

JOHNSON VILLAGE TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2022

Present:

Trustees: Steve Hatfield, Lynda Hill, Diane Lehouiller, BJ Putvain, Ken Tourangeau,

Others: Erik Bailey

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. Call to Order

Steve called the meeting to order at 6:00.

2. Additions or Adjustments to the Agenda

Steve added setting a date for a joint meeting with the selectboard and possibly eliminating the meeting planned for next week. BJ said someone needs to reach out to the selectboard and make sure they understand what is happening with the fire department's radio tower plan. Steve said that will be discussed in executive session tonight.

3. Scheduling Joint Meeting

Steve said the selectboard suggested October 12 or October 19 for a joint meeting. It was agreed to tell them the trustees prefer October 19 at 6:00.

4. Discussion of Contract with Troy Dolan

Steve moved to find that premature general public knowledge regarding the Dolan consulting contract would clearly place the village at a substantial disadvantage because the board of trustees would be disclosing details of the contract and to enter executive session to discuss the Dolan contract under the provisions of 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1), Ken seconded, the motion was passed and the board entered executive session at 6:06.

The board came out of executive session at 7:20.

Ken moved to accept the Dolan Municipal & Utility Consulting, LLC consultant service contract at a rate of \$80 per hour with a cap of 25 hours per week until February 3, 2023, contingent on Troy Dolan's acceptance and signature, BJ seconded and the motion was passed

Ken moved to authorize the chair to sign the Dolan Municipal & Utility Consulting, LLC contract on behalf of the board, BJ seconded and the motion was passed.

5. Discussion of Fire Department Proposed New Radio Coverage System

Diane moved go into executive session to discuss fire department issues under the provisions of 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1), Ken seconded, the motion was passed and the board entered executive session at 7:22.

The board came out of executive session at 7:49. No action was taken.

6. Village Manager Duties and Project Priorities

Ken suggested Erik's top priority should be the village garage. He should look into getting an air scrubber. Other priorities are the no idle policy needed for the bucket truck grant and decisions about ARPA funds.

BJ asked where we are with the audit. Steve said Rosemary was looking into finding a company that could do it. Lynda said Rosemary said it would cost about \$10K. Ken said we have 4 years' worth of audits to do, so it will cost \$40K. Steve said we might not do them all in one year. Ken Nolan told him as long as we were working on it VPPSA would be satisfied. BJ suggested we could do one past audit every year.

Ken asked, Diane is still working on the rest area near the bridge, right? Diane said the person she was working with at LCPC is not there anymore. That area should get looked at because we need to get rid of the rubble. It should get put on the list. And it is imperative that we get money to do that. Putting in a rest area can be done with a grant, but we need to take care of the old stone. Ken said the removal cost was going to be \$20K. BJ asked if we can bury it there. Ken said he thinks we need to have someone tell us if we can. Maybe we can get funding to help with that.

BJ asked if there are any grants we need to be on top of to make sure we don't miss deadlines. Steve said there is a deadline for the USDA grant for the garage. Ken said we need to adopt some policies to meet the requirements for the USDA grant for the bucket truck. Steve said we should not hold out too much hope for the bucket truck. The manufacturer has stopped communicating with Troy. We have not spent any money on it so far. Erik said according to Troy a bucket truck will need to be replaced in 2025.

Diane said she thinks we need to develop a harassment policy. Ken said we also need an employee review policy. Erik said the personnel guidelines already say reviews will be done at least annually. It just needs to happen.

Erik said he had sent out the employee review form he plans to use. First the employee fills out sections 1 and 2, saying how they think they are doing and what they see as goals for the next year. Then they will discuss it with their supervisor and the supervisor will give back the actual review. Erik reviews both employee and supervisor reviews. There is a midterm check on progress on the goals.

Erik asked, other than the crew who else should he include in the review process? BJ said he thinks we should do reviews for all the office employees who work part of their time for the village, as well as for Marla, who is a full-time village employee. Ken suggested that Erik ask Brian Story how the town wants to approach reviews for people who work for both town and village.

Steve asked, how about the fire department? Ken said Arjay handles that. Erik said he thinks we should leave evaluation of firefighters to the fire department.

BJ said he agrees with Diane that we need a good verbal and sexual harassment policy. There should be no tolerance of harassment. Erik suggested a revamp of the personnel policy that includes harassment. Diane said there is a sexual harassment policy. Steve said we have some examples of policies that we like.

BJ asked if we have a policy that if someone comes to us with an issue about a coworker it stays confidential. His employer has something like that. Others said they would be interested in seeing that policy.

Lynda asked, what about Troy and Meredith's situation? Steve said we have a conflict of interest policy.

Erik asked that any examples of policies be sent to him. He can review the personnel policy and come back with suggested changes. Steve said he and Diane were thinking they and the other trustees could work on that to lighten Erik's load. Erik said it would be great if the board could take the lead on it and loop him in to provide input.

Diane said the Vermont League of Cities and Towns invited us to send a harassment policy to them to review before we send it to our lawyer.

Ken said another priority, though not at the top of the list, is having someone contact the state for information about their paving plans so we will know what we need to do with our manhole covers to prepare.

Erik said the state reached out to Brian Story and Brian asked that the village manager be looped in. They want to upgrade the crosswalk at the Route 15/Pearl St. intersection. They haven't engineered it yet. They want to know if we are okay with the idea of improving the crosswalk. Board members agreed that they are okay with it. Erik said he will tell them that we are conceptually on board and that we want to review the plans and make sure it doesn't cost us anything.

Lynda said she would like to look into subcontracting for plowing sidewalks. Ken said that is a great idea but he doesn't know any company in the area that does that. Some board members suggested that we could use a contractor only on weekends and holidays. Ken said we should make sure this work is not in the union contract. If it is, we would have to pay anyone who did it union wages.

Steve said he was invited to participate in the union contract negotiations. BJ said he would like to be involved with that. Steve said he will ask if it is legal for Erik to do it. If not, Steve can do it with BJ. Ken said previous trustees felt it was better not to be involved in negotiations until it was time to sign. Erik said he would want to find someone besides the lawyer to be on the negotiating team, perhaps a trusted former board member. Lynda said she thinks we should have a current board member. School board members have always been involved with school district contract negotiations.

Steve asked, if he and BJ don't find any red flags in combing through past invoices, is everyone comfortable forgoing the meeting next week to talk about priorities? BJ said we just now talked about priorities. Others agreed that a meeting next week is not needed.

Ken suggested maybe the board should agree on the top few priorities. Erik said it sounds like the garage air scrubber and garage grant should be top priorities. Ken agreed. Erik suggested appraisals. BJ suggested the harassment policy. Lynda and Ken suggested ARPA. Steve said at the October meeting the board will set a date for a special meeting to talk about ARPA. Ken said we should find out from Rosemary when the deadline is for deciding how to spend ARPA funds.

Erik said the VLCT Town Fair will be on October 6 and 7. It is a good networking opportunity and has helpful sessions. Is the board okay with paying for his hotel and registration so he can attend? The board agreed to that.

7. ***Adjourn***

Ken moved and BJ seconded to adjourn at 8:25 and the motion was passed.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths

UNAPPROVED