

JOHNSON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MONDAY, JULY 18, 2022

Present: Selectboard members: Beth Foy, Duncan Hastings, Eric Osgood, Eben Patch, Mark Woodward (via Zoom)

Others present in person: Brian Story, Jason Whitehill, Lois Frey, Ron Dickson, Sandra Dickson, Kim Anetsberger, Jim Lovinsky, Stuart May, Nicole Chauvin, Paul Warden, Margo Warden, Jen Burton, Casey Romero, one other person

Others present via Zoom: Kyley Hill, Cynthia Hennard, Geraldine Carpenter, Liz Curry, Diane Lehouiller, Anna Kern, Corey Perpall, Greg Stefanski, John Broderick, Katie Orost, Kirsten Owen, Roger Nicholls, Gail, Nicole, Jeanie, Nadeau, EC, Ken

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. Call to Order

Beth called the meeting to order at 6:31.

2. Additions, Changes to Agenda

Duncan added an update on the regional assessor, Lamoille County Planning Commission appointments and discussion on rail trail mowing.

3. Review Invoices and Orders

The board reviewed invoices and orders.

4. Review Approve Minutes of Meetings Past

Eric moved to approve the minutes of July 8, 2022, Duncan seconded and the motion was passed.

5. Selectboard Issues/Concerns

Eric told the board about a recent magazine article that mentioned Duncan and books written by his brother and father.

6. Public Works Supervisor/Highway Foreman Report

Jason said the crew has been working on River Road. Stone lining of ditches will be completed this week. He had a meeting with Rob Moore today about the Fox Lot Road grant project. Rob Moore will have a report to Jason and Brian hopefully by the end of next week so they can get materials lined up for the project.

Eben said in future years he thinks it would be good to have a contractor do roadside mowing in early June before plants go to seed because roadside mowers pick up seed and spread it. There are a lot of invasive species that are spreading. Jason said he would love to do mowing in spring because plants such as knotweed can be spread by the mower. Eben said poison parsnip is spreading fast. Duncan asked, if mowing were done earlier, would it have to be done as second time? Eben said he thinks our crew would still need to mow later. Our crew would not have time to do mowing early in the season, but if plants are cut before they go to seed it keeps the seed from being spread. Mark said he agrees with Eben's idea. He has watched poison parsnip spread across the state. It is a good idea to mow it before it goes to seed. It isn't bad in all of Johnson, but it is coming. Eben said next spring we will still be in this fiscal year and the budget has already been voted on but he thinks it would be good to

think about this when we are doing the budget for the next fiscal year. It would be good if we could get cost figures at that time for contracting out mowing.

Duncan asked about the dump trailer mentioned in Jason's written report. Jason said it is a small trailer that has a dump on it that is pulled behind a small truck.

7. *Review Planned Purchases*

Brian said we previously discussed reallocating money budgeted for salt in the current year's budget and spending it to buy more sand instead. He is asking for approval to spend \$10K more on sand and \$10K less on salt than what was budgeted.

Duncan asked how many yards of sand we have put up now. Jason said we have put up 5K yards a year since he has been here. That is roughly what we need in winter. We have about three quarters of that now.

Duncan said he understands the concept of reallocating the money not spent on salt. But if that is \$10K we can save for the taxpayers that is good too. Do we really need to spend this \$10K to get to the full 5K yards? Jason said yes, we do. Duncan asked, there isn't money already budgeted to fill the pile? Jason said the money budgeted is for half what we need. Usually we have pulled half the amount from our pit but this year we have not been able to get into the pit yet.

Brian said the board had previously asked about the location of Manosh's pit. We thought it was in the Morrisville/Wolcott area but it is actually in Eden.

Duncan moved to authorize reallocation of \$10,000 from salt to sand, Eric seconded and the motion was passed.

8. *Green Mountain ATV Road Improvements*

Brian said the Green Mountain ATV Club has proposed improvements they would like to make on Coddling Hollow Road, which were described in the packet. The improvements are things that would normally fall under Jason's purview, pretty ordinary road improvements of the kind we typically would approve for a Class 4 road. They are asking the selectboard to sign a resolution of commitment, committing to ensuring that the GMATV club has continued use of the trail after putting in the investment.

Eric said he fully supports the ATV club investments and he appreciates that they come to us to get permits. But we cannot commit a future board to anything. That is where the resolution of commitment is a little problematic. He would support the club having access to Coddling Hollow Road for as long as he is on the board but he would have trouble supporting the resolution. Eben said it would have to be written differently, like a contract that would renew unless there was notice of termination. Eric said that is the only way to do it so we don't hold the future selectboard to something. Eben said some information also needs to be added to the resolution document like the road name and the useful life of the investment/commitment. Beth said this is very different from something like a contract for IT services that might automatically renew. This is not about a service the club is providing or an asset they own. Eben said it's about them putting money into our asset and wanting to protect their investment. Eric said he can understand why they want the commitment. They

have had access to Coddling Hollow Road for 20 years and he doesn't see why they wouldn't continue to. Eben said it is a Class 4 road and the state allows access on all Class 4 roads. Eric said they changed the law so the road has to be unplowed and the town has to allow it.

Duncan said we should be sure that any improvements are actually taking place in the highway right of way. He asked if Jason has looked at that. Jason said yes. Jason said they are trying to bring the road up to the Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) standard. Duncan asked if the work to be done is located on segments of the road that are identified under MRGP. Brian said the work is on hydrologically connected road segments but he doesn't believe we currently have any gully erosion there that we are required to address. But we could be required to do a project there in the future and this would help us avoid that kind of future expense. Jason said someone took out water bars on that road, causing erosion. The club wants to address it so it doesn't erode more.

Duncan said he is supportive of the concept of the club making improvements but he has the same concern as Eric about committing to something that a new board might not agree to. And this document specifically says that if we reverse our decision the town becomes liable for the cost of the improvements. That language bothers him. We probably should have asked the Conservation Commission to weigh in on this. As he understands it, the proposed work is all within the Gomo lot and prior boards have tasked the Conservation Commission with management of the Gomo property. Brian said we do still have the opportunity to get input from the Conservation Commission.

Mark said he has similar concerns to Eric and Duncan. Suppose the citizens of the town vote to limit ATV access on Class 4 roads? Does that mean we have to pay the club back? He also would like to hear for a fact that work is only happening within the town right of way. The schematic submitted looks like it might be to one side or the other of the right of way. Jason said it will be within the right of way.

Beth said she is hearing that the board is hesitant to agree to the language about paying back the cost of the improvements, there is a suggestion that the language about continued use could be changed to provide for annual renewal, and it has been suggested that the Conservation Commission review this before the next meeting.

Jason asked if the board wants him to take pictures. Duncan said he trusts that what Jason is saying is accurate. There is a section of old road that goes down to a ravine and got washed out. Jason said he would have to look into it with Spencer Leggett to be sure exactly what he is looking to do. He told Jason he would be working in the right of way. Duncan said he thinks at one point the trail was moved to the side of the washed out area, which would be outside the right of way. If they were working in that section perhaps the conversation would be a little different.

Eben asked how much material they need for repairing water bars. Jason said they are also putting rock down on the road. Eben said we have a small amount of money budgeted for work on Class 4 roads. Maybe we could meet in the middle and we could provide a little material for the club to use and then they would not need this agreement.

Duncan asked if there are any areas where a culvert would be more appropriate than a water bar. Jason said maybe, if they could get the depth they needed. Duncan said the money budgeted for Class 4 roads has often been used to provide culverts to people living on Class 4 roads that they install themselves.

Eric said we could suggest to them that they get rid of the whole resolution because it is the ordinance that will say what is allowable as far as access. As difficult as it is to change an ordinance, if we write a new one it will probably be in place for the next 15 years and that does govern over future selectboards. Brian said he will talk to the club.

9. *Permanent Shelter for Lamoille County*

Kim Anetsberger, executive director of the Lamoille Community House; Jim Lovinsky, executive director of the Lamoille Housing Partnership; and Stuart May, CEO of Lamoille Health Partners, introduced themselves.

Kim said for almost 5 years there has been a warming house in Hyde Park in a building owned by the sheriff's department. It is open from November to April. It used to close during the day and then when the pandemic hit it started being open 24/7. Lamoille Community House also started serving people who were staying at hotels through the State of Vermont's General Assistance program. There is a need in our county for support for those experiencing homelessness. Lamoille Community House used to serve about 35 people but in 2020-21, 161 people experiencing homelessness were served in hotels and in the shelter, including 58 children. She doesn't believe COVID caused the increase but during COVID services were more available and eligibility was loosened and so everyone who needed help was able to access it and they were able to get a clearer picture of the need. They are trying to find a site for a year-round shelter facility. Johnson is one of the towns they are exploring. They don't have a site locked down yet. They want to make sure they get community input. They are hoping to have 20 beds which would be an increase from the 10 now available in Hyde Park. Part of their vision is to create a community center to provide services, including medical, housing navigation and job services, with office space for partners from Lamoille Mental Health and other social services. The services would be open to all of Johnson, not just shelter guests. They recognize that Johnson has a high poverty level and access to services is limited so hopefully their vision will enhance the services offered to Johnson residents. The shelter would bring a lot of jobs. They have 11 to 12 staff members at the house now. If they double the beds they would probably double their staff. If they have the right property and all the pieces work well they will have a transitional housing program with transitional housing people can move into.

Stuart said the vision Lamoille Health Partners has is a whole-person approach addressing employment, physical wellness, food, and safety. One thing they have noticed is that access to services is very limited in the western part of the county because there are not providers there. Johnson is very attractive geographically as a location. Last year Lamoille Health Partners contracted with the Lamoille North School District to start to provide core services at the elementary school. That started in February. They helped over 50 students who had not seen a pediatrician or dentist in over a year or hadn't been able to access mental health services outside of the school counselor. If the student body is not accessing those services

there is a high probability that the rest of their families also is not. They are looking at real estate in Johnson. During COVID they found that when individuals had a stable place to stay it was easier to bring services to them and help them navigate to get the resources they needed. Currently people have to travel to Morrisville or Stowe for services. Transportation is a high barrier. Once they are able to find a site, that is where the Lamoille Housing Partnership comes in.

Jim Lovinsky said Lamoille Housing Partnership is the local affordable housing developer for Lamoille County and Hardwick. They are constantly trying to find sites where they can develop affordable permanent housing. In Johnson they have a site across from the elementary school. That property has a high turnover rate and he thinks part of that is due to inability to find services locally. Lamoille Housing Partnership has access to funding mechanisms to help with acquisition, rehab or new construction. Their housing is mostly permanent housing but in all of their new sites they are setting some units aside for people who are coming out of homelessness or in danger of becoming homeless. They partner with service agencies to provide wraparound services for those people. There is an idea that there is not local homelessness, but there is homelessness in every community in the county. There is a housing crisis right now. There are not many rental homes or single family homes available. Lamoille Housing Partnership is trying to find places to develop with a focus on downtowns. To do a multi-family development they need municipal water and sewer and they need walkability since many people don't have transportation. They often ask for money from the Vermont Community Development Program, which requires that the selectboard sign on to the project and request the money.

Duncan asked if the goal in Johnson would be to replace the Hyde Park shelter. Kim said yes, if they had a new shelter they would no longer rent the Hyde Park building from the sheriff's department. Duncan asked if the services provided, including medical, would be limited to the homeless population they are servicing or open to the wider community. Stuart said they would be open to the wider community. In Johnson he thinks they could also serve people from Jeffersonville, Belvidere, Waterville and Eden.

Duncan asked if there is a nexus between what Jenna's Promise is doing and what Lamoille Community House is doing. Kim said there is a nexus between the people Lamoille Community House serves and the people the shelter serves. The shelter does not require people to be sober. The recovery home requires people to be in recovery. There is some crossover. The two organizations try to have conversations about what their goals are. They would try not to duplicate services.

Duncan said Johnson has been involved in a number of studies about finding a solution to needs for low-income housing and one barrier has always been that there is at least a perception that Johnson is already providing a lot of low-income housing. Is there any ability to turn some of the permanent housing to be developed into owner-occupied housing – dedicating a certain number of units to become owner-occupied over the course of time? Jim said he has not explored that personally. Lamoille Housing Partnership does not have a homeownership center but they work with Champlain Housing Trust, which does.

Eric said he wonders why the groups haven't looked at Morrisville as a place to build a shelter because all of the services are there and transportation is available. We lack a lot of that. Why try to replicate all of that in Johnson to support a shelter? Why not put the shelter in Morrisville? Jim said one reason is that all the service providers would like to be able to bring their services to other parts of the county. Now people in Johnson have to travel to Morrisville to access services. It would be easier for them to access services if the services were brought to the community. Also in Morrisville zoning restricts shelters to one part of town, they can only have 8 beds and the shelter has to be staffed 24/7. Kim said the current shelter is staffed 24/7 but the zoning requirements limit their ability to build the kind of project they want. And they would be bringing the services here not just to serve the shelter but to serve the whole community. They hope to purchase a van and maybe create a shuttle route. If there is no transportation in this area it feels even more important to bring services here. Stuart said his organization is trying to bring services to western Lamoille County. Even without the partnership with the other organizations they would still be trying to do that. It would be nice if the organizations could find a property to serve both purposes. Lamoille Health Partners does support Jenna's House in a couple of ways. Lamoille Health Partners backs up the private individual who provides medical services there and they are buying coffee products from Jenna's Promise and working to bring them into a health collaborative they have.

Eric asked if the population served by the homeless shelter could jeopardize the population served by Jenna's Promise. Beth asked if there are studies about the proximity of shelters that are not dry to recovery centers. Kim said she is not sure about studies. That is something to look into. That is a hard question to answer. People in recovery will have exposure to people who are using whether or not the people using are experiencing homelessness. If someone is in a recovery program and goes into town they can meet someone they know who is using whether that person is in a shelter or not. It is common to align substance misuse with homelessness. People who are homeless are in crisis and they do what they need to survive. If they have year-round housing it is easier for them to move out of crisis mode. There is access to these substances from people who are housed in this community as well. She doesn't have the research to back up her hunch but she doesn't think the shelter will specifically increase the risk.

Beth said the selectboard's job is to protect our residents. How many people who identify as belonging to Johnson have used the shelter? Also, if there was a shelter in Johnson and it had to turn people away, what would that mean to Johnson?

Kim said there is no hard data on how many people using the shelter are from Johnson. Nicole Chauvin, the shelter manager, said she has seen residents of every town in our county using the shelter. She can almost guarantee that everyone in this room knows someone who has come through their doors. People use the shelter who you would not expect. Kim said they are not all people with substance use issues. There are teenagers who are aging out of foster care and older people who need physical assistance and have nowhere else to go. Lamoille Community House has more funding this year and they are starting something called diversion. They will try first to see if there is somewhere else a person can go. For instance, could they pay for them to go to family out of state? They will try that with every

person to make sure that when people access the shelter it is their last resort. That will hopefully open up beds. If the shelter is full or if someone is not allowed into it because of past behavior or conflict with another shelter guest there is a shelter network in the state. They can see if they are eligible for a hotel room through the General Assistance program or they can possibly pay for a hotel room for a few nights while they try to help the person figure out somewhere else to go. They do their best to help them find somewhere else to go. If there is an issue with people who are being turned away from Jenna's Promise, with a shelter in Johnson those people would have somewhere nearby to go.

Jim said pre-pandemic Lamoille Housing Partnership used to have a waiting list of around 200 applications. They might have a dozen to two dozen vacancies a month. At the beginning of June 2022 they had 531 people on the waiting list and 70 turnovers. They get calls from people who are desperate. People can't find homes. The rental market is bad and rents are going up.

Eben says he shares a lot of views with other board members. As for medical services, there was previous discussion about possibly getting a health clinic here with Jenna's Promise. Maybe Lamoille Health Partners is already working with them? Stuart said Northern Vermont University was looking to offload the McClelland building. Courtney said the Family Center, Lamoille Health Partners, and Greg Tatro were looking to purchase the building but it did not happen because of various bond issues. Northern Vermont University is now able to rent the building. Separate from that, Lamoille Health Partners has been in discussion with Greg Tatro about obtaining part of the Subway building he purchased for medical services.

Eben said the town's largest expense is for emergency services. If increased substance use in our community were to double our sheriff's budget, the taxpayers would be funding extra services needed due to the homeless shelter. Is there any plan to support emergency services or will the taxpayers just foot the bill?

Kim said emergency services do not come to the shelter frequently. Nicole said last year EMS came twice to the shelter. One of those visits was COVID-related. She thinks the police came three times in the whole last 6 months that the shelter was open. Kim said when the shelter started being open 24/7 they saw a decrease in the need to call emergency services. The staff has de-escalation training and trauma-informed training and they can deal with things like arguments in the shelter. They have not thought about whether the shelter would cost the taxpayers more money. She can't say that there would be an increase in substance use. Maybe having services in the area for people who are using drugs and having access to a space they can come to if they are using drugs might help.

Duncan asked if the entity that owns the shelter would pay any property taxes. Jim said Lamoille Housing Partnership would be the developer and owner and all their properties pay property tax.

Mark asked if they have a location in mind. Will it be in the village? Jim said they do not have a location right now. However, they need village water and sewer. They don't want to

be in a flood zone. Mark asked if it would be new construction. Jim said it depends on what they find. If they find an appropriate building that they could rehab, that would work. An empty lot they could develop would work.

Beth suggested inviting these organizations back for further discussion in the future. She said maybe we should have a special meeting about this and make it more of a town hall where residents could ask questions. She suggested the town could organize a Johnson-specific meeting and the organizations might want to organize one for all of Lamoille County. She suggested that they talk to Brian about scheduling.

10. *Ronald and Sandra Dickson Status Update*

Ronald and Sandra Dickson introduced themselves. They said they bought 2006 River Road East in January 2021 and they have plans to clean it up. They have already moved out five tons of trash. Ron said he has filed a civil suit to make it possible for him to remove some larger items. They have heard rumors that the town is going to take their property. They want their land. The selectboard will find out that they will do the right thing.

Beth said she appreciates them coming in and introducing themselves. The selectboard very much appreciates the cleanup efforts and wants to encourage them to continue. Ron said they have a dump trailer and they are working on the trash pile. They realize there is buried trash and the cleanup project will probably get bigger over time but they want to remove all the trash.

Duncan asked if their long-term plan is to have a home there. Ron said there will be no home there if they can help it. There is a lot of trash there and an EPA representative told them that there is so much buried trash there that there probably will be a big hole when it is all removed.

Eric said we have been dealing with that property for 10 years and this is the most promising development he has ever seen.

11. *Noise Permit for Field Days*

Eben moved to authorize Brian to sign the noise permit for Field Days, Duncan seconded and the motion was passed.

12. *Sewer Permit for 120 Sinclair Road*

Brian said the village approved a sewer permit for 120 Sinclair Road on the condition that the town also approve it. The entire parcel is in the town sewer service area.

Mark asked if we have any concern about where the residents get their water from. He believes the existing house didn't have water or had a dry spring. Beth said she is pretty sure she heard that they used a spring.

Eben moved and Eric seconded to approve the sewer permit for 120 Sinclair Road.

There was discussion about whether the permit application is for one or two buildings.

Duncan said according to the town sewer service ordinance we are supposed to request an annual update on what remains of the 25K gallon allocation the town has. That is not

essential with regard to whether we approve this or not but we should find out how much of our allocation we have left.

Duncan asked if we got any fee for this permit. Brian said not to his knowledge. Duncan said the village is giving the applicant credit for 210 gallons because the house on that property was previously hooked up to village sewer and they are also allocating an additional 210 gallons. Are they going to deduct 420 gallons or 210 gallons from our 25K? Eben said it should only be 210 gallons. Brian said that is what he would expect but it doesn't hurt for us to make sure. Duncan said he thinks we should make it clear that that is our expectation.

With Eric's agreement, Eben amended his motion to add that the sewer permit is approved as long as the village only deducts an additional 210 gallons a day from the town's allocation.

Duncan said we should receive a \$75 permit fee. Brian said he will talk to Rosemary and Troy. Duncan said that having the town approve this after the village approves it is backwards.

Mark asked if it is correct that we are approving two separate buildings and 210 more gallons a day. Beth said she believes so.

Duncan said for future reference our ordinance specifies that these applications should come to the town first if they are in the town sewer service area.

The motion was passed.

13. Lamoille County Planning Commission Appointments

Duncan said he is willing to continue to serve on the Lamoille County Planning Commission board. **Eric moved to submit Duncan's name to the Lamoille County Planning Commission to serve as Johnson's representative on the LCPC board for 3 years, Beth seconded and the motion was passed with Duncan abstaining.**

14. Updated Draft Dilapidated Building Inspection Report Form

Brian said he made some changes to the Dilapidated Building Inspection Report Form that were requested at the last meeting. **Duncan moved to accept the Dilapidated Building Inspection Report Form with the changes that have been made, Eric seconded and the motion was passed.**

Brian said he has been talking to the health officers about him and the health officers all doing the first dilapidated building inspection together. Beth said we have at least two complaints pending. Brian said he is planning to start with properties we have received complaints about and then we will revisit the topic of how we select properties for inspection.

Duncan asked if the ordinance was reviewed by the municipal attorney before it was adopted. Brian said yes but the attorney who reviewed it was not our current attorney. Duncan said he still has concerns about whether the enforcement provisions in the ordinance are in sync with each other. Beth asked if we want to send the ordinance to our current attorney to question that item. Brian said there are a few places where the ordinance could probably be more

clear. The intention for how the process is supposed to work is that the town would receive a report and conduct an inspection, then an inspection report would come to the selectboard and the selectboard would hold a hearing to determine whether the case had merit. If the selectboard believes the building is a dilapidated or nuisance building then the property owner would have an opportunity to submit a plan of corrective action and the selectboard could accept or amend that plan or write its own plan and hold the property owner to it. Penalties start to accrue if the property owner does not comply with the plan, whether the plan is imposed by the selectboard or is the one the property owner volunteered. One area Brian was most concerned about was that in the description of giving notice to the property owner we refer to a state statute about giving notice for tax sale. He thinks we meant to model our process on that process but it is unclear why we are referencing that statute. It is really not applicable. He doesn't think it undermines anything in a practical sense, though. Duncan said his concern is that the ordinance envisions what he considers to be two different statutory procedures. One section talks about filing liens and filing in court for remediation and full cost and another section refers to first, second and third offenses. He doesn't think we can pursue both. He thinks we have to do one or the other. If we start issuing fines he doesn't think we can seek the other remedies or if we use the other remedies, he doesn't think we can apply the fines for first, second and third offenses. It was agreed that Brian should send the ordinance for legal review.

15. Regional Assessor Update

Duncan said the LCPC executive committee reviewed the concept of a regional assessor and decided to move the question to the full board with their support for the concept. The idea of entering into a service agreement with LCPC will be brought to the full board at their next meeting.

16. Rail Trail Mowing

Brian said we have requested a permit from the state for rail trail mowing. We haven't received it yet but he is not expecting any hurdles. He expects we will get it in the next couple of days and we will send the crew out as soon as they are available. He asked if the state would provide a hold harmless assurance if we mow the rail trail and they will not.

Eben said he would almost rather contract out the mowing since we don't owe the rail trail. Brian said another point in favor of contracting out the work is that our mower deck doesn't fit across a couple of the bridges on the rail trail and going around adds time. Duncan said he just wants to get the trails mowed. Eben said he thinks we should treat all outdoor recreational rights of way in this town the same. Whatever we want to spend on the rail trail he thinks we should spend on all the others rights of way for recreational clubs (VASA, VAST, etc.) We should either write checks to those organizations or maintain their rights of way.

Duncan moved and Mark seconded that if we do not hear from the state by the end of this week the public works crew should begin mowing the section of Lamoille Valley Rail Trail that goes through Johnson anyway. Eric suggested the friendly amendment, which was accepted, that the town crew should be instructed to mow the rail trail at its earliest convenience starting after the end of this week. Eric said Jason has told us that they try to time the mowing for when there is not high traffic on the trail. **Eben suggested a friendly amendment that the public works crew keep track of their hours and we send**

the bill to the state for time spent mowing. Duncan said he would not accept that as an amendment to his motion. We could and probably should do that and a separate motion can be made. **The motion was passed in a roll call vote with Mark, Eric and Duncan in favor and Eben opposed.**

17. Interview Recreation Coordinator Candidates

Eben been moved to go into executive session for recreation coordinator candidate interviews as allowed by 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) with Casey Romero invited to remain, Duncan seconded and the motion was passed at 8:36. The board came out of executive session at 9:51.

Eric moved to direct Brian to extend an offer of employment to David Ellerbee pending a background check, Eben seconded and the motion was passed.

18. Review Job Descriptions for Economic Development, Recreation Coordinator and Town Administrator

Board members all agreed that they are satisfied with the economic development and recreation coordinator job descriptions that Brian submitted. Beth suggested pushing the town administrator job description discussion to August.

19. Signing for Flood Resilient Communities Fund Grant for Flood Mitigation of Holmes Meadow

Duncan asked, there is not a town match for this grant? Brian said there is not. Duncan asked, if we approve this, that will allow the next steps of purchasing the property and having an engineering study done? Brian said yes. There might be recommendations in the future about modifications to the property to make it more effective at mitigating flood risk. Those modifications would not be paid for under this grant. This grant is for acquiring the property. Eben said it seems like a lot of money for a property in a floodplain but it is federal money. **Eben moved and Duncan seconded to authorize Brian to sign the grant agreement for the Flood Resilient Communities Fund Grant for purchase of Holmes Meadow. The motion was passed.**

20. Review of Draft Grant Agreement for Vermont Electric Coop and Town of Johnson Storm Water Improvements

Brian said we have a public-private partnership with Vermont Electric Coop that we formed in order to do an engineering study on what it would take for Vermont Electric Coop to comply with the three acre stormwater rule. Under that rule, entities with three or more acres of impermeable surface had to reapply for their storm water permits. We participated in a grant with VEC. It was a 30% engineering grant. And then we entered into a competitive process to get a grant for a 100% engineering study. Vermont Electric Coop got that grant. They are now in the construction phase. Beth noted that the grant agreement refers to Johnson Village and Town. Brian said we will have to get that amended.

Eben said we looked at the engineering drawings previously and there was no extension that the town would be able to hook onto if the industrial park were to be developed. That potential was the only reason we agreed to be part of this. He has not seen revised drawings. Without a spot allocated for us to hook in we are not doing the taxpayers any good. Duncan asked if there are legal provisions like a right of way or easement for the town to physically connect. Brian said we can ask VEC for that. Eben said he wants an extension to tie into shown in the drawing. Duncan said he would hesitate to approve this without knowing we

have the legal right to hook up. Eben said the only reason for the town to participate is if taxpayers could potentially benefit in the future. Brian said there is benefit anyway because this is an important business in Johnson that is getting state and federal financial aid through our participation and the only cost to the town has been a little bit of his time. Mark said as a member of the VEC board of directors he wants to abstain from this vote.

Duncan moved to approve execution of the grant agreement for Vermont Electric Coop and Town of Johnson storm water improvements contingent on the town receiving an easement to connect to the storm water system and with the word “village” struck anywhere it appears and the document, Eben seconded and the motion was passed with Mark abstaining.

21. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:03.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths

UNAPPROVED