

JOHNSON VILLAGE TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MONDAY, MAY 13, 2019

Present:

Trustees: Scott Meyer, Brian Raulinaitis, Gordon Smith, Bob Sweetser, Phil Wilson

Others: Meredith Birkett, Rosemary Audibert, Troy Dolan, Dan Copp, Elizabeth Emmons, Jim MacDowell, Eric Osgood, Carleton Torrey, Steve Engel, Noel Dodge, Kyle Nuse

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. Call to Order

Gordy called the meeting to order at 6:41.

2. Pearl Street Sidewalk Public Meeting

Meredith gave a presentation on the Pearl Street sidewalk project. The project is intended to meet ADA standards and provide a safer pedestrian environment, improve the appearance of a section of Pearl Street/Clay Hill, address property owner concerns, and improve stormwater management.

The total estimated project cost is \$100,120. Estimated design costs are \$13,300 and estimated legal fees are \$1,700. The estimated cost of construction that was included in the grant application was \$85,120, but the scope of the project may go up, increasing the cost.

The village got a grant from the Vermont Agency of Transportation for \$42,550. Any cost over that amount is paid for by the village. The village has \$129,599 in the sidewalk reserve fund. The projected balance of that fund at the end of the project is \$72,049 if there is no cost increase, but there probably will be a cost increase. The village must cover 100% of the design/engineering costs, match state funds for construction and cover any additional construction costs.

Meredith showed the initial design that was sent with the grant application. The village has since come up with something a little different. Dufresne came up with six alternatives for the project. Troy spoke with Brian Krause and narrowed them down to two alternatives – one with a more limited scope and one that includes additional green space closer to the bridge based on public comments received in the first round of public comments.

Meredith reviewed comments that have been received so far. There was a request for further widening of the greenbelt on the east side. The property owner would like us to push the sidewalk all the way to the edge of the right of way in order to widen the green belt.

Gordy said his concern is with the width of the road. Elizabeth Emmons said each lane is 9 feet wide and there is a 2-foot shoulder on each side. That is pretty standard for a town highway like this. Gordy said it is hard for two buses to meet and have room on Clay Hill. He would like to get away from that. Meredith said the green belt would not be coming closer to the road; it would be pushing the sidewalk closer to houses. Elizabeth and Meredith said neither alternative would change the existing road width.

Meredith said pushing the sidewalk closer to the houses would require moving one utility pole back. That was not included in the original plan and would mean additional cost.

Meredith said a property owner expressed concern that it appears that where the sidewalk crosses driveways there may be dips or ramps to the elevation of the driveways. Elizabeth said where the sidewalk goes across the driveway it would match the driveway elevation, so the sidewalk would go down. Bob asked if water would end up sitting in driveways. Elizabeth said no. She described how that would be avoided by having the driveway and the sidewalk slope to the road. Meredith said unless we get rid of the planned curbing the property owner is right that there will be dips.

Meredith said a property owner asked that one of the proposed green spaces be squared up. That may be doable on one side but for plowing by the town she thinks the town would prefer more of an angle on the other side. The village could follow up with the town on that. Meredith said she thinks the request was to make it look more like the other green areas.

Meredith showed a picture provided by a property owner who suggested adding additional green space closer to the bridge with a bulb-out at the corner. People park close to the intersection of School and Pearl Streets and there is a section along the shoulder of the road in that area that is not plowed or driven on in winter anyway and could become additional green space. But that would add cost.

Gordy asked if the bulb-out would make snow plowing more work. Troy said yes. Elizabeth said she thinks the existing curbing would have to be left as-is or the sidewalk would be damaged. She feels we would have to add another curb with a green strip in between the two curbs.

Jim MacDowell said one thing he has suggested has been looking at Lamoureux and Dickinson's conceptual plan. He is in favor of the idea of adding the green space and bulb-out but he is not saying it should be added to this project. We should probably stay with the existing scope of this project but make sure it ties in with future plans for that corner.

Gordy asked if curb stops for water will be in the way of the project. Jim MacDowell said it looks like the curb stops for VSC properties are close to the edge of the sidewalk. Those curb stops probably will both be abandoned. Elizabeth said there are two ways to address curb stops that are in the way of the sidewalk project. One is to put them in a plastic sleeve within the sidewalk. The other is to relocate them outside of the sidewalk area. Bob said if we have to replace a valve on a curb stop, that can't be done if it is within the sidewalk. Meredith asked if the plans show the location of curb stops. Elizabeth said they haven't all been identified. Meredith said we will need to go back and figure out which curb stops will be impacted. Elizabeth said she has information from the asset management program that can be used.

Scott said if we are going to be tearing out sidewalk, that might be a good time to replace the defective rods in curb stops. Troy agreed that it would be good to coordinate changing defective rods while the work is being done instead of at a later date. Scott explained that we have a batch of curb stop rods that have been failing so it makes sense to replace them all while the ground is dug up. (*Eric Osgood arrived at 7:01.*)

Kyle asked about maintaining the green strips. She was wondering if the village has a plan to reseed, etc. Meredith said she thinks the area in front of Eric's house gets a little torn up but lasts well. Troy said it gets torn up where the village picks up snow. They don't pick up snow on Eric's

side. Phil said there will be new curbing and people won't drive over that. Elizabeth said that is the most beneficial part of a curb. It protects the green strip. Kyle said it is great to have green strips but they look bad if they are not maintained.

Meredith said the village will have to consider the requests and decide whether they make sense budget-wise.

Gordy asked if the Tuesday Night Live committee knows that some parking may be reduced due to this project. Meredith said she hasn't communicated that with them but she can now that the new committee has been established.

Meredith reviewed the project timeline and next steps. It is anticipated that the design will be finalized in June 2019. Then it has to be submitted to VTrans for Title 22 review. Elizabeth said VTrans has to do a historical review to see if there is any reason to believe that the project would have historic impact. For a job like this that is in the utility right of way which has been torn up in the past there is little likelihood of historic impact. Meredith said VTrans told us to expect this review to take two months. She hopes to obtain easements in July and August. We believe that on the west side of the road the current sidewalk is outside of the town right of way. VTrans won't approve the project until we show we have easements. She anticipates issuing requests for bids in August or September of 2019. Construction would take place in spring 2020. Elizabeth said late fall sidewalk pours can have issues. The sidewalk needs to cure for long enough before salt is put on it or spalling can result. It should have at least 6 months to cure.

Eric said he has a concern about a large oak tree on his property. It must have big roots that go under the existing pavement. He is concerned it will probably not survive and he wonders if the village will remove it if it dies.

Noel Dodge said that is why he is here. Oaks usually have a central taproot that goes straight down. Jim MacDowell said one approach might be to try to cut the roots cleanly instead of ripping them out with an excavator. Noel agreed that could be better. He said if there is a big root and you go through it there is no way of knowing if it is one of the biggest roots or one of many.

Jim MacDowell asked if the easement is to put the sidewalk in the exact location where it is now. Meredith said in some areas the sidewalk may have to move up to 12 inches west. Elizabeth said in the plan she tried to center the new sidewalk on the existing sidewalk but the existing sidewalk meanders somewhat.

Jim asked if any movement of the sidewalk will push it closer to Eric's tree. Meredith said it would move the sidewalk closer to his home rather than to the tree. She noted that the sidewalk has to be widened in addition to straightening it. *(Kyle left at 7:10.)*

Jim asked if the elevation of the finished surface on the west side is likely to change much. Elizabeth said no; there may be a little adjustment. It will be as close to the existing elevation as possible.

Jim asked, when the road is resurfaced in the future, is it likely that it will get high enough that water will get onto the sidewalk on the west side? Now there is enough of a dam to keep water

running past the residences. As the road is paved and raised in the future, how do we keep runoff from the street from going onto people's properties?

Elizabeth said in both alternatives curbing will be put in. Elizabeth and Meredith talked about where curbing will be put in. Meredith noted that there will be a green area to catch water from the road.

Phil asked, why not add curbing to the whole west side? Eric said there is not a problem with water coming from the road onto his property. Meredith said adding curbing on that whole side would be a cost increase.

Meredith said it sounds like the studio center can see the benefit of not adding green space in front of their building if additional curbing could be put there instead.

Jim said he is wondering about elevating the entire sidewalk, anticipating the possibility of adding curbing in the future, knowing that the road elevation will increase with paving. There is already pressure from road runoff in some areas. To avoid that in the future, why not start the new pour at 7 inches high? Is that possible without a lot of additional cost? Elizabeth said some elevation increase might be possible but it would mean a hump across the driveway.

Meredith said she thinks the village may develop a version of Alternative One with modifications based on this conversation and get prices for that and the alternative that includes additional green space.

Jim said he wonders about the cost of putting in curbing in some areas where it is not currently proposed as compared to the cost of doing the work without a curb, which might lead to more cost for dirt work. He would prefer a 7-inch curb, knowing that grass may come later.

Elizabeth said adding green space could tighten the intersection and lead to problems with turning radius.

Meredith said we will revise the plans and send out a proposed final design. Jim asked if there is a way to get cross-sections to see elevations. He is curious with regard to water flow.

Elizabeth asked which alternative plan will be adjusted. Meredith said she thinks we are leaning towards adding some curbing to Alternative One and adding some curbing to it. An issue we will have to discuss is whether to move the sidewalk on the east side back to create a larger green strip.

Scott said the alternative with the grass bump-out seems like it would be pretty but without a curb he thinks people would drive over it. He asked about why curbing is not being put along a section of sidewalk on the west side. Meredith said because it seems to have worked well the way it is. Eric Osgood agreed that it works well as it is now. Water is not going onto people's properties. Scott said he wonders if people not being able to park on the other side of the road will force people to park on Eric's side of the road, leading to homeowners having to defend their green space. Eric said if curbing is put in on the west side a greater volume of water will come further down the road. Elizabeth said it will go into people's driveways.

Jim said he wonders if the green strip is plantable. Can people add trees? Meredith said she would say it is plantable. It is within the town right of way

Gordy asked if the green strips will be something landowners will mow. Eric said he does not mind mowing the green strip himself. He would just request that the village not adopt the same policy as Plattsburgh. He doesn't want to shovel his own sidewalk.

Noel Dodge asked about the driveway that provides access to Checkerberry Field. Is there enough turning radius to get a vehicle with a trailer into that driveway? The field is mowed as a town field. How will the mowers get in there? Eric and Carleton said they park a trailer somewhere nearby and drive the mower down the driveway.

Jim MacDowell said he thinks it would be helpful to be able to see the Lamoureux and Dickinson conceptual drawing again either at a meeting or on the website.

The public hearing ended at 7:38. (*Elizabeth Emmons left.*)

3. ***Request for Excess Water Bill Adjustment at 20 McCuin Drive***

Meredith said Steve Engle submitted an excess water usage adjustment request. Steve Engle said last year he had a leaking pipe. He replaced the leaking section but recently there were more leaks. He replaced more pipe. Probably he should replace the whole thing. The pipe was rotted from the inside out. The water that leaked didn't go in the sewer. Meredith said his last excess water usage adjustment was more than 12 months ago. He is eligible for an adjustment based on usage.

Bob moved to adjust Steve Engel's sewer bill for 20 McCuin Drive to \$53.79 (the highest bill from the last 12 months) and to adjust his water bill to 97.74 (three times the average for the last 3 months) according to village policy, Brian seconded and the motion was passed.

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

Scott asked if we should add an item about next steps for the merger study and Gordy agreed.

5. ***Review and Approve Minutes of Trustee Meetings***

Gordy moved to approve the minutes of April 8, 2019 Phil seconded and the motion was passed.

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

The budget status report was reviewed. Meredith discussed possible reasons why purchased power is a little higher than budgeted. She said she can look into that and send an email about it.

Rosemary noted that Waterville has not yet sent its first installment for fire department services. She probably should check on that. She noted that the electric department paid all their rent for this year already so that we can pay for the new truck.

Bob moved to authorize signing the promissory note to borrow \$38,925 from Community National Bank at an interest rate of 2.75% for 5 years, with monthly payments of \$516.64, for a truck purchase, Scott seconded and the motion was passed.

Bob moved to approve the Resolution for Highway Equipment Borrowing authorizing the \$38,925 loan from Community National Bank, Scott seconded and the motion was passed.

Gordy moved to approve the Non-Arbitrage and Use of Process Certificate for Highway Equipment Borrowing, Scott seconded and the motion was passed.

Rosemary said the tax sale is scheduled for Wednesday at 10. There is still one property that will be for sale.

7. *Water/Wastewater Report and Action Items*

Meredith said we talked about having standard operating procedures related to the flood gates and last month we talked about incorporating procedures for the flood warning float. She and Dan developed an SOP. Whenever there is a flood watch or warning the flood gates will be installed. Dan said they will try to be proactive and install them on Friday if there is any chance of a flood watch or warning over the weekend. If the low level float goes off a staff member will respond and verify that the river is at that level, then notify Dan. Then Meredith will be notified. If Meredith is not available Troy will be notified and if he is not available Gordy will be notified.

Dan said when high river levels are due to rain it takes a long time for the river level to move between the low and high levels on the float. If there is an ice dam during the winter then if the water reaches the low level it will be all hands on deck. When the water reaches the high level Meredith will be notified and she will take over making phone calls after that. She will notify Eric Osgood, if he is not available she will notify Gordy, and if he is not available she will notify Arjay West. If the water has reached the highest level and appears to be rising rapidly employees should leave if they seem to be in danger and call 911, then notify Eric and Meredith (or Gordy if Meredith is not available.)

Scott said that the wording in the SOP “if safe to do so” (referring to installing flood gates) is weak and open to interpretation. Can we say “as per training?” Dan said even when the high water alarm activates the level is still 2 feet below the plant. Scott said the fire department has a swift water rescue team. He suggested having them be involved somehow as they have technical training on high water. Meredith suggested maybe we could say “if the high water alarm activates and the water is not rising rapidly.” Dan said he has told employees that if the high water alarm goes off and water is going over the road they should get out. Scott said he would like something more. Gordy said he thinks Arjay should be notified even if Gordy is available. He should be notified ahead of Gordy. Dan said water is not hitting Sterling Market or the water plant at the level of the highest float. It was agreed that Arjay should be called first, then Eric.

Phil moved to adopt the Flood Gates & High Water Early Warning System Standard Operating Procedures with the changes suggested, Bob seconded and the motion was passed.

Dan said we got our new wastewater treatment facility permit last August. We hoped and believed that our asset management plan met the requirement under that permit to do an engineering assessment of our system. But the permit language also included an engineering study of the distribution system and pump stations. We did not budget for that. We are asking if we can have an extension so we will not have an additional unbudgeted expense.

Phil asked about the cost of the study. Meredith said she is guessing it would be in the \$20,000 range.

Dan said he got a quote for removal of the cupola and the additional cost for rebuilding the center section. The quote to remove the roof was \$20,660 and the quote to build a new center section was \$9,950, for a total of \$30,610. He got another quote today that was \$37,000 for all the work, about \$7,000 more. That contractor estimated about the same price to tear off the roof but the amount for rebuilding was significantly more.

Meredith said if we approve the expense tonight we have some insurance requirements we have to check on. The total cost is a little above budget. **Bob moved to accept the bid from Lauredon Construction for \$30,600 for cupola removal, Scott seconded and the motion was passed.**

8. ***Foreman Report and Action Items***

Troy said the town has been allowed to use the village's tractor for roadside mowing. Recently a piece of equipment – a harrow – was purchased that can go on a three-point hitch. His understanding was that it would be used on the village tractor but it is too big. He talked to Brian today and found that the plan is not to use that equipment on the village tractor. There have been concerns about maintenance and wear on the tractor. Troy talked to Brian today and they agreed that the town and village would split the cost of new front tires for the tractor. Troy's understanding is that the town will purchase their own tractor.

Gordy said he and Meredith met with Eric and Brian and asked that if the town buys something to use on our equipment we be given the courtesy of knowing. The town uses the village tractor about four weeks out of the year. It saves them money. An issue was brought up about the amount that they are using it. They made us pay for road salt but wanted to use our equipment which belongs to the sewer department. He is trying to look out for the sewer ratepayers.

Troy said he uses the tractor once in a while, primarily in August for brush hogging. Meredith said the concern was the wear and tear on the tractor. Troy said they use it a lot on blacktop which is hard on it. He feels the equipment they use with it is oversized for it. For this year he believes they will use the village tractor but they will get their own within a year.

Bob asked if there is any compensation for their use of it. Troy said not currently. There was discussion about the town renting the tractor. Gordy said he brought up the idea of exchanging use of the tractor for salt. He doesn't feel the town or village manager needs to know about borrowing of small equipment; the foremen can just deal with it. But for a larger thing like this he feels that the board chairs deserve to know.

Phil asked what the value is of the tires that the town is going to pay for half of. Troy said he hasn't had time to research it. He would guess they would cost \$600 or \$700.

Scott asked how the town feels about the salt. Gordy said Brian and Eric suggested that for any large piece of equipment employees keep track of hours the equipment is used and then we can see if a piece is being used more than normal. Meredith said there was discussion about having a rental rate for our tractor and backhoe. Troy said we own 20% of the backhoe and we used it once in the past year. There was a comment made that it was used by the village in the winter and not washed but that is false. Meredith said if the village is part owner of the backhoe she feels it is not appropriate for the village to be charged for its use.

Phil asked what else we share. Troy said nothing else. He feels sharing doesn't work. He thinks the board agreed that the village would sweep the streets this year and then come up with a plan for next year. Meredith communicated that to Brian.

Bob brought up a concern with the town wearing out the village's equipment. Troy said that is his concern. Bob said he doesn't think it would be unfair to keep track of it. He wouldn't feel too bad if we did charge them for it this year.

Gordy said going into the winter Troy would have a log of hours and the town could decide if they want to get a bigger tractor. Meredith asked, so we would track usage this year and not charge for it so they will have a budget figure if they want to use it next year? Scott suggested bartering for road salt and if that doesn't work then we can charge them and pay for road salt. The board agreed.

Meredith said a few of Troy's employees expressed concerns about how they were feeling after working in the garage for a few hours. Troy said they are not in there for 8 hours straight but they may be there for a few hours and the next day they would have headaches. Scott took a look at the building and tried to figure out what chemicals they were using. Scott said mold-related illnesses usually result in hay fever symptoms. Their symptoms are not matching up with what would be expected from a moldy building. Endotoxins from mold spores can give headaches but when there is that much mold there are usually also sinus issues and watery eyes. He looked at chemicals that are used and there is nothing that specifically causes a headache. There is one chemical that is on the state's radar. We only use it in an aerosol can. There will be a recommendation to find another degreaser to replace it. Everything else checked out fine. Besides carbon monoxide from equipment starting up there is not a lot there that would cause headaches in his professional opinion, but an engine can fill a space with carbon monoxide quickly. He suggested that Troy have the employees keep a diary of how long they are in the building, when they get headaches and how long the headaches take to go away after they leave. If this continues we can have someone from the state come in and do a building assessment. They will put together a testing protocol and test. If anything that does not meet OSHA requirements is identified they would ask us to fix it within a reasonable time. Everything seems compliant with standards. He wouldn't worry about someone from the state coming in. He will give Troy and Meredith the name of the chemical that he suggests replacing. He thinks the state will start regulating it heavily and there are alternatives.

Bob asked about exhaust fans. Troy said there aren't any. If employees are going to run an engine inside for more than a few minutes they always open the doors. He bought a couple of carbon monoxide detectors and they haven't gone off. Bob said he thinks an exhaust fan would take care of it.

Scott said he thinks keeping a log will help narrow down when employees get headaches and what chemicals they were using prior to that. Testing by the state is free through the business assistance program. Scott cautioned about using fans especially if they go into the roof. The employee is still in the path between the source of admissions and the fan so it may not lower exposure much.

Meredith said some of the way we have paid on-call pay in the past hasn't been correct. There are requirements in the Fair Labor Standards Act. In the past, the year's worth of on-call pay has been spread out evenly so every week each employee gets 4 hours a week even though they're not on call each week. But it is a requirement that the employee must be paid in the period when on-call

work actually was performed. Our on-call schedule is different from the pay schedule. So if an employee is on call they will get paid for that in two different pay periods. We will have to make changes in how we record and pay on call pay. We won't pay employees any more but we will shift how employees get paid. We will stay within what was budgeted. Troy, Rosemary and Meredith will figure out changes to timesheets.

We also will have to pay two years of back pay because we did not calculate the overtime rate properly. On-call pay is added to wages for calculating overtime pay. We have already started the process of calculating back pay. The Department of Labor wants us to complete the calculations by June 7. Gordy said this applies to our former sewer plant employees also. Meredith said she has some correspondence from our attorney on this subject that she will share during executive session.

Kyle Nuse raised a question about the grass strip on Railroad Street which takes a beating every year. Two years ago the village bought materials and the fire department and Boy Scouts seeded and watered the strip. The town has a hydroseeder and Brian Story suggested that it may be more effective and faster to use that. If the town is willing to use it to do the work we could pay for the materials. Meredith is not sure if they would want to be reimbursed for their labor time. She thinks we could at least offer to pay for materials if they use the hydroseeder on the green strip. Maybe they can do it on their way back to the garage from somewhere else.

Phil said he thought we talked about putting a "no parking" sign on Railroad Street. Meredith said we discussed starting gently. She put something in the newsletter. Maybe she will mention it again in the next newsletter. We were hesitant to flood the area with more signs since we are trying to make it look nicer. Phil said he thinks if we put flowers by the curb people will not run over them. Meredith said she can ask Brian if the town is agreeable to using its hydroseeder if we agree to pay for the materials.

Scott asked, there is no responsibility from homeowners? Phil said the buildings in that area are all rentals. Some landlords have cleaned up their properties. The board agreed that Meredith should talk to Brian as discussed.

Meredith reviewed the summer work plan she, Troy and Dan put together. It doesn't include all her administrative tasks or the normal activities of Troy's and Dan's crews.

Meredith said by July 1 all municipalities in Vermont are required to have a conflict of interest policy. VLCT put together a model policy. The town adopted it with one addition. They included an article stating that they will notify the village if they make changes to their policy. (*Dan left at 9:28.*) The idea was that we would have a similar article in our policy. A draft policy was included in the board packet. Meredith recommended adopting it.

Gordy said it is not enforceable. It is only a guideline. The voters can vote a board member out if there is a major conflict. **It was moved and seconded to adopt the conflict of interest policy as presented.** Meredith said we can't do much about an elected official but if the individual is employed in some cases they can be removed. We would ask for a legal opinion. **The motion was passed**

Meredith said there is general consensus that the foundation of the powerhouse building is relatively stable. The cost estimate to remove the building without removing and disposing of the building foundation is \$264,612. The cost for removing the foundation is high. She thinks there is general agreement that we would be looking at the option that does not include removing the foundation. She asked KAS to tell her what their costs would be. NRC is doing the actual demolition and removal but we would like KAS to be the project manager. They charge a 10% overhead charge plus time and materials for management oversight. Their total estimated cost would be about \$19,000. She also asked NRC to give us a quote for installing a fence. They gave us two quotes – one for a short-term fence and one for more permanent chain link fence which she thinks is the way we want to go. The cost for that is almost \$4,000. The total of all those expenses is about \$314,000. Tonight in executive session she will have comments from our attorney about the contract language and liability but she is looking for authorization to sign a contract pending working out liability and contract language and getting attorney approval on that.

Phil asked when they will remove the foundation. Meredith said she thinks it can stay there. Phil said he thought the idea was that we could make that into a useful space. Scott said he thinks final remediation will be hard because we don't know what is underneath. The foundation might be heavily contaminated or might be fine. Meredith said if we do not have it removed now we will not have to pay fees to transport it to Michigan. Scott said we can potentially put a deck on top of the foundation. With the foundation gone we might have an unstable bank. He thinks it would be great to use the foundation. Meredith said we don't know if we can yet.

Bob authorized Meredith to spend up to \$325,000 for powerhouse building demolition and removal, Scott seconded and the motion was passed.

Meredith said Brian Story and his wife are purchasing the house at 933 VT 100C, which is a former restaurant. They have requested an amended sewer permit for the property. This is a change of use permit to convert the former restaurant/multi-family property back to a single family property. Because the property is already connected to the system and no physical changes are being made Meredith proposes that the board issue preliminary and final approval at the same time. The town is getting almost 800 gallons per day back in the town sewer service allocation as a result of the reduction in permit capacity. A condition for the permit is that the Storys notify the village if they remove the grease trap or water storage currently on the property so that we know that work will need to be done if anyone ever wants to bring the property back to restaurant status.

Scott moved to give preliminary and final approval for an amended sewer permit for 933 VT 100C changing the capacity to 210 gallons per day Scott, Phil seconded and the motion was passed.

A municipal exit sign was knocked down during the winter. Gordy said Brian Story and Eric said the town would take care of it.

Gordy said the village owns the village green but the town wants to do some beautification work on it and fund the work. If we contribute anything toward this work it has to come from the \$2,500 we budgeted for work on Main Street. Gordy showed the board plans provided by Andrea Blaisdell of the landscaping proposed for the village green. There are a couple of different options. One costs \$1,500 and the other one costs \$1,900. Gordy suggested that the board could authorize Troy to

represent the village in meeting with Andrea and letting Meredith know if she can tell the town to proceed.

Troy asked if the plants that will be put in are annual flowers. Gordy said they are shrubs. Troy said if the shrubs could be moved farther toward the center of the green it would be better for his crew because it would give them more room to put snow when they plow. Gordy suggested that Troy relate that to Andrea. Meredith said she thinks Troy needs to talk to Andrea and have her revise her plan so the shrubs will survive. Gordy said the berm proposed in one of the alternatives might make water run toward Kyle's building. Troy said water already runs in that direction and creates a problem there. The board agreed that Troy can talk to Andrea and give the green light for the town to go ahead. Meredith said if the town can't fund the project 100% then we will need to talk about how much to budget for it.

Gordy said Andrea also has plans for redoing municipal building landscaping. He showed pictures of her ideas.

Scott said we should make sure that she calls Dig Safe before any work is done on the village green. Meredith said the town beautification committee will be her overseer. She asked if she Andrea has insurance. Gordy said he doesn't know. Meredith said we don't let people work on our property if they don't have insurance. Gordy said he will call her to ask about that.

Meredith said the idea for the \$2,500 that was budgeted for beautification was that we would hire Peter Moynihan again and give him more money and better direction for better results. We had intended to talk with the selectboard tonight about how much to put toward that this year but we didn't have time for that conversation.

Meredith said a bill currently under consideration in the Vermont legislature includes a requirement that the Public Utility Commission conduct a study this summer looking at the feasibility of electric utilities providing broadband service. VPPSA anticipates that this bill will pass and the study will move forward. That could be an unfunded mandate from the state. When she asked at a VPPSA meeting if there would be funding for this study the answer she got was that most likely utilities would have to increase their rates to pay for it.

The transportation bill includes several provisions related to electric vehicles. One calls for a per kilowatt-hour tax for when electric vehicles are being charged. But there are ways that people could get around it such as charging with an extension cord at home and there is the question of how we would get the information needed to collect the tax. All the state agencies involved are recommending that the best way is to have utilities collect the tax. Electric vehicles don't pay the gas tax so the purpose of this new tax is to help replace lost gas tax revenue in the transportation fund. Electric utilities suggested a higher registration fee for electric vehicles but DMV said they could not handle that administratively.

VELCO has been studying ways to solve the SHEI constraint in the Northeast part of the state. Reconductoring portions of the B20 and the B22 transmission lines has risen to the top of the solutions list and it appears that GMP is moving forward to begin that work. We are partial owner of the line and normally would be responsible for 15% of cost but at this point GMP is covering the cost so Meredith does not see any big financial impact to us.

9. Executive Session – Personnel Matter

Phil moved to enter executive session for a personnel matter under the provisions of 1 V.S.A. § 313(4) with Rosemary and Meredith invited to remain. The motion was seconded and passed and the board entered executive session at 10:03. The trustees came out of executive session at 10:17. No action was taken.

10. Executive Session – Personnel Matter

At 10:18 Phil made a motion to enter executive session for a personnel matter under the provisions of 1 V.S.A. § 313(3) and Brian seconded. The motion passed and the board entered executive session. The board came out of executive session at 10:27. No action was taken

11. Executive Session – Attorney-Client Communications

At 10:19, Scott made a motion to find that premature general public knowledge regarding confidential attorney-client communications would clearly place the village at a substantial disadvantage and Brian seconded. The motion passed. Scott made a motion to enter executive session for confidential attorney-client communications under Title 1, Section 313(1)(F) and Bob seconded. The motion passed. The trustees came out of executive session at 10:40.

12. Merger Study Next Steps

The trustees discussed the conversation about the merger study proposals at the joint meeting with the selectboard earlier that evening. Because the selectboard gave the town administrator different and somewhat conflicting direction than the direction the trustees gave the village manager, the trustees directed the village manager to hold off on contacting any of the merger study proposers until both boards can meet again. Scott suggested that we invite all three proposers to meet with both boards to discuss their proposals since he felt that worked well for the IT proposals.

13. Adjourn

Bob moved and Brian seconded to adjourn at 10:49 and the motion was passed.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths