

JOHNSON VILLAGE TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
MONDAY, JUNE 13, 2022

**Present:**

Trustees: Steve Hatfield, Lynda Hill, Diane Lehouiller, BJ Putvain, Ken Tourangeau,  
Others: Rosemary Audibert, Kelly Locke, Walter Pomroy (via Zoom), Michael Jansen, Paul Boisvert (via Zoom), Asher Anderson (via Zoom), Lois Frey (via Zoom)

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

**1. Call to Order**

Steve called the meeting to order at 6:01.

BJ congratulated Rosemary on winning the Marvin Lifetime Achievement Award. He presented her with flowers and a cupcake and there was a round of applause.

**2. Review of Agenda and Any Adjustments, Changes, Additions**

Ken added a discussion of banners in the right of way on Pearl Street. *(Michael Jansen arrived at 6:03.)*

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

**Ken moved to approve the minutes of May 9, May 13 and May 23, 2022, Lynda seconded and the motion was passed.**

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

Rosemary said grievance hearings for the grand list are this week. We should be set to get tax bills out on time this year in the middle of July with a due date around August 15. Lynda asked who handles grievance hearings. Rosemary said our assessor, Terri Sabens. Steve asked if people sit down with her one-on-one. Rosemary said yes. She likes to have discussions with people ahead of time in case their issue is a small thing that doesn't really need a hearing.

Rosemary said most revenues, including taxes and PILOT payments, will not come until later in the year. We have gotten the first installments from Belvidere and Waterville for the fire department contract and the second installments are due at the end of this month. The second installment of ARPA payments will be coming this summer. The amount billed for the electric department after 5 months was 41% of budget. Water sales and fees are at 46% of budget. Sewer revenue is 42% of budget.

Rosemary said we have to post a notice of the real estate transaction related to Alex Nadeau's easement in the newspaper and other places for 30 days. Ken said it is just a location swap. All we did is change the location of the right of way. Steve asked if Rosemary knows whether Alex Nadeau's attorney drew a diagram. Rosemary said she hasn't seen one. His attorney reviewed the deed and made minor changes that our attorney was okay with. Lynda asked, the easement is just 12 ft. wide? Steve said he just wants his kids to be able to walk down through the property from his adjoining property above to go to school. He already has an easement on the other side and we are just switching the location to avoid tearing down the wall that blocks the other location. Rosemary said next month, after the notice is posted, the board can sign the authorization documents to grant the easement. BJ asked if we will

have a diagram of the location before we sign it. Rosemary asked if we want to pay for it. Ken said he thinks the description is simple and straightforward and a diagram is not needed. Steve agreed that he does not think we need a diagram.

**4. *Food Truck Application for the Village Green***

Michael Jansen said he owns Pizza on Main in Morrisville. Pizza on Main has a food truck that they would like to put on the village green. They can serve some combination of pizzas, slices, drinks, snacks, desserts, and salads. Diane asked if they serve subs. Michael said he has sold them from the truck before but they didn't sell well. However this is a different environment so they might sell better. He has four or five 6 ft. picnic tables he could bring if the board is open to that. He is not sure what hours he will be open. He would love to be able to be open 7 days a week from about 11:30 to 6:30 or 7:00. He has a generator and if adequate electricity is available he could plug into that. Ken said electricity is available and he would need to pay for it. We don't allow generators.

Steve asked how long the food trailer is. Michael said it is 22 ft. Ken said the Mudgies food truck was 18 ft long with a 6 ft tank on the end so it was longer than this.

Steve asked if the truck generates wastewater and how it would be dealt with. Michael said he has water and wastewater containers. One is under the trailer. His hot water is heated by propane. Ken said we don't have a sewer hookup. Steve said he will need to dispose of his wastewater every day.

**Ken moved and Lynda seconded to allow Pom Enterprises, Inc. to have a food truck on the village green.**

Lynda asked how soon he wants to set up. Michael said he is waiting for some maintenance to be done and he needs to get a health inspection. Lynda asked how many people will be there at a time. Michael said usually one or two. Sometimes they have had three if it was very busy.

There was discussion about how he can advertise that the truck is there. Michael said he does radio ads. He also noted that his business does fundraising campaigns. If the village wants to raise money they can do a round up campaign at the food truck and he will promote it on the radio. Ken said there are plenty of committees in Johnson that might be interested.

Steve said he will not be able to have a generator and he will need to remove his wastewater. Ken said he doesn't think the green should be crowded with picnic tables. Steve said there is not a lot of room there and when this trailer comes in there will be less. He said we will want the Pizza on Main trailer located just behind where Front Seat Coffee is, facing into the green. Ken said he will try to put some stakes on the green marking where the trailer will go. Michael asked if he can leave a generator on the truck if he does not use it. Steve said yes. Diane said there are no picnic tables on the green now, just benches. She thinks we do need picnic tables. Steve said he agrees that we need a couple of places for people to sit down. He said with one previous truck we had mess issues. We will be watching carefully on that. Lynda asked if Michael will supply his own trash cans. Michael said they usually do provide a trash cans for trash and recycling.

**Ken moved and BJ seconded to amend the motion to stipulate that approval is contingent on Michael Jansen submitting the necessary paperwork to Rosemary.**

Walter Pomroy said he has two issues. One is the generator, which has been addressed. A generator would be a serious concern because of carbon monoxide. The other is the hours of operation. He did not hear what the hours would be. Ken said from 11:30 to approximately 7:30. Walter said as long as that is part of the stipulation he is happy. Ken said he thinks we have to allow the truck to be there until the time noise is restricted under the noise ordinance, which is 10:00 PM. Michael said if the board is going to stipulate exact hours he would start with being open Wednesday through Sunday and then if he can get enough staff he will add Monday and Tuesday. Ken said we do not regulate business hours as long as the truck is not making noise after 10:00 PM.

**The motion to amend was passed. The amended motion was passed.**

**5. *Food Truck Application for the Village Green***

Rosemary said the village has received a water and sewer allocation/connection application from William Chesbrough for 723 Vermont 100C Lot B. The application and allocation fees have been paid for both water and sewer. This is for water and sewer hookup for a house. They already have the state permit so the board can give both preliminary and final approval.

**Ken moved to give preliminary and final approval for water and sewer allocations for 723 Vermont 100C Lot B, Diane seconded and the motion was passed.**

**6. *Water/Wastewater Report and Action Items***

Dan gave his report. The E-DMR and Wr-43 were submitted to the state. We had 3 alarms at River Road pump station. All were high wet well alarms. We remotely monitored it and all alarms corrected themselves within a few minutes. Staff finished scraping the paint in the influent dry well. We are not going to re paint it. We will continue to scrape any loose paint. The public works department brought some topsoil and employees fixed the lawn where there was damage from plowing, then rolled and seeded those areas. We received 1500 gallons of liquid alum. The price went up by over \$1.00 per gallon. Dan was able to split a load with Morrisville that allowed us to get the cheaper price for a 3000 gallon load. It cost \$100 to split it but saved over \$1.00 per gallon on cost. So we saved over \$1400. We had a belt tear on the belt press and put on our last spare. We ordered a replacement for both belts. This was included in the belt press rehab budget. We had a pre-construction meeting for the River Road Pump Station. They should be starting soon and anticipate a 6 week build time. We have a bad solenoid valve on one of the 2 process water pumps. We are sourcing a replacement. We resumed wastewater COVID sampling. This period is for 9 months. Dan applied for the PACIF grant that was discussed earlier in the year, but was never sent in due to the village management turnover. The underground locator that the electric department wanted was denied. The material cost for guarding off the grit channels in the headworks looks like it will be approved. Dan is waiting for official approval and then we will start on the project.

Coliform samples were negative. We had a partially plugged chlorine injection nozzle. We were able to blow it out and soak in some hot water to removed the build up and re-install it. We also replaced the pump tube in the chlorine pump at the same time. Luke assisted the public works department for 2 days with hydrant flushing throughout the water system.

A village water line goes into and out of the building housing the Nadeau well. When we turn it over to the Nadeaus that building will have to be heated and checked to make sure the heat is on. If that line breaks it would drain our reservoir overnight. We heat the building now. They will have to be aware of the need to use electricity to heat the building and someone will have to check it regularly. He doesn't want to go in there if it no longer belongs to the village. There is a red light outside that goes on if the temperature drops low enough but that is not a perfect warning system.

Steve said it sounds like we might need our attorney to write something up. Ken said he thinks they will be using that water so they won't let it freeze. He doesn't see it being a big issue. Dan said if they use that water they will have to plumb all the way to the building. That might be the time to suggest that they take our line out of the building and bury it while they are digging. Ken asked what the cost of that would be. Dan said if they had the equipment there he would say less than \$10,000. He noted that that water line is only used to feed hydrants. It might be worth talking to Arjay West about whether the water to those hydrants could be shut off. Ken said he definitely thinks we should start by talking to Arjay. Steve agreed. If Arjay says we can get by without those hydrants that makes it simpler. Dan said the line feeds two hydrants and he does not think a fire truck could get to one of them. He will reach out to Arjay and see if we could shut off that water line. Ken offered to talk to Alex Nadeau about the issue. Rosemary noted that the gravel pit is under new ownership.

Water loss for May was 17%. This included lost water during hydrant flushing. Dan said anything over 20% is considered a problem.

Lynda asked what the purpose of flushing hydrants is. Dan said it keeps the lines clearer. It cleans out minerals and organics.

Lynda asked how often the water is chlorinated. Dan said it is dosed when the pump runs. When the reservoir gets to a certain level the pump kicks on. Sometimes it runs a couple of hours and sometimes it runs for 10 hours. Lynda asked, is that why sometimes there is more chlorine smell than other times? Dan said yes. Sometimes the water is freshly pumped and sometimes it is not. On average the pump runs about 6 hours a day. Lynda asked if it runs more in summer. Dan said no because there is less use from the college and the elementary school then.

Dan said we did not receive any bids for the cupola work. He is at a loss for what to do. Ken said he doesn't think we want bids now anyway as they will be quite high. Dan said the cupola is not falling apart yet. The insurance company keeps recommending fixing it. But they have not required it yet. The work is beyond what he wants to tackle with his crew.

Diane asked for a ballpark cost figure. Dan said we put \$40,000 in the budget this year. That was a guess. With rising costs he is guessing it would now cost over \$50,000. Ken said he thinks it will be closer to \$75,000. We still have the option of removing the cupola and not putting it back up. Getting a contractor to just tear it down might be easier. Dan said he asked for separate bids for tearing it down and putting it back. Ken said in his opinion tearing it down would be just as expensive as putting it back up. Diane asked Dan if he ever checked with an electrical contractor about the cost of moving the electrical panels. Dan said he hasn't. Another option would be to just have a smaller roof over the electrical panels. Diane

asked, Dan's preference was to move the electrical panels to the back? Dan said yes, but that probably would cost \$10,000.

**7. *Electric/General Report and Action Items***

Steve read the water and light report submitted by Troy Dolan. The crew completed the following tasks:

- Set a new pole at 120 Sinclair Road in preparation for the installation of a new 200 amp service that will feed two residential buildings at that location.
- Set a pole and anchor for the Old Mill Park service.
- Completed a new 600 amp secondary service at 38 Lower Main West.
- Installed a new solar production meter at 1846 Route 100C.
- Repaired and re-energized the secondary service at 105 Gillen Ave.
- Repaired street lights at the Village Green and Maplefields.

The contract tree crew began work and removed 11 danger trees. The village crew also completed monthly meter reading, high/low checks, substation check, and Dig Safes

The crew completed the following water/sewer tasks:

- Water service was turned on at the Old Mill Park trailhead and Legion Field.
- Repaired a sewer clean-out at 95 Railroad Street.
- Repaired water shut-off cap at 80 Lower Main East.
- Repaired water shut-off at Vermont Studio Center cafeteria building.
- Repaired curb stop cap near the cold spring.
- Turned off water service at 43 Katy Win.
- Completed all spring hydrant flushing in the village.
- Repaired water shut-off at 94 Pearl Street.

The crew completed the following tasks in the General Department:

- Repaired the flag pole in the Village Green.
- Put up American flags within the Village.
- Installed summer banners.
- Removed the NVU banner.
- All street sweeping was completed in the Village.

Nate, Jeff, and Chan completed the annual required pole top and bucket rescue training.

Troy completed the following administrative tasks:

- Worked with Lamoille County Mental Health's engineer to finalize the permit application for a sprinkler system at 599 Lower Main West.
- Continued to work with the property owner of 93 Lower Main West related to the water/sewer permit process and costs.
- Placed an order for 20 utility poles to maintain the Village's inventory.
- Placed an order for electric line hardware to maintain needed stock.
- Finished submitting all documents to PACIF related to an insurance claim for the repair on the digger truck boom. The Village has received the reimbursement check from PACIF.

- Continued working with the electrician for the new 600 amp service that will serve the EV charging stations at the Jolley Store. Currently we are waiting on a cement vault and a transformer to complete the project.
- Had meetings with Lion Electric and the State of Vermont related to the electric bucket truck. Lion Electric proposed standardizing the specs for the truck amongst the three Vermont utilities that received grants for them (Johnson, Burlington Electric, and Green Mountain Power). A meeting with all three utilities to discuss that idea is being planned. The hope is that standardizing the specs could potentially speed up the manufacture and delivery timeline.
- Had a meeting with Engineering Ventures at the Village Garage to discuss the next steps for the project. Reached out to USDA to gather more information about the Community Facilities grant program, which could cover up to 75% of the project cost. A meeting amongst the Village, Engineering Ventures, and USDA is planned for the week of June 13th to discuss the requirements and process to apply for the grant.
- Completed water and sewer permit applications for 120 Sinclair Road and 723 VT Route 100C.
- Created an estimate for 93 Lower Main West for a new 600 amp electric service.
- Created an estimate for 120 Sinclair Road for a new 200 amp electric service.
- Started working with a contractor for a new 1500-foot primary underground line extension for a new building on Plot Road.

Troy attended the June VPPSA Board meeting virtually. The meeting included an update on the AMI project. Given the amount of time since the vendor provided its initial cost estimate, discussions are underway about revising those figures upward. On a positive note, the state budget as approved includes \$8 million in funding for AMI with reimbursement of up to 70% of project costs. This funding should help offset vendor cost increases and keep the projected cost of AMI for the village close to the prior estimates. Troy recommends inviting VPPSA back for an update in July. The VPPSA General Manager also provided an update on Barton Village's attempt to sell the electric utility to Vermont Electric Coop. On May 10th, the Barton Village voters decided not to sell the utility to VEC by a 67% to 33% margin. VEC has given notice that they will cease providing line maintenance for Barton and the Barton Trustees are now trying to determine how to move forward to ensure customers continue to receive the service they need.

Steve said we do not want that to happen here. He said Diane has agreed to attend VPPSA meetings. He will notify Troy of that. It takes about 3 hours to attend the meeting and we are paying Troy \$85 an hour so we would save the village almost \$250 if Diane goes rather than Troy. He believed she can get the same information Troy gets from attending the meeting. Diane said Walter Pomroy was the VPPSA rep when he was a trustee. BJ asked if Troy needs any of the information he gets from the meetings for his work. Steve said he will talk to Troy about it to see if he has any serious objections. BJ said he is okay with having Diane attend as long as Troy doesn't say that if he doesn't go it will leave him out of getting information for something he is planning. Ken said he doesn't feel Diane is qualified to be the representative. He doesn't feel anyone on the board is qualified to do that job with no electrical background or experience. Lynda asked why Nate wouldn't go. Ken said he is not qualified either. Steve said we only have a three-man crew with a lot of work to do and going to the meetings takes

half a day. Since Troy recommended inviting Ken Nolan here in July Steve suggested asking him his opinion when he is here. Diane said she likes that idea.

Ken emphasized the point Steve made earlier that we do not want to be in the position Barton village is in. Steve said their line crew resigned and they tried to sell their power supply. The village voted not to sell and now VEC is saying they won't maintain the lines. Barton village is not the only one with difficulties. The whole concept of little utilities has its pluses and minuses. Ken said they had inadequate staff running the system and that is why they are in their current position. He doesn't want us in the same position. Diane said she went to the meeting where the Barton trustees had to inform the voters about the vote to sell the power supply. The trustees did not collect the right information or disseminate it properly and they got themselves into trouble. Ken said that was because none of them knew anything about running a power supply system. Diane said she doesn't think it was that at all.

Ken said if Diane goes to VPPSA meetings she will get preconceived notions from other members. That is not fair to residents. Lynda said the more the board knows, the better. We can't leave it all to one person.

Lynda asked what a solar production meter is. Steve said it measures how much an electrical array is producing because customers get credit on their bill based on that.

**8. Fire Department Report**

Steve read the fire department report for April 28 to May 26. The fire department responded to 16 calls, 11 during daytime and 5 at night. The average duration was 79 minutes. There were 2 structure fires, 1 debris fire, 3 wildland fires, 2 automatic alarms, 1 CO alarm, 2 vehicle crashes, 1 medical assist, 3 mutual aid (structure fire, wildland fire, station coverage) and 1 other (assist public.)

**9. Robert and Sons Mowing Bid**

The only bid received for lawn mowing was from Robert and Sons. Their rate has increased from what we were previously paying. Steve said some of the places they are supposedly mowing are places Dan and his crew actually take care of. Ken said we should tell them not to mow those places – three water department sites and the wastewater plant. Steve said the bid amount is not unreasonable and they are the only bidders. Ken said if we remove the areas we do not need them to mow, that reduces their estimated cost to \$1297. He suggests that we respond that we will pay that amount. He thinks we also need to specify, as the selectboard did, that they need to do mowing once a week. Rosemary said this year mowing has not been done that often. Steve said he thinks we need to go around 2 or 3 times a season and inspect what has been done. Lynda said she is wondering if we are paying the H2O Innovation employees more than we would pay Robert and Sons. Steve said we already pay H2O Innovation a lump sum that includes that work. Ken said what we pay them is already in the budget. We can discuss it for next year's budget. The board agreed to notify Robert and Sons that if they agree to a cost figure of \$1297 we will approve using them for this year.

**10. Village Garage – Next Steps**

Paul Boisvert joined the meeting at 7:18. Steve asked Paul to give a brief summary of the recent meeting on the village garage and the conclusions arrived at about the two possible paths we can take with this project. Due to technical difficulties Paul was not able to respond and he left the meeting. Asher Anderson said there is a question about what the USDA would allow. We are looking for financing from the USDA. He thinks Paul and Troy have a meeting scheduled with a USDA representative. Steve said it is not scheduled yet. Steve said

one thing he has not done yet is contact the village's attorney. He did review our procurement policies but he needs to touch base with our attorney. He is pretty sure that to get any federal or state money we will have to get at least two bids. But the big question is whether we need to get another bid for the work already done. He is thinking that since the work was grant funded and basically free that does not make sense. But we need to clarify whether architecture and engineering services need to be publicly bid.

Asher said there are two separate questions for the remaining design and engineering. One is whether the village needs to go out to bid and another is whether a hard bid process must be used or if there could be a modified process like CM delivery. Steve said we don't have a village manager so his preference is to go with whatever is the least work for the village. What makes the most sense for him is to have professionals handle the bid process, not the village. Asher said both options involve professionals, just in a different way. He suggested first getting an answer from the USDA about their requirements and then we can move on. Steve said he will also try to get a clear answer from our attorney about what he believes we need to do.

Steve said Ken had suggested just getting the heating system installed before this fall. Ken said that would include adding an air scrubber. Steve said that would hopefully eliminate a lot of the problem before winter and allow employees to use the building. Asher said so far the mechanical and electrical engineers who would focus on designing that system have not even been involved. They are busy, but he could contact them and look into having that portion of the work done ahead of the rest. He can't remember if Paul included a mechanical engineer in his original proposal. The mechanical engineer would be a consultant from a different company. He can call them and see if they have capacity to design that discrete system and put bids together. Ken said he should not waste time on that if Paul does not think it is a feasible option. *(Lois Frey joined at 7:32.)*

Steve said he will reach out to Troy and they will try to set up a meeting with a USDA representative.

Ken said he thinks the bid from Engineering Ventures was the only bid we got and that was why we went with them. Steve said there are two things we need to work with – our procurement policy and any federal or state policies. Ken said we can adjust ours if necessary.

Rosemary said we should not forget that we will need to go out to bond and that will require a village vote. Ken asked about having that vote at the same time as the village primaries. Rosemary said that would be August 8. It may be easier to have the bond vote in November.

Ken asked who found out about this grant. Steve said he thinks it was Troy and Meredith.

#### ***11. Water Permit for Sprinkler System***

Lamoille County Mental Health is asking for approval to put a sprinkler system in their building at 599 Lower Main West. Steve said he believes Troy told him that we don't discourage anyone putting in a sprinkler system because it is for safety. **Ken moved to issue a water permit for a sprinkler system for the Lamoille County Mental Health building at 599 Lower Main West, BJ seconded and the motion was passed.**



## **12. Powerhouse Site**

Diane said she had previously sent out an email about the powerhouse site. She talked to Seth Jensen from the Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC) and he would like permission to contact the Department of Environmental Conservation and the EPA. That needs to be the next step and the village needs to request it. Ken asked if that would be to have them check PCBs and other contaminants to make sure it is allowable for people to be there. Diane said yes. She thinks once that is done Seth will tell us what the next steps will be for the project. Ken asked if the concrete left there has to be hauled out. Steve and Diane said they think it can be covered over. Diane said in the future it can make a ramp for access from 100C. Diane said the next step will be finding grant money. **Ken moved and BJ seconded to give the Lamoille County Planning Commission permission to contact EPA and the state Department of Environmental Conservation to ask them to determine how the powerhouse site can be used and what the village can do with the contaminated materials.** Diane said she checked prices of picnic tables, umbrellas, etc and what we would need only comes to about \$1350. The site doesn't need much leveling. Steve said we could leave the fence there that was already put up, clear weeds and put in picnic tables. Ken suggested maybe we could ask the state to extend the guard rail if we do a project there. Diane said if we do something on the site VTrans will consider doing work to make it safer. **The motion was passed.**

## **13. Pearl Street Right of Way**

Ken said it was brought to his attention that on Pearl Street where we hang the banners there has never been a legal right of way for the village from the town. We need a right of way to go across their highway. Rosemary and Eric Osgood both think it is the case that there has just been an agreement between the boards. He thinks we need to contact the selectboard and see what we need to do so village employees can legally hang banners there. He thinks it will be simple and the selectboard will agree. He suggested that first we contact Beth Foy and ask if we should have our lawyers write something up. Lynda asked why the town doesn't put the banners up. Ken said because they don't own the lines and the cables across the road; we do. Steve said our crew uses the bucket truck to put them up.

## **14. Other Business**

BJ asked if the board would like him to look into getting an external speaker for the laptop used for Zoom meetings so the board can hear people on Zoom better. The board said yes. Steve suggested the town would split the cost with the village. Ken said at the meeting to discuss possible uses for ARPA money upgrading the audiovisual system for meetings was brought up. He thinks we need to be able to mute the microphones. Lynda and Steve said they have had difficulty hearing when they have watched from home. Ken said he thinks when we have members of the public speaking we need to ask them to step up to the microphone to speak.

## **15. Adjourn**

**Lynda moved and BJ seconded to adjourn at 7:55 and the motion was passed.**