

JOHNSON VILLAGE TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2015

**Present:**

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

Others: Duncan Hastings (Manager), Rosemary Audibert (Clerk), Tom Elwood, Troy Dolan

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

**1. Call to Order**

Gordy called the meeting to order at 6:02.

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

Walter asked to add an update on the form-based zoning committee. Duncan asked to add cell phone, climbing gear replacement, VPPSA Resource Report, and a report on 5 firefighters we made a first report of injury on. The board agreed to all the additions.

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

**Walter moved to approve the minutes of January 12/14, 2015 and the minutes of the January 12, 2015 joint trustee/selectboard meeting, with any typos corrected, Ellis seconded, and the motion was passed.**

**4. Treasurer’s Report: Bills and Warrants / Budget Status Report / Action Items**

Rosemary said last month’s report only showed 11 months of the year for water and sewer so we are better off than it appeared then. We ended the year with a surplus in water and sewer.

Lovin’ Cup’s CIG loan has been paid off. **Walter moved to authorize Gordy to sign the Discharge of Mortgage Deed for Megan Harris and William Lascomb III, David seconded, and the motion was passed.**

The board discussed who the village report could be dedicated to this year.

**5. WWTF Chief Operator Report and Action Items**

There were no wastewater plan callouts in the last month. The college dumped a foot of water from their pool – about 31,400 gallons – and that pushed a plug of rags and grease into the 6 inch siphon barrel. We used Morrisville’s jetter to unplug it. A filter at the water plant was down for about a week and a half until the flow control valve could be repaired. There was a leak at the Katy-Win booster station. The header that feeds the water meters there is in bad shape and needs to be replaced. Water loss is at 10%. There were 2 meter freeze-ups under trailers. There was a callout this past weekend for a main sewer line that was plugged up. Right after that the college had a water main break and lost about 300K gallons of water.

When electric/general department employees are called out, they get a minimum 3 hours of OT. Water/sewer department employees currently have a 2 hour OT minimum. Tom is asking the board to make the minimum callout pay the same for the two departments. Duncan said logic seems to dictate that they should be the same. David said he would be curious to see what the average callout time is. He thinks the two departments’ pay should be the same. Tom said most are probably pretty short. Duncan and Tom agreed there are probably less than dozen callouts per year.

Gordy said he agrees callout pay for the two departments should be the same. Walter suggested waiting to make a decision until the budget is being developed and the rest of the board agreed.

Candy and Robert Griswold have applied for a billing adjustment. They are on village sewer only and had a leak from an outside hose. The water didn't go down the sewer. **Walter moved to adjust the Griswolds' December sewer bill to \$50.29 (equal to the highest bill in the prior 12 months), Ellis seconded, and the motion was passed.**

Duncan said Cliff Hill said his garage was flooded once several years ago when water was drained out of the reservoir by village personnel. Duncan and Tom talked about a possible future fix. Tom said the outfall from the reservoir is in a gully split by an island. There used to be a pipe that went down one side, but the new one is shorter and water from it goes down both sides. He thinks we need to block up one side. Duncan said he thinks Cliff mainly just wanted to bring this to our attention. Tom said he thinks we should look at it in the spring. He mentioned that it has almost been 10 years since that reservoir was commissioned. Usually a reservoir should be checked every 10 years. It involves sending in divers. Tom will get more information about that.

#### **6. *Foreman Report and Action Items***

Troy said Cliff and Nate had asked who would be in charge if he were not there. Gordy said he thinks it should be Cliff, based on experience. The rest of the board agreed. Duncan said in the past if Steve Towne was gone and Cliff was in charge, Cliff was paid more for that period. Rosemary said he would get \$4 more per day. The board decided to wait until budget development to discuss possible additional pay for Cliff when he is in charge.

Troy asked whether he can use Jeff and Brian for work other than snow cleanup. Walter asked if there is a need for another part-time person on call. Duncan said yes. Troy said there has been a rotation of employees being on call for a week at a time to handle sidewalk maintenance and call in others for snow removal if needed. Now Nate and Troy are left in the rotation. Troy has spoken to Duncan about adding Jeff to the rotation. He will start on the rotation next week. Duncan said he would encourage the board to give Jeff \$70 on call pay for the weeks he is on call. **Walter moved to include Jeff in the snow removal rotation and to authorize on call pay of \$70 for each week he is on call.** Troy said Cliff is not in the rotation but comes in if needed for plowing. The employees are happy with that arrangement. **The motion was passed.** The board agreed that Jeff and Brian can be used for work other than snow removal and that if Troy and Duncan feel it is necessary it would be all right to hire someone full time for electric and general work. Duncan asked if it would be all right to send Jeff to flagger training. The board agreed that it would be.

Nate's harness has no arc flash rating. After April 15 none of his climbing gear will be good, either. Duncan thinks a new harness and climbing gear would cost around \$400-500. Walter said he thinks we should purchase the new gear as it is needed for safety. David asked if there is other equipment we should be planning to purchase. Troy said he thinks if we are going to stay in the electrical business we should have an amp meter. Tim got a price of \$1200 on one, but that seems high to him. Another thing he would like to get is a spinner for the reel, which costs about \$250. Walter asked if the amp meter is a safety issue or a luxury issue. Troy said to him, it's a safety issue. Gordy agreed. David asked if we can wait to decide about it or if we need it now. Gordy asked what is going on with Morrisville negotiations. Duncan said they have a union mediator meeting tomorrow. He thinks we can probably wait another week before deciding whether to purchase an amp meter. The board will have to schedule some budget work sessions soon. Gordy

suggested maybe VEC could send a line crew with an amp meter if we needed it. If we did need it, it would be for a situation like a major outage. Walter said he thinks the spinner is a luxury item so we should put that on hold until we decide on the electric department transition. David asked if Troy could put together a list of needed items before the board starts to discuss the budget.

Troy said the electric crew was able to transfer the broken pole on 100C without having to have an outage on the R1 circuit. Cliff came up with a good idea about how the transfer could be done. Two smaller jobs were completed the same day with the same traffic control. Service to the Butternut Mountain Store was upgraded to accommodate their recent renovation.

Walter asked if all billing is being taken care of. Troy said Tim has been showing him how to code invoices. Duncan said Jim Fontaine has helped with some invoicing too. Troy said he thinks everything has been taken care of so far.

Troy said a large part of the work day has been dedicated to snow removal lately. Some repairs were recently done to equipment.

David asked if we have a list of future capital needs. Duncan said we have a list. We don't have a capital budget. We have some major pieces of equipment that will need replacement before long. David asked if we have a priority list. Gordy suggested we could have Troy start on that. Walter said it relates to what will happen long term with the town and village. Duncan said he has a schedule with ages of equipment. Troy said the sander will need to be replaced. Gordy asked Troy to come up with a wish list with rough price estimates and have Duncan review it. Duncan suggested there are other pieces of equipment that might be better for plowing sidewalks than a skid steer. Troy pointed out that a skid steer can be used for other things besides sidewalks. Duncan said he thinks we might want to keep one.

Duncan said Troy has been using his personal cell phone for work and Duncan doesn't think that is right. He would like to get a smart phone set up for Troy's use if the board is comfortable with it. Tim was using his personal cell phone. The board is comfortable with Troy having a work phone.

Gordy asked for thoughts about the Valcor radio. Troy said he thinks it could be handy in a mutual aid situation, but it is not really needed on a day to day basis and doesn't get turned on.

**Walter moved to enter executive session for a personnel issue, with Troy and Duncan invited, Ellis seconded, the motion was passed, and the board entered executive session at 7:13.** The board came out of executive session at 7:36.

Walter said Troy and Tim may possibly have been underpaid recently. Duncan and Rosemary will research what has been paid and what the board approved regarding pay. **Walter moved that, since Troy is the new general foreman, effective last Thursday his pay be changed to \$29 per hour, David seconded, and the motion was passed.**

**Walter moved to authorize Troy to use the pickup previously used by Steve Towne for work, effective today, with no personal use except de minimis usage, Ellis seconded, and the motion was passed.** Walter explained that "de minimis" usage means minimal usage for convenience such as going slightly out of the way to stop and pick up milk. *(Troy left at 7:43.)*

## 7. *Municipal Manager Report and Action Items*

Duncan handed out copies of the VPPSA Resource Report, which VPPSA prepares to be submitted on our behalf. It provides a snapshot of what our power supply through VPPSA looks like. Duncan asked if the board has any problem with Troy going to a VPPSA meeting sometime. Board members said they had no problem with that.

Duncan said Troy has suggested using Brian Boyden for mechanical work. Is the board okay with that? Board members said yes. Duncan said he is not sure whether Brian is willing to do this at the part time rate we are paying or as a contract service.

Duncan said PACIF annually does inspections of town and village facilities. During their last visit they wrote up the town for not having a lockout/tagout policy for dump trucks, loaders, etc. The village also needs this policy, which is required by OSHA. Duncan showed the board a proposed policy. We have an electric tagout policy which Steve worked on, but this one is for hydraulic lifts. There will need to be a one-time training on it. **Walter moved to adopt the Control of Hazardous Energy Policy and Procedures (Lockout/Tagout), David seconded, and the motion was passed, with Ellis opposed.** Ellis said he is opposed to this type of regulation.

Duncan has filed the Annual Power Outage Report with the Public Service Board. We exceeded our SAIFI number due to failures of the step down transformers at the sub and planned outages required for the switchover to the MW&L transmission system. Duncan has to formally request a waiver, which he has done. The last two times we missed our number were similar instances and the PSB didn't even acknowledge Duncan's request for a waiver.

In order to have a formal agreement with GMP for backup service it would have to be submitted to and approved by the FERC. GMP is reluctant to do this and has recommended another approach which Duncan and our counsel think works and will cost a lot less money. VOJ would apply to GMP for "non-firm" sub-transmission service under their Schedule 21 FERC Tariff. For emergency and short duration outages where we need to transfer transmission load to their 34.5 kv line they would discount the rate to 0 (no cost to us.) For longer term planned outages they would bill us at their normal tariff rate. Probably an emergency outage would be considered something no more than about 4 or 5 hours. The board is comfortable making application to GMP for non-firm sub-transmission service.

It was agreed to plan budget work session meetings for February 18 and 25 and 4:30.

Duncan updated the board on the town's plan to acquire the Beards' swimming hole parcel. The parcel in question is a little less than 2 acres. Its appraised value is \$85K. The Beards have a purchase and sales agreement with the River Conservancy for that amount. The River Conservancy plans to do all the fund raising necessary to purchase the property. The selectboard plans to apply for two grants from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Vermont Land Trust. The River Conservancy would buy the parcel from the Beards, then give it to the town with the development rights removed. It would come off the tax roll. The town would be responsible for maintaining and insuring it. David said he hates to see more property taken off the Grand List. He asked if the Beards initiated this. Walter said people have been talking to the Beards about this for a long time, 10 or 15 years. Duncan said they approached the River Conservancy after hearing about Journey's End. David said in the future if something like this happens in the village he would

like the trustees at least to be notified. Duncan said it is his fault the trustees were not notified. It happened fairly quickly. The River Conservancy was used to working with the selectboard and probably just assumed they would again, and so did Duncan. Walter agreed that as the property is within the village borders it would have been nice to have been notified about what was happening and asked whether the trustees had any objections. Other board members agreed that is the message Duncan should relay to the selectboard.

Duncan will be working with VPPSA to prepare and submit the PSB Annual Report.

David, Eric, and Duncan are signed up to attend VLCT Local Government Day in the Legislature.

Duncan worked with Arjay to submit a PACIF Equipment Grant application for turnout gear for the fire department.

Duncan has sent out the cover letter and Fire Service Agreements to Waterville and Belvidere. He hasn't yet contacted the college about a suggested donation.

We will need to follow VTrans Guidelines for Pedestrian Crossing Treatments for marking Main St. crosswalks. Duncan would suggest doing the same for village crosswalks for consistency.

Duncan distributed a handout covering the required VOSHA safety trainings for electrical workers. Not all are provided by NEPPA. Duncan is trying to get the NEPPA safety group to consider using a software program to track trainings each employee has had. Duncan worked with NEPPA and the municipal utilities in our group to put together the 2015 training schedule. There is a 10 hour OSHA class coming up that Duncan got funding for from VLCT PACIF. Everyone, including Duncan, is enrolled. This will cover the new OSHA requirements already in effect or going into effect.

The Abridged Power Bill Summary shows us ending up with a 0.8 variance over the course of the year. We had some bad months early on, but came out pretty good. He thinks the power supply group at VPPSA is doing a good job.

There was an agreement reached with the PBS over how to assess wheeling charges for standard offer projects, which VEC now appears to be deviating from. Essentially the agreement said that all standard offer generation within a utility service territory would be treated as offsetting native load requirements up to the pro rata share of the generation and would not be subject to the wheeling charges. VEC submitted a bill to VEPPI which includes 100% of the wheeling charges (no discount for the native load pro rata share.) VPPSA has opposed this concept. VEC and GMP are the only utilities with FERC tariffs. If VEC is allowed to do this he expects GMP will also.

VPPSA is trying to address issues with the Renewable Portfolio Standards legislation that the House Natural Resources and Energy Committee is considering.

Duncan gave the board an electric rate comparison showing where Johnson is relative to other utilities statewide.

After the recent house fire in Hyde Park, 5 firefighters were evaluated, put on rest time, re-evaluated, then released. There were no actual injuries. Arjay thought we should file a first report of injury in the unlikely event that one of the firefighters needs to make a worker's comp claim and VLCT PACIF recommended that we do it. It protects the firefighters if they later need to make a claim and it doesn't harm our rating. We reported it as notice only, no injuries.

Gordy asked if we are all set with the on call situation for Tom and Steve. Duncan said it has not been brought back up to him as an issue. He told Tom that until he hears otherwise there should be one pager number for VEC to call and Tom and Steve are alternating having the pager.

**8. Form Based Code Update**

Walter said the form based code committee is seriously looking at producing form based code that will only encompass the village. He has told the committee that there is a problem with expecting only village taxpayers to pay for zoning. The committee is saying that it is their job to come with a plan to give to the boards and the boards' job to figure out how to pay for it.

**9. General Foreman Job Description**

Duncan had sent out a job description for Troy for the board to review. **Walter moved to adopt the job description for the General Foreman, seconded by David.** Duncan said he told Troy this job description may change before long. **The motion was passed.**

**10. Adjourn**

**Ellis moved and Walter seconded to adjourn at 9:00 and the motion was passed.**

*Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths*