

JOHNSON VILLAGE TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MONDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2014

Present:

Trustees: Gordon Smith, Ellis O'Hear, George Pearlman, Walter Pomroy

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

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. Call to Order

Gordy called the meeting to order at 7:00.

2. Changes, Additions to Proposed Agenda

Duncan said he had one addition to the agenda: discussion of a letter from the person who ran into the crabapple tree by the Mobil station.

3. Review and Approve Minutes of Meetings Past

Walter moved to approve the minutes of September 8 and September 22, 2014, Ellis seconded, and the motion was passed.

4. Treasurer's Report / Review and Approve Bills and Warrants / Budget Status / Any Action Items

Walter asked about what we are doing for fuel. Duncan said we have not asked for bids. Steve said any propane tanks belong to the company that installed them and we have to get propane from that company. Duncan said most of what we use is heating oil. Ellis said another company can buy out the tanks. Walter said prices have been coming down; it seems we might want to go without a contract this year. Duncan said in the past County has given us a quote that was a certain amount above their rack price. David said he thinks we should get bids every year no matter what. If the current contractor still has a good price we can choose to stick with them. There was no argument from other board members.

Steve said stainless steel rods that are part of the curb stops are snapping off. There are a lot of them that seem to have this problem. He is following up on it. He priced grating for the grit channels again and the price has gone up a couple of thousand dollars. He will talk to Rosemary about whether to buy the grating in this fiscal year or the next. Walter said he thinks we should do it sooner rather than later since it is a safety issue.

Rosemary said an employee has a weekly deduction from his pay for an insurance policy and he wants to know how much money he has accumulated. She asked the board to sign a letter authorizing the insurance company to speak with him about it. **Ellis moved to sign the letter authorizing American National Insurance Company to discuss Clifton Hill's policy and issue any payments due him, Walter seconded, and the motion was passed.**

Walter moved to sign the tax certificate for the short term loan of \$216,000 for tanker financing, Ellis seconded, and the motion was passed.

Walter moved to sign the Resolution for Highway Equipment Borrowing for the short term loan of \$216,000 for tanker financing, Ellis seconded, and the motion was passed.

Ellis moved to sign the highway equipment note for the short term loan of \$216,000 at an interest rate of 0.5% for tanker financing and the motion was seconded and passed.

Walter moved to sign the Resolution for Highway Equipment Borrowing for the long term loan of \$216,000 for tanker financing, Ellis seconded, and the motion was passed.

Walter moved to sign the tax certificate for the loan of \$216,000 at an interest rate of 1.45% for 5 years for tanker financing, Ellis seconded, and the motion was passed.

Walter moved to sign the highway equipment note for the loan from Union Bank of \$216,000 at an interest rate of 1.45% for 5 years for tanker financing, Ellis seconded, and the motion was passed.

There was discussion about scheduling a joint meeting with the selectboard to discuss how much to contribute to the health insurance plan. Walter said he would like to discuss salaries and short term disability as well. Employees have to make elections in November. Duncan said the boards will decide how much they will contribute and employees can pick any plan they want. The board will have to give thought to how it will work if the plan chosen costs less than the amount the board is willing to contribute. Duncan will circulate an email to members of both boards to determine a date for the joint meeting.

5. *WWTF Chief Operator Report and Action Items*

Tom said the plant is running well. Flows have been low. The ground water table is low. A property owner on Clay Hill had a backup due to a broken cleanout and the village opened a manhole to help investigate the problem.

We took delivery on the vactor trailer. One of the catch basins on School St. was cleaned out with it as a demo. We need to figure out a way to dewater it if it is to be useful for sewer cleaning. Steve said it will be parked in the lower building. We had an electric brake system installed on the green dump truck so it can pull the trailer. Duncan said it appears to him that driving the truck that pulls the vactor trailer will require a Class A CDL license. Troy Dolan has a Class A license. Walter asked if there will be time to do catch basin cleaning ourselves rather than hiring Hartigan. Steve said yes, but someone will need a Class A license. Duncan said all the town highway department employees have Class A licenses and Steve Smith said he would be willing to help with the trailer. *(Tom left at 7:49.)*

6. *Manager's Report and Action Items*

Tim Percy jointed the meeting. Duncan said Tim had indicated he was amenable to accepting the Head Lineman position. Tim said he is still planning on moving to the Montpelier area, which would put him outside of the time for response requirement. But if the board is all right with that he is more than willing to stay on for a while as Head Lineman. He may end up working for another utility eventually due to his move, but he has to wait until they are hiring.

Walter said we may need someone to act in Steve's position on a temporary basis. How would it work in terms of plowing if Tim were put in that position during the winter season? Tim said it will be a 50 minute commute for him in good weather. In bad weather, he would need to allot more time. Steve said with one employee working 3 days a week and another who lacks experience with a skid steer, plowing will be an issue this winter.

Duncan said he and Tim had talked about the possibility of changing the Head Lineman job description. Currently that position includes delinquent collections. Tim had some ideas for a change that Duncan thinks are good. Tim said employees get all the overtime they want in the winter, but in the summer there are few opportunities for overtime other than doing collections. We don't shut people off in the middle of winter. There are 6-7 months when we do that. If the work were rotated among employees a month at a time, it would spread out the wealth. Steve and Duncan agreed this would be very doable. Steve said he thinks it is a good idea.

Steve said he has notified Duncan that he will resign as of January 1 and that he will be very happy to assist in the transition. Gordy said one idea is not to have a Public Works Superintendent but to have a working foreman. Walter asked how much time Steve is willing to give as a consultant and for how long. Steve said he would have to talk to his new employer, but the new employer is willing to contract with the board for Steve's time at an hourly rate. Duncan said he doesn't feel it is fair to ask or expect Steve to do that.

Walter asked if Tim thinks he is capable of doing the work Steve does. Tim said he thinks he could, though it would be a little rocky at first. Steve said he will be available by phone at no charge. Walter said there are other sources of assistance we could hire on a contract basis.

The board agreed to have an executive session later in the meeting to discuss this further. *(Steve and Tim left at 8:10 and Arjay joined the meeting.)*

7. ***Arjay West: Tanker Bids, Etc.***

Arjay said delivery of the new truck is slated for November 1. We will need our payment and insurance paperwork prepared for that date. **Ellis moved to authorize either Gordy or Arjay to sign the payment and insurance paperwork necessary to take delivery of the new fire truck, David seconded, and the motion was passed.**

Arjay said the bids for the old truck have been received. The high bid was \$17K from Bourne's Energy. He recommends accepting that bid. If it is withdrawn he would like to sell to the next highest bidder. He would like the money to go into the large equipment capital fund. **Walter moved to accept the bid of \$17,000 from Bourne's Energy for the old tanker, David seconded, and the motion was passed.**

Walter moved that the \$17,000 for the old tanker be put into the Fire Department large equipment capital fund upon receipt, David seconded and the motion was passed. It was agreed that if Bourne's withdraws its bid the board will discuss what to do at the work session meeting scheduled for October 15.

Arjay asked about payment for the old truck. Board members agreed payment should be due on delivery.

Arjay said the grant-funded dry hydrant was installed last weekend. He is getting invoices together to give to Rosemary to submit for reimbursement.

Arjay doesn't believe JSC has made a contribution for this current year. He would like to work with Duncan on making contact with them.

Walter said he would like to know as part of the budget process where the fire department capital reserve fund stands. Do we have too much money in it? Duncan said no. Arjay said he wants to look at it but probably won't have a chance until sometime this winter. Looking forward to the planned rescue purchase he sees that there might be a money shortfall. Ellis said he might recommend going with gas instead of diesel for the next purchase. Duncan brought up the fact that the price of an extended warranty is going up.

Rich and Nicole Whittemore have submitted water and sewer change of use applications for two properties, as well as the necessary fees. Arjay described the changes to the buildings, which were both single residential and are being split into additional residential units. Duncan explained to David that they are applying for us to assign them the allocation, then they can request a permit from the state. We are telling the state the village has the sewer and water capacity for these properties. The capacity is 275 and Duncan thinks we are using around 190. **Walter moved to approve both the preliminary water and sewer allocations for Rich and Nicole Whittemore, David seconded, and the motion was passed.**

Walter asked when the next fire truck purchase is scheduled to happen. Arjay said 4 years from now. Walter suggested that we could use the \$17K from the sale of the old truck to pay off debt. Arjay said he can take a look at that. He said he would like find a way to track the balances of the two fire department reserve funds more easily, perhaps getting them into their own accounts. Rosemary said the large equipment reserve fund does have its own account. *(Arjay left.)*

8. *Manager's Report and Action Items (continued)*

Walter moved to enter executive session to discuss personnel issues with Duncan remaining, David seconded, the motion was passed and the board entered executive session at 8:36. Walter moved to come out of executive session at 9:27, Ellis seconded, and the motion was passed. *(Steve and Tim rejoined the meeting.)*

Walter moved to appoint Tim Percy as Head Lineman and increase his pay to \$28/hour immediately and to \$29/hour starting January 1, and to make an offer to Troy Dolan to begin full-time employment at \$27/hour. Rosemary asked if Troy Dolan's pay increase will start this week. Walter said it will if he accepts it. **David seconded and the motion was passed.**

Tim said he would accept the offer. Gordy asked Steve and Tim to write down what they typically do in a day. They said they will try. Steve said between now and the end of the year Tim will need a vehicle with a radio. The board agreed to look into getting a radio for him. *(Tim left at 9:32 and Greg Stefanski joined the meeting.)*

9. *Greg Stefanski: Winter Jubilee*

Greg asked if the trustees would be willing to contribute \$500 to support the Winter Jubilee. He will be asking the selectboard for the same amount. **Walter moved to authorize \$500 for support of the Johnson Works Winter Jubilee, seconded by David.** David asked how the money is spent. Greg said it pays for advertising, printing materials for the scavenger hunt, and entertainment. David asked how many people usually attend. Greg said last year around 180 adults and kids participated in the scavenger hunt, but more people than that come to the Jubilee. It gets a good turnout from Johnson and the surrounding towns and also from around the county. David asked if the businesses like it. Greg said they love it. It brings out a lot of traffic and the scavenger hunt brings people into all the businesses. **The motion was passed.** *(Greg left at 9:36.)*

10. Public Works Superintendent Report and Action Items

Steve said the Morrisville B-22 interconnect will happen on October 16.

There was a theft of service recently on Sinclair Rd. A customer who had been disconnected for non-payment helped himself to power. Walter asked if the sheriff's department was called. Steve said yes. He doesn't know if they are prosecuting. Duncan said they won't do anything unless we ask them to. The customer stole power for a couple of weeks. Our terms of service don't talk about estimating use and charging for it. He owes the past due amount plus our reconnect charge (about \$35) and a charge for work to shut the power off so he couldn't turn it back on.

Steve thinks the village is done with the rail trail work. We are still waiting for the replacement power supply board for the R2 breaker control panel. Cracks between bricks in crosswalks have been filled. The JSC solar project is moving ahead. Fairpoint will be setting poles on Clay Hill this week. Transformers won't arrive until mid-November. The arc flash analysis is done. The new catch basin on Pearl St. will probably be installed in the next couple of days. All materials are ready for raising the manholes on Clay Hill, which will be done after the existing blacktop is removed. The 3 crosswalks on Main St. will be replaced at the same time Clay Hill is paved. Green Mountain Traffic Control is on standby. Walter asked if the crosswalks can be painted before winter. Steve said it can be done. Gordy suggested letting the school know about the planned work on Main St. Gordy suggested that if extra flaggers are needed for Clay Hill, some firefighters might be available.

11. Manager's Report (continued)

The board agreed that Duncan should file the paperwork to renew VLCT PACIF insurance coverage. Duncan said he talked to Arjay about building values for the smoke training building. Arjay felt a value of \$40K was enough. The commercial appraisal was \$88K but Duncan doesn't think they got inside the building and knew it was just a shell.

Duncan recommends that we continue to purchase our load ratio share of the TRANSCO equity and finance the purchases through VPPSA. There were purchases in 2013 that VELCO "held" for Johnson and there is a 2014 TRANSCO issuance. The rate of return continues to be 12.5%.

Walter moved to authorize Duncan to sign the documents to have VPPSA finance both the 2013 and 2014 VELCO TRANSCO equity purchases, Ellis seconded, and the motion was passed.

Duncan said he thinks there may be a couple of holes in the temporary sick leave bank that we should consider changing. If there is a joint trustee/selectboard meeting that might be the time to discuss it. Gordy said someone asked him whether an employee has to donate to the bank to receive leave from it. Duncan said not right now.

Duncan said he learned that there was legislation passed last year requiring employers to consider an employee's request for "flexible hours." He thinks it will require a modification to the personnel policy.

Gordy said he had been approached by a village employee who said there are some hard feelings because several years ago employees asked to donate time to another employee and were told no, and now other employees are being told yes. Walter said this is the first time he has seen such a request. Gordy said the previous request didn't get to the board. Gordy said office employees

were told about the new policy in person while outside employees just got a notice stuck in with their paychecks. Steve said there was some talk about this in his shop too. Duncan said he will talk to the employees. He doesn't remember the past conversation about donating time.

A work session meeting is scheduled for October 15 at 6:30.

It looks like the Main St. crosswalks will be replaced the last week of October, dependent on weather. Duncan thinks the work can be done in two days.

Gordy said he would like to ask Duncan and Steve to cut back on attending electric meetings other than VPPSA. Steve said he has no plans to attend any more meetings. Duncan brought up the question of his participation in NEPPA. He is on the board of directors, but he could resign. Gordy said he doesn't think Duncan should resign as long as we are on with VPPSA. Duncan said he has told both Gordy and Eric that with his health situation he is going to try to work only 40 hours a week.

Duncan did not get anything further done with the policy on cost responsibility for sewer connections. Gordy said his suggestion is instead of pro-rating payment for 3 years to pay 100% of costs for 3 years. Walter said he thinks we should be responsible for 100% of costs for 3 years but he wants to be able to control costs, so people should be educated to call us immediately. David asked, 3 years from when? Duncan said from the date of work we do. Duncan said he will recirculate the draft policy. He thinks we should have a legal review before it is adopted.

The MW&L transmission switchover is expected to happen Thursday of this week.

The TMDL Committee meetings Duncan has attended have been productive so far. Duncan thinks we may dodge the bullet on waste water treatment but we are very likely going to be looking at significant changes to storm water treatment and highway maintenance issues.

Our insurance company has been trying to collect from the person who drove over our crabapple tree. It sounds like maybe his insurance doesn't cover the damage. The cost for replacement we got from Green Mountain Landscaping is \$500. He has offered to pay \$100 or leave it in the hands of the court. Steve said we could call around and see if we can replace the tree for less than \$500. The replacement tree needs to be a salt tolerant variety. He said the village could take care of planting it. It was agreed to take the \$100 offered, ask the tree board to purchase a tree, and have the village crew plant it. Walter said he will talk to Sue Lovering about it.

12. Adjourn

Ellis moved to adjourn at 10:19, David seconded, and the motion was passed.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths