

JOHNSON VILLAGE TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2014

Present:

Trustees: Gordon Smith, Ellis O’Hear, George Pearlman, Walter Pomroy, Chris Parker

Others: Duncan Hastings (Manager), Rosemary Audibert (Clerk), Steve Towne, Tom Elwood, Arjay West

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. *Call to Order*

Gordy called the meeting to order at 4:04.

2. *Treasurer’s Report & Review and Approve Bills and Warrants*

Duncan pointed out that sewer revenues don’t track exactly with water revenues, perhaps because of the fixed service fee for JSC, which the board decided not to raise. Revenue from rates is not enough to keep up with sewer expenses.

Ellis moved to authorize Gordy to sign the single audit engagement letter, Chris seconded and the motion was passed.

Ellis moved to authorize Gordy to sign the financial audit engagement letter and the motion was seconded and passed.

Walter moved to place a water and sewer lien on Sarah Dinsmore’s property at 46 Currier Drive and the motion was seconded and passed.

3. *Review and Approve Minutes*

Walter moved to approve the village trustee board minutes of January 13, 2014 as amended by Duncan, Chris seconded, and the motion was passed.

Walter moved to approve the minutes of the January 13, 2014 joint trustee-selectboard meeting, seconded by Chris. Duncan suggested one small change. The motion to approve the minutes with that change was passed.

4. *Wastewater Treatment Facility & Water System Operator’s Report*

Tom said water loss is at 2%. He and Steve Towne just checked on a small water leak at Katy-Win. They may have to dig to repair it, but they are not done looking at it. If digging has to be done, they hope to hold off until the ground thaws.

The wastewater plant is running well. The new phosphorus level requirements Tom had discussed previously are coming. About 70% of the time we remove enough phosphorus to achieve the .2 level that will be required. He thinks with some more refinement we will consistently be below .2.

Our wastewater plant may be reclassified as Class 3. If that happens Steve Edgerly would be required to get a Grade III certification. Tom has a Grade IV certification. There is a comment period. Tom thinks he and Duncan should draft a letter with comments. Walter asked the rationale for changing our classification. Tom said they are trying to make

classification more uniform. He wants Johnson to be added to the list of communities that are biologically removing enough phosphorus so we aren't required to get filters. Our wastewater plant's permit has been expired for 5 years. We have reapplied, but the state hasn't renewed it.

5. *Public Works Superintendent Report*

Steve said he and Tom had researched process and costs for emergency bypass pumping in case the rigid sewer pipe under the Pearl St. bridge is damaged. He distributed a cost analysis sheet. It will not be cheap. Duncan asked if the board would give authorization to get a pump staged here ahead of time if flooding seems likely. That would cost us extra money if we don't end up using it, but save us money if we do need to use it. Walter asked whether insurance would reimburse us for being proactive or if we would need to wait for damage if we want insurance reimbursement. Duncan said he doesn't know. He doesn't know if our insurance even covers that sewer line, but thought it didn't.

Duncan said he had talked with Steve about what it would cost to buy an electric pump we could have ready to put in place. Walter said perhaps a group of communities should work together to buy a pump that would be available for any community that needed it. Duncan and Steve pointed out that different communities in the same area would be likely to need the pump at the same time. Steve said he can look into the cost of a pump. It would run day and night so it would need a control and an alarm. Tom said we should try to make a temporary repair to the pipe as soon as possible to minimize bypass pumping. Steve agreed that we should do that as quickly as we can, but the water level will need to go down first. He said 12 weeks of pumping would cost \$50K. The total cost including new pipe would be close to \$100K. Walter said he thinks maybe municipalities should try to get grants to pay for a pump. Steve said a lot of phone calls could still be made to work on streamlining this process. Walter said he thinks a plan should ideally be created, not just at our level, but among all municipalities that have sewer pipes crossing the river. There should be equipment all could access.

Duncan said if he, Tom, or Steve feel the need, they would like authorization to stage a pump here in anticipation of possible flooding. If we bring a pump here, that will cost \$2K whether we use it or not. If we have to set it up and use it, that will cost another \$2K. But if the pipe breaks and we haven't already staged a pump, it will cost \$5K to get it set up. The board agreed Duncan, Steve, and Tom are authorized to arrange to have a pump staged if necessary.

The 753 skid steer had a hydraulic failure last Friday. Bobcat of Essex brought a replacement for us to use and took ours to their repair shop. It will cost about \$3K to fix it. Steve gave them the okay to do the work.

The programming of the generator at the municipal office turned out to be all right. The generator just failed to start for other reasons. Steve found it had not had the electrical components (spark plugs, cap, rotor, and wires) replaced in years. Once he had them replaced, the generator worked perfectly. It had been in our agreement that the electrical components would be replaced upon customer request. Now it is in the agreement that they will be replaced every two years.

The PSB requires the village to meet specific targets for outages each year. The System Average Interruption Frequency Index (SAIFI) target is 1.0 interruption per customer. We achieved 0.1. The Customer Average Interruption Duration Index (CAIDI) target is 2.7 hours. We achieved 2.2.

The Telemetric SCADA Control was sent back to the manufacturer for repair and is on its way back to us to reinstall. For some unknown reason it had reprogrammed itself.

G & K Services (our uniform service provider) is looking for the village to renew its 3 year contract with us. Steve may let this contract run out then consider another provider, or providing a yearly allowance to employees to buy clothes, which they would have to launder. Other utilities are using this approach. Gordy stated the Coop is doing it this way.

Burlington Electric has a job which they are willing to allow Tim Percy to assist them on. This would give him valuable contact time and training. But they do not have money in their budget to pay for outside help so Steve cannot bill them for Tim's time there. The Board agreed not to send Tim if his time was not being paid for by BED.

Steve had a couple of complaints about plowing on Main Street. Duncan said those with complaints should check out Morrisville or Montpelier. Gordy agreed that many other villages aren't plowed as well as Johnson. Walter asked what the specific complaints were. Steve said there were complaints about the snow piled on the bump-outs (which is cleared only if gets high enough to obstruct the view of traffic, so as to keep costs down), and the way handicapped parking areas are designed in relation to the ability of customers to get out of cars and get to businesses.

6. Arjay West – Update on Tanker Replacement and PACIF Grant

Arjay West joined the board at 5:09. He distributed information on the tanker the committee proposes to buy. Their budget was \$211K. The truck they want is quoted at about \$219K now but they are making a few changes and have a few credits so they expect the next quote to come in about \$216K. They should be able to get \$4-9K from the sale of the old truck and expect to apply that to the cost of the new truck, so they are confident the project can stay on budget. The fire department would like approval to start working with Duncan on identifying preferred financing options.

Walter asked if Arjay feels this truck will meet their needs adequately. Did they cut anything important? Arjay said they feel it will meet their needs. It has more water capacity than the current truck. The biggest debate was over whether to put a fire pump on it. That would have cost about \$20K. They decided it would be used so seldom it would not be the best place to spend money. As an alternative the truck will use a portable pump which will cost about \$2200. Nothing on the new truck is a step backwards from the current truck. The water capacity will be increased from 1250 gallons to 2800 gallons. It will be a larger truck but will have equivalent or better capability for turning in driveways, etc. Arjay feels it will serve the department's purposes very well.

Walter asked, what if we got a smaller tank size? Arjay said a truck with a 2000 gallon tank, without the pump, would be \$210K and the one we are getting is about \$216K.

Arjay said Cambridge is also looking at getting a tanker. The Johnson fire department would like to team with Cambridge and Hyde Park and go through the ISO evaluation with the goal of bettering our rating. That should allow premiums for residents to go down. The extra water capacity will help with our rating.

The fire department wants the tanker purchase to be on the next village warning with the intention of signing a contract for purchase shortly thereafter. They would take delivery of the truck at the end of the year or early next year. They would take out the first funds to pay for it in 2015. Arjay said they are looking at a 5 year payment schedule. He would like to look at the difference between purchase and lease purchase and come back to the board with first and second choices so by the village's annual meeting they would be able to say how they would finance the purchase.

Arjay said another improvement they would like to make on the truck is to get a hydraulic rack to lower the portable tank, because the weight is cumbersome and dangerous. The hydraulic rack would cost \$5500. Arjay would like to try to get a PACIF grant through VLCT to help pay for it. They have a 50-50 matching grant for safety equipment that relates to claim reduction and he feels this qualifies as it could reduce the likelihood of back injuries and other injuries. Steve said he is interested in getting a PACIF grant for a chainsaw course for his employees, but he could apply through the town, freeing up the village's grant funds for the fire department. Duncan said the village might be able to apply for funding both the chainsaw course and the hydraulic rack.

Walter moved to authorize Duncan and Arjay to start negotiations for purchase and financing of a new tanker truck for the fire department and to apply for a PACIF equipment grant for the fire department to purchase a hydraulic tank rack, Chris seconded, and the motion was passed.

The board thanked the truck committee for all their work. (*Arjay left at 5:41.*)

7. *Manager's Report*

Walter moved to authorize Gordy to sign fire service contracts with the towns of Waterville and Johnson, Chris seconded, and the motion was passed.

Duncan said he has learned that if the town and village would like to have a shared plan, it probably makes sense not to describe the plan as a "joint" plan and to have each board adopt the same plan separately. The Planning Commission can still create a plan with the same language for both entities but if it is not defined as a joint plan then the trustees still have authority to vote on it.

Walter moved to authorize the Joint Planning Commission to design a new plan for the Town of Johnson and the Village of Johnson, Chris seconded, and the motion was passed.

Jessica Lussier applied for an excess water usage adjustment. She had a leaking toilet that affected her December and January bills. (She couldn't get a plumber in to look at it until

January.) The water did go down the sewer. Walter said the policy is not to grant more than one adjustment per customer per year. Duncan said he thinks if the board adjusted both the bills that were affected by this incident, that would probably only count as one adjustment.

It was moved and seconded to adjust the December 2013 and January 2014 water and sewer bills for Jessica Lussier to equal three times the average of the November, October, and September 2013 bills, according to policy. The motion was passed.

Mel Siegel also had excess water usage due to a frozen pipe that broke. It was a big leak – 26,000 gallons. Seth Manchester, who is looking after the property while the owner is out of state, says the water leaked outside through the crawl space and did not go into the sewer. Duncan recommends suggesting to Mel Siegel that he have the village shut off his water the next time he leaves for the winter.

Chris moved to adjust Mel Siegel's water bill to 3 times \$23.56 (the average for the last 3 months) and to adjust his sewer bill to \$36.43 (equal to the highest bill in the past year), Walter seconded, and the motion was passed.

Chris has tenants who have been parking in spaces in the municipal lot. They were ticketed by LCSD and LCSD was notified that the cars could be allowed to park in the lot in designated spaces, but LCSD says they cannot selectively enforce the ordinance. So we need to come up with another solution. The village is currently using Chris's property for ingress and egress from the parking lot based on an informal agreement with him. In the long run, Duncan thinks we should have a formalized agreement. Chris said if the village could formalize in writing that two spaces in the municipal lot are designated for his tenants, then he and his wife would be willing to formalize the right of way across their property to the parking lot. He will recuse himself from any decision on this. Board members agreed it would make sense to mark 2 spots as tenant parking spots. Duncan said the covenant calls for 14 available parking spots in the lot. Chris said the tenant parking spots would be available to the public during the day. George said we wouldn't want people to avoid parking in the tenant spots on busy days because they were marked as tenant spots. Steve said we could give a map to the sheriff's department showing the spots that are for tenant parking only after a certain time at night. Board members agreed on the general concept of arranging to have two assigned tenant parking spaces in the municipal lot. It was agreed to look at all the issues, develop some draft language and report back to the Board at a future date.

Walter moved to reallocate insurance costs for shared town/village employees between the town and village in the same ratio as the agreed-upon reallocation of hours, starting July 1, 2014, Chris seconded, and the motion was passed.

Duncan posted the Long Trail easement notice as per statute and received no petition or comment. Ellis moved and Chris seconded to authorize Gordy to sign the Long Trail easement, and the motion was passed with Walter abstaining.

Gordy mentioned that, for budgeting, the board will need a rough estimate of the cost of repairing the crosswalks. Steve said he is concerned about one crosswalk where the concrete pad underneath is heaving.

Duncan distributed a synopsis of the VPPSA Net Metering Proposal. The House passed out a bill which will increase the cap to 15% immediately. It also reduces the rate that we have to credit from 20 to 19 cents/kwh. VPPSA provided Duncan with a comparison of load and cost for Standard Offer contracts as a percent of total power costs versus total load required. The percent of cost is a little more than double what the percent of load is.

Duncan attended a Pre Hearing Conference Thursday on the Morrisville Water & Light transmission purchase. He believes the PSB will issue a final order before the end of the month approving the finance and purchase.

Duncan will miss the March meeting as he will be attending the APPA Legislative Rally, but he can call in if needed.

Two locations with private water supplies were tested for any evidence of petroleum contamination related to the former talc mill. There were no indications of any issues.

Morrisville accepted the bid for the Vactor trailer. HP Fairfield said they would not challenge it. We are going to house it and all the towns that own it are going to maintain it. Steve said it is here now.

Katie Orost as school board chair signed the Memorandum of Understanding regarding the School St. project, but she did not have it witnessed so we have to do that.

8. ***Executive Session – Personnel Issues***

Walter moved to enter executive session to discuss personnel issues, with Steve and Duncan remaining, the motion was seconded and passed and the board entered executive session at 6:27. The board came out of executive session at 7:11 with no action taken.

9. ***Adjourn***

It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 7:11 and the motion was passed.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths