

JOHNSON VILLAGE TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
TUESDAY, MAY 9, 2017

Present:

Trustees: Gordon Smith, Scott Meyer, David Goddette, Bob Sweetser

Others: Meredith Birkett, Rosemary Audibert, Troy Dolan, Tom Elwood, Dan Cole, Will King, Kyle Nuse, Rick Aupperlee

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. Call to Order

Gordy called the meeting to order at 6:00.

2. Changes, Additions to Proposed Agenda

Meredith said Mike Timbers is not planning to come but the board can still discuss his issue.

Meredith would like to add a request for funding from LEDC. They request funding every year and it is up to us to decide if we want to contribute and how much. Rosemary said usually we contribute \$250 or \$500. She thinks it was \$250 last year.

Meredith said #8 should be an action item. She needs the board to authorize her to submit the Northern Borders Grant application and to authorize Gordy to sign a related letter.

She also wants to add a request from Lamoille Valley Bike Tours to a facility use permit for Old Mill Park and authorization to sign the host town agreement for the compost facility.

Scott said a hypodermic needle was right below the pump house on the shoulder of Clay Hill Road. He picked it up. The sheriff's department said it was the only one found in Johnson.

3. Review and Approve Minutes of Trustee Meetings

Bob moved to approve the minutes of the April 4, 2017 annual village meeting; the April 10, 2017 trustee meeting; the April 10, 2017 joint trustee-selectboard meeting; the April 17, 2017 joint trustee-selectboard meeting; and the April 18, 2017 special meeting, Scott seconded and the motion was passed.

4. Treasurer's Report & Review and Approve Bills and Warrants

Dave asked if street sweeping will be done by commencement. Troy said he doubts it. The hydraulic control on the sweeper broke and a new one has been ordered. Most of Main Street has been done.

Rosemary said a couple of years ago we set aside \$9K to pay VEC for dispatching. They have never sent us a bill, so does the board want to undo that payable? The board said yes.

Scott asked if we have a project manager for the sewer extension project to make sure it is done properly. Meredith said John Grenier, the engineer, will come in to inspect the work. We don't have a specific third party project manager. Scott asked who is liable if there is a problem. Meredith said John will be liable for what he reviews. Tom said John will witness pressure tests of manholes and lines. Tom is going to do some documentation. Scott asked if there is any retainer on the contractor. Meredith said there is no retainer but there is a one-year warranty.

David moved to authorize Gordy to sign the release of lien for Donna Nease's property at 635 100C, Scott seconded and the motion was passed.

Rosemary said the tax sale will be May 12 at 10:00.

5. *Dan Cole – Solar Proposal*

Dan Cole said he contacted some solar companies to see if two lots he had would be appropriate for a solar installation and they agreed his land would be a good location. He is here to see if the village is interested in purchasing power from a solar project on his land. The village would be the purchaser of power with an option to buy.

Will King of SolarSense said his company develops large scale renewable energy projects. In this case they would develop the project for Dan Cole to be the owner-operator. Power could be sold to the village for a fixed rate of 10.5 cents for the first 10 years; then the rate would go up 1 cent per year after that. In one scenario, the village just purchases the power. There would be no other cost to the village. In another scenario the village would at some point become the owner-operator. Dan and his group have to own the system for 6 years for IRS purposes. In year 7, the village would have the option, but not the obligation, to purchase the system at fair market value. The IRS doesn't allow them to fix the purchase price in the contract.

Scott asked if we would purchase the land as well, or purchase just the solar array and lease the land. Dan said he would prefer to sell both the land and the solar array but both options are available.

Scott asked if the property is served by VEC. Dan said no, it is on the village system.

Will said they arrived at a fair market value figure of about \$3.5 million. With debt service and annual operating expenses, the cost of power would be about 9.67 cents per kWh. What happens with the renewable energy credits (RECs) is negotiable. They assumed that while they own the system they would own the RECs. With RECs and miscellaneous benefits of owning the system, the cost of power would come down to 6.17 cents per kWh. Over 25 years, during which time they assume the inverter would need to be replaced, the estimated overall cost of power is 8.24 cents per kWh.

The system would be 2 MW AC and 2.8 MW DC, about 3.5 million kWh per year. The panels have a 25 year production warranty. They are warranted to be at 80% or more of original capacity during that period.

Scott asked if this fits with the state mandate for renewable energy. Meredith said yes. It can qualify for Tier 2 and excess can be moved into Tier 3.

Gordy said there is a large cost to extend 3-phase power to the site. Dan and Will said they assume they will pay interconnect costs. They realize 3-phase power has to come up the road. Gordy said the capacity of our substation is another issue.

Gordy asked about warranties. Dan and Will said the panels have a 25-year warranty and the inverters have a 10-year standard warranty which can be extended. They could provide ongoing operations and maintenance if the village wanted them to or the village could do it.

Meredith said she envisions putting this back on the agenda next month. In the meantime she will talk to VPPSA about it. *(Dan and Will left at 6:39.)*

6. Gulf Hill Storm Drain

Meredith said she, Tom, Troy, Brian Story, Brian Krause, and people from VTrans and ANR met to discuss the excess water situation affecting Mike Timbers' property. She and Brian Story have since done research to make sure there is no town or village ownership or responsibility. They did not find any.

Scott asked where the water is coming from. Meredith said there is a catch basin in the yard at 301 Lower Main where water is backing up. The water is coming from springs and brooks and running down the bank from Katy-Win. Tom said there is an almost year-round brook that runs into a culvert, which runs into a storm drain, which runs into clay tile. Gordy asked, isn't the culvert plugged too, with sand and silt? Tom said yes, and it is caved in a bit.

Meredith said she told VTrans it looked like there was no responsibility on the part of the town or village. The state feels it is the responsibility of the property owner. They found a past letter to Mike Timbers saying they would let him connect to the state system but would take no responsibility for ongoing maintenance. Meredith forwarded VTrans's letter to Mike.

Gordy said he doesn't think we should have Troy or Tom do anything or we could be seen as assuming ownership.

Scott asked what will prevent this from being an ongoing issue if the owner doesn't have money to fix the problem. The area affected is an entrance to our community.

Troy said one issue is that the state receivers are too high. Meredith said we strongly suggested that fixing that problem should be a next step. They acknowledged that Main Street could use another layer of pavement but that probably won't happen until 2020. We can keep pressuring VTrans on that. Meredith can follow up with VTrans and ask where on their project list lowering the catch basins is. Tom and Troy said the state should address the issue and do something to make the catch basins take water. Scott said we might want to tag it as a safety issue.

Dave asked if we know the cost to fix the issue. Meredith said Hartigan will charge \$1000 to clean out the drain. Tom said he thinks the clay tile is collapsed so more needs to be done than cleaning out the drain. Dave asked, since this is at the entrance to our community, is there any assistance we can provide to help the homeowner solve the problem?

Bob said if the catch basins were taking water as they are supposed to we wouldn't have this problem. He feels the state is liable and should do whatever they have to do to prevent this. Their catch basins are too high to pick up the water.

Scott said he feels that is only treating the symptom. The cause is failed drain function. He would rather take care of the issue. He agrees with Dave that perhaps we can provide some kind of assistance. Dave said we have the revolving loan fund. This may qualify for that.

Tom said he thinks cleaning the storm drain and fixing the pipe is just the start of addressing the issue. There is a silting problem from the bank that is leading to the problems.

Meredith said she wants to do some research on whether any state grants are available that could be used to address the issue.

7. *WWTF Chief Operator Report and Action Items*

Tom said all wastewater samples taken this month were good. The WR-43 and EMR were submitted to the state. There was one callout for soap foam on the wastewater tank. Tom did ongoing maintenance. He renewed the special waste renewal form for Casella so we can dump our sludge at the Coventry landfill. Casella is having Tom do more testing every year. Tom showed the board the results of the annual metals sampling for the state. We are below the unacceptable level. A siphon alarm went off twice during normal hours. We had Hartigan clean it. We usually use Morrisville's rodder but they have not been returning our calls.

Tom attended a pre-construction meeting with Dirt Tech and the state. They are aiming for a June 1 construction date for the sewer extension project.

The monthly water samples were all good. There were no callouts for the water plant. Tom and Steve restored service to Ken Phelps and Lamoille View Cemetery. They have been repairing curb stops. Consumer confidence reports went out in the mail.

The Cabin Cove leak got repaired, but when they repaired it Manosh left the curb stop open to the house. We notified the owner they left the valve open.

Meredith said we have been continuing to work with LRSWMD. We came up with a plan for both of us to submit our permit applications to the state at the same time so they can merge them. The permit application fee is \$1000. We did not budget for that. LRSWMD is anxious to get on the site and start doing improvements. Meredith proposes to sign the host town agreement, adding a provision that we can cancel the agreement if there is any reason that their permit hampers our ability to get our permit. The agreement has been reviewed by their attorney and our attorney. She just wants to add a sentence stating that if we don't get our permit because of their use we can cancel the agreement.

David moved to authorize Gordy to sign the host town agreement with Lamoille Regional Solid Waste Management District with the amendment discussed and the motion was seconded and passed.

Meredith said Johnson State College has had a leak for many months. Based on usage it looks like it goes back to November, maybe earlier. Tom said he reached out to Woody Dionne several times over the past 4 or 5 months about water usage there. He said he would look for leaks. They happened to catch some leaks when the snow melted. JSC has asked if we can adjust their sewer bill. They are pretty confident the leaking water didn't go into the sewer.

Meredith said our policy for adjustments doesn't envision this specific scenario. She thought of two possible options. One is to take the highest usage in the previous 12 months before the leak and apply it to the months since the leak. The other is to apply the average of the last 12 months, which would include months with and without the leak.

Scott asked when we first notified them that it was likely they had a leak. Tom said he thinks probably October 2016. They have had several leaks and have fixed some. Scott said the village notified them that they probably had a leak and they didn't deal with it and now they are asking for help. Tom said they still haven't fixed the leak. Meredith said she thinks no adjustment would be given until they had fixed any leaks. Scott asked what the answer would be if a resident requested an adjustment under these circumstances. Meredith said she thinks it would be an uphill battle for them to get an adjustment. Tom said we could use this for some leverage. He has wanted to do a smoke test on their sewer for a while. He strongly suspects that some of their roof drains and other drains are hooked into the sewer. The only way to find out is a smoke test. We could give an adjustment if they agree to a smoke test. He thinks that could save us a lot of money.

Dave said he would like to work with them in the spirit of cooperation as they are one of the largest employers in Lamoille County. Bob said the water definitely didn't go in the sewer. Dave said he thinks we can work with them if they are willing to let Tom do the testing he wants.

Meredith said she can't imagine us adjusting prior to 2017. If we are going to adjust she would recommend using the 2017-only figure.

Scott said he would like to have them agree to have Tom do a smoke test and in the future when they are notified that we think they have a leak he would like them to respond within 24 hours if they are notified on a business day. He would like a more structured process for notifying them.

Meredith suggested that a third condition should be that no credit will be offered until we see evidence that they have the leak fixed. She thinks using the average of the last 12 months is more in the spirit of the policy.

Scott said he wants a formal document to notify them of a possible leak, with a specified turnaround time for them to get back to us. Dave said we should have a process for any customer notification of possible problem so that we have it documented. Scott suggested giving them a 2 or 3 day turnaround and if they don't respond in that time we won't give them a break on their bill.

Scott moved to consider the sewer bill credit requested by Johnson State College with the stipulation that they respond in an appropriate amount of time to future notifications of possible leaks, that they allow a smoke test of their sewer system, and that no credit be issued until after the leak is fixed, Dave seconded and the motion was passed.

8. *Foreman Report and Action Items*

Troy would like to replace the 2012 F350 he drives. He thinks now is a good time to trade it in, while we can still get a good trade-in value. He is interested in replacing it with a Toyota Tundra. He got quotes and that is the truck that had the lowest cost. The dealer offering the best price will do all maintenance for 3 years at no cost to us. He feels we would pay less to maintain this vehicle than we do for the current vehicle. We don't need a one-ton pickup. We budgeted \$43K for a replacement truck. We assumed an estimated trade-in value of about \$17K so that leaves \$26K to

spend on the truck and a plow. The best quote he got was \$16,500. A plow will cost \$4,400 is cost of plow. Figuring in a cost of \$2K for accessories, the total cost would be about \$3100 under the amount budgeted.

Dave moved to authorize purchase of a Toyota Tundra to replace the 2012 F350 pickup, Scott seconded and the motion was passed.

Troy said all the right of way cutting for the Gould Hill solar project was done last month. He plans to do all the interconnection work this month. He has scheduled one outage and will need at least two more. The outages affect probably 10 customers. The biggest of them is Dan Bradley. Troy will coordinate with him to try to minimize the impact on his business.

We participated in the ISO New England spring voltage reduction test. There were no issues.

His crew has continued right of way cutting on 100C. They set a pole for the new streetlight on St. John St. They worked with VTrans on street sweeping at the end of April. The majority of Main Street is swept. It was hard to sweep. There was a lot of mud due to the damp weather. They lost the hydraulic motor on the sweeper and they are waiting for a new one. They cleaned up the Village Green and worked around the municipal building to clean up damage from plowing. All village fire extinguishers had their required 6 month inspections.

Troy met with the Nadeaus to see if our current electrical infrastructure could handle their facility. We could handle it if they do not increase usage. Troy has been working with Alan Lehouillier on their solar array. They are making fast progress. Most of it should be put together in the next couple of weeks. Troy and Alan have determined that instead of replacing the overhead line we will put in primary underground to feed the array. Troy was contacted by Green Lantern's engineers. They are hoping to have their array finished by the middle of June. Scott asked how the neighbors are with that project. Troy said he has been working with one person who had concerns and he thinks it is okay now. Meredith said she will notify customers of the planned outage.

Troy suggested putting up a fence to identify the edge of the municipal building lawn where it adjoins the parking lot. It would give a guideline when plowing and he thinks it would improve the appearance of the building. He was thinking of a fence like the one at the cemetery. The board agreed he should get a quote.

Rosemary asked if the water hole in the parking lot can be fixed. Troy said he will bring some asphalt grindings to fill it.

Dave asked if there is something we can do with the flower box by the sign at the entrance to the village. Troy said we would need someone to plant and maintain flowers. Meredith said someone comes to the municipal building to take care of the flower beds. She will do some research into hardy, drought-resistant flowers. We have some money in the budget for beautification. Dave suggested cleaning the box out before the JSC commencement.

Kyle asked if Railroad Street will be swept after the new motor for the sweeper arrives. Troy said yes. Kyle asked if the village will do anything with the grass. Troy said no, we haven't done that on the side streets. Kyle said she would love to see grass replanted and spruced up. Gordy said we felt

we had to draw the line somewhere. Because of the Main Street money, the line was drawn at Main Street. Kyle said she sees a lot of tourism coming off the rail trail. Dave asked how much it would cost to fix up the grass on Railroad Street. Troy said he would have to figure it up. It would probably mean 2 days of labor plus materials. Gordy said if we did that on Railroad Street then we would have to be ready to do other streets. Scott said he feels it is a homeowner responsibility. In some other places, homeowners are required to shovel the sidewalk in front of their property. He doesn't feel the village should spend money sprucing up curbside grass when there are people who aren't taking care of their own property and drive on the grass. He feels property owners should step up.

Kyle said many owners don't live in their properties and the tenants may not be engaged. That is the root of the problem. She agrees that some of what we are talking about is bandaiding a bigger problem. There is a certain amount of damage done by the Bobcat that clears the sidewalks. The wheels are wider than the sidewalk. She feels part of it is a village duty. Troy said the village crew did the best they could. This Bobcat was a special order intended to fit on the sidewalk better than the standard model but it is hard to determine where the sidewalk is with snow on it.

Dave asked if Troy could get a price on seed and hay for Railroad Street if he can find labor to reseed. Gordy said then people will ask us to mow it. He does not agree with doing this, but he is okay with getting prices. He thinks Main Street is the most important street we have. Bob said if we do Railroad Street we will have to do others. Kyle said she hears that but we are trying to brand our village and get people to come here. She thinks we need to maintain our village and as a resident if that means our taxes go up a few cents that is all right with her. Bob said he thinks we have more important things to deal with. Dave said he will work on this. He understands that others will ask for the same thing. Kyle said if people see us maintaining grass maybe some will step up and do a project of their own. Dave he will see if he can find help to do the work if Troy gives him a price. He is in favor of beautifying the community.

Scott said he has seen that Morrisville rakes, cleans and reseeds damage done by their plows. He would be interested to see what they budget for that. He might go along with spring cleanup and then he feels the rest should be up to the landowner. David said there would have to be an ordinance.

Meredith said Tom had talked about adding the water plant and the Clay Hill booster station to the mowing contract. The cost would be \$1000 for the season, which is about \$60/week. Tom feels his time can be better spent doing other things. We have no plans to sell the mower we have. Troy said we have used it for mowing around the substation. Meredith said we budgeted \$1250 for that mowing and some trash pickup. If the board concurs she will add those areas to the mowing contract. We can see how it goes and do not necessarily have to do the same thing next year. The board agreed to that.

9. Village Manager Report and Action Items

We got an application for a change in water and wastewater allocation from Sharon Mansfield, who is adding a second apartment to a garage. She has submitted the application and fees. It is a shared line, but she is not changing any physical connections, just changing the allocation. The water allocation will increase to 675 and the wastewater allocation will increase to 490.

David moved to approve the preliminary water and wastewater allocation request from Sharon Mansfield, Bob seconded and the motion was passed.

Meredith said we got the first invoice from Stanley Wescom for municipal building repairs. It was about \$12K. It included 3 weeks of labor and she thinks all the materials except the siding. He has to pay for all the wood tomorrow. He hopes to get a check tomorrow in advance of the selectboard formally reviewing and approving the invoice. She told him she thought we could provide a check for the whole amount tomorrow with fairly high confidence that the selectboard will reimburse us for half the amount.

Meredith got quotes from a local electrician. Eric Osgood had noted that the lights upstairs in the municipal building are often left on. The electrician suggested timers rather than motion sensors. Timers would be less expensive. When a light is turned on it would automatically go off after a certain amount of time. She thinks we would want to set a fairly long time like 6 hours. The estimate of \$4250 also includes labor for adding a light outside the assessor's office. We didn't specifically budget for this but we had some money in the budget for improvements to the building. This cost would ideally be split with the town.

It was moved and seconded to pay half the cost of putting in timers and a light outside the assessor's office in the municipal building and the motion was passed.

Gordy said he wants to talk to people looking for service awards about the grass strips.

Meredith reminded the board that last month we talked about the idea of adjusting the Delta Dental plan to opt in for dependents up to age 26. The dependent does not need to be in college. Additional cost to the village kicks in only when an employee's youngest child passes 18. Before that, if they already have a family plan there is no additional cost. The additional cost would be about \$606 per year.

There is also a new orthodontic rider available. Braces are only available to people under 18. There would be an added premium for everyone if we got that rider, whether or not they were interested in orthodontic care. There would be no extra cost for those on a single-person plan as the person covered would be over 18. For employees on a 2-person plan there would be a small extra amount. For those on a family plan there would be an additional cost of \$116 per year. Based on the current plan membership there would be an increase of \$408 per year. Meredith does not know if any employees are interested in this. Before asking them she wanted to find out what board members thought. We have joint employees so any decision would be contingent on what the selectboard does.

Gordy asked, if we don't do it this year can we put it in the benefit packages when we address raises and benefits next year? Rosemary asked, if the village didn't want to pay the extra cost could it be an additional employee deduction? Meredith said she assumes so, but the orthodontic coverage is for all or none. Everyone gets the burden.

Meredith said she thinks if we opt in for dependents up to age 26 the maximum cost to us would be \$1200. Our plan year starts July 1, so this year we would pay only half of that additional unbudgeted cost.

Scott asked how we do this for joint employees without sitting down with the selectboard. Meredith said she and Brian discussed that each board would decide its opinion and then see what the other board does. If one board does not concur we would not do it.

Rosemary said currently no joint employees have kids under 18. Only town employees have kids under 18.

Gordy said he doesn't like giving raises or benefits in the middle of the year unless it's something mandatory. Through the school system he and his wife will be paying more and getting less. If an employee wanted to pay for the difference out of pocket he would be more in favor. Meredith said she thinks that is possible for dependents up to 26

Meredith said we had budgeted for a 3% increase. The actual increase will be 2%. Scott asked if the extra cost still falls within the amount budgeted. Meredith said she didn't do that math but she thinks \$1200 is more than the difference between 2% and 3%.

Dave said he feels we should make no change until next year. Gordy asked, can the employee pay for it? Dave said we could let them if they want to. We couldn't do that for orthodontic coverage. Rosemary said for adding dependents up to age 26 there won't be any additional cost for an employee who already has family coverage. Meredith said the difference in cost between a 2-person plan and a family plan is \$606.

Bob said he thinks orthodontic coverage ought to wait until next year. Scott said he is on the fence. Dave said the way he looks at it, our budget is set. Scott said he would have no issue with it if the new cost was within the 3% increase budgeted. One part of him says everyone he knows is paying more for health insurance. He thinks the town and village do a good job of keeping our benefit package nice compared to what most Vermonters have. That is why he is on the fence. Gordy said he agrees with Dave; we have everything budgeted for the year. Dave said in November let's discuss this for next year. It is not that he doesn't care about the employees. Gordy said he agrees with giving employees the option to buy the additional coverage.

Dave moved to approve the village opting in for Delta Dental coverage for dependents up to age 26, provided the employee would be responsible for any additional premium cost. He asked if this is subject to town approval. Meredith said she assumes so, but if the village is okay with it there could be different coverage for joint employees. One board member brought up the fact that no joint employees have kids. **Scott seconded and the motion was passed.**

Meredith distributed copies of the latest revision of the Hazard Mitigation Plan. This plan has to be done in order for the town and village to be able to receive FEMA funding. It is being updated by LCPC on our behalf. FEMA submitted comments on an earlier draft and Lea Kilvadyova tried to respond to their concerns. This version has updates made since got it back from FEMA.

We need to talk about prioritization of mitigation projects the village could undertake. One is using the village revolving loan fund for building improvements geared toward flood resiliency. Is the board still comfortable with that concept? Board members said yes. Meredith said we would have to update our loan policy to include this as a permitted use. Another thing listed is that form based

code is being considered. Meredith has to look to see if there is anything in the code related to the floodplain. The projects suggested in this plan are not required. They are things we would do to improve resiliency if we had the funds. Other things listed are developing evacuation and notification procedures and educating residents about disaster preparedness.

Gordy asked if it is redundant to have evacuation planning listed for the town and the village. It was agreed to change the wording to indicate this would be joint town/village planning.

Meredith said a mitigation action she added was implementing backup transmission service. Another item already listed as a joint town/village action is upgrading existing stormwater management systems.

Gordy noted that the town will have its own loan fund. Meredith said the wording about using the loan fund could be changed to include both the town and the village.

Meredith said she tried to prioritize 3 village-specific mitigation projects. Based on feasibility, cost and administrative capacity, she listed updating borrowing guidelines for the revolving loan fund as #1, implementing backup transmission service as #2 and upgrading stormwater management systems as #3. The board agreed with that prioritization.

Gordy moved to approve the revised Hazard Mitigation Plan as discussed plus the project prioritization, Scott seconded and the motion was passed.

Meredith said Brian Story has been going for a while to Green Mountain Byway meetings. She attended the most recent one. The program designates scenic byways and makes participating communities eligible for state tourism funding and projects. There would be a benefit to including Johnson, but also an associated cost. Communities that are part of the byway have to pay to update the byway plan. The cost would probably be several thousand dollars. Brian has talked about fundraising. We will have to decide if we want to participate.

David asked what comes with this. Meredith said they are working on developing Google maps. If someone goes to the state tourism site the maps would show businesses and the site could come up with itineraries based on interests – for instance, it could show all wineries. It could bring attention to Johnson businesses. There will be marketing pushes. Some print materials will be available at rest stops. She thinks our cost will be about \$5K.

Gordy asked how much we are paying for the marketing work we are doing with the town. Meredith said that is a \$5K shared cost. Gordy asked how this compares. Is one better? Should we be doing one and not the other? Meredith said she would definitely prioritize our own efforts. She doesn't think we would actually have to produce the money until early 2018.

Gordy asked if the work being done with the marketing grant could include looking into this and prioritizing this and other options for marketing our community. Dave said he feels this would be low in priority. He feels focusing on our own marketing efforts is more important. This would be a great opportunity down the road but there are other priorities we need to focus on. He would suggest reaching out to see if other organizations are interested in helping us out with the cost. Meredith said we may be able to have those conversations before we have to commit.

Scott said he wants more detail. Is the business community involved? Is there input from them? Meredith said that is a good question. The program is being managed by a small committee. It seems like there has to be localized business outreach. She doesn't know that businesses are terribly well represented on the committee. The project is transitioning from being federally funded to locally funded.

Scott said he is concerned about what might happen if we don't jump on this and other communities around us do. If they are all showcased and we have nothing, we will be skipped. Dave said he sees that concern, but he wants to learn more. Scott agreed. He wants to learn what we would get for our money. Dave said there are things we should be doing on our own. Scott said he doesn't want Johnson to be left out when tech savvy people are looking for information on what to do in Lamoille County.

Meredith said she can ask the head of the committee to give a presentation to the board next month.

Meredith said she talked to GMP last week about the cost of backup service. They are saying it can't be free. It falls under the Schedule 21 tariff for subtransmission service. There are fixed costs we would pay every month and variable costs based on actual energy from GMP at their peak time. The fixed costs should be \$700-800 per month. In a month where we used 2500 kWh of GMP power during the hourly peak the cost would increase to \$1416. The cost depends on how many times we hit the peak during a 12-month period because they use a 12-month rolling average. If we used their power every month the cost could be \$58K, a little lower than what we were paying when we were taking their transmission service. We would probably budget about \$10K per year.

Gordy said those costs sound favorable. Meredith said she wants to have VPPSA review this information. If the board is okay with the costs she can move forward with spending on engineering, hardware, etc. necessary for the interconnection. She feels \$10K a year seems reasonable to have that reliability for our customers.

Scott asked how this works with our safety and health policy. Troy said each time switching needs to be done a new set of orders are written. We coordinate with GMP. Scott asked how it works if we have stricter safety and health practices than GMP. Troy said he sees their practices as being very similar to ours. They have very strict protocols. Any switching done on their system would be done by their employees. We would only be working on our own system under our own safety rules.

Meredith said the original draft agreement for backup service was a 3-party agreement between Johnson, Morrisville and GMP. She can reach out to Craig Myotte and let him know we are still pursuing this. She doesn't know if he will want to participate.

Gordy said he thinks this should be the number one priority for the electric department.

Meredith said she will verify with VPPSA that she is understanding the cost information correctly.

Meredith submitted a letter of intent to apply for a Northern Borders Grant for a 50 kW solar array on the roof of the wastewater treatment facility. VPPSA helped her come up with the cost of panels

and installation. She came up with a cost for structural work on the roof, engineering, and legal expenses. We have a 50% match.

Scott asked if the grant covers the cost of removing the cupola. Meredith said yes.

She said grant applications are due June 2. There is a requirement that the board approve a resolution allowing her to submit the application. This would help meet both Tier 1 and Tier 2 requirements. Meredith envisions that the array would be owned by the electric department and the electric department would pay a lease fee to the sewer department for use of the roof. That would benefit both electric and sewer ratepayers.

Our match is actually slightly more than 50% because they deduct an administrative fee.

David moved to pass the resolution authorizing Meredith to apply for a Northern Borders Grant and to authorize Gordy to sign the letter of commitment to provide matching funds of \$138K if we are awarded the grant, Scott seconded and the motion was passed.

David said over the last 2 months he, Meredith and Michael Crane, one of the Railroad Street area wide plan grant consultants, have been meeting with several business owners, landowners, landlords, and employers in the community. A good portion of the area wide plan is economic development specifically for Railroad St. He has learned a lot from the conversations on the needs of the community, businesses, and landlords. It has been a great process. Meredith said the consultant is nearing the end of the interviews. Then they will wrap up the market analysis and focus on three or “catalyst sites” in the corridor.

Scott asked what happens with this for spurring new growth. What is the next step? David said this will help us understand the needs of our community and steer us in the right direction. It provides us information on what we have going for us and what we have against us. Kyle said they will be coming up with a tangible plan to develop catalyst sites. Hopefully that will have a ripple effect. Meredith said she thinks there will be a focus on what the town and village can do as municipalities to nudge it along. We are looking for them to give us actionable, deliverable projects.

Scott said he feels the lack of single family housing is an issue. Dave said he feels we aren't marketing things like the Studio Center enough. Kyle said they will give us a plan. Scott said we have gotten plans before from previous studies. Previous studies have always talked about homes for families. If we find we need single family homes maybe the village and town could provide tax incentives for people who want to turn an apartment building into a single family home. Meredith said buying a rental unit and converting back to a single family home is a losing proposition financially.

Meredith said she, Gordy, Bob, and Dave met with Elaine Collins and Sharron Scott of JSC. She feels they made progress in understanding each others' needs and priorities. Gordy said one thing that came out of the meeting is a need for us to promote the college.

Meredith said she talked to our attorney about the personnel policy and joint employees. She could send out an email summarizing that conversation. The board agreed she should do so. Meredith

said she feels we should come to a decision about whether to have joint employees before reworking the personnel policy as the policy will be different if there are no joint employees.

Meredith also talked to the attorney about issues relating to the annual village meeting that were discussed at the last meeting. She can put the summary of that conversation in the same email.

Gordy said he has a problem with people who are not voters being able to speak from the floor in support of a person or issue. He talked to someone from another municipality who said that municipality asks the voters to decide at the beginning of the meeting whether to allow any non-voters to be able to speak.

Kyle asked what Gordy's problem is with non-voters speaking. Gordy said if it's a consultant or Meredith, as long as there is permission from the voters he agrees, but when someone is running for election or there is major village issue he doesn't think people who are not voters should be able to speak. It would be like someone from Cambridge coming to town meeting and wanting to speak on something that affected town residents only.

Bob said if ground rules were set at the beginning of the meeting it would do away with people choosing to let one person talk and not another. Kyle said she agrees that it felt like there weren't enough ground rules set at the beginning of the annual village meeting. Gordy said he would like to have better procedures for large meetings like that so everyone is treated fairly. Scott said he likes the idea of getting it clear up front who can speak.

Dave drafted a social media policy based on the social media policy provided by VLCT. He suggested that board members read it.

Scott said solicitation of commerce is mentioned in the policy as something we cannot do. If we actively promote the Studio Center, is that okay? Meredith said she thinks we can provide information about it. Scott said someone else could ask why we are promoting the Studio Center and not their business. David said he can see the village using social media to promote what we are doing as the village government. Talking about the Studio Center would be more for Johnson Works. Scott said we have to be careful. He thinks it would be beneficial to have our lawyer review this and to have a clear line on what we can and can't post.

Meredith she inserted into the policy a statement that social media is not a place for us to engage in back and forth conversations with people. People should contact us directly with questions.

Dave said examples of things we might put on social media are flood warnings, when board meetings are, or a notice about a parade.

Dave asked board members to read the policy. He thinks the next step is to send it to a lawyer.

Scott asked, are we allowed to post information about a Paddlers' Trail event? It's not a business. Dave said he thinks so. Meredith agreed. It is a not-for-profit group.

Meredith reviewed the power bill summary. She said the trend of load being lower than predicted has fallen off. We were still a little under in March but she thinks the warm January and February

were the cause of the previous lower loads. Because the load was lower than predicted, power supply costs have been down but the per kWh cost is over what was budgeted.

LEDC is asking us for a membership contribution. Membership contributions help cover the cost of programs they provide to municipalities, not administrative and operating costs. Gordy asked if we used LEDC services this past year. Meredith said she hasn't, but Brian Story has.

Scott moved to give a membership contribution of \$250 to LEDC, Bob seconded and the motion was passed.

Meredith said she will sign the facility use form for Lamoille Valley Bike Tours.

10. Executive Session – Discussion of a Possible Real Estate Transaction

Dave moved to go into executive session to discuss a possible real estate transaction, Bob seconded, the motion was passed and the board entered executive session at 8:05, with Troy, Rosemary, and Meredith remaining. Dave moved to exit executive session at 10:10, Scott seconded and the motion was passed.

11. Adjourn

It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 10:10 and the motion was passed.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths