

JOHNSON VILLAGE TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2015

**Present:**

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

Others: Sandy Miller (Interim Manager), Rosemary Audibert (Clerk), Troy Dolan, Casey Romero

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

**1. *Call to Order***

Gordy called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

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

Walter would like to give the board an update on VPPSA.

Bob has an update on the sewer line at 552 Railroad Street.

Sandy would like to add Dunham Rentals Application for Water and Wastewater Allocation.

Sandy asked for PILOT, Item #5 to be changed to an action item.

Gordy, as authorized representative signed the Wastewater Permit Program Operations Report for the month of August. (*Scott arrived at 5:05*)

**Walter moved to enter executive session to discuss Village Manager applications and candidates, inviting Sandy and Rosemary to remain, Bob seconded, the motion passed, and the board entered executive session at 5:05. Walter moved to exit executive session, David seconded, and the motion passed.** The board came out of executive session at 6:11. (*Troy and Casey arrived at 6:11*)

**3. *Review and Approve Minutes of Meetings Past***

**Walter moved to approve the minutes of August 10, August 12, and August 21, 2015, Gordy seconded, and the motion was passed.**

**4. *Treasurer's Report/Review and Approve Bills and Warrants/Budget Status Report/Action Items***

Rosemary reported on the sewer budget that contains eight months billed. Sewer revenues are at 66%. Overall the expenses are at 55%, but that doesn't include the capital purchases that go into the reserve fund.

Rosemary reported on the water budget. Water revenues are up 66%. Overall the expenditures are at almost 57% of budget.

Rosemary reported that the overall JSC Solar credit to date for this year is about \$25,000. Scott asked if they had paid their outstanding bill. Rosemary said not yet.

Walter asked how the tax sale went. Rosemary indicated that none of the trailers sold. Scott asked what happens if they don't sell. Rosemary said we wait for another year. We could go to small claims court, but there is not much we can do as most of the time the taxes are more than the trailer is worth. Gordy asked how we are going to pay Duncan his leave amount. Walter and Rosemary indicated that we will take the allocated percentages and pay out by each department.

Rosemary reported that the State is changing their policy for the PILOT program. We now have to apply to receive the funds by grant agreement and it must be submitted by September 15<sup>th</sup>. The estimated amount we will receive is \$46,237. We budgeted \$33,000. **Walter moved to authorize Rosemary to sign the grant application for the PILOT, Scott seconded, and the motion was passed.**

Rosemary explained that the Union Bank has been providing loan servicing for the Community Loan Fund for \$3 per month per loan without a formal agreement. The Bank is now requesting a formal agreement. **Scott moved to authorize Gordy to sign the loan service agreement with the bank, Walter seconded, and the motion passed.**

**Walter moved to authorize Gordy to sign the water and sewer lien for the property of the Estate of Norma Mitchell, Scott seconded, and the motion passed.**

**Walter moved to authorize Gordy to sign the water and sewer release of lien for the property of Lloyd and Ginger Bedell at 274 Railroad Street, David seconded, and the motion passed.**

5. *WWTF Chief Operator Report and Action Items*

Sandy said that Casey Romero has approached the Town about getting access to public water on the Legion Field. An option to get water to Legion Field could be tapping into the water main on School Street which we would want to do before the paving occurs, if that turns out to be a viable option. The window of opportunity for the School Street Project is about three weeks.

Casey thanked the board for considering this request. She said that the community field is used for athletics and also for Tuesday Night Live in the summer. It seems with crowds of that size it is a sanitary thing and also a good amenity to provide. The question is can it be done. Casey is requesting to have water available at the field, if that is possible. Walter said that he would be willing to work with the Town to put the water in, but after that the Town would be a customer and would be billed at the recreational facilities rate. David asked if a spigot is what is needed. Casey said either a spigot or bubbler. David asked where we would tie into the line. Troy said that Tom mentioned that we might be able to tie into the line near Travis Hill's or from the line feeding the school. The issue there is that it becomes another service not on a main line. David said that he preferred a tap/curb stop from the main on School Street. Bob asked about the service from the yellow house. Troy said he wasn't sure how that is fed. Gordy suggested that the Town apply to us as a customer. The board agrees to the general

concept to do this and is willing to work with the Town if they decide to pursue. (*Casey left at 6:49*)

**6. Foreman Report and Action Items**

Troy asked the board what they would like to do about snow removal for winter. He would like to have a plan in place before winter. Troy asked if the board would be interested in hiring another full-time employee.

**Scott moved to enter into executive session to discuss personnel, Gordy seconded, motion passed and the board entered executive session at 6:45. Walter moved for the board to exit executive session, David seconded, and the motion passed.** The board came out of executive session at 7:07.

Troy asked about the possibility of a joint purchase for a wood chipper that could be shared between the Town and Village. Walter suggested that Troy work with Brian and present more detailed information at the joint meeting this fall.

Troy reported that this month we reconstructed pole 509 on French Hill to increase reliability. They also upgraded the service at 373 Vt Rte 100C due to severe salt exposure. They worked with Northco Land Management and removed the large elm tree that was located between Edelweiss Bakery and the Village office. They also removed five other danger trees on Clay Hill. Gordy asked what the estimate was to remove the tree out front. Troy said around \$750. Cliff and Nate have also been using the mower on the tractor to maintain ROW areas.

Troy said that they installed recycling containers on all the trash cans in the Village. The protective cages have been reinstalled around the trees on Main Street and all of the crosswalks in the village have been painted. Tom has scheduled the use of the Vactor unit for this Thursday and Friday to clean the catch basins. They will start at the junction of Pearl Street and School Street. Walter noted that he saw the Tree Board out there constantly working. Rosemary was asked to pick up a thank you card for their hard work.

Troy said that the rubber gloves were sent out for their required three month test and that they completed the OSHA Part A Refresher at the last safety meeting.

Troy said that he has been working on two estimates for new electrical installations. One is for a 1,700 foot primary underground job. The second one is for a house site located on Plot Road.

Troy said that he was contacted by Senior Solar Energy about two weeks ago and according to their representative an approval has been granted to pay the balance owed to the Village for the JSC solar project. We still have not received payment.

Troy said that he has been ordering some supplies for the water department and working on invoices for customers. He has also been finishing the Host Employer Policy and updating tailboard forms as they occur.

Gordy asked Troy if he is including outages on his report. Troy said he has been, but we haven't had any outages recently. Gordy asked if the pumps at Harvey's have been pulled and cleaned out. Troy said that both of them have been.

Troy mentioned that earlier today Steve Edgerley contacted him about a noise coming from one of the transformers at the plant. Steve had an electrician coming for another job, so the electrician inspected it and ran some tests. Troy and Nate put the sewer plant on a generator and the noise went away. They checked the connections and put the plant back on line and the noise went away.

**7. *Interim Manager's Report and Action Items:***

Sandy said that the monthly water system operation report for August has been signed and filed.

Sandy said that letters were sent to six homeowners along Route 15 West regarding the possibility of connecting to the Loeffler sewer line. Duncan told Sandy that the Wescom's and the Duffy's may possibly be interested. The Wescom's are under a state order for failed septic. Duncan suggested that Sandy contact Carl Fuller to encourage the Wescom's to connect.

Sandy said that the draft Lamoille County Regional Plan for 2015-2033 is here. If anyone would like a copy, he can make that available. Walter noted that the entire draft plan does not appear to be online. Sandy will pass that information on.

Sandy reported that Duncan sent a letter to Gunnar McCain regarding Diane Geoffrey's sewer line. Sandy doesn't think anything else needs to be done at this point.

Sandy said that we have received the health insurance plan notice from VLCT. We expect more information on renewal for 2016 by mid-October. Rosemary said that it has arrived already.

Sandy was asked by Lea to inquire if the board might be interested in an Electric Vehicle Charging Station grant opportunity. The grant was previously available only to Designated Downtowns and is now being extended to Designated Village Centers, of which Johnson is one. The maximum grant award is \$25,000 and requires a 25% match which can be in-kind or cash. Walter said that he is interested, but needs more information. He would like to see if a few of the businesses in town are interested in going in on this. David said that he is also interested in learning more. He sees it as a benefit to the downtown but wants it to be net positive venture. He thinks that we should break even or make money. The board agreed to have Sandy ask Lea to get more information on this grant opportunity.

Sandy said that Tasha Wallis from LCPC would like to come to the meeting next month.

Sandy reported that Edelweiss Bakery had agreed to participate in the tree removal. They were contacted and they stated that they were interested, but now they have informed Lea that they will not pay as there was not a formal agreement. Walter suggested that Sandy send them a letter reminding them that they initiated the removal of the tree and that even though we did not have a formal agreement, we had an understanding that they would share the costs, and that we are very disappointed to learn that they are no longer willing to participate.

Sandy asked if the board would like him to sign the Amended Water System Source Protection Plan as the administrative contact. Scott asked if they could have some time to read the plan and get back to Sandy at the next meeting. Sandy said that he would keep it on the agenda for the next meeting.

Sandy and Troy have looked at the Kelley Blue Book for the Honda Civic. The Civic has 140,000 miles on it and there is also a recall on the car. Scott asked if we would be liable for selling a car with a recall. Walter said that we would just need to disclose it. Sandy said that we could provide the recall information in writing to prospective buyers. The private party value is \$2,813 and the trade-in value range is between \$1,115 and \$2,134. Because the timing belt has never been changed and the batteries are past their useful life, Sandy doesn't think there is a lot of cash value. Sandy recommends two options. We could list a minimum price of \$1,500 and authorize Sandy to accept the highest bid over that price or list an asking price of \$2,500 and accept the highest bid over \$1,500.

**David moved that we the trustees deem the 2005 Honda Civic as surplus property and offer for sale by a sealed bid for a minimum of \$1,500, Walter seconded and the motion was passed.**

Sandy said that himself, Gordy and Eric Osgood think that it would be beneficial for Sandy to meet the Selectboard. Sandy would like to attend the September 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. Gordy would be willing to go to the Selectboard meeting and introduce Sandy with the board's permission. Scott wanted to put a time constraint on it. Sandy agreed to make the 21<sup>st</sup> a work day and minimize the time spent. The board agreed to that.

Sandy asked the board if they have an interest in composting at the Johnson landfill. The board does not want to pursue at this time.

Sandy reported that there was a preconstruction meeting today on the School Street Project. David Manning was there. Woody Dione could not be there, but he sent in some questions. There was a lot of discussion about staging with the school buses and drop offs. We are going to coordinate with the Town and paving. Everyone is committed to doing the best job we can to minimize the disruption. Walter asked when the start date is. Sandy said that a start date was not given, but he will keep the board updated.

Sandy said that Lea spoke to the State today about the office renovations. They told her they would try to take a look at it this week.

Sandy said that the Former Cyprus Minerals reimbursement forms are being jointly signed by Lea and Sandy.

Sandy distributed the Abridged Power Bill Summary for the month of July.

Sandy said that he received water and wastewater allocation applications from Arjay West of Outback Design on behalf of Dunham Rentals, LLC. Dunham Rentals is asking for additional allocation at 76 Vt Rte 100C for the front lot only at this time. **Walter moved to authorize the trustees to sign the Dunham Rentals, LLC preliminary application for water and wastewater allocation, David seconded, and the motion was passed.**

Walter went to the VPPSA board meeting last week. He updated everyone on what was going on here at the Village of Johnson. He did drop a hint that we are still accepting applications. Walter told the VPPSA Board that Duncan has retired and that the Village has hired Sandy Miller as Interim Manager and that in the short-term that Walter would probably attend the VPPSA meetings. Walter also spoke to David Mullett. David indicated that there may be a transaction with Highgate coming up and if that happens, David is willing to help us out if needed. Walter left it with David that Walter would be the point person with VPPSA for now, as long as the board agrees to that. Everyone on the board agreed. Gordy thinks that Walter should be reimbursed for mileage or some stipend for his time. Walter said at this point he is not worried about it. If there are more meetings he may submit something. Gordy thanked Walter for his time.

Gordy welcomed Sandy to his first meeting. Gordy thanked Susan for being here on short notice to take the meeting minutes and he thanked Rosemary for being here and getting the pizza for the meeting tonight.

David asked Troy if the sign coming into Town from Cambridge is going to be repaired. Troy said that it is in our storage facility. Troy indicated that the sign has rotted out and taken on moisture. David asked if we could look into a price to repair or replace.

Bob asked Troy for an estimate on what it would cost to put a 2" line inside the 4" line at Diane Geoffrey's on Railroad Street. The estimate was less than \$1,000. Bob thinks that it would be cheaper to dig up and get rid of the problem now, rather than have to deal with it this winter. Walter said that Duncan just recently sent them a letter. We should wait to hear back from them. Scott suggested that we give this another month and revisit at that time.

Scott asked for definitions on our personnel leave codes. Gordy asked if our long-term disability plan covers catastrophic illnesses. Rosemary said that long-term kicks in after

six months. Bob would like to see something simpler than what we currently have. David asked how we compare to other municipalities around the State. Scott said that the State offers vacation time based on years of service. The State also has ceilings for leave time. The State offers personal time, but if you don't use your personal time, you lose it. The State has a cap on personal time and comp time. The State does not have a cap on sick time, but when you retire, sick time is not paid out. Sandy said that he can do a survey, but it would be helpful to know the board's objective. Sandy said that in his past experiences, vacation reserves have been established for retirements and such. Scott said that employees deserve their vacations and a lot of times in a public sector you are just too busy to take them. Scott said that he thinks the sick time is sort of an insurance policy, and he doesn't think that you should get paid for that when you leave. Walter suggested that this be a topic of discussion for a joint meeting. David said that the current plan seems too complicated. He would like some research to figure out what other municipalities are offering. He would like to make sure that we are offering a fair and competitive plan for the employees, but one that does not place the ratepayers at risk. Troy said that VEC offers combined time off, but if you don't your use time within a certain time period, you lose it. VEC does offer short-term disability that covers you if you were to get sick. Sandy said that short-term disability is not very expensive and may be something to consider. Sandy asked if everyone would like for him to do some research. Scott said that he will forward the State information to Sandy. Gordy can provide VEC information to Sandy. Walter suggested we set up a budget item. Bob moved to have Sandy do some research on this and if anyone has any information that will assist Sandy, please bring it in. Sandy suggested that he can let the Selectboard know of our discussion and that are doing some research, and if they are interested we will share that research with them. The board agreed.

8. *Adjourn*

**Walter moved and Scott seconded to adjourn at 8:35 and the motion was passed.**

*Minutes submitted by Susan Tinker*