

JOHNSON VILLAGE TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
TUESDAY NOVEMBER 18, 2014

Present:

Trustees: Gordon Smith, Chair, Ellis O'Hear, Walter Pomroy, David Goddette, Chris Parker

Others: Duncan Hastings (Manager), Craig Myotte, General Manager Morrisville Water & Light

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. Call to Order

Gordy called the meeting to order at 6:30. He asked if there were changes or additions to the Agenda. Duncan stated that he wished to discuss Troy Dolan's employment status. David stated he would like Duncan to inform the Board about a recent inquiry about a location for a business.

Craig Myotte was introduced and he provided written proposal for the Trustees to consider regarding contracted services for the Electric Dept. The basics of his outline were: 1) Maintain status quo, 2) Have MW&L provide all outside services with the exception of meter reading and disconnects and reconnects (outsource), 3) A hybrid model where VOJ retains some of the existing qualified lineworker staff, the bucket truck, and performs some level of service. Under the

There was a great deal of discussion over the various options with some board members thinking we could and should maintain the status quo, some thinking it should all be outsourced and some thinking the hybrid approach was best. Morrisville was amenable to considering various approaches but wanted to be clear that under the outsource option MW&L would need to hire a fifth lineworker to provide the contract services to Johnson. The cost of that approach would be \$10,000.00 per month. If the hybrid model was used, they would not hire a fifth lineworker and MW&L would not be able to provide the same level of assurance for availability of services when needed by VOJ. MW&L did not have an estimate of cost for that approach.

Duncan stated that overall he thought the best and most cost effective approach was the outsource model, with VOJ retaining meter reading, disconnects and reconnects. They could also patrol lines, identify issues and call out MW&L in the event of an outage during normal work hours. This would likely result in a Public Works staff of 2 persons and they would not necessarily have to be qualified lineworkers. Based on a quick and very conservative review of the costs savings, this approach would yield an annual savings of approximately \$125,000.00 or a 5.2% reduction in expenses. Actual savings would likely be greater. He recommended this approach, but recognized there did not seem to be a lot of support for it.

Gordy stated that he liked a hybrid approach where we would retain some lineworkers and the bucket truck, at least to begin with, as it would provide a higher level of service for customers who are used to very fast response times in the event of an outage. He thought people would be very unhappy if they had to wait longer for restoration and were willing to pay for that service.

Ellis agreed and was of the opinion that we should continue status quo without hiring a Superintendent. He asked Craig if Morrisville could provide the services that Steve currently performs as Superintendent. Craig said they probably could but he would need a lot more information about exactly what we would need and how much time is involved. Duncan stated that he thought that was an unrealistic approach and would not work long term. There are simply too many things that happen on a day to day basis that requires the presence of someone who can make decisions on the ground. He stated much of that would fall to him if there was not a Superintendent and he simply does not have the available time to deal with it. Craig agreed this would not be an ideal situation for the long term. Duncan stated that one way this might be addressed is that when Steve Smith does retire that the Town and Village could functionally merge the Highway and Public Works Departments into one and hire one Superintendent that would be responsible for all. He thought this could work well and provide both town and village good service. There seemed to be general agreement that this approach should be further considered by both boards at the appropriate time.

Walter asked a lot of questions how the hybrid model might work and if there could be swapping of employees back and forth between MW&L and VOJ. Some of the scenarios would be difficult due to union versus non-union issues. David stated that he thought the hybrid model was asking for the best of both worlds and would not work well. We would not be getting the full savings of the outsource approach.

After considerable discussion the Board concluded they needed to have further discussions to see if they could come to a consensus on next steps, they thanked Craig, who left the meeting.

Discussion continued. By consensus, the Board asked Duncan to work with Steve and Craig to bring back a refined proposal based on a hybrid model that would: retain some level of existing staff as qualified lineworkers who would be available during regular hours for basic services, retain the bucket truck, define what services MW&L could provide at least on an interim basis to cover the scope of work now performed by Steve Towne (ranging from estimating, record keeping, safety training responsibilities etc., etc.), provide for afterhours coverage, on call schedules, direct assistance to our crew, substation assistance (possible VEC as backup), capital projects, etc. Chris stated that he thought some of the issues the Board was concerned about might resolve themselves as we go forward.

Duncan discussed his meeting with Troy Dolan. Troy indicated that he enjoys working for the Village and would like to go to full time. Troy thought December 1st would be a good date. Troy recognizes the situation that is happening with the Electric Department and that there is no guarantee that he will have full time employment or even any employment, pending the outcome of the Trustees decisions on the Electric Department. Duncan stated that the Board had previously voted to make an offer of full time employment to Troy, so he can do that now based on that vote. The Board agreed that the offer should be made.

David asked Duncan to advise the Board about the contact that had been made regarding a business looking for a location. Duncan stated that he had been contacted by LEDC. LEDC had a very tentative inquiry about a site of app 20 acres for a business that could potentially employ 200 people. Duncan has been in touch a couple times with LEDC to see if there has been any

further communication, offered to make direct outreach to the business and made it very clear that Johnson would have a great interest in such a project. Duncan stressed that the initial inquiry was very tentative and there was nothing of any substance to report or act on at this time. He would stay on top of this and report to both boards anything of importance.

Ellis moved to adjourn at 9:30 p.m., seconded by Walter, unanimous in favor.

Submitted by Duncan Hastings 11/19/14