

JOHNSON SELECTBOARD/VILLAGE TRUSTEE BOARD JOINT MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MONDAY, JUNE 9, 2014

Present:

Selectboard Members: Kathy Black, Nat Kinney, Doug Molde, Eric Osgood, Howard Romero

Trustees: Gordon Smith, Ellis O’Hear, Walter Pomroy, David Goddette

Others: Duncan Hastings (Manager), Steve Towne

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was reopened from the adjourned session of May 19, 2014 at 6:05.

2. Continuation of Review of CDL Policy

Duncan said he had added language about giving the board full discretion to allow non-safety-sensitive work to be made available to employees who had had a drug or alcohol violation. He had also drafted language addressing the question of who pays for substance abuse evaluations and services. His draft states that the burden of paying is on the employee to the extent it is not otherwise covered by insurance. But it is up to the board whether they want to pay for it. He checked and found out that under most insurance policies substance abuse counseling is not covered in a situation where there has been an infraction.

David asked how much counseling costs. Duncan said it depends on the individual counselor how long the counseling takes. It is also up to the individual counselor to specify how often and for how long the employee should be tested for drugs or alcohol after returning to work.

Duncan said according to VLCT most communities are requiring the employee to pay the cost of substance abuse services. Kathy asked what the cost is. Duncan said he is not sure – probably more than \$100/hour. David said his opinion is that the employee put themselves in this position and should be responsible for the cost of counseling. Walter said they will have read this policy and know the consequences. Ellis said if the test proves to be negative the employee shouldn’t have to pay. Duncan said they wouldn’t get to this point without a positive test.

Duncan said in the section on follow-up testing he added for clarification that there will be a minimum of 6 follow-up tests. The federal requirement is 6 tests in a 6-month period and he wanted to make it clear that there may be more than that required if the substance abuse professional calls for it.

Doug asked about how the testing is done. Duncan said he or Rosemary gets a call saying that the employee needs to report to the equipment garage at a certain time to be tested. Eric asked if we can request testing if we suspect the employee is using alcohol or drugs. Duncan said we can request it if there is reasonable suspicion.

Regarding the cost for follow-up testing, Duncan suggests language stating that the employer pays for the initial return-to-work testing, that follow-up testing is the responsibility of the

employee, and that the employer and the employee may enter into an agreement for reimbursement. The cost is about \$90 per test. Howard said he likes the idea of allowing for a somewhat different agreement.

There was general agreement that the current draft of the policy is good. Walter suggested that Duncan make all the changes that have been discussed and then email out the policy for board members to review for approval at their July meetings, after asking any questions by email. Duncan agreed. Ellis suggested adding a place for the employer to sign. Duncan said he could do that.

3. *Review of Request for Food Shelf Building Renovations.*

Duncan said the Food Shelf wants to make some changes in a back room at the talc mill office building where they are located. They want to put foam insulation on the interior walls, have electrical outlets put in by a licensed professional electrician, and buy 2 hot plates, a dehumidifier and a vegetable cooler. It is not clear if they want the vegetable cooler in that room. He thinks they want to use the back room for storage of root vegetables. They are not asking for money, just permission to make those changes with grant funding. David asked if there are any strings attached to the grant. Duncan said one requirement for the grant is that they do demos. That's why they need the hot plate.

Walter moved that the trustees approve the request of the Johnson Food Shelf to make modifications to the talc mill office building, Ellis seconded and the motion was passed.

Kathy moved that the selectboard approve the request of the Johnson Food Shelf to make modifications to the talc mill office building, Howard seconded and the motion was passed.

4. *Stormwater Runoff Management Issues*

Eric said the selectboard has discussed some issues with flooding and stormwater runoff on Clay Hill and Clark St. They are looking at paving Clay Hill but wouldn't want to put all that money into it if the village is going to be digging up recently-paved areas to put in storm drains. Kathy said in the area where Clay Hill becomes Pearl St. stormwater comes down and runs across into buildings. Her concern is that any investment we make in paving the road may compound the problem rather than resolve it and trying to resolve it might mean tearing up paving work that had just been done.

Gordy said the village is looking at using a grant to install new sidewalks, etc. next year. They don't have money this year. He feels we should fix the crosswalks first and we should fix the storm drains before we pave. He thinks we should take care of the infrastructure we have now before adding more. Ellis said somewhere on Clay Hill there are buried manholes we have to find. Steve said there are about 4 or 5 in the middle of the road that are down at least 6-8 inches and need to be found and raised up. We also need to put in a storm drain near Chris Parker's. We need to camera and Vactor to find out what is going on with storm drains that don't work. Starting mid-July we will have full use of a Vactor jetter. A camera is also being ordered with a VLCT grant.

Duncan said the town has applied for a Class II paving grant but we don't know yet if we will get it. David said if we are talking about repairing the stormwater issues before paving,

that will take a long time. Duncan said unless what is there can be fixed or replaced in kind, we may need a stormwater permit from ANR. Deferring the work on School St. is a possibility, but there are several funding pieces going into that, including a Class II paving grant. The plan was that when the work was done we would repave using the town's Class II money and that this year we would use Class II grant money for crowning and repaving on Clay Hill Rd. If we mill it and it comes out to the same elevation as now, he doesn't see how that could make the problem worse. Kathy said except we would be putting paving money into an area where the storm drain system is not functioning. Steve said he might be able to dig across Pearl St. and connect the non-functioning storm drain to one that works. He and Duncan agreed that would be a pretty quick fix. Duncan said we could defer Clay Hill paving until next year and do all the Clay Hill and School St. paving in one year.

Walter said he thinks we need to examine this whole situation. Storm drains are a road thing and not an integral part of sidewalks. He doesn't know why the trustees are maintaining storm drains. Stormwater runoff will become a bigger issue because of phosphorus. The trustees will never have the money to address it. Storm drains should become part of the town's responsibility. The town should ask for grant funds not just for paving but for addressing stormwater drainage. The village does not have the money to do what needs to be done.

Kathy said the village can write grants. There are lots of places in the village where there used to be great infrastructure and over time there has been a lack of investment in infrastructure. If the village makes a plan at least they will be prepared for when funding opportunities come along. Her concern is that water off Clay Hill doesn't run into buildings. More people are coming to the Studio Center who are in wheelchairs and have limited ability to get around. It is important to keep the sidewalks in good condition and improve them. Walter said he doesn't have a problem with the village lending assistance with people and equipment. But the village will never be able to afford even 10-20% grant matches.

Doug asked how sidewalks got allocated to the village and roads to the town. Walter said he doesn't know and he doesn't care. He wants to change it. Duncan said he agrees that the village doesn't have funding capability even to fix what we have now, let alone to add anything new. He is not arguing that we don't need it. But the 10% of the Grand List that the town gives the village is in part for maintaining storm drains and sidewalks. Walter said that 10% won't cover the cost. David asked if the town and village can work together and come up with priorities.

Duncan said we don't necessarily have to think about using the type of storm drain systems we have used in the past. Those will become more difficult to get permitted. But there are other solutions that are fairly simple and low cost, like dry well systems, that can be very effective.

Doug said he thinks the idea of working together is a good one. We need interest from both bodies and over time solutions will start coming around. David said then we can figure out if we can do the work in our current budgets or if it is something we have to plan for.

Steve said uncovering the buried manholes is not something that can be done in half an hour. It is a lot of work just to do one. That will take sewer department money he doesn't know if we have.

Eric asked, so if the necessary work will cost a lot of money, will we possibly be looking into delaying the School St. sidewalk work? David said it sounds like it. Gordy said he thought the town could help solve the water ponding problem on Pearl St. Duncan said if we don't do a paving job this year he thinks we need to pool all the money and do a massive paving job next year.

Eric said what the town would do hinges on village issues. And on whether we get our grant, said Kathy. Duncan said because the town owns the highways and the village is not eligible for any paving or structures grants, he would encourage the boards to think about the long term. He thinks we need to have some strategic planning meetings. Are there opportunities for something like a merger? He agrees we should question whether it makes sense for the village to handle storm drains. Doug said he sees areas where the two boards are disconnected and need to communicate. Eric said it is important for the two boards to communicate because the town can get grants the village can't. Duncan said in most villages in Vermont, the village owns the village streets and the town owns streets outside the corporate limits.

5. ***Adjourn***

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths