

JOHNSON VILLAGE TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MONDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2018

Present:

Trustees: Gordon Smith, Walter Pomroy, Scott Meyer, Bob Sweetser (by phone), Phil Wilson

Others: Meredith Birkett, Rosemary Audibert, Troy Dolan, Dan Copp, Jim MacDowell, Eric Osgood, Glenda Osgood, Kathy Black, Joe Salerno, Sally Verville, Kyle Nuse, Carleton Torrey

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. Call to Order

Gordy called the meeting to order at 6:00.

2. Pearl Street Sidewalk Public Meeting

Meredith gave a presentation on the planned sidewalk project. The existing sidewalk is in poor condition and some pieces are missing. It also doesn't meet current ADA standards as it is less than 5 feet wide and has no crosswalk connectors or detectable warning plates. In the past there have been problems with water flowing from the road towards some properties. Last fall the village added some asphalt as a temporary fix to try to stop water from flowing in. We have also heard there is a desire for the green strip to be restored. (*Scott arrived at 6:03.*) The goals of the project are to bring the sidewalk up to ADA standards and approve the appearance of this section of the village by replacing the asphalt sidewalk with cement, adding curbing, restoring the green strip, addressing landowner concerns where possible and improving the flow of water toward existing storm drains.

The estimated cost of the project is \$85K. The village applied for a small scale grant from AOT that will provide up to 50% funding. We are able to match that with village funds we have in our sidewalk reserve fund. The \$85K estimated is based on the existing site plan. If we expand the project the cost would go up and we would not expect to get more funds from VTrans. Meredith assumes any cost overruns will all be borne by the village.

Meredith showed where we are proposing to add curbing, connecting pads, detectable warning plates and new sidewalk. The state would like the funds spent in 2019. Her goal is to hire an engineer in January to draw up more specific plans we can go out to bid with and in February to issue a request for bids. Construction would be in summer or fall 2019.

Meredith would like input on 2 questions. On the east side we are proposing to restore the green strip and put in curbing, which would eliminate the unofficial use of that area as parking during Tuesday Night Live. She would like feedback on that. Our sense is that it would be a positive improvement. The town highway department agrees that a curb would help channel water towards the storm drain.

Her second question has to do with the possibility of angling the curbing on the west side so as to create more room for green space. That wasn't included in the cost estimate. She could see getting estimates on that as a bid alternate and seeing if we can afford it. The village hasn't spoken to the town highway department about this idea and she would want to do that before making formal recommendations.

Eric Osgood asked about how telephone poles in that area fit in with the plans. Meredith said we are not planning to move any poles. Eric asked if the sidewalk will be ADA compliant in the area where there is a telephone pole in the middle of the sidewalk. Meredith said we believe it will be. We will check.

Jim MacDowell said the area going north from the old gym is not an essential drop-off place for the Studio Center. If that area were green space that would be great for the Studio Center.

Joe Salerno said it seems that a huge advantage of having more green space there would be that snow that is not being removed from the road could be left there. He also thinks the traffic calming aspects of a green corridor would be useful. Jim agreed that more green space would be an aesthetic improvement and would help with traffic calming. It would be nice to have a wide green strip coming off the bridge.

Joe said there is a telephone pole that used to be in the green space that used to exist and was moved in. The poles provide an obstacle course for the sidewalk. He thinks it would be great to get as much green space as possible, which could involve having to move that pole. As far as his property, he thinks the tree that could be in the way of the wires may not be there much longer. He would be willing to trim or move his bushes if it would allow a bigger green space. He has no qualms about the sidewalk moving closer to his house. If the village is not willing to move poles maybe the sidewalk could jog slightly by the Studio Center to provide a bigger green space. Jim said that is a good idea.

Jim said there is a curb cut into the corner house property just north of the pole. The Studio Center would be willing to give that up. The next driveway, into Pearl House, will handle two houses in the future.

Kathy Black said she thinks the project looks great. She thanked the village for taking it on. She described where people often cross but there is no crosswalk. Even if a crosswalk there can't be totally to code she thinks it would be great to have one. Probably 14 people live in Corner House and there will probably be 14 in Pearl House and it is unrealistic to think they will cross Pearl Street and walk to the corner and back. There is no crosswalk where people will naturally walk. People may be walking out between cars and drivers may not be looking as they turn that corner. It is a situation designed for an accident. A crosswalk would flag to drivers that people cross there.

Meredith said she would reach out to VTrans for guidance on that. Acknowledging that people are crossing there anyway, is a crosswalk a good idea liability-wise?

Kathy said another alternative is not having parking there.

Walter said he was also going to raise the question of whether we should put a crosswalk there. Ultimately we want to redesign that corner to reduce speeds. But that is not part of this project. If we put in a crosswalk we have to make it ADA compliant and put in a ramp, which increases cost. It is a wide intersection to put in a crosswalk. But people cross there. He crosses there.

Walter said the current plan has the sidewalk stop 5 feet before Crabtree Lane. We could go further but we would have to take out a tree on Eric's property. Eric said he thinks the sidewalk could go beside that tree. But the other problem is that there is quite a lift to Crabtree lane from his driveway. He doesn't know how the sidewalk would make that transition.

Eric asked if the oak tree on his property is going to cause a problem for the sidewalk. Meredith said we will have to measure and figure out how far the right of way extends. Eric said the tree will continue to grow. Troy said we may get into the root base when we are removing the old sidewalk and putting in the new one.

Eric asked if 5 feet is the width of the bucket on the village's loader. Troy said yes.

Gordy asked if Meredith can have stakes put in at some point so people can see where the sidewalk will go. Meredith said yes.

Joe and Jim talked about possibilities for where additional green space could be.

Carleton Torrey asked if homeowners will be able to use their driveways during construction. Gordy said he thinks the contractor will have to work with each property owner. Meredith said she thinks there will be times when people are not able to use their driveways. Glenda Osgood asked if she will need to move her peonies. Meredith said some sections only need to gain 5 inches in width. Gordy said we will mark it out once the snow gone and then we will have a better idea.

There was discussion about how drainage could be affected by this project.

Glenda asked if there will ever be a plan to go all the way up Clay Hill with sidewalk. Scott said on one side homes are so close to the road that there isn't much room and on the other side the bank is very unstable. Walter said the original pathways plan just had a wide shoulder on Clay Hill – no sidewalks, just a safer walking environment. Putting sidewalk further up Clay Hill would be a huge project with a big cost. His feeling is that there are other places we would build sidewalks first. Glenda said if the sidewalk is not eventually going to go all the way up Clay Hill she doesn't think it has to go to Crabtree Lane.

Jim suggested it would be helpful if the conceptual plan for the School St./Pearl St. area from the early 2000's could be uploaded. That would be helpful in thinking about this area and preparing for the next project. Meredith said she has to find it first.

Scott suggested better lighting to make it easier to see people in the crosswalk areas. Another resident agreed. Gordy suggested that Meredith look into lighting. Walter agreed that is a good point. *(Eric, Glenda and Carleton left at 6:40.)*

Joe asked about the Legion Field ice rink. Meredith said she thinks the fire department may start on the base this week. Joe suggested that maybe the light that illuminates the rink should be seasonal. It shines into his back yard. *(Kathy and Joe left.)*

3. Changes, Additions to Proposed Agenda

Meredith said the board could add approval of the joint meeting minutes if people are ready to approve them.

Walter asked what transmission we fixed. Troy said the transmission on the small bucket truck failed after the warranty period. It will be replaced with a remanufactured transmission with a warranty. Meredith said we still at or even slightly under budget for that truck purchase. Troy said the company we bought the truck from did pay for replacement of all tires.

Gordy added a clarification on beautification to the agenda.

4. Review and Approve Minutes of Trustee Meetings

Scott moved to approve the minutes of November 12 and December 3, 2018, Walter seconded and the motion was passed. It was agreed to wait until a future meeting to approve the joint meeting minutes.

5. Treasurer's Report / Review and Approve Bills & Warrants / Budget Status Report / Action Items

Walter asked if safety training is over budget because of Chan. Rosemary said the hotel cost is more than in past years. Troy said hotels in the location where the trainings are raised their rates considerably after a gas explosion in that area.

Rosemary said we will be short on water sales. Walter said will be very short. Meredith said we will have to reassess for next year's budget. Walter said it looks like expenses will be under budget too.

Gordy asked, now that we have contracted out for water and sewer, are we still looking good compared to what we would have spent with our own staff? Meredith said she thinks what she budgeted was pretty accurate.

Walter said our sludge number is way under budget. Dan said we are not producing as much sludge.

Rosemary showed the board the delinquent tax list.

6. Vermont Studio Center Request to Connect to Stormwater System

Meredith said the Studio Center has had plans for building on the east side of Pearl St./Clay Hill. She and Troy met with Jim MacDowell about that and another question came up. The Studio Center is interested in doing stormwater management and they have made a request to tie into our municipal stormwater system. Meredith wonders if that is something we allow. Have we talked about that before? Jim MacDowell said the question is whether there a mechanism to request going into a village storm structure.

Gordy said he would want Meredith to do research to see what ANR said about it. Walter said when we did the Main Street project we connected a number of people to the state system. Is VSC planning to do treatment? Jim said no, they would be taking surface water that goes into School Street and directing it. Walter said we will get it in our system anyway. Jim said he called LCPC to ask about this. He thinks Stowe and Waterbury allow it. LCPC is hoping to find an example of an ordinance from Essex.

Meredith said her concern is that she doesn't feel we have a good enough understanding of the condition or capacity of the stormwater system to know that it will continue to function well if

VSC connects to it. And are we opening the door to any private property owner asking to connect? Our decisions about who we allow to connect could be arbitrary without a formal process.

Scott said ANR and AOT each have a rule. We need to check with state officials.

Walter said his biggest concern is all the new mandates. If we give permission, have we just shifted VSC's problem to our problem because we will have to treat more water? The water will end up in our drains anyway. But if there are things we need to do to treat water before it comes into our system he wants to know that before giving permission.

Jim said there will be an Act 250 review of the VSC project. Scott said there is a question of whether we will have to do an application also. Jim said VSC's application has to say how they will deal with stormwater. Meredith said they need to get clarity on their request to connect to the village system in order to inform their design for the Act 250 process.

Jim said Stowe takes into account the condition and size of the system in different areas in making decisions on who can connect. It is dependent on area. Meredith said we could do the same as long as we had something to support our decisions. She doesn't feel we do now. *(Sally arrived at 7:07.)*

Jim asked how long it would take to develop an ordinance on connections to the village stormwater system. Meredith said she would say 6 months is a realistic timeline. Walter said there would have to be public hearings for an ordinance. He thinks 6 months is optimistic.

Meredith said she will make some phone calls and keep Jim updated.

7. *Revolving Loan Fund Application*

Sally Verville said she had to replace her furnace at a cost of \$6,425 and she is asking for a loan to help pay for it. She has requested a 10-year loan, hoping to keep her monthly payments as low as possible. She will probably sell her house within 2 years and at that time she will pay the loan back in full.

Meredith said the loan guidelines leave the loan term up to the board with an eye to the shortest possible term. The last loan the village issued was for 5 years.

Gordy said this is a safety issue. Sally needs to replace her furnace so she will not be using portable heaters. She has had a loan from the village in the past and that is all in good standing.

Sally gave Meredith the proposal from her plumber and Meredith made a copy.

Walter asked if she will get any energy efficiency rebate. Sally said she would have had to get a more expensive furnace to be eligible for that.

Phil asked how much money we have available in the loan fund. Rosemary said over \$100K.

Scott moved to loan Sally Verville \$6,425 from the revolving loan fund for 10 years at an interest rate of 3.25%, Walter seconded and the motion was passed. *(Sally left at 7:16.)*

8. Water/Wastewater Report and Action Items

Dan said all wastewater samples met state requirements. The E-DMR and WR-43 were submitted for review. There were no callouts for the wastewater plant. The Phosphorus Optimization Plan that is a requirement in our new discharge permit has been submitted and approved by the state. We performed and passed the laboratory proficiency tests that are a requirement of the new discharge permit.

Tim replaced a pressure reducer on the boiler feed line. Hallam technicians visited the plant to get final details for the PLC upgrade. The installation and troubleshooting are scheduled for January 2-5. Pratt Electrical ordered a speed control for one of the decanters that was faulty. This was the last item that needed to be replaced so we can run the plant while the PLC is disabled for the upgrade. Dan doesn't have a price yet for the speed control but he doesn't think it will be a lot. The PLC went down again with the heavy snow and rain we received. We were able to get it going with phone support from Hallam. Dan replaced the UPS at that time with a spare from Morrisville and we have had no problems since.

Slack Chemical will replace the polymer make down unit for the belt press at no cost if we switch to their polymer. The price for their polymer is roughly the same and we will save \$6000 vs. buying a new unit. We will switch to their polymer on December 17.

Work was started on the River Road pump station. We need to dig a new ditch for conduit from the manhole to the station. The conduit has completely disintegrated. Once that is replaced we can install the dialer system. All the work will be transferable if we go to a new station. (*Kyle Nuse arrived at 7:20.*)

All samples taken at the water plant were negative. There were no callouts for the water system.

We met with Elizabeth from Dufresne Engineering about the water system asset management plan. She has scanned all the drawings and O&M manuals for the plant and booster station so we now have everything in digital format as well as printed.

The power failure plan for the plant and pump stations has been accepted. The plan is a permit requirement.

9. Foreman Report and Action Items

On November 27 we had 6 line outages related to wet snow, affecting about 60 customers. All power was restored by 4:30 pm.

The primary underground line extension for Tom and Vickie Foster was completed.

The voltage regulator for Just Send It Solar was put into service and currently is working well.

The crew completed monthly meter reading, disconnects and Dig Safes.

The contract tree trimmers have cleared the main feeder lines from the substation to Route 100C and from the substation to Clay Hill.

During the storm on November 27 an issue developed with the small bucket truck. It was diagnosed as a faulty transfer case. The replacement cost will be close to \$3800. Troy spoke with Gordy and Meredith before ordering the new transfer case.

Winter banners and holiday garland were installed. A good amount of time was spent on sidewalk maintenance and cleanup, as well as preparing for the Holiday Jubilee.

All rubber goods and sleeves were sent out for 3 month testing. The rubber blankets were sent out for t month testing.

Troy hired David Young, a contract substation technician who has worked for us in the past, to check over the voltage regulator for Just Send it Solar before we put it into service.

On December 6, Troy and Meredith met with the consultants from KAS Environmental and two contractors who will be giving us estimates related to the demolition and disposal of the materials from the powerhouse.

Walter asked whose expense hiring David Young was. Troy said Alan Lehouillier's.

Walter said a semi truck was parked all weekend in the Village Green parking lot. It took up almost the whole back of the lot. It violated the winter parking ban and Walter thinks maybe we have no parking allowed there in the evening. It was idling also. He doesn't know if we want to be proactive in calling the sheriff's department in situations like this. Troy said if someone noticed it they could call the sheriff's department and they would talk to the driver and have them move it.

10. Village Manager Report and Action Items

Meredith said the Historical Society has developed a newsletter and they want to know if we would let them turn it into a bill insert at some point.

Walter asked, is this for the town Historical Society or the 501(c)(3)? Meredith said she isn't sure. Walter said if it is the 501(c)(3) organization he would say no because there are other 501(c)(3) groups that would like to use our mailers. If it's the town, he has no problems helping out the town. If the newsletter is not a fundraiser for the 501(c)(3) he would be open to doing something.

Scott asked how often they would send the newsletter. Meredith said she is not sure.

Walter said we only reach about a quarter to a third of residents.

Meredith said we are starting to fill up our mailings with things we are required to put in or our newsletter. There are few open slots.

Scott said he thinks we should ask if the newsletter is representing the town or the 501(c)(3) and how often it will be sent. If it is for the 501(c)(3) we should turn down the request.

Walter said next the Conservation Commission or Tree Board or Recreation Committee could ask for a bill insert and we won't have the space. Maybe we can do it on occasion.

Phil asked how we are limited in how much we can insert. By weight? Meredith said yes. We can insert 1 sheet in addition to the bill. It also takes more time to stuff the envelopes if there is more than one insert.

Scott said maybe at times we can put Historical Society information into the village newsletter. Meredith said she has been saying that is for our own village business. Gordy said if it is not village-oriented he thinks we should say no. Bob agreed. Phil said we could say space was first-come, first-served for pertinent town information.

It was agreed that Meredith would get more information and invite the Historical Society to send a representative to the next meeting.

Meredith said on December 6 she and Troy met with 2 contractors coordinated by the Brownfields consultant we have worked with. They came with the intent of preparing cost estimates for demolition and disposal. We are hoping they will provide a cost estimate to demolish the building, an estimate for the worst case scenario for disposal, assuming the worst level of contamination, and also an estimate for disposal in the case of a lower level of contamination allowing the materials to be taken to New Hampshire. The difference in cost will give us an idea how much time and effort to put into pushing the idea of stockpiling the materials taken down to test later, which it sounds like they will not let us do. Meredith is hoping for cost estimates in the next week to 10 days. Both contractors thought it sounded like a daunting project.

This morning Scott, Troy and Meredith met with a state Division of Fire Safety structural engineer. He will work on a written report. His assessment was that the left hand portion of the building is in very poor condition and could potentially go any day. He would not go into it. He didn't feel comfortable with the idea of anyone going in for more testing. Scott said Meredith made a good call in not allowing that. Meredith said the engineer felt the foundation is not that bad but the walls are in danger of giving way. He said it could last a week or maybe it could last a year but it is in bad shape.

Walter asked if it has been determined if we have to take out the foundation. Meredith said one contractor said removing and disposing of the foundation would be very expensive and he would recommend leaving it there. She needs to follow up with ANR about whether the junk in the building can be taken out before the demolition or if it also has to be labeled hazardous. Scott said the contractor may be able to use field testing equipment to test materials on-site. He can send Meredith information on the equipment.

Walter asked if Meredith has heard if we have to take care of the pad and soil at the same time. Meredith said no one is saying that.

Bob said he wonders if it is to our advantage to leave the cement in the river. Meredith said that is what a contractor suggested. Troy said the engineer today said he wouldn't move any of the cement structure.

Walter asked if the condition of the building has gotten worse in the last week or two. Troy said no, but it has gotten worse over the last 6 months.

Scott said we have to be diligent if the state wants us to do PCB monitoring in the river because if they want us to test too far downstream we could run into another existing site with known contamination.

Meredith distributed the comments from our attorney on the latest version of the quit claim deed for the East Johnson sewer system. Our attorney also reached out to the town's attorney. There are some open issues and questions. The most recent draft references an easement across 100C and didn't give documentation on the easement. Meredith asked Brian to research whether there is an easement with the state. Our attorney would like to see the underlying deeds that provide the town's easements and has asked the town attorney to send them. The town did a land records search but the easements they found may not be all of them. We talked about adding language to ensure that if there are other easements they also transfer to the village. And perhaps we would want an affirmative statement from the town that they are not aware of any existing defects or a disclosure of any defects they know of. Once the village's attorney gets the deeds from the town's attorney he will draft an updated quit claim deed with our proposed language. Meredith will send it to Brian. Once the selectboard approves it delivery has to be accepted by the village.

Scott asked what happens if there is no easement across 100C. Meredith said she doesn't know. She thinks we would have a conversation with our attorney and the state and find out if we can get a permit for the line that is already there.

Scott asked what the underlying deeds for the easements would be. Meredith said there are quit claim deeds for the Romeros, Duncan Stephens and Albert Nadeau. These are all in the land records. Scott asked if they would be transferred to the village. Meredith said yes; we will become the owner of all the easements. Scott asked if we need separate quit claims for the easements. Meredith will check. Walter said he thinks there may be one deed referencing multiple properties.

Bob said it is hard for him to understand what is being discussed. He can't hear well. He suggested maybe Meredith could fax him the relevant information. Meredith agreed to do so.

Meredith said the town adopted the proposed inclusivity statement. Since then there have been suggestions from the public about possible changes or about having town wide discussion or adoption at town or village meeting.

Scott said he was at the selectboard meeting where the statement was adopted and he was involved in some of the committee meetings where it was developed. What sparked his interest was what happened with the people visiting VSC and the comments they received on Route 15. No one knew if the comments came from a town or village resident. That started his concern. Meredith sent the Studio Center a letter saying the village doesn't endorse that behavior. Meredith said Gary Clark called and thanked us and made it clear that he didn't think the village did support that. Scott said Stowe had some issues on Mountain Road affecting people at a camp and the Town of Stowe and lawmakers wrote a letter to the camp saying that was not what they were about and apologizing. He thought that was great and needed. That is why he asked Meredith to write to the Studio Center.

Scott said he looked at other towns' web pages. A lot have a statement about what their community is about. Some describe a social or environmental mission. It gives a good feel of

what the community is about. We have been struggling with getting young families into the community. He thinks that is improving. He would love to see it continue. This statement supports the good vibe we are looking for. He has traveled to places out west that he will not go back to because of the vibe the community has. He and his wife found a nice community in Colorado with an open, welcoming way of being where everyone is respected and they acquired property there based on that. He thinks having that feeling is important for Johnson. He heard from some that the statement the town adopted was a little dark and that putting it on the town web page may make people wonder what is going on in our community. Barbara Backus did a more positive version. Scott had originally wanted the village to back the town but now he is waffling. For those dealing with racism, there is a reason the statement is worded this way. Some are offended that a small group of people passed this on the town's behalf, but that is our political system. Elected officials make big decisions for the community. It would be nice to get feedback from village residents, maybe in a forum. He thinks it needs to be stated somewhere what we stand for. He saw a public TV show about white supremacists moving into a town and taking it over. The town was caught off guard. They had thought they were a nice community that was away from that behavior. He doesn't want us to be caught off guard.

Walter said he thinks it is good that the community is talking about this. He agrees with Mike Dunham that it should be decided by town vote. If this board voted on the statement he would abstain like Mike. He feels the citizens should decide. He would be agreeable if someone brought an article to put in the warning for the village annual meeting. Also, he thinks we can do better with the wording. He agrees with Barbara Backus. Town meeting is still 3 months away and village meeting is 4 months away. Let's try to do something better. We have time to work on it.

Gordy said he doesn't know where the community would be without VSC and all they have done for the community. He supports all they have done and it saddened him to hear what happened with the VSC residents. We asked Meredith to contact VSC and tell them that we don't tolerate or accept that behavior. There were some things posted in minutes on the town website, which represents all of us, that never should have been allowed to be posted. There were comments in the minutes about too many flags on Railroad Street and Main Street. Flags mean a lot to veterans. Relatives of his are in the military and 3 village employees are veterans. The flag represents everyone in the country. He feels the inclusivity statement is good for a start but is too negative. He likes Barbara Backus's. Sue Lovering had a good article. He agrees with Rob Rodriguez's statement. The statement should be developed by a cross section of all people in the community. We should start a process and get something we could adopt at town and village meetings. One comment that he heard was that Katie Crown is a resident of Hyde Park. He isn't sure if that is true. Instead of uniting our community these statements have divided people. He thinks we need to move forward in a positive way.

Walter corrected Gordy. The committee meeting minutes weren't on the town website.

Gordy said he spoke with one village trustee and one selectboard member who were at the first community meeting and told him the comments posted weren't spoken at that meeting. Scott and Walter said they didn't hear those comments, but they ended up in the meeting notes.

Phil said he thinks a lot of energy went into crafting this statement but he has heard comments about it being too negative. The selectboard has already passed this, so trying to open it back up

and redevelop a statement would be a process. It hasn't been brought to our board to approve it. He thinks village meeting would be an appropriate place to do that.

Gordy asked how we proceed. Scott said he would love to have village feedback. He is not sure how to get it. Meredith said we can put out a request and put it on our next agenda. We can do outreach. In her mind there is no reason to rush this. No one has officially requested that we adopt the statement. We have time to be thoughtful and hear from village residents.

Kyle said it annoys her when there has been a lot of outreach about meetings in a public space, encouraging people to come and be involved and many people do not go but after the fact they grumble about why it was done the way it was and complain that they didn't have a say. There was plenty of opportunity to be at the meetings and be part of the crafting process. People there were from all facets of our community. People who came to the selectboard meeting and gave statements represented all stakeholders. David Manning from JES, Greg Stefanski from Laraway and representatives from the college expressed support. After the Seven Days article she has been flooded with emails specifically mentioning the statement of inclusivity and expressing happiness that we adopted it. The things that happened in the community were negative and we are saying we reject them. That is positive. People need to hear that. She disagrees that the statement is negative. She thinks people want to see those words on paper. She thinks everyone had a fair shot at the process. Reinventing it is a lot of extra work that doesn't need to happen. She thinks overall people are very happy with this statement, more happy than not. She is not opposed to it going to town or village meeting, but she thinks people really like it. She has prepared statements from the college in support of the statement that she can read.

Walter said he went to the first community meeting but no one informed him of the second meeting where the statement was written. It was posted on Front Porch Forum for people to comment. But realistically the only way anyone would know the statement was coming before the selectboard would be if they read the agenda posted 2 days before the meeting. He disagrees with Kyle somewhat about people having the opportunity to be involved. He never heard about the writing of the statement.

Phil asked, we didn't already have a town statement? Others said no, there wasn't one before.

Walter said if someone brings something for the village meeting he is fine with it being on the warning and voted on and letting village residents decide. He won't vote on a statement at the trustee level. Maybe we can see what happens in the community as it is being discussed.

Scott asked how an article about a statement could get on the village meeting warning. Meredith said the trustees can vote to include it or there can be a petition. Scott said a petition locks us into specific wording and if we develop the article we can have control. He asked if we can work on this and get it on the town meeting warning as an article.

Kyle said she is not in favor of reinventing the words. She feels professionals in our town that work at institutions all believe the wording has a lot of weight and is well put together. She feels the hard work has been done. The people the statement is important to feel it has been done well. It would only strengthen the community if it were also adopted by the village.

Scott asked if Kyle could mail the support statements people have given her to board members before the next meeting. Kyle said yes.

Scott said at the next meeting he will make a motion to approve an article for village meeting asking the voters to vote on adopting as written the statement the town adopted. Walter asked that it be put off until February because of the holidays and Scott agreed. Meredith said that gives us time to let people know that discussion will happen at the February meeting. People can come to the January meeting with input. She can do outreach.

Kyle said all the acts of intolerance she has experienced or heard of have happened in the village so it is important for the village to have a statement rejecting racism, sexism and bigotry.

Meredith said the latest version of the 2019 VPPSA budget is \$315,875. The budget in 2018 was \$317,444. The 2019 budget is a decrease of about half a percent. Member fees have gone up slightly. The Project 10 budget stayed about the same. Renewable energy standard costs have gone down. VPPSA was able to make some renewable energy credit purchases for less than expected. Another positive is that there was an overcollection for renewable energy standard Tier 3 costs. We are getting a credit of about \$7500, which helps lower 2019 costs. When everything is factored in we have a decrease of about 2.9% for the VPPSA budget.

Walter said the credit is a one-time thing. Meredith agreed. Some of the reasons the budget went down are one-time things. But hopefully reserves and Project 10 will help us in the future.

Gordy and Meredith thought it made sense to follow up on the merger RFP conversation with the selectboard. Brian just sent an updated version of the RFP intended to reflect what was discussed at the meeting.

Walter said the wording approved by the two boards is not what is in this RFP. He thinks Brian needs to read the minutes and change #5. Phil said Brian was working from notes Phil emailed him. He would suggest using the wording that is in the minutes. Walter said we have to use the wording that is in the minutes unless we amend the minutes because the minutes are the official record of the decision. Meredith said she will let Brian know the trustees prefer to use the wording that is in the minutes.

Meredith said she looked at the minutes from the annual village meeting. She read the amendment regarding the merger study: "Will Jennison moved and Jon Gregg seconded to amend the motion to specify that no money be spent by the village until the trustees have received a scope of work and price for the study." The wording doesn't say to her that we need to do anything more. She won't do additional outreach and there is no need for a public meeting. We have a scope of work and we will get a price before the work is done.

Scott asked, when we send out the RFP is it a joint village-town RFP? Meredith said yes.

Scott asked where we will send the RFP. Meredith said we will send it out through VLCT. Beyond that she and Brian will have to think about the best mechanisms to get qualified consultants. Scott said New Hampshire and New York have struggled with the same things. We

shouldn't limit ourselves to Vermont-based consultants. Meredith said maybe there are VLCT-like entities in New Hampshire and New York.

Meredith said we need to add a timeline and when we need bids back to the RFP. Scott asked, do we have an idea about the timeline? Meredith said she would be inclined to give 3 weeks to prepare a response.

Scott asked if Kyle had anything else she wanted to talk about. She said she had missed the sidewalk project presentation. Board members showed her the project plan map and Scott summarized what the plan includes. *(Kyle left at 8:40.)*

Gordy asked Dan about the anaerobic digester mentioned in Meredith's written report. Dan said he and Meredith are going to a meeting on it tomorrow. To his knowledge it is independent of the solid waste district. Gordy asked if it would take our sludge. Dan said no. There are a lot of questions about whether a digester could work logistically. They are meeting with us to see if we could take the liquid waste. Walter asked, is the conversation just about wastewater or also electric? Dan said both sides. Walter asked if these are Tier 3. Meredith said it would be Tier 2.

Walter moved to enter executive session for a personnel issue, inviting Meredith to remain, Scott seconded, the motion was passed and the board entered executive session at 8:45. The board came out of executive session at 8:55.

At 8:57, Walter moved to find that the premature general public knowledge of pending or probable civil litigation would clearly place the village at a substantial disadvantage, Scott seconded and the motion was passed.

Walter moved to enter executive session to discuss pending or probable civil litigation, Scott seconded and the motion was passed. The board came out of executive session at 9:07.

11. Adjourn

Walter moved and Scott seconded to adjourn at 9:08 and the motion was passed.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths