

JOHNSON VILLAGE TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
ELECTRONIC MEETING VIA ZOOM AND PHONE CALL-IN
MONDAY, JULY 6, 2020

Present:

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

Others: Meredith Dolan, Eric Nuse, Pam Mudgett, Cody Mudgett, Joey Buttendorf

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. Call to Order

Gordy called the meeting to order at 6:01.

2. Changes, Additions to Proposed Agenda

Gordy said he wants to add a discussion of a sign policy for the village green to the agenda for next week's meeting. Meredith said she has a few things to share on that topic at the end of the meeting.

3. Village Green Facility Use Request for "Mini Free Library"

Meredith said Eric Nuse submitted a request to put a mini free library on the village green. Eric said it is like a small cabinet with a roof on it. People can take a book without signing it out or leave a book. The village green seems like a natural spot for it. He did research, as suggested by Meredith, to see what other towns are doing during COVID-19. Hyde Park converted their mini free library to a place to take some food or leave some food. He heard of a town that turned theirs into a seed swap in the spring. Another has hand sanitizer and directions to sanitize before and after selecting a book and to wash hands after getting home. Near one of the benches there is a metal utility structure and somewhere in the vicinity of there seems like a fine spot for it. Or anywhere people can spot it.

Meredith said the state right of way for Route 15 looks like it extends a foot beyond the back of the bike racks. We couldn't put anything in that area without a state permit. She doesn't know if the state would grant it or not. She thinks we would have to show it wouldn't impact any sightlines.

Eric said it's mounted on a 4x4 post up off the ground. It is about 2 or 3 ft. tall and about 2 feet wide. He showed a picture.

Scott said he is not in favor of this during COVID-19 for a variety of reasons. He checked with library associations, some cities around the country, a couple of places in Canada and our library policy. During this public health issue it is really important that everyone is going with the same messaging. All those institutions call for a cool-off period of 12 hours, or in some places 24 or 48 hours, for books that are being returned. This doesn't follow that. He knows the infection rate for surfaces is pretty low, around 5%, but it's still there. This is a wonderful idea but he thinks this is a risk he is not willing to take. With our own library he believes we are still holding books before circulation because of that risk. For food it is a little different from books. You cook it and wash your hands. People breathe all over books. Most people wet their fingers to turn pages. He is not comfortable putting a book back for someone else to pick up after being in those kinds of environmental conditions.

Gordy said he brought this up with the 6-person emergency management committee and there was pretty much unanimous consent with what Scott just said. The library had a lot of restrictions they had to meet to open up partway. He agrees with Scott.

Phil asked if the board would support it down the road when things are back to normal. Scott said he would. For it to work now he thinks there would need to be a period when books were out of circulation. For instance, the bottom shelf could be made into a slotted book holder and people could put books back with the date on a sticky note. That would negate his issue.

Bob said with the way Main Street looks now he hates to see anything added. If we don't have someone maintaining it, it can be a trash hole. Meredith asked if Eric would check on it periodically. He said yes. He said Kyle Nuse and Michael Mahnke are also willing to keep an eye on it.

Eric said he thinks he agrees with Scott. We want to send a consistent message. The workaround Scott suggested could work, but we don't need to have the mini free library up instantly. He can hang onto it until the time is right.

Brian asked if we can we go off what the library is doing for their books in order to be consistent. Eric said he knows the library has free books in their alcove. He doesn't know what they are doing with them now. Maybe they would be interested in having the mini free library in front of the library. Scott said that is a great idea. Then if returns come back the library could do a quarantine on them before putting them back out. Scott said he thinks the emergency management group would be fine with having it at the library. Gordy said if the library can control the retention period he thinks that would be a good place to start during the virus situation. Eric said maybe he could build a locker for donated books. Then there would be quarantine ability. But it would be a little more work for the library. They may not be willing to take it on. Meredith said she will email Brian Story and if he is on board with this idea they will figure out how best to get Eric in touch with Jeanne Engel.

4. *Village Green Food Truck Application*

Pam and Cody Mudgett propose to use the village green to operate a food truck. Joey Buttendorf said she consults with Pam and Cody and she can answer questions about COVID safety.

Pam Mudgett said the food truck is called Mudgie's. There will be VOSHA certification for anyone who works in the trailer. Joey said the health department gave the truck a 98 score on its inspection. The only issue was that there was a bathroom where they had to replace a spring on the bathroom door to make it shut automatically.

Joey said Cody was a student of hers at the New England Culinary Institute. He will be taking a certification test soon. The food truck plans to use locally sourced food as much as possible. She showed a menu.

Scott said the emergency management group wanted to know VOSHA training had been done for employees. Pam said all 3 of them have taken the training.

Scott said the emergency management group also wanted to make sure a safety and health policy has been completed with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development. Pam said she has done that.

Scott said a license from the health department is needed and he sees they have it.

Scott said people are getting complacent about masks and social distancing. What happens if people are gathering around the food truck and are not masked up? Meredith said we haven't discussed a specific protocol to deal with people not abiding by village policies. We have signs on picnic tables about precautions. We don't have staff to monitor that regularly and the sheriff's department doesn't have the capacity. We just have to trust people to self regulate. There isn't a good way for us to enforce precautions. She hopes the operators of the truck are willing to say something to people not wearing masks.

Pam said she doesn't know how much control the food truck can have. They can put information out for people. Joey said they don't want to turn customers away. But she thinks they can have a sign saying they would appreciate people wearing masks while placing orders and maintaining social distancing while eating at tables for everyone's safety. If tables are spaced appropriately and there are signs, it should work out naturally.

Scott suggested a sign with the message: "Your ability to follow directions will keep this open." Joey said they were planning to have a web page. They can have a message about precautions on there too. Meredith said there can be messaging on the village and Johnson Works Facebook pages.

Joey said Cody and Pam will be cleaning and disinfecting surfaces 3 times a day.

Gordy said he thinks educating people is the best we can do. He asked if the truck will be parked at the village green for 4 or 7 days a week. And where on the village green will it be? Meredith said she thinks we should meet on site to figure out the best spot.

Pam said they would like to leave the trailer there for 4 days at a time. She asked if there is power available. Meredith said there is power. It gets billed to the village. We would need to figure out a fee for using power. She doesn't think we have discussed the idea of something being left there overnight. We have no overnight parking at certain times of year. She wants to think about that and talk to our insurance company. Joey and Pam said Mudgie's would have its own liability insurance. Phil said he doesn't see a reason why the truck couldn't be there as long as it is outside plowing season. Meredith said our current policy limits use of the village green until October because of plowing but we can think about whether there are solutions.

Scott moved to approve the application for Mudgie's food truck to use the village green, Brian seconded and the motion was passed.

5. ***Municipal Office Picnic Table Purchase***

Meredith said the picnic table that used to be outside the municipal building was moved when we started the siding project and it fell apart. Staff are interested in getting another one. We talked about putting the same signage on it as on the village green picnic tables. **Bob moved to approve paying half the price of a picnic table for the municipal building, Scott seconded and the motion was passed.**

6. ***Other Business***

Meredith said she believes where people are currently leaving signs at the village green is within the state right of way. We shouldn't be allowing that. She agrees it would be a good idea to think about a policy. She would need to work on creating one to discuss at the next meeting. Gordy said he thinks if we don't have a policy before long there will be yard sale signs and all kinds of other signs. He wants the village green left open. He mentioned that the Beautification Committee was going to put rose bushes along the railroad ties at the village green. We need to keep in mind whether we will need to change those plans due to the food truck.

7. ***Adjourn***

Scott moved to adjourn, Brian seconded, the motion was passed and the meeting was adjourned at 6:49.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths