn't have offered the raises as we proposed them, but now that they are on the table he thinks there is more harm from cutting them.

Kyle said she would like the process of deciding on cuts to be similar to the process of developing the original budget. She would like to review multiple drafts. She thinks that is responsible.

Lois said she doesn't think Brian needs to give back the \$500 to the Conservation Commission. They talked at their meeting about giving it back.

Kyle said she would be open to seeing a version of the budget with the raise cut on the table. Mike said he doesn't want to consider cutting the 3% raise, so now there is a majority that wants to keep it.

Nat suggested a straw poll on cutting 6% from non-profits. Nat, Eric and Mike said they wanted those cuts. Brian said he will draw up a draft reducing the amount for non-profits and giving a little back to citizen groups. He will try to get a more concrete dollar figure for East Johnson lights and investigate Pearl Street lights. He will narrow the focus of the cuts, focusing on mud abatement and paving.

Eric said he would go away from hitting paving. Mike said he doesn't think we should cut paving. Brian K. said it might be nice not to deplete mud abatement completely. Even with \$10K he can do some mud abatement. Brian S. said he thinks he is looking to cut about \$20K from the highway department. Mike said he hopes Brian can leave more in the highway department than that. He suggests maybe taking \$10K from mud abatement and leaving paving as is. Eric said then we would be talking about taking \$20K from other parts of the budget. He doesn't think we can get that much. Mike suggested taking \$15K from the highway department.

Brian asked, when he takes 6% from non-profits, does the board want the majority of that to offset highway expenses or to offset other contributions to the budget? Mike, Eric and Kyle said they prefer it to offset highway expenses.

Lois asked if the \$8K for events and celebrations has been affected. Brian S. said that is a pass-through for Tuesday Night Live. Nat said they raise that money and we spend it.

Brian said the board had expressed a desire to see the cuts narrowed but now it sounds like the board wants to see the cuts taken from a wider base for the next draft, reducing the amount cut from the highway department. He might try to have two drafts for next time.

Eric said about \$4K of revenue is generated for Tuesday Night Live and we budget about \$8K for events and celebrations. He guesses that line item includes other events like the Jubilee.

#### **7. Discussion of Staff Responsibilities and Job Descriptions**

Brian said when we changed from a lister to a contracted assessor, NEMRC did not take over everything Rose did. One thing NEMRC does not do is keep up our electronic maps. That hasn't been getting done. It is having an impact and will have a more severe one. We need to talk about how we are going to get that work done. We can talk about adding those duties to an existing employee's job description, but it should come with additional compensation. It is not currently part of anyone's job description.

Eric said if we are changing an employee's job description he is not sure if that necessarily should come with a financial incentive unless it requires a higher level of skill. When we brought tax collection into the office he believes we just absorbed the job but never compensated anyone for doing it. Rosemary said we started doing that work the same year the employee that does it started so it was part of her responsibility right from the start.

Lois asked about the expertise required for keeping up the maps. Does it take a special skill other towns might be using? Might this be done by an employee shared with other towns? Brian S. said he doesn't think it would be useful to have a shared employee. He thinks it would be more useful to have someone in house doing this. The person will need to be dealing with documents that come into the office so it would be good to have it be someone who is already in the office handling the documents.

Eric asked, would we be looking at moving job responsibilities between employees or just adding a responsibility? Rosemary and Brian said just adding a responsibility.

Eric asked, do we feel that an employee has the time available to do the additional job? Brian S. said he thinks discussion of that involves evaluation of a particular employee and should be done in executive session.

**Doug moved to enter executive session to discuss appointment and evaluation under the provisions of Title 1, Section 313 (a)(3), inviting Rosemary and Brian S. to remain, Mike seconded, the motion was passed and the board entered executive session at 9:46. The board came out of executive session at 10:08.**

8. ***Adjourn***

The meeting was adjourned at 10:09.

*Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths*