

JOHNSON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MONDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2022

Present: Selectboard members: Beth Foy, Duncan Hastings, Eben Patch, Mark Woodward
Others: Brian Story, Rosemary Audibert, Walter Pomroy, Jeff Bickford. Paul Warden, Rob Rodriguez, Charles Gallanter, Lois Frey, Dean Locke, Kelly Vandorn, Brian Vandorn, Steve Smith, Mary Jean Smith, Donald Garrett, Dick Simays, Chris Ferguson, Allison Tafuri, Pat Ripley (remote), two other people

Absent: Eric Osgood

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. Call to Order

Beth called the meeting to order at 6:30.

2. Additions, Changes to Agenda

Beth added an item related to a planned fun run.

3. Review Invoices and Orders

The board reviewed and discussed invoices and orders.

4. Review and Approve Minutes of Meetings Past

Duncan moved to approve the minutes of September 15 and September 19, 2022 with the day of the week corrected on the September 19 minutes, Eben seconded and the motion was passed.

5. Selectboard Issues/Concerns

Mark said someone called him because they were concerned that someone may be living in a school bus by Scribner Bridge. Brian said he can look into it. Duncan said he had someone ask him about a similar situation, a trailer on upper Clay Hill Road. Mark said that is on private land. Duncan said someone asked him if the trailer has any septic permits. The state issues those. Brian said he can check with the state to see if they are aware of anyone there.

Eben suggested that Brian and Jason might want to send out a letter to people who have things in the road right of way asking them to clear the right of way before plowing season.

Duncan said the Historical Society will have a tour in Whiting Hill Cemetery on October 23. There will be some re-enactors. Beth said we should put it on the town Facebook page. Lois Frey said it will be at 2:00. Beth asked Lois to let her know when the Historical Society publishes something about it so she can push it out on Facebook.

6. Treasurer's Report / Review and Approve Bills, Warrants, , Licenses / Any Action Items

Rosemary said ballots were mailed recently to all active voters. Anyone who has not received one should contact the office.

Walter Pomroy asked what the board plans to do with surplus from the last fiscal year. Beth said that is something the board needs to follow up on. Walter said he would like to know under what authority the board is spending that money. The voters gave the town a budget of \$3.2 million. If the board spends the \$200K surplus in some way, something else in the budget has to be cut. If the board is talking about putting it into reserve funds, there are specific rules related to those funds. The capital fund has to be a line item in the budget that the voters can act on. He

can't see how the selectboard can do anything with the surplus except to leave it in cash on hand and present a proposal for using it to the voters on town meeting day.

Duncan said he is not sure he agrees with Walter on the reserve fund. The rest of the proposal is to reserve funds for specific purposes which would be included in the general budget that is voted on by the voters. Beth said the voters approve a total budget amount, not specific line items. Walter said it sounded like the board was talking about spending the money now. Beth said we are talking about allocating it to reserve funds or operational budget, not spending it. Walter said it can't be put into reserve funds without voter approval. He said Article 12, approved by the voters in 2001, is the basis for what he is saying. (*Rob Rodriguez arrived at 6:48.*) He feels the board can only put the surplus into cash on hand and ask the voters in March to approve using it.

Beth asked Rosemary to have numbers for the next meeting and to help the board with a historical understanding of what the voters passed. (*Walter left at 6:49.*)

7. Review Planned Purchases

Brian said there are no planned purchases over \$1,000 for the next two weeks.

8. Fun Run

Lisa Crews emailed Beth and Brian to ask about a fun run that is planned for October 30. If the state does not give us a permit for using the rail trail, she asked if the run could be held on Lendway Lane. Board members had no objection to that.

9. Continuing ARPA Discussion

Beth said she had invited members of the Planning Commission to come tonight for continued discussion of uses for ARPA funds. (*Kelly and Brian Vandorn arrived at 6:51.*) Selectboard and Planning Commission members have all seen the ideas from the meeting in June and from the survey that went out since then. Beth suggested identifying items that anyone feels are particularly important. She thinks we should go through the full list and cross out things that we think are not priorities.

Paul Warden asked how much money we have available and what the deadlines are. Do we have until 2024 to allocate the funds and until 2026 to spend them? Brian said yes. Rosemary said we haven't received all the money yet. It will be close to \$600,000. (*Charles Gallanter arrived at 6:53.*) Paul asked if that amount is for both town and village. Brian said no, just the town. The village has its own allocation. (*Steve Smith, Mary Jean Smith, Donald Garrett and one other person arrived at 6:54.*)

It was agreed that the industrial park should be high on the list of possible uses.

Beth said she does not think we should cross out recreational development.

Beth does think we should strike out upgrading internet service in Johnson. Eben said he doesn't think we will be able to do anything useful with \$600,000. Duncan said there are efforts underway with the Communications Union District. It was agreed to strike out that item.

It was agreed to strike out upgrades to water, sewer, utilities and other infrastructure. Much of that infrastructure belongs to the village.

It was agreed to keep possible new pathways as an item for consideration, but not conversion of Legion Field into more of a town park.

One suggestion was to lower property taxes for those making under \$50,000. Mark said he doesn't think that is our job. Brian said he doesn't know that we have the authority to means test and lower property taxes for some people. Beth said she does not feel we would want to use ARPA funds for that.

All agreed that using ARPA funds as matching funds to leverage grants make sense as an item for further consideration.

The suggestion about a non-motorized trail system will remain on the list for consideration.

It was agreed that cleaning up graffiti on bridges and installing security to prevent vandalism is not a priority for ARPA funds.

Regarding the suggestion to buy solar powered speed monitors, Duncan said he thinks that is a good thing for the town to do but he is not sure it is the best use of ARPA funds. Eben suggested striking it from this list but agreed that if there is an opportunity to get some, that would be a good thing to do. Mark asked what how much they cost. Brian said a couple of years ago they were around \$15,000 each. It was agreed to strike this from the list.

Eben and Beth were in favor of keeping updating and maintaining buildings on the list. Mark said he doesn't think we should be spending ARPA funds on ongoing maintenance. Duncan said at one time there were going to be ARPA funds available from the state for building maintenance, etc. He asked if Brian has heard anything about that. Brian said there are some building modernization grants.

It was agreed to cross out the suggestions of a year-round facility for a farmers' market and other small businesses, a sculpture walk and park, and an irrigation system for the arboretum.

There was a suggestion to use ARPA funds to offset the annual increase for law enforcement. Mark said he doesn't think we should use one-time funds for that. Duncan agreed. Beth said there was a separate request from the sheriff's department for the three contract towns to fund up to two cars to be used across the three towns. The cost for Johnson would be \$51,000. Duncan said he would want reassurance that it would buy us increased law enforcement. It was agreed to strike law enforcement uses from the list.

It was agreed to strike using the money for medical transportation upgrades from the list.

Regarding the suggestion to upgrade the audio-visual system for meetings, Mark said he thinks we should probably do that, but not with ARPA funds. Beth said she thinks there might be other appropriate grant opportunities for this. Charlie Gallanter said the town needs to upgrade the internet at the town offices so people are able to use internet during meetings. Duncan said he thinks there could be a different source of ARPA funding for this. It was agreed to remove AV upgrades from the list. Beth said she thinks we should consider using ARPA funds for the network itself.

There was a suggestion to give grants to restaurants that want to locate in Johnson. Beth asked if we are allowed to give away ARPA funds. Brian said that is an interesting question. For the most part we are freed up to do anything with the money that we would do with other revenue, but before giving it away to a private citizen he would want to check. Beth said she likes the idea of this for businesses in general, not necessarily only for restaurants. It was agreed to keep grants for businesses in general on the shorter list for further consideration.

It was agreed to strike mitigating flood zones and dredging the river.

There was a suggestion to offset water and sewer payments for residents who continued making payments during COVID even though they lost their jobs. That was crossed out because it falls under the village.

There was a suggestion to assist with renovating existing rental housing. Mark said the state has a lot of money coming out for rental upgrades. Duncan said he does not see this as a good use of ARPA funds. Beth said she thinks we have a lot of rental units in our town that are not good. She is hesitant to strike it too quickly. If we had higher quality rental housing, that could change the character of our town. Eben said he is okay with putting this on the compressed list. Paul Warden said the Planning Commission has talked about housing stock but he is not sure if this is the best use for ARPA funds.

It was agreed to strike planting large trees on Main Street. It was agreed to keep enhancing the rail trail by adding bike lanes on Railroad Street and Route 15 on the list. The suggestion about a possible pedestrian bridge is covered by the pathways item already discussed. It was agreed to strike the idea for a recreation/senior/teen center. It was agreed to keep the idea of an ecologically informed recreation plan for town properties. It was agreed to strike the community pool suggestion and to keep the dog park idea. Gravel paths and roads at the arboretum can be considered as part of the pathways item. It was agreed to keep marketing of Johnson on the condensed list but not improvement of the welcome signs. There was a suggestion for a place for live music, dance, gallery space, readings, lectures, and other cultural events. Mark said he thinks we already have that between the Studio Center and the college. It was agreed to strike it. The suggestions to fine tune the water filtration system and to offset electrical bills apply to the village, not the town. Beth said she likes the suggestion to assist owners of dilapidated buildings in fixing them up or buying buildings but a majority of board members wanted to strike that from the list. It was agreed to strike putting in public parking on or near Main Street. There was a suggestion regarding sidewalks but the village owns the sidewalks. Eben said the suggestion about improved signage would fall under the marketing item already discussed. It was agreed to strike the public pool suggestion. There was a suggestion to use funds for improvements at the Holcomb House. Duncan said he thinks that is a great idea but he is pretty sure there will be another pot of ARPA money that might apply. It was agreed to strike that item. It was agreed to strike the suggestion for townwide landscaper/gardeners/greenhouse.

Beth suggested that selectboard and Planning Commission members all think about what a vision of Johnson means. We will discuss that next time and it will inform our next steps in deciding on how to use ARPA funds. Duncan says he thinks it is important to think about ARPA funds in the context of our prioritization list.

Beth said she would love for the Planning Commission to continue to be involved in decisions about ARPA funds.

Paul Warden said one concern of the Planning Commission was that many citizens may have missed the survey and their chance to weigh in. Some Planning Commission members missed it. Beth said if there are any big ideas that have not been included on the list so far people should send them to her.

10. *Historical Society Proposal for Holcomb House*

Mary Jean Smith said the Historical Society wants to occupy the second floor of the Holcomb House. They want assurance that the selectboard will not place tenants there. They request a firm yes or no vote on the Historical Society using the upstairs.

Beth said the selectboard needs to know what the Historical Society wants to do with the space and what needs to be done to get it to a usable state.

Mary Jean said when this was last discussed by the selectboard it was stated that when the tenants were out the Historical Society would be told that it was okay to go upstairs but they have not heard anything. After the tenants moved out Brian told them that the space had to be inspected and that is the last time they heard anything. There were rumors but they did not hear anything directly.

Beth said the Historical Society asked for additional cleaning and the selectboard approved it. That has happened. If the selectboard said yes today to the Historical Society occupying the space, what would the Historical Society's next steps be? Mary Jean said they would seek a professional inspection and advice about bringing the space up to code for storage and display. Mark asked if display would mean the public going up into the space. Mary Jean said that would have to be looked into.

Eben said this selectboard could give the Historical Society a firm yes or no but this board can't bind any future selectboard so the Historical Society would have to come again in March to ask permission. He noted that the letter the Historical Society had sent the board says the Historical Society expects to share the cost of renovations. That cost is an unknown. We don't know what the town is being expected to pay. Mary Jean said she doesn't know that the Historical Society knows that either.

Mary Jean asked what happened to the rental income. She thought that was going to go into renovating the building. Eben said he only ever saw it stated that the money was going to go to the town, but plenty of expenses at the Holcomb House have been dealt with by the town. Mary Jean said there are plenty more. Eben looked at the agreement between the Town of Johnson and the Historical Society It says that the Town of Johnson will receive rent and says what the Historical Society will pay but he doesn't see it stated that the town will put rental revenue into the building. The revenue helped to offset costs that the town had. Mary Jean asked, wouldn't anyone assume that the money from the renters, or at least some of it, would go into the building? Duncan said for the first 5 years the rental income went to offset the loan payments. Mary Jean asked, didn't we fully pay the loan back? Duncan said the Historical Society did not

fully pay it back. Beth said she doesn't think anyone should assume where the money will go. It goes into and out of our budget. It didn't go into a specific reserve but into the general budget.

Mary Jean said she is here for a yes or no as to whether the Historical Society is going to be able to do something upstairs. They want to use the space for storage and eventually display but that won't be for quite a while.

Duncan moved not to rent the upstairs of the Holcomb House to any tenant until the Historical Society has come back to the selectboard with a detailed plan for future use of the space. Eben asked, what kind of plan? A financial plan? Does it need to have numbers or can it just be conceptual? Duncan said that might be part of a second motion. **Mark seconded.**

Mark said after being in that apartment he does not think we ought to be in the rental business. He has some discomfort about bringing in a professional inspector. The upstairs is not up to code for public access. A professional might even say that the Historical Society should not use it.

Paul suggested including a timeline in the motion. Duncan said he doesn't think it is necessary. This board can't bind a future selectboard to a never-ending commitment.

The motion was passed with Eben opposed.

Duncan said he expects that what the selectboard would need would be a detailed plan including costs and, if there are proposals to share costs between the town and the Historical Society, a breakdown of the cost sharing with a rationale as to why it would be appropriate for the town to share those costs. He knows there will be some compliance issues but he doesn't think we can figure that out unless we hire a consultant to do that analysis. Mark asked if it is safe to assume the Historical Society did that for the first floor. Duncan and Mary Jean said yes.

Beth said she thinks the selectboard needs to understand the proposed use for the second floor before we get someone in to do an assessment. Mary Jean asked, beyond saying the Historical Society wants to use it for storage and displays? Beth said she thinks she heard there was no immediate plan for displays and there was an immediate need for storage. What does that look like? What does the timeline look like? What is needed for that to happen and what does it look like beyond the storage phase?

Mary Jean said the Historical Society was not certain whether they had access to the top floor. The board agreed that the Historical Society is allowed to access the top floor in order to come up with a plan. Eben said as part of the plan he would like an updated yearly cost analysis sheet.

Mary Jean said there seems to be a question as to whether or not the town wants the Historical Society in that building at all. Eben said he thinks the selectboard wants the Historical Society there. He doesn't think any board member wants the town to be a landlord. Beth said he should speak for himself, not the board. Eben said Holcomb House costs are continuing to rise. It is becoming a yearly cost to the taxpayer and the request is for the town to share in costs while removing revenue that is helping to cover costs.

Mark said someone will have to address the plumbing on the second floor because there is potential for water to freeze. Beth said the town should address it. Duncan said he thinks we should have some minimum amount of heat upstairs. We should not just turn the thermostat off. Mark said even with some heat he thinks we should still shut the water off. Beth said we can have Donnie Garrett shut it off and make sure the windows are closed.

Duncan said he supports the work the Historical Society has done and he suspects the whole board feels the same way. He suggested that the Historical Society keep an open mind about the possibility of having a small one bedroom apartment in the upstairs space. That would be a way to offset costs. (*Historical Society members left at 7:55.*)

11. VAST and Sterling Snow Riders Land Use Agreement Request

VAST and the Sterling Snow Riders are requesting to renew agreements to cross some town roads and use some town properties for snowmobile trails. Rob Rodriguez said the Landowner Permission Form is for 5 years. If the board does not agree to that time period, the date will have to be changed. Eben said we can write that date down but the agreement won't be binding to the next selectboard. **Eben moved to approve the Landowner Permission Form for VAST and Sterling Snow Riders as presented, Duncan seconded and the motion was passed.**

12. Discussion of Status of Fifth Public Works Position

Brian said at the last meeting there were questions about how much was budgeted for the fifth public works position. The amount budgeted for total compensation was \$93,804.89. (*Charlie, Paul, Lois and Dean left at 7:57.*) We budgeted for 200 hours of part-time help at a cost of \$4,368.16. (*Chris Ferguson and Allison Tafuri arrived at 7:58.*) Our budget has projected a total wage and time off of \$340,048.04 of which \$59,216.58 has been spent. Health and dental insurance has \$89,614.08 dedicated and \$18,355.46 spent so far. Social Security has \$26,013.68 dedicated and \$4,540.27 spent. Retirement has \$22,953.24 dedicated and \$2,623.42 spent. We have room in our budget for a position. Exactly how much depends on the person we hire. It would be possible for a new person to cost more than we have budgeted but we could end up spending less than we have budgeted.

For comparison, Brian looked at Pittsford, Windsor, Cambridge, Hyde Park and Brandon. Hyde Park has 4 employees and uses seasonal assistance. Cambridge normally has 5. Currently they have 4 and are hiring a fifth. Pittsford has 4 and they are satisfied. Hyde Park, Windsor and Brandon have 4 regular employees and use seasonal employees or employees borrowed from other departments for assistance.

Beth asked if paying someone at the high end of the salary range for 3/4 of the year breaks our budget. Brian said it could if we hired a highly qualified person.

Duncan asked if Brian compared miles of highway with the other communities he looked at. Brian said he did for a couple but he did not have road information for all of them. Duncan asked, don't we have access to the VLCT salary survey? Brian said we do but he doesn't recall seeing road mileage in it. The towns he looked at are either neighbors or are demographically similar.

Mark asked if adding another person would cut down on overtime. Brian said in theory it should. When we added a fifth person we reduced the amount of overtime hours we budgeted for.

Duncan said one of the biggest benefits of a fifth employee is that we could set up a schedule allowing a rotation for weekends so not all employees would be on call all the time. Brian said that has a secondary benefit that employees can then take more time off in the winter so they will have more time available in the summer and can get more done.

Mark asked, if it snows on a weekend, is that automatically overtime? Brian said yes. Duncan asked why that would be. He thought part of having rotating shifts was that people covering weekend hours would not be working overtime. Rosemary and Brian said that has never happened. Brian said we did investigate scheduling options where we wouldn't have to pay overtime but the public works department felt those options would not work for them – that they wouldn't be able to complete the work in a reasonable time because there would be times when there were only two people to drive the trucks. Duncan said it depends on how you schedule. The foreman plays a huge role in overtime hours.

Eben said the town could consider the question of overtime in contract negotiations. Duncan asked where we are in contract negotiations. Beth and Eben said they can't talk about negotiations.

Mark asked if the 5th employee would have to have a CDL. Brian said not necessarily. Our salt truck is under the weight limit for requiring a CDL. An employee without a CDL could only use certain equipment but there would be useful things they could do.

Mark said he recalls hearing that there is someone in the pipeline. Brian said we have received one application and two others have expressed some interest. Mark said he is wondering if we would find someone for the position if we posted it.

Duncan said he would like a better understanding of why it makes sense to have a fifth person. There are some things, like knowing that weekend hours are always overtime hours, that are making him question whether it is cost prudent. Mark asked if it makes sense to get further along in contract negotiations before making a decision. Eben said it is unclear how long negotiations will take. Brian said the advice we have gotten is just to conduct business as we regularly do during contract negotiations. Duncan asked if we can find out what other towns are doing. He is uncomfortable automatically paying overtime for weekend hours. Eben said he thinks it is pretty common. Brian said he can ask around about it. Duncan said he thinks differential pay for weekends is common but if we are doing a truly rotated schedule there shouldn't have to be overtime on weekends. Beth said she would like to know about that too. She has experience in a different industry with differential pay but not overtime for nights and weekends. Brian said we were never able to make splitting the crew up into different groups work for us. We have looked at plans that involve that and we could not make effective use of staff. Duncan said we don't have storms on a 5 day a week basis. The foreman is important. If we know we will have a storm the foreman can call all five members in if need be. Jeff Bickford said whether we have four or five people on the crew we have to have everyone available every weekday by a certain time because of school.

Eben said he feels Jason is not getting the support he needs. We keep encouraging him to further his computer skills and come up with plans but he has time constraints because he has to do the

same physical labor as the rest of the crew. Maybe he would be able to do different things if we gave him the time. He is supportive of adding a fifth person.

Mark said he would like to get more information and act on this next month. He would like to know more about whether adding a fifth person will save us money on overtime. He has a sense that overtime is critical to these employees and that bringing on another employee will not reduce it.

Duncan said his big question is the issue of automatic overtime versus differential pay on weekends and how that might affect the budget. Mark said he doesn't see how a fifth person affects that. Duncan said years ago he was told that having a fifth employee would allow a weekend off each month for each employee. Can we set up a schedule so each employee is guaranteed a weekend off each month?

Beth said she is very interested in the question of whether the high end of the possible compensation range fits into our budget. Can we push hiring out as far as possible or look into hiring a part-time person? She doesn't want to break our budget.

13. Requested Change to Conditions of Loan to Blackjack LLC

Brian said Blackjack LLC is asking the selectboard to change the terms of their loan. They want us to release the equipment as part of the collateral. Chris Ferguson said they want to be able to sell the business and include the equipment without having a lien on the equipment. Duncan asked if the other lienholders, Union Bank and VEDA, will release their liens. Chris said they will with a purchase and sales agreement.

Duncan asked if the business equipment is included in the mortgage. Allison Tafuri said no, it is theirs. They are using it as collateral. Duncan asked if this is theoretical or if they have a potential buyer. Chris said they are finishing up 9 years and they had a 10-year plan. They hope to have a potential buyer soon. Duncan asked if they would be comfortable if the selectboard's vote was conditional on a purchase and sales agreement. Chris and Allison said yes. Duncan said he is assuming that their plan is to continue to own the building and be owners of the loan. They said yes.

Beth said her concern is whether there is enough equity on the building that the town would get the loan amount back if something happened. Chris said he thinks so. He could give relevant information in executive session.

Duncan said the purpose of the loan fund was to try to encourage business development and investment in businesses. He thinks the basic tenets of the loan were met.

Mark asked why having a purchase and sales agreement makes Duncan comfortable. Duncan said it shows commitment from a buyer to continue operation of a restaurant in that location.

Mark asked if the debt to the town would be paid off at the time of sale. Duncan said that would not be part of his motion. Chris and Allison have indicated that they would continue to own the loan and make payments.

Duncan said we are already third in line on collateral and on the mortgage, so we are at some risk of not getting paid back. Beth said she thinks we are at greater risk if we release the lien on the equipment because then the total value will be less.

Pat Ripley of the Lamoille Economic Development Corporation said he did not understand that VEDA was also part of the collateral. That exposes the town to a higher risk than he originally understood and changes his personal thinking a little. There is already a fair amount of risk with the loan. A traditional lender would offer three options: pay back the loan, replace the collateral or pay the loan upon sale. But the town is not a traditional lender and can do things a traditional lender would not do. His understanding is that one purpose of the loan fund was for economic development of the community. This is an important building and business for the community. The future of that business should probably factor into the board's decision. There is a fair amount of risk to the town in this loan now, with the town being the third party in line. He is not sure the risk goes up significantly by removing that collateral in this particular case.

Duncan moved to authorize the release of equipment collateral pending a valid purchase and sales agreement being provided by Blackjack LLC, Eben seconded and the motion was passed with Eben opposed.

Duncan asked Pat what is needed from the board to change the terms of the loan agreement. Pat said he thinks just a memorandum added to the agreement.

Duncan moved to authorize the chair to sign a memorandum of understanding changing the Blackjack LLC loan term conditions to eliminate equipment collateral on receipt of a purchase and sales agreement from Blackjack LLC, Mark seconded and the motion was passed.

14. Proposed Municipal Partnership for Assessor Services

Duncan said he had emailed a spreadsheet with cost figures based on what he thinks the maximum costs are. Eben pointed out this morning that he thinks we are carrying \$15K in the current budget for assessor services. There is a \$15K line item: listers contracted services. Is anything else covered in that line item? Rosemary said no. Duncan said regarding the rate LCPC would charge, in their written document they had 10% but when he talked to Tasha Wallis she mentioned a figure of 15% of total compensation (not just salary.) That is what the spreadsheet shows. There is a retirement benefit in the spreadsheet right now. Tasha told Duncan that as a regular part-time employee a shared assessor would not be eligible for VMERS. Their thought was that if it were a full-time position we might offer the employer's contribution, 6% of the base salary. That might not be in there initially but he thinks the long-term goal would be to find enough hours for a 40-hour per week person. That will change our share for health insurance, retirement, etc. It might also reduce the hourly rate because we have to pay for health insurance once the person reaches 30 hours. Duncan's recommendation is that we contract for 8 hours of service. Terri Sabens thinks 4 hours a week would probably be enough to maintain the grand list but 8 hours would be ideal. We have to either put out an RFP ourselves or agree to the shared assessor option.

Eben asked, if we paid the listers a decent rate, would there be interest in the lister positions? Rosemary said many towns are getting rid of listers. Beth said she likes the idea of having one

less headache for the town. Duncan said there are advantages of having LCPC take care of this. They handle insurance, payroll, etc. Rosemary said she thinks this is a good solution.

Mark asked if the village pays us for maintaining the grand list. Rosemary said no. Mark said maybe we should charge them for it.

Duncan said if a service agreement is put together it will have to go back to each selectboard and the LCPC board and they will all need to agree.

Eben moved to ask LCPC to draft a service agreement with Johnson committing to contract with LCPC for 8 hours a week of assessor services. Duncan seconded. Rosemary said the 8 hours a week will be an average, with the assessor working more some weeks and less other weeks. **The motion was passed.**

15. PACIF Renewal

Brian said we still need to submit payroll information and property valuation reports in order for our final rate to be determined but PACIF always asks for our renewal first.

Duncan asked Brian and Rosemary to take a very close look at PACIF's property schedule. In the past they have sometimes thrown out exorbitant numbers for the value of buildings and we have pushed back on that. Brian said they will do that. They will also review with Erik Bailey any property and equipment shared with the village.

Mark asked if we get quotes for insurance. Duncan said he would caution against that. If we get quotes someone will give a low quote to get our business but within 3 years their rates will be higher than PACIF's. He will not support going with another insurer. PACIF provides auxiliary benefits that other insurers do not. Brian said the last he knew PACIF provided property and casualty insurance for all but two or three municipalities in the state. He noted that he did work for PACIF for a time. Beth said she would like to see quotes from other reputable property and casualty insurers. She is curious about inflation rates. She thinks the rate they show is high. Duncan said he thinks in the past they have used high values for replacement values.

Eben asked what the deductible is. Rosemary said it is \$2,000 for buildings and \$1,000 for vehicles. Eben said he thinks that is very low.

Beth said she would like to get additional quotes. Eben said he would like to know definitely what the cost will be. Beth said there are laws about knowing your rates in advance of entering into an agreement. She doesn't know if PACIF has to follow the same rules but other insurance companies have to file rate increases through the state and get them approved and only a certain number is allowed for inflation. Mark agreed that we should get quotes.

Beth moved to get quotes for property and casualty insurance coverage from at least two insurers in addition to PACIF. Eben seconded, offering a friendly amendment, which was accepted, to have the quotes include \$10,000 and \$5,000 deductible options. The motion was passed 4-1 with Duncan opposed.

Duncan said he would like to have a listing of the services PACIF provides a no additional cost that other insurance companies would not provide.

16. Review Capital Equipment Reserve Fund Balance and Projections

Eben said he thinks changes are needed to the capital equipment fund. The whole board could work on it or Brian, Jason and maybe one board member could come up with options and bring them to the board. He does not believe the compressor needs to be replaced. It should perhaps be moved into small equipment. If we purchase an excavator he would suggest not replacing the backhoe as soon. He does not believe we need to replace the screen. The mower replacement needs to be moved up. **Duncan moved to authorize Eben, Brian and Jason to draft a revised capital equipment plan.** Beth said she would like to have different scenarios presented. Brian said that can be done. **Mark seconded and the motion was passed.**

17. PACIF Renewal (continued)

Duncan said he would like to see Brian fill out the PACIF renewal application, which does not commit us to buying insurance from PACIF. If Brian does not fill that out, PACIF will not give us a price. Brian said he assumed that getting a quote from PACIF was part of what the board wanted him to do. He will give them everything they need in order to give us a quote.

18. Draft RFP for Sale of John Deere Grader

Brian had included in the packet a draft Request for Bids for the grader we will be selling. It includes a date and time when people can come to inspect the vehicle. The board agreed to say that bids must be over \$110,000, to include a rain date for inspections (by appointment), to include a statement that the town reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to have mailed bids sent "Attn: Grader Bid" and to allow bids to be sent by email. **Duncan moved to circulate the Request for Bids for the John Deere Grader as soon as possible with the changes discussed tonight, Mark seconded and the motion was passed.** It was agreed to make December 5 the deadline for receiving bids.

19. Economic Development Proposal Review and Selection

Eben moved to enter executive session to discuss evaluation of candidates for potential appointment as allowed by 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3), inviting Rosemary and Brian to remain, Duncan seconded and the motion was passed at 9:35. The board consented out of executive session at 9:53.

It was agreed to repost the request for proposals with VLCT, LinkedIn and the Vermont Planners' Association and to check with Tasha Wallis on places to post. Duncan asked if we have reason to believe we will receive anything more for contract services. Eben and Mark said they don't believe there is enough money to hire an employee. Duncan said he thought there might be people with interest in picking up a second job or part-time position.

20. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:58.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths