

VILLAGE TRUSTEES MEETING NOTICE & AGENDA

Agenda

Date: Monday, December 12, 2022
Time 6:00 p.m.

Johnson Municipal Building upstairs located at 293 Lower Main West, Johnson VT

Masks are voluntary if attending the meeting in person. Please respect the personal choice of your neighbors.

If you want to participate in the meeting, please attend the meeting at Johnson Municipal Building. Village of Johnson is not responsible for technical difficulties with zoom.

Electronic Meeting via Zoom and Phone Call-In

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Meeting ID: 344 652 2544

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Agenda: Please note times are approximate.

6:00 p.m. Call to order

REVIEW OF AGENDA AND ANY ADJUSTMENTS, CHANGES AND ADDITIONS

6:01 p.m. Review and Approve Minutes of Trustee Meetings

Joint Trustees-Selectboard Meeting November 9, 2022, Trustee Meeting on November 14, 2022,
Special Trustees Meeting December 2, 2022.

6:05 p.m. Treasurer's Report: Review and approve bills and warrants. Budget Status Report and any Action Items. Signatures needed

-Rosemary to brief Trustees on steps to convert Clerk & Treasurer positions from elected to appointed.

6:15 p.m. Members of the Public

6:45 p.m. Village Manager's Report and any action items

7:00 p.m. Water/Wastewater Report and action items

7:15 p.m. Electric/General Report and any action items

7:25 p.m. Fire Department Report and any action items

7:30 p.m. Any other discussion or action items

1. (D) Discuss initiatives to welcome NVU Internationals to the Village.
2. (D) Discuss avenues to utilize ARPA funds and the options to manage those and other grants.
3. (D.A) Discuss and possibly complete the LCPC Communities survey paper copy (online survey closed last month).
4. (D.A) Review propane prices and chose to either throw out bids and remain with current, or otherwise.
5. (D.A) Discuss and possibly act on revoking the contract to purchase the electric bucket truck from Lion Electric due to many delays and changes in the design and equipment by Lion. (Pending receipt of letter refunding our deposit)
6. (D.A) Discuss and possibly act on a funding suggestion by a resident for the Tree Board.
7. (D) Discuss and possibly adopt the final draft harassment policy.
8. (D.A) Executive Session
as allowed by 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1) *The Trustees have made a specific finding that premature general public knowledge of Labor Relations agreement negotiations would clearly place the Village at a substantial disadvantage.*

Other Business

Adjourn

JOHNSON VILLAGE TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MONDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2022

Present:

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

Others: Erik Bailey, Dan Copp (remote), Kyle Nuse, Kelly Locke (remote)

Absent: Lynda Hill

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. Call to Order

Steve called the meeting to order at 6:03.

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

It was agreed to move the water/wastewater report before the other agenda items.

3. Water/Wastewater Report and Action Items

Dan said the E-DRM and Wr-43 were submitted to the state. The belt press rehab is 95% done. It should be completely done in a few weeks. So far it has cost about \$14,000 out of the \$20,400 we budgeted. It should come in about \$5,000 less than anticipated. The emergency plant generator at the wastewater plant went down with a bad water pump. It took a week to get the replacement so Brookfield had to set up an emergency generator on site. While the water pump was being replaced it was determined that the main bearing for the fan and the water pump was also bad. That is likely what caused the water pump to fail. We had to wait almost 2 weeks for the bearing. Dan thinks they made a mistake and forgot to order the bearing and that is why it took two weeks. He will have a conversation with them about the cost of generator rental after we receive the invoice. All fire extinguishers at the plant were serviced and recertified. Some UV bulbs were replaced. We will need to buy more in a few months. The UV channels were pressure washed and scrubbed. Wind River pumped out the wash water in the channels after they were cleaned.

Coliform samples were negative. Luke assisted the village crew with flushing hydrants. We have the spare well pump on site now. Dan would like to isolate the Nadeau well pump from village water at the well house. This would require buying two flanges and pulling out the T that connects the systems. This would allow us to have the state rewrite our permit so that well is not included in our sampling for 2023. PFOA sampling is required in 2023. This would save roughly \$1,000 in sampling costs and would give us time to consult with Percy about how they want to handle taking over the well and how they want to deal with the piping in the ground to divert around the well house. We will maintain the building and check the heaters throughout the winter as we have done in the past. We are not going to be able to reroute around the building this year. Dan hears from Nate that Percy wants to be consulted but Percy hasn't gotten in touch with Dan yet. The parts needed should not cost more than \$200. This plan would mean that we would maintain electricity through the winter as we have in the past. The board agreed to what Dan suggested. Dan said water loss for October was 17%, which includes loss during hydrant flushing.

Erik brought up the plan to rehab the Katie Win meter house. Dan said the plan was to put the cost of that in the budget for spring. Ken asked if the Ship Sevin issue is taken care of. Dan said we still need a lawyer to draft up an agreement with Ship Sevin regarding liability. They have verbally agreed; we just need a legal document. He forwarded the information to Steve but doesn't know if

Steve forwarded it to Brian Monaghan. Steve said he or Erik will talk to Brian Monaghan tomorrow about it. Ken asked Dan to send the information to Erik.

Diane asked about the difference between the original \$197,000 cost estimate for the pump house work and the current \$35,000 estimate. Dan explained that if we change the capacity at the pump station then everything has to be brought up to the newest codes, which costs more. If we do not change the flow but just replace what is there and reorganize it, then we can rehab the building within the same footprint, saving money. Diane asked, there is no problem with the flow now? Dan said we have never had complaints from anyone in the trailer park. The state was going to require more flow but we have data showing that the current flow is adequate. By not changing the flow we have fewer hoops to go through.

4. *Review and Approve Minutes of Trustee Meetings*

Diane moved to approve the minutes of October 11 and October 12, 2022 with one change to the October 11 minutes: replacing “Lynda” with “Diane” in “Lynda said she will hopefully apply for another Winter Placemaking Grant.” The motion was seconded and passed.

5. *Village Manager’s Report and Action Items*

Erik said the air scrubber has been in the garage for over a month and it works. BJ asked if we need to have anyone come and check the air quality to make sure it is working. Erik said it has a pressure sensor on it and when the pressure reaches a certain level that means we have to change the filters. Ken said he recalls that we were only allowed to have employees in the building for so many hours a day. Steve asked if that was an official requirement. Ken said he doesn't remember. Steve said we need to find out if that was an official requirement. Ken said he thinks we probably should have an air quality test done. BJ agreed. Ken said the employees say they are okay with the air in the building right now.

Erik said a wastewater study is being done with grant money. The initial meeting with the person doing the study was on October 4 and the final product should be ready in December. VPPSA put us in the queue for developing a rate case for electricity. We are 6th in line and they think it will happen in February. Erik is meeting with Seth Jensen from the Lamoille County Planning Commission on Wednesday regarding the cleanup project. Nate is on vacation this week. The crew has a task list and Morrisville and Stowe are ready to assist if we have an emergency. Erik approved a wastewater allocation of 210 gallons per day for an accessory dwelling at 210 Sinclair Road.

The first union contract talks will be on December 2. Erik, Steve and BJ will be there. The first meeting will be to set the tone and receive the union’s demands, then we will go from there. Diane asked if the board will talk about what we would like to see in the contract. Erik said he would suggest an executive session to discuss the contract at the next meeting. Ken asked if some notes about what the union wants could be sent out after the negotiations meeting so all board members are informed before the trustee board meeting.

6. *Electric/General Report and Action Items*

Erik read the report from Troy. The crew installed a service, connected a new solar array, energized service for the charging station at Jolley, retired an existing overhead service, completed a pole transfer, provided 2.5 hours of mutual aid to the Village of Hyde Park, addressed a flickering light issue, did right-of-way cutting and completed monthly meter reading, high/low checks, substation check and Dig Safes.

Hydrant flushing was completed. The crew assisted with sewer main cleaning and stormwater catch basin cleaning, changed the water pump at the cold spring, performed fall cleanup at the village garage and outside areas, assisted the fire department with removing a water tank from a truck, helped AOT with a gravel spill from a state truck on Route 15, worked on the village tractor tires, painted the Bobcat, and prepared equipment for winter. The village furnace was repaired. The crew attended the October NEPPA safety meeting, restocked first aid kits and replaced outdated face shields and water blankets.

Troy had multiple conversations with Lion Electric and the state about the status of the electric bucket truck. He wrote a report about the situation for the board. He discussed a line relocation with a customer, discussed the line relocation project on Clay Hill with Naté, did a true-up for the property owner at 280 Sinclair Road, completed an estimate for new secondary service to serve new properties on River Road West, and scheduled sewer main and catch basin cleaning. He reached out to three transformer suppliers for quotes and only got a response from one. They are in the process of getting pricing together. At this time most transformers are a year out from delivery, whether rebuilt or new. He continued to work on getting pricing for a line materials order, reviewed budget actuals and monthly financials for all departments, discussed budget status related to materials and staff time with Nate, talked to a solar developer and property owner to discuss installation of a new array, forwarded water and sewer permit applications to Erik, completed monthly invoice coding and continued to meet with Nate.

Ken asked if we are staying within the budget. Other board members said they would be interested in that information as well. Ken asked Erik to let the board know if we are very far over budget.

7. *Fire Department Report and Action Items*

Erik read the fire department report. For September 29 to October 27 there were 11 calls, 4 during the day and 7 at night. The average duration was 47 minutes. There were five automatic alarms, one CEO alarm, one medical assist, two smoke condition, one debris fire and one wilderness rescue. The average number of firefighters responding was 10. Total number of hours was 57. Fire prevention and awareness trinket bags were distributed to children in preschool, kindergarten and grades 1 and 2 and to homeschool students, and students had the ability to view a fire safety video prepared last year. Annual service and state inspection was completed on several trucks. Diane asked if members of the fire department went to the school. Ken said yes; their Facebook page includes pictures from the visit.

8. *Village Manager's Report and Action Items (continued)*

Erik said our community is being targeted by Efficiency Vermont in 2023. As part of that we are eligible for \$60,000 to cover the costs of some energy efficiency projects. No one project can be more than \$25,000. They can be municipal, commercial, farm, or non-profit projects.

Ken asked if we could use the money for the new meter at NVU. Erik said possibly. Ken said he thinks we should look into that. He doesn't think our ratepayers should pay for it.

Erik said we need to figure out where we want the money to go. We need to provide a list to Efficiency Vermont before the first of the year. Diane asked Erik's thoughts about where the money could go. Erik suggested heat pumps for the new garage might be a possibility, though he is not sure if we can buy heat pumps for it when it is not built yet. Or perhaps we could evaluate putting heat pumps at the municipal building. It has to be something to save energy. Ken suggested converting some furnaces to propane, which is cheaper than fuel oil. Diane said heat pumps would be even better. Ken said he thinks it would be cheaper to convert our furnaces than to put in a

whole new system. Erik said he thinks Efficiency Vermont would go for heat pumps before conversion to propane. Erik said we may want to talk to NVU and see where they want to spend money. BJ suggested an energy audit for the municipal building. Ken said he would like these funds to be used for the meter for NVU. He said he got a lot of complaints about ratepayers paying for it. Erik said board members should think about where we could use the money besides municipal projects. We will have to use the money in multiple places because each project can be no more than \$25,000.

Ken said the selectboard had previously asked to see fire department monthly reports. Do we know if Arjay has been sending them to the select board? Erik said he doesn't know. Ken suggested checking with Arjay and making sure he is also sending the reports to the selectboard.

9. *Railroad Street Beautification Project Request from Beautification Committee*

Kyle said the Beautification Committee is hoping to decorate the Railroad Street bridge with a banner, colorful flags and solar powered LED lights for winter. They brought a proposal to the selectboard and the selectboard was supportive. The village budget includes \$500 for the Beautification Committee. The committee was thinking maybe they could give that \$500 back to the village as payment for installation of the decorations using electric department equipment and crew. If that is not a possibility they thought they could use that money to either rent a lift or pay someone who is insured and able to use a rope and pulley system.

Erik said Nate told him that using the bucket truck in the bridge does not work because of the angles inside the framework. Ken asked if the Beautification Committee has asked Johnson Farm and Garden about donating a lift. Kyle said not yet. Johnson Farm and Garden has been very generous in the past, so that is a possibility. Then there is the question of who can do the work. Diane asked if the village crew could help out with that, perhaps along with some of the town crew. Kyle said the selectboard had suggested that the town crew could help with flagging if the village crew could put up the decorations. Ken asked if the town is going to waive the right of way fee or release the village from any responsibility. The village does not have a right of way across that bridge. Erik suggested it might make sense for the village to do traffic control and for the town to do work on the bridge since it is the town's bridge. Ken said if the village crew were going to do the work he would want the town to accept all responsibility and clear the village of any liability. The town charges thousands of dollars for a right of way. He suggests they either give us the right of way at no cost or agree to cover all liability. Our insurance would only cover us if we had a right of way.

Diane suggested Brian Story should have information about right of way requirements. Kyle asked if Erik wants to initiate a conversation with Brian or if she should. Erik said it would be convenient if she could do it.

Steve suggested maybe a person could work from the sidewalk on a ladder. Ken said he thinks a drivable lift would be the quickest and safest way to do it. He expects Johnson Farm and Garden would donate use of one but he has no problem with using the Beautification Committee's budget to rent one. He said it would be nice to see something red, white and blue set up at one end or the other. Renting a lift for a day should cost around \$225.

Ken moved to allow the Beautification Committee to use up to \$500 of the money budgeted for the committee for installation of decorations on the Railroad State bridge and to direct

the Beautification Committee to actively seek a donation from Johnson Farm and Garden. The motion was seconded and passed.

10. Johnson Works Request for Village to Cover Event Insurance for Holiday Jubilee

Erik said in the past the village has paid for event insurance for the Holiday Jubilee. Brian Story estimated the cost would be just under \$1,200. Event insurance comes through VLCT but is from a different carrier than our usual insurance. An amount not to exceed \$1,500 should be a safe number to approve. Ken said he wishes Rosemary was here to tell us if we budgeted for this insurance.

Diane moved to authorize paying for event insurance for the Holiday Jubilee if it is not already in the budget, BJ seconded and the motion was passed.

11. Possibly Revoking Contract to Purchase Electric Bucket Truck from Lion Electric

Erik said the electric bucket truck keeps being delayed. Lion Electric has changed major components because their suppliers dried up so it is not even the same truck we originally contracted to buy. They are willing to give us back our deposit and the state is willing to let us step away from the grant. That is the suggested move.

Ken said he thinks before we cancel the contract there needs to be written verification that we will get our deposit back. Steve said they won't even guarantee the price anymore. Diane said another consideration is that we need the Tier III credits we would have gotten from purchasing this vehicle. Ken said the state will still push us to do something to get Tier III credits. Steve said if we don't get them we may have to pay a penalty.

Diane asked if there is another company that we could possibly get a truck from. Erik said right now the technology is not there for an electric truck to be a smart purchase. If the crew has to be out for 12 hours working on a big power outage, would we have to bring in a generator to charge the truck? Ken said Troy said there is another company that has made and delivered a few electric bucket trucks but there are no reviews on them yet because people have only had them a short time. Erik said it is easier for a big company to be a guinea pig since one vehicle is not as important to them. We have a total of two bucket trucks and we can't afford to have half not working.

Steve said it sounds like we are not going to vote to cancel the order until we have received a letter telling us when we are definitely going to get our \$10,000 back.

Ken suggested the possibility that we could get one of the state grants in the future to replace the smaller bucket truck with an electric truck in order to get Tier III credits.

12. Stetson Wind Power Purchase Opportunity Presented by VPPSA

Erik said the wind power purchase the board approved at the October meeting fell through. The VPPSA board of directors is now looking at purchasing wind power from Brookfield Electric in Maine. Their average price is a little more but their bandwidth of prices is steadier so price can be tracked better. Their price will beat the market rate based on market projections. We will get renewable energy credits and save money.

BJ moved to approve the Stetson wind power purchase presented by VPPSA, Ken seconded and the motion was passed.

13. Utilities Estimating & Logistics Specialist Job Description and Advertisement

The board reviewed a proposed job description and an advertisement for the Utilities Estimating & Logistics Specialist job. Diane asked if any of the things in the job description are things Nate was asked to do. She thinks Nate could do most of them. Steve said it is true that he could, but we are trying to free him up to be a working foreman. If he did these things he couldn't do a lot of what he

is doing now. Erik said a lot of this work can be done by a part-time exempt employee and then we will not have to hire more linemen. Diane asked, we will stick with four linemen and this person? Erik said we will also have a general labor/plow person. He thinks that should be a full-time job. Diane asked if this person would help with employees having to be on call. Erik said no. Diane asked how we can alleviate that problem. Erik said that will get better when the two employees who are currently apprentices become first class linemen. That will give more flexibility. Currently they can't be the lead on call.

Erik said he plans to advertise with VPPSA and VCLT. He will try to advertise with NEPPA. There might be a small charge. He will distribute it to the board of directors of VPPSA. Diane asked if we will use Indeed. Erik said we could. Steve suggested advertising in the other places Erik suggested, waiting a month and seeing what response we get and then deciding if we need to broaden where we advertise. We could even get some consulting from Alan Gould of Municipal Resources to suggest other places to run the ad. Diane suggested maybe we should get him to advertise the position right now. Ken suggested just going with what Erik already had planned. Steve agreed. The board agreed that Erik can choose an application closing date that seems appropriate.

14. Possibility of Clerk/Treasurer Position Transitioning from Elected to Appointed

BJ said we have already discussed the idea of making the village clerk and treasurer positions appointed rather than elected. The selectboard is in favor of it and so is this board. **BJ moved and Diane seconded to start the process of turning the village clerk and treasurer positions into appointed positions rather than elected positions.** Ken asked what we have to do to start the process. He said Eben Patch had mentioned making sure nothing needed to be changed in our charter. Steve said he thinks we should check with the Secretary of State. We can look in our charter. BJ said Erik should check with Rosemary when she comes back. Ken said he thinks Rosemary had a good idea of how to move forward. **The motion was passed.**

15. Choose Two Trustees to be Members of the Merger Inquiry Committee

Ken moved to appoint BJ and Diane to serve on the joint town-village merger inquiry committee. Ken reminded them that they are representing the village residents. **Steve seconded and the motion was passed.**

16. Discuss the Two Draft Harassment Policies as Presented

Erik said we have the further edited VLCT model and the Milton model. He doesn't have a preference except that the HR specialist at VLCT suggested some wording (shown in red on one of the drafts) that he thinks should be part of whichever policy we accept.

Ken asked, did she say that it is no good to have harassment and sexual harassment policies that are separate from each other? Erik said she said that it is better to have the language as part of a fully upgraded personnel policy. Diane said the VLCT specialist said we haven't worked on the personnel policy for a long time so we should work on it. Ken said she mentioned statutes that have changed. Erik said he plans to work on the whole personnel policy.

BJ said we now share a personnel policy with the town so we will be separating and having our own policy. Erik said unless they adopt what we adopt. BJ said he remembers them saying that they can't change their policy now since they are in the middle of negotiations.

Ken said the two model policies say the same thing but one is longer than the other. BJ said he is not partial to one over the other. Diane said she really likes the wording in the Milton one. Steve said he does too. Ken suggested having Erik add his suggested language to the Milton policy and

sending it to VLCT for review. Erik said he can send it to their HR specialist and if they think it needs lawyer review they have some people they work with.

Diane moved to send the draft harassment policy based on Milton's policy, with the added language recommended by Erik, to VLCT for review, BJ seconded and the motion was passed.

17. Funding of Employee Holiday Party

Ken moved to pay 50% of the cost of an employee holiday party (\$300), BJ seconded and the motion was passed.

18. Executive Session regarding Municipal Security or Response Measures

Steve asked if Erik could explain to all board members what the executive session is going to be about. Erik said the nature of it needs to be in executive session.

BJ moved to enter executive session as per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(10) to discuss municipal security or response measures, the public disclosure of which could jeopardize public safety, Ken seconded and the motion was passed at 7:36. The board came out of executive session at 7:46.

19. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths

JOHNSON SELECTBOARD/VILLAGE TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2022

Present:

Selectboard Members: Beth Foy, Duncan Hastings, Eric Osgood, Eben Patch, Mark Woodward

Village Trustees: Steve Hatfield, Diane Lehouiller, BJ Putvain, Ken Tourangeau

Others: Brian Story, Erik Bailey, Rosemary Audibert, Marla Emery, Lydia Putvain, Jason Whitehill

Trustees Absent: Lynda Hill

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. *Call to Order / Review of Agenda and Any Adjustments, Changes and Additions*

Beth called the selectboard to order at 7:00. Steve called the trustees to order at 7:00. At Duncan's request, it was agreed to add a request from the Historical Society to display a historic weathervane in the municipal building.

2. *Review and Select Candidates for Fuel Purchases*

Brian said we got one bid in writing from Fred's Energy. He spoke to our current suppliers, Brosseau and Corse, and they are interesting in continuing to supply us, but did not submit anything in writing. Fred's can supply propane, fuel oil and diesel.

Eben asked if our current suppliers are doing a rack plus price. Brian said yes. Eben asked if we know what the plus is. Rosemary said she thinks the last price we got for heating oil was about \$4.59. She thinks the price was the same for heating oil and diesel.

Steve asked if there is any difference in service or reliability. Brian said we don't have experience with Fred's. We have had no issues with Brosseau and Corse.

Steve asked if it would be reasonable to ask Brosseau and Corse to submit something in writing within a couple of days. Eric said that should have been done before this meeting. Duncan said since our request for bids had a fixed date the only way to get other bids would be to reject the bid received.

Eric said it sounds like heating fuel is about 30 cents a gallon more expensive with our current supplier. It would be interesting to know how our current propane price matches up with what Fred's is offering. Ken said the propane price offered by Fred seems good compared to what he pays. Since propane is cheaper than heating fuel he thinks we should consider switching our furnaces over to be able to use propane. The propane price has not fluctuated as much as the fuel oil price in the last 30 years.

Eben noted that that the contract offered by Fred's includes a fee if we do not use at least 80% of the amount specified on the contract. Ken said that is only the case for propane. Beth said we need to know our annual propane usage. Eben said the fee is only if we go with the rack plus price. Duncan said they based their bid on Brian's numbers in the RFP. Beth asked if we got our actual usage from the current supplier. Brian said he would want to double check on that.

Duncan asked if we found out whether Corse owns any of our tanks, particularly underground tanks. Brian said he doesn't know if we own the tanks.

Eric said he would feel comfortable going with Fred's. His only caution is the question of whether there will be any cost for switching tanks. Erik said the new supplier typically puts their tank on site before the old supplier retrieves theirs. The old supplier has to give you credit for what is left in the tank. Marla said it is common for companies to swap ownership of a tank if the tank passes inspection. Sometimes there is a small fee to change owners. Mark said since our current companies did not bother to give us bids he would go with Fred's for all three contracts. Beth said her only concern is that the Fred's contract gives us a specified number of gallons to buy. She would like confirmation of the actual gallons used for the calendar year. She wants to make sure we would not be significantly under the target amount and have to pay an extra fee. Ken said Fred's mentioned a \$1.50 charge for using less than a certain amount of heating fuel or diesel, but does not have any gallon amount we have to purchase to avoid that charge. Brian said he expects they would want to set a number before they agreed to the contract. Erik said different pricing is shown for off-road diesel and heating oil even though they are the same product. Duncan suggested maybe those are two different pricing options. Duncan said he would guess that if we did not meet the amount shown in our RFP they would try to apply the \$1.50 charge. Erik said if we want to bet that the price might go down a fixed fee above rack price is one option. Beth said they do show 500 gallons in one place as an amount of fuel oil we have to use. Duncan said he doesn't think they will use that amount; he thinks they will use what is in the RFP.

Duncan said there is a certain attraction to the idea of a fixed price but he doesn't know if the price of fuel oil will go down over the next year. But 30 cents above rack price seems a little high to him. He thinks that is considerably more than the current price. Mark said we need to know that. Mark said he likes the idea of a percentage over the rack price vs. a fixed price. A company will set the fixed price high to ensure they don't lose much money. But he doesn't know what we are paying over rack now with Brosseau. Eben said he wants more information. Rosemary and Lydia went to look up information about the current suppliers' prices and the board agreed to come back to this discussion later.

3. *Memorandum of Understanding for Jointly Owned Buildings*

Brian said he made the updates previously requested to the MOU. He added a definition section that defines Maintenance and Improvement as "Any work done to a building that does not alter its use or result in a known reduction in value" and Use as "The purpose for which the building is dedicated to at the time of signing this agreement." He added a Statement of Agreement: "The Town and Village agree that actions which require the demolition or substantial change in use or value for any jointly owned building will require the consent of both the Town and Village." He also added "use" to the list of things that can be decided on by the village for the village garage and the town for the town garage.

Ken asked, if the town decides to turn its garage into a store, that means the town needs permission from the village? Brian said yes. Any actions that require demolition or substantial change in use or value require consent of the town and village. We can argue about what substantial means but changing the garage into a store would pretty clearly be substantial. Ken suggested that maybe the word substantial should be removed since there could be arguments about the definition and it should say that any change from current use requires consent of both town and village.

Mark said that really ties us in. If one entity decides to make any minor change then they would have to deal with the other. Ken said someone else's substantial could be different from his. Eben said there could be a number of minor changes over time, none of which would be substantial in

itself, but which over time could lead to a substantial change in use. Eric asked, if we currently have three tandems and we decide to go to two, is that a change in use? Ken said no because the town garage is currently a garage. Brian said if we had one less vehicle he would not call that a substantial change in use but it would alter the function of the building. Ken said a different number of vehicles would not change the use.

Brian said he thinks it is impossible for us to write a document that will cover every possible scenario. We have to have some faith that everyone here is acting in good faith. We are not lawyers and he doesn't think we want to hire lawyers to write this. He thinks we should accept that it will be imperfect. Beth asked if the trustees or selectboard want a legally written document. Duncan asked if she means that we would draft it and have legal review. Beth said either that or we could ask a lawyer to write it. Duncan said he would be more inclined to have legal review than to have a lawyer draft it. Eric agreed. Mark said he is fine with the way it is written. He doesn't want legal review. Eben said he doesn't want legal review. Steve said he doesn't want to spend money on this. Beth said she doesn't want legal review on the document but she thinks including substantial use matters. Just referring to use does not give either of us any flexibility. She thinks that puts us at risk of more conflict, not less. She would like to understand whether substantial use is something that has a generally understood meaning in agreements.

Eric said the town garage section says the town is 100% responsible for the maintenance and improvement of the town garage and decisions on building maintenance, improvements, and use will only require the affirmative vote of the selectboard. So if we say in the Statement of Agreement that any change in use requires consent of both town and village, that would not be consistent. There would be a conflict between those two areas of the MOU. The way it reads now he thinks either town or village can have a change in use as long as it is not substantial. Beth said the language for each of the buildings says that decisions on use just need a vote of the board in charge of that building.

Duncan said to address Eben's point we could say "incremental or substantial change in use." He thinks Eben's point was that if we change the use 10% each year it could completely change over time.

Mark said he doesn't care what the village does with the village garage. Ken said he doesn't care if Mark cares.

Duncan said he thinks the intent of the Statement of Agreement is to prevent one entity or the other from devaluing the total property. He thinks it creates a higher bar if we take out substantial. If it only refers to change in use we could say that the village putting in a closet is a change in use. Ken said that is not a change in use. Beth said if we are using the town garage to store vehicles and not supplies and then we decide to also use it to store bags of sand we are now using it for more than the current use so that is a change, but not a substantial change. BJ said he doesn't look at that as a change of use. Changing what is kept in it is not a change of use. If it was made into a food shelf, that would be a change. Beth said it depends on how you define change. Eric said if we take out substantial then a change in use would include everything, including minor changes. Leaving substantial means only major changes would be included. Erik said it would be a change of use if the town wanted to store something like rec equipment in the building and not just highway department equipment. BJ said that would not be a change of use. If it is still used as a garage, that

is not a change. Mark said he thinks BJ is arguing very successfully for use of the word substantial with what he is saying.

Brian said the word substantial is meant to apply to both use and value. If we take it out, it means any change, no matter how small, in use or value. Steve asked, don't we only care about downward change in value? Brian said the wording now does not indicate only downward change but we could adjust it. Beth she thinks we would also need to know about a substantial increase in value to be sure we are properly covering the building with insurance. There are ramifications if the value changes in either direction. Brian said that was the intent – that any substantial change in value would need approval by both boards. Mark asked if it has to be a majority of each board. Beth said yes.

BJ moved to authorize the chair of the village trustee board to sign the Memorandum of Understanding between the Town of Johnson & Village of Johnson on Responsibility for Jointly Owned Buildings as presented, Diane seconded and the motion was passed 3-1 with Ken opposed.

Eric moved to adopt the Memorandum of Understanding between the Town of Johnson & Village of Johnson on Responsibility for Jointly Owned Buildings as presented and to authorize the selectboard chair to sign it, Duncan seconded and the motion was passed.

4. ***Review and Select Candidates for Fuel Purchases (continued)***

Lydia gave the most recent propane price from Corse. She said their service fee is only \$7. They also have a safety fee. Marla said some companies have fees on their contracts and some don't. There can be a considerable difference with regard to fees. For the last delivery from Brosseau of oil and diesel fuel the cost was \$5.47. The cost in October was \$4.27. Corse has a better price for propane than Fred's. Ken asked, but they wouldn't commit to that price? Eben asked if it would be possible to reach out to Brosseau and Corse and find out what their rack plus price is and then each board could make a decision at its own meeting about who to contract with. Eben suggested also reaching out to Fred's to see if they can offer a rack plus price on propane. Beth said we should also ask about fees. Duncan said if we are talking to Fred's we should also ask why they offered both a percent above rack price and a fixed price for the same product.

Erik said he will get the current rack over price from Fred's and Corse and find out whether they will honor that for at least a year and get our actual usage for the past 12 months from Corse. Brian said he will get information on prices and fees from Brosseau and Fred's and clarify why Fred's offered two methods of pricing for the same product.

Eben moved to allow the trustees to select a propane supplier for town and village with the town agreeing to pay its fair share for propane from the supplier picked by the village, Mark seconded and the motion was passed

Ken moved to allow the town to contract for oil and diesel for the upcoming year with the village agreeing to pay its fair share for oil and diesel from the supplier chosen. The motion was seconded and passed.

5. ***Website Overhaul Planning***

The board had been sent information on website development costs from website hosting bids. Brian said we previously put out an RFP just for web hosting but some of those who submitted bids also included pricing for a new website with their bids so we had some data on what a new website

might cost. Beth said at the last joint meeting there was discussion about whether we were interested in proceeding with a website overhaul. The boards asked administrators to find the costs that had been presented before. We are not looking for a new web host right now. We are reviewing website development cost figures to decide whether we have an appetite for building a new website.

Eben said we don't need a new website host. If we went to a new host along with getting a new website the cost might be more. This information gives us ballpark price figures, but without samples. Erik said Ecopixel does Waterbury's website.

Brian said we don't have the money in our current budget for a new website but if we want one that could inform budget discussion for next year. We could ask the person who currently hosts and maintains our website for a quote. He would imagine that would be less than the other quotes we have. Beth said that person basically just recreated the website we already had so the current website is not a representation of her work. Lydia said Elisa Clancy, the current web host, is absolutely wonderful. She is very informative and communicative. Lydia would like to advocate for her. Lydia did training with her on the Historical Society website and Elisa showed her some of her other websites. They were all very different but easy to read. She is sure we could get a list of them in order to get an idea of what she could do. Duncan asked if we have a contract that ties us to 3 years with her. Brian said he believes it is auto renewing but he would have to look. Beth said at the time we signed a contract with her we were thinking of it as temporary. She would be shocked if we signed a contract that locked us in for long. Eben said we are only ever locked in for a year.

Eric asked if there is anyone who is happy with the current website and would like to keep it. Eben said yes and no. It is cumbersome and not a great representation of the town but it is not costing a lot of money. If some of these vendors do not allow us to keep the same host, switching hosts could be an additional expense.

Lydia said she thinks if we are going to spend money on a website overhaul there would need to be significant improvements such as being able to submit utility applications through the website. It would be helpful if there were an election page on the website too.

Eben said before we go much further with discussing possible website improvements each board needs to decide whether they can carry the cost in their next year's budget.

BJ asked, if one person builds a website, can another company host it? Beth said they could. It depends on the technology they use. Brian said he thinks most, if not all, of the people who have offered redesigns have their own content management systems and would not host someone else's website. The website would be easier to maintain if we used a more advanced content management system, but do we generate that much content that we really need it?

6. *Employee Compensation Discussion*

Brian showed a spreadsheet with healthcare options and costs. Healthcare costs have risen pretty substantially. We had estimated an 8% increase in the budget but the Blue Cross Blue Shield cost increase is 12%. If we leave everything unchanged the town will be about \$1500 over budget for all non-bargaining unit employees. Eben asked if the 8% increase that was budgeted was off last year's actual number or last year's budgeted number. Insurance went down last year. Duncan asked we are only adding the 8% increase for half a year, right? Brian said yes. The amount budgeted for

2023 was based on an 8% increase from actual 2022 numbers, which had declined from 2021. We will be over budget by about \$1500 if we keep everything the same.

Erik had prepared some comparisons with other towns based on the most recent VLCT Compensation and Benefits Survey. BJ said most other towns have a higher employer contribution. Eben said we should remember that this is only insurance and he thinks this is a poor representation of what is being contributed. He fact-checked one or two of the other towns earlier today. Underhill does pay 100% of the Gold, but it is a high deductible plan, which is considerably cheaper than the 90% Johnson pays for a non-high deductible plan. Beth said with a high deductible plan the employee is paying a lot out of pocket.

Duncan asked if he is right that the town and village offer a dollar amount that the employee can apply to any plan they choose. Erik said that is correct. He and Sue pay more to be on the Platinum plan. Duncan said when he was an employee he chose a high deductible plan and took the unused part of the employer contribution and put it into a health savings plan. There is a fair amount of flexibility in the way the benefit is currently offered.

There was consensus among both boards that board members are comfortable accepting the unbudgeted cost increase rather than passing on an increase in cost to employees. It was agreed to continue to contribute the same percentage of the same plan.

Jason asked if there might be any substantial change to the amount an employee can get if they opt out of the health insurance benefit. There could be a good cost savings to the town if more employees took health insurance somewhere else. Brian said currently we pay 50% of the single person contribution. There had been discussion before about basing the buyout amount on what insurance the person would qualify for. He had misgivings at the time but he has since spoken to other towns that do it. He is more comfortable with it if other towns are doing it. He previously did not like the idea of tying any compensation to an employee's marital or family status. Duncan said it is not Brian's decision, but the boards. Brian agreed. Jason said he takes the family plan, which costs \$28K. If the buyout were larger he would probably opt out. Duncan said in the past, before the current buyout amount was set, there was no compensation if you opted out of insurance. Beth said that is the way it is in all companies she has worked for. Lydia said at the time there was no buyout compensation maybe the employer contribution was 100%.

Eric said he has always felt uncomfortable asking what insurance an employee would be qualified for because of HIPAA rules. Maybe we can ask them to tell us if they are married or have a family but he is uncomfortable about it. Beth said he thinks we would have to do it based on their tax filing. Eric said he thinks it is straightforward the way it is. He wouldn't want to change it. He would prefer to continue to contribute half of what we would pay for a single plan and employees will not have to tell us if they are married or not. Duncan said they will have to show proof that they are covered somewhere else.

Eric said what Jason is pointing out is that there are people who are on family plans and have access to policies through their spouses that are not as good. The amount of money we currently offer for buyout is not enough to make them change to their spouse's insurance. If we want to save money on more plans we would need to restructure our buyout offering.

Eben said he would be uncomfortable forcing people to prove they were married or have children if they want us to give them a bigger buyout. He thinks if we want to give employees more we would have to give a higher percentage of the single plan. Some people choose not to get married and the town would be denying them money because of their choice. Whatever is done needs to be fair and consistent, not based on life choices. Jason said what he is suggesting is increasing the percentage of the single person plan that is used for the buyout. That would pique the interest of people who have a family plan and potentially save the town money. Duncan said he thinks we can talk about that in budgeting. Eben said boards could decide that on their own, though it would be good to agree on it jointly. Eric said it is good if all employees in both town and village have the same benefits.

Brian said last year we gave a 6% increase to all non-bargaining unit employees and we had estimated a 3% increase this year for the town. We actually had budgeted a little more than we are currently spending. Eben asked if that is because of the fifth employee. Brian said no, that is a bargaining unit employee. He thinks it is mostly because of our rec employee.

Erik had made up a cost of living fact sheet. He said he used the national CPI number but the New England number is 7.4. Beth said she is worried that if we use CPI as our guide every time we give raises we will have peaks and valleys. She thinks trend lines are the way to think about everything in budgeting. She likes to see where the trend is headed to make budget decisions. We are in a spike now and she thinks we need to think carefully about how we flatten out that spike. She doesn't love the idea of using 7.4 as a percentage increase this year. She does like the idea of supporting employees but she would rather use a lower figure this year and next year if CPI is a low number she would want to give an increase that was higher than CPI. She wants us to consider how we can avoid spikes and valleys.

Eben said in another conversation there was mention of using the previous year's CPI as a percentage increase. If we did that we would know what to budget for. The increase employees got would lag behind when CPI was rising and also when it was falling so employees would not be harmed. Eric said he likes that idea. It is fair to employees. They will get cost of living increases, though maybe late, and it keeps us from being hit with a shortfall.

Beth said our customer is the taxpayers. We need to ask how we can be fair to our taxpayers while supporting employees. She personally feels it is fairest to the taxpayer to flatten the impact as much as possible so taxes are predictable. Duncan said it is always difficult balancing the needs of taxpayers and employees. Some taxpayers are not getting cost of living increases and are not wealthy and a lot of them look at municipal employees as well compensated. BJ said employees who are not in the union do not have the power to negotiate. We can't go by what some other people in the community are getting. To get employees we need good compensation. He likes Eben's idea.

Erik's fact sheet showed a 4.6% federal employee raise. Erik said the proposed military raise is the same percentage but Congress has a say in that and there is talk of increasing it to match the Social Security cost of living increase.

Eben said he fully agrees with being fair and protecting the taxpayers. The difference between a 1% raise and a 6% raise is one penny. We are not talking about a big swing in tax rates. Supporting employees is very important. All other costs are going up. Erik said it is a competitive market now

for employees. Eben said the difference in out-of-pocket costs for the town and village for 6% versus 1% raises for all employees is just shy of \$20,000. It would be less than that for the town because we don't pay 100% of the salary for all employees. What he is proposing would be a day late but not a dollar short because while raises would lag behind a rising CPI they would also lag behind a falling CPI. If we used that method of deciding on increases this conversation would be short every year. He doesn't think with the cost of everything going up that the town can afford much more than a 4.5% increase this year but if we agreed to budget 7% next year employees would get caught up. BJ asked, what if we budgeted last year's 5.4% increase to start now with the new method? He asked if 5.4 last year was the national or New England number. Erik said that was the national number. BJ said in the future we can use the New England number. Erik said he likes that idea. It would be hard to give an increase equal to the current CPI this year but if we use last year's CPI and plan to use this year's 7.4 figure next year, he likes that. Mark suggested looking up last year's New England figure. Beth looked it up. She said the New England annual average from 2020 to 2021 was 3.6. That is different from the number we used last year. The 12 months ending August 2022 was 7.3 and at the end of September it was 7.4.

BJ suggested using 5.4% for the increase. Eben suggested 6%. Lydia said she would need at least a 5.5% raise to break even with her new contribution to health insurance. Her paycheck might go down if she does not get that much.

Beth said we can't codify a method of deciding on raises for the future because we won't have the same boards in the future.

Eben asked, if we give a 6% increase, how does that compare to what we budgeted? Brian said we would be a little less than \$2000 over budget.

Eben moved to give Rosemary and Susan a 6% increase in pay and to keep the current employer health insurance contribution of an amount equal to 90% of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Gold plan, Eric seconded and the motion was passed.

Ken moved to give Rosemary and Susan a 6% increase in pay and to keep the current employer health insurance contribution of an amount equal to 90% of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Gold plan, BJ seconded and the motion was passed.

Beth recommended that Erik and Brian put in their calendars for a year from now that they should pull the minutes from this date to show the boards.

Eben moved to give non-bargaining unit town employees a 6% increase in pay and to keep the current employer health insurance contribution of an amount equal to 90% of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Gold plan and the motion was seconded and passed.

BJ moved to give non-bargaining unit town employees a 6% increase in pay and to keep the current employer health insurance contribution of an amount equal to 90% of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Gold plan, Ken seconded and the motion was passed.

7. ***Request to Display Weathervane in Municipal Building***

Duncan said there is a historic weathervane that the Historical Society would like to display in the atrium of the municipal building. It is very old. It is probably 10 to 12 ft tall and has a vane probably 3 ft long. **Ken moved and Steve seconded to allow the Historical Society to place a**

historic weathervane in the foyer of the municipal building. The motion was passed. Eben said he would rather see it and know more about it before voting. Eric asked if it would sit on the floor. Duncan said it would need some kind of mount. He was thinking of a big stump, probably tied to the wall. Eben asked if Duncan can bring more information to the next selectboard meeting.

8. *Other Business*

Eben said last year selectboard members paid for a holiday party for all employees. This year he would like to continue that with the village trustees paying a portion of the cost as well. Beth said it wasn't a budgeted item. Board members contributed individually. The trustees agreed that this year they will contribute half the cost.

9. *Adjourn*

Ken moved to adjourn, BJ seconded and the motion was passed at 9:29. The selectboard adjourned at 9:29.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths

UNAPPROVED

JOHNSON VILLAGE TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2022

Present:

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

Others: Erik Bailey, candidate for employment

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. Call to Order

Steve called the meeting to order at 3:30.

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

No changes to the agenda were suggested.

3. Executive Session to Interview Utilities Estimating & Logistics Specialist Candidate

BJ moved to enter executive session to interview a candidate for employment as Utilities Estimating & Logistics Specialist as allowed under 1 VSA 313(a)(3), Diane seconded and the motion was passed at 3:30. The board came out of executive session at 4:20.

4. Adjourn

BJ moved to adjourn, Ken seconded, the motion was passed and the meeting was adjourned at 4:20.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths



Budget Variance Narrative - Johnson

Summary: Year-to-year total budget variance - \$64,983 or 18.4% increase. The majority of the increase in the 2023 budget is related to the Renewable Energy Standards.

Detail of key factors with a 5% or greater change:

- 1.** Renewable Energy Standards: The total RES 2023 budget increased by 88.32% or \$42,614 for Johnson. The key factors for this increase include but are not limited to, the increase in the budgeted Renewable Energy Standard Tier I certificate cost from \$4.50 per certificate in 2022 to \$10.00 per certificate in 2023. Each year until 2032, the compliance requirement increases. Johnson's total Tier I need grew from 4,720 in 2022 to 6,006 in 2023. The increase in the volume needed to meet compliance and the market price increase are the primary causes of the 2023 budget increase.
- 2.** Member fees: Member fees increased by \$4,135 for Johnson in 2023. The largest driver to this increase in the general budget is caused by a 15.47% increase in Health Insurance costs for 2023.
- 3.** Sander's Grant match: VPPSA received a \$1,000,000 grant to implement a revolving loan fund for commercial electrification projects to provide low-cost funding to businesses in place of other incentive payments. Each member will receive a share of the credits earned for the completed projects. The majority of match requirements are being met by utilizing administration and staff costs. Johnson's share of the \$250,000 match is \$8,714 for the 2023 budget.

2023 Budget Timeline

- 1) Regular February Trustee Meeting (2/13/23) – 1st Draft of Water Department and Sewer Department Budgets
- 2) Special February Trustee Meeting (week of 2/27/23) – 1st Draft of General Department and Electric Department Budgets
- 3) Regular March Trustee Meeting (3/13/23) - Complete Draft Budget – all departments
- 4) Print & Send Village Report – Week of 3/20/23
- 5) Annual Village Meeting – 4/4/23

NOT THE POSITION OF JOHNSON ELECTRIC OR VPPSA. INFORMATIONAL ONLY



Groton Electric Light

23 Station Avenue
Groton, MA 01450

tel: 978-448-1150
fax: 978-448-1159

localight

The 40 Municipal Electric Utilities
of Massachusetts

Dear GELD customer:

It is with sincere regret that I must share that my concerns have gone beyond the rapid increases in utility costs, and now extend to the reliability of the electric grid. It is extremely critical for all of us to **BE PREPARED** this winter.

For the last few years, the reliability of the electric grid has been deteriorating, especially in the winter in New England. This year is even worse. If there is an extended cold snap, there is a high probability of rolling blackouts. If we experience rolling blackouts, there will be times when the transmission lines to our substation will NOT be energized. That means there is nothing that GELD will be able to do to provide electricity other than petition the regional transmission owners for the shortest possible duration without electricity.

The following paragraph explains some of the reasons this is happening. The paragraph following that offers my recommendations.

This problem has been years in the making as baseload generation has been shut down in New England. The coal plants were shut down, then the oil plants, then many of the nuclear plants. In the recent past, we had fuel diversity in our electric generation which is not available today. Last January, there were many days where 25% of the electricity produced in New England came from diesel fuel. There are multiple plants in New England that run on dual fuels. They run on natural gas when it is available, but they can switch to diesel fuel when natural gas is not available. For the full month of January 2022, 11% of the electricity produced in New England came from diesel fuel. At the present time, diesel fuel storage on the entire eastern seaboard is at historical lows and the government is creating a situation where refining in America is becoming so costly that the refiners are steadily closing. In the last year, America has lost over one million barrels per day of refining capacity. That cannot be restored quickly and will have to be made up using overseas suppliers.

I have a few recommendations for the ratepayers of Groton during these challenging times. First, fill up your tanks soon; if it is cold in January, it will be more challenging and more expensive to get both heating oil and propane. Fill up your five-gallon fuel containers – they will be needed for generators if there are rolling blackouts. If you have a generator, test it to make sure it runs. You still have some time to have it serviced if it is not working properly. If you have a wood burning or pellet stove, make sure you have at least a one-week supply of wood/pellets.

GELD will do everything we can to keep our service as reliable and secure as possible, despite any challenges that come our way.

Please be prepared – stay safe and warm this winter.

Sincerely,

Kevin P. Kelly
General Manager

Questions and Answers:

Q. The letter doesn't include details about the rolling blackouts. Can you help us understand the likelihood and severity of the blackouts?

A. Excellent question. For the last six months, I have been trying, to no avail, to get ISO-NE to answer that. So, I'll give you my best guess. Currently, New England is in acceptable shape regarding electricity, but the real challenge will be any extended periods of time where the temperature drops below 10 degrees. The critical issue is the duration of the cold snap, every day longer the situation gets worse and worse. My expectation is that in a long cold snap they would keep the blackouts as short as possible to avoid freezing pipes, probably on the order of three hours rotating throughout New England until the temperature moderates.

Q. How long would a blackout last?

A. It is expected that rolling blackouts would NOT exceed four hours in duration, probably on the order of three hours at a time.

Q. Would there be notice?

A. In theory, yes, there would be adequate notice. First there should be a call for all of New England to engage in voluntary load reduction (see definition below). Then there would probably be a call to shut down the manufacturing that is left in New England. Then there would be other steps that GELD would administer, before blackouts would occur.

Q. What is Voluntary Load Reduction or conservation?

A. Voluntary Load Reduction would be a call, probably via major media outlets asking customers to avoid things such as laundry, running the dishwasher, charging electric vehicles, reducing heat, turning off humidifiers, turning off holiday lights etc. during incident, then return to normal activities once incident has passed.

Q. Will lowering electric use today help?

A. Short answer is no. It is still beneficial for us economically to move as much of your use as possible out of the peak evening hours (4pm-8pm). The problem with this winter is electric generation during an extended cold snap.

Q. Where can I get information regarding generators?

A. You can start with our generator flyer at:

<http://www.grotonelectric.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Generator-Brochure.pdf>

Q. Where can I get more information about the energy situation in New England?

A. Some great articles:

https://www.boston.com/news/local-news/2022/10/31/eversource-biden-emergency-action-new-england-natural-gas/?p1=hp_primary

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/new-england-risks-winter-blackouts-as-gas-supplies-tighten-11665999002>

Basic outage information can be found at:

<http://www.grotonelectric.org/information/outages/google-maps/>

Goals of VPPSA Tailored Programs

Targeted, Tailored, Local

Focus on residential customers –homeowners and lower income

Support local businesses – Anchor businesses & downtown vitality

Options and ease of participation

Promote Electrification measures and role of DUs and Tier III

Work through the community (General Managers/Community Events/Local Media)



What we heard from you....

- Outreach and awareness
- Agriculture support
- Economic development
- Moderate-income offers (eligibility cut-off)
- Deliver value – true to mission
- Serve Multifamily/Renters

Big Changes from Last Year

- ✓ Broader outreach and awareness campaign
- ✓ More flexibility with commercial bonuses
- ✓ Expanded residential offers
- ✓ Increased rebates for special offers

2023 Commercial Offers



Overview

Bonus Overview	\$60,000 per DU to be allocated by business sector by DU director
Eligible Sectors	Municipal owned buildings*, Non-Profits**, Commercial (large and small business), Agriculture
Customer Offer	Up to 100% of project cost for qualified projects, capped at \$25,000 per project.
Number of Project per DU	We need to support at minimum 4 projects per community; max 6 per community
Number of Projects per Customer	This is a one-time offer per customer; a single customer can not receive more than one Tailored Community Bonus in 2023. Bonus offers can not be stacked if building ownership and operations are divided.
Project Eligibility	Any project that qualifies for Efficiency Vermont business rebates or incentives. Project must meet Efficiency Vermont eligibility requirements and T&C for the measure(s) being installed to receive bonus. Not eligible: Residential, multifamily applications, and new construction.

*not including public K-12 schools

**must be 501c3 certified. Outside of DU territory as long as they serve the community

Example: Commercial Bonus Allocation

Sector	Number of Customers	Bonus Cap (Can't exceed \$25,000)	Total for Sector
Municipality	1	\$10,000	\$10,000
Non-profit	2	\$15,000	\$30,000
Agriculture	1	\$20,000	\$20,000
Totals	4 (at least 4, DNE 6)	N/A	\$60,000 (DNE \$60,000)

2023 Commercial Offers

Deadlines



2023 Residential Offers



Offer Name	Summary	DU Role
Energy Savings Kits	Free kits provided to residential customers via a customized site (kits will change in June)	Promote via at least 1 bill insert
Appliance Coupon	A coupon provided to each residential customer for a \$200 incentive for a list of efficient products including refrigerators, air purifiers, air conditioners, freezers, clothes washers, and clothes dryers	Promote via at least 1 bill insert
CCHP Bonus	\$800 moderate income bonus (\$400 from VPPSA/\$400 from Efficiency Vermont) <small>(\$1,000 total incl statewide \$200 MI bonus)</small>	Support promotion with social media posts, hanging posters, etc.
DIY Bonus	Additional \$100 that can be layered with standard \$100 offer, total of \$200 available for DIY projects	Support promotion with social media posts, hanging posters, etc.

Outreach and Education

- **Public Events** – At least 3 online or in-person events will happen throughout the year to help notify customers of the above offers.
- **Button-up Workshop** - *Optional* A button-up workshop focused in your community during the fall campaign
- **Landing page** – A landing page will be created for each community outlining offers and highlighting the relationship between VPPSA, the DU, and EVT. Launch date: 1/1/2023
- **Bill Inserts** – Efficiency Vermont will create at least 2 bill inserts promoting offers to be sent out by the participating DU's.
- **Direct Mail** – Efficiency Vermont will segment and provide tailored messaging of offers for Tailored Community utility customers when deploying statewide residential mailers
- **Social Media** – Targeted social media ads will be run throughout the year to promote the above offers on Front Porch Forum and Facebook.
- **Local News Publications** – Ads in local papers and on local paper websites outlining offers
- **Google Search & Display** – Geotargeted advertisements outlining offers



Meet your
community
managers!

Efficiency
Vermont

Keys to Success

Strong Partnership = Successful Campaign

- Regular communication with Community Manager
- Support promoting events through local channels
- Sharing referrals and insights w/Efficiency Vermont
- Promoting campaign through word-of-mouth
- Help getting Residents and Businesses interested and excited

Campaign Timeline

- January 1 – Campaign website launched and ESK ordering site live
- February – Bill insert 1 (appliance coupon)
- February 1 – Deadline for commercial bonus allocation and list of customers for bonus offers
- Summer – Bill insert 2 (energy savings kit)
- June 1st – All customers finalized for commercial bonuses
- August 1st – Incentive Agreements signed for commercial bonuses
- December – Wrap up programming



The Village of Johnson WWTF, WTF
Monthly Chief Operator's Report
December 9th, 2022

1. Operational Status of Wastewater Plant and Callouts

- E-DMR and Wr-43 were submitted to the state
- We had Two electric motors rebuilt at Farrell Electric one was for the gravity belt drive on the press, the other was for the process water pump for the press, both are back on and installed and working properly
- Had a callout for a plugged syphon under the river on Saturday the 26th called Manosh in and within 2 hours we had it jetted and opened back up, and reset alarm float
- Repaired outlets and installed new heat tapes and heat tape insulation on decanter valves for holding tanks
- Performed E-coli tests
- Wind River cleaned grit channels

2. Operational status of Water Plant and Callouts

- Coliform samples were negative
- 2-6" Caps were purchased and installed to complete the piping change at Nadeau well to provide an "air gap" from the existing well on the property to the village system, Nadeau well is now completely removed and disconnected from the water system and an e-mail has been sent to Andrew Ferguson at the state, asking what we need to do now to have it removed from the state as a water supply to the village, we are awaiting his reply
- Water loss numbers for November were 25% an increase from past months that could be contributed to a leaking "flushing" hydrant on Clay hill that's now been isolated
- Repaired a vent in Katy Winn meter house #3 where the insulation had fell out and was open to the outside.
- All heaters for Katy Winn meter houses and the Nadeau well are turned on and being checked weekly
- Had a call out for Clay Hill booster station for light and audible alarm, seem to be getting "ghost" alarms there met with Nate and went through program on panel researching the cause

Village of Johnson December 2022 Water & Light Report

Prepared by Troy Dolan

- Electric Dept.

The crew completed the following tasks:

Began cutting the right-of-way at 807 Foote Brook Road in preparation for an overhead line relocation.

Worked with the property owner at 11 Provoncha Lane to remove some large pine trees that were close to the electric lines.

Responded to a call at 240 Lower Main East for a complaint of flickering lights. The crew checked all the connections on the pole and the line side of the meter socket and found no issues on the Village's side of the service.

Responded to a call out on November 26th at 268 Plot Road for a tree on the line. The tree was safely removed without de-energizing the line.

Completed monthly meter reading, high/low checks, substation check, and dig safes

- Water/Sewer

The crew shut off a leaking flushing hydrant at 285 Clay Hill and they are currently waiting for parts to make the final repair.

- General Department

At the Town's request, the crew adjusted the risers on two manhole covers on Clay Hill.

All Village trucks were sent out for annual undercoating.

The crew removed the US flags and fall banners and installed the winter banners and holiday lights.

Assisted the Town with installing holiday lights on the Railroad Street bridge.

- Safety

The crew attended the November NEPPA safety meeting. The topic of the class was protective grounds and metering.

- Administrative

Troy completed the following administrative tasks:

Completed two mutual aid invoices for assistance provided to Hyde Park Water & Light.

Created a new estimate for mutual aid for Hyde Park Water & Light to assist them with the installation of a new utility pole, primary underground connections, and transformer installation in their service territory (transformer and other material being provided by Hyde Park).

Reviewed the CPG for the solar array at 1775 Clay Hill.

Continued working on the material order with Green Mountain Electrical Supply.

Reached out to Lion Electric to request confirmation in writing that the Village's \$10,000 deposit will be returned if the order is cancelled. As of the writing of this report, I have not yet received a response. I had the monthly call with State representative for the bucket truck grant and provided her with an update on the Village's position. She indicated that if the Village decided to move forward with the purchase, the grant would need to be extended and this would need to be requested by January 4, 2023.

Worked with Nate on the line relocation at the end our service territory on Foote Brook Road.

Worked on monthly invoice coding.

Worked with Johnson Farm & Garden regarding clarifying a credit on the Village's account related to a primary underground wire purchase from earlier this year.

Completed a questionnaire created by VPPSA on distribution transformer issues, the results of which will be sent to the Department of Public Service.

Continued speaking with Nate daily to discuss scheduled work and answer any questions he has.

Transformer Availability

Continued trying to obtain quotes for transformers. Quote requests were submitted to six vendors over the last several months, but only two have responded. Of those two, neither can provide the dual voltage transformers the Village has purchased in the past. It appears that

currently, no manufacturers are producing dual voltage transformers. Additionally, only one of the vendors can provide single-phase transformers, which are primarily what the Village currently needs.

The lead time for the single-phase and single-voltage transformers that are available ranges from 148-180 weeks, which is significantly longer than the Village has experienced in the past. The delay in receiving transformers is a problem being faced by utilities across Vermont and the whole country. I recommend the Village discuss a policy regarding how to manage its existing transformer inventory to ensure a minimum supply for existing customers is maintained while creating a process to fulfill transformer needs of new customers.

Johnson Fire Department Report

Oct. 27 - Dec. 1, 2022

Calls:

JFD responded to 12 calls.

7 calls occurred during the daytime (6 am – 6 pm)

5 calls occurred during the nighttime (6 pm – 6 am)

The average duration was: 102 minutes

Nature:

Those calls were: 2 – automatic alarms, 2 – carbon monoxide alarms, 1 -medical assist, 2 – vehicle crashes, 3 – structure fires, and 2 – mutual aid (structure fire & water rescue)

Staff:

The average number of firefighters that responded was: 10

Total hours of service was: 201

Other:

We have taken delivery of the Rescue 2 replacement from LV Chevy. Vehicle undercoating was completed at the dealer. Warning lights, lettering, and radio install has been completed by Hard Wired Auto Electronics. Bedliner was done by Rail City Liners. We are arranging materials and scheduling the retro fit for Rescue 3 after the new year.

Desorcie Emergency Products completed inspection, maintenance, and repairs on both fire pumps for Engine 1 and Engine 2. This should position us well for the next year - year and a half of operation.

Respectfully submitted, Arjay West, Fire Chief

Hope you continue to feel better. Honestly I've been too wrapped up in Jubilee to put any of my plans into action with the international students.

One thing I have been thinking about though is to have a welcome night at the college and to have a table with all of the business material and samples to give out to the students and the international ones. We do something like this when the families come to tour NVU. We have all the material already and I could ask the businesses if they want to give out coupons.

I did not hear back from BJ regarding a time frame. Are they here? Staggered arrivals?

I'm leaving town for the weekend and won't be back until Tuesday, or I'd be happy to talk to trustees about my idea.

Thanks,

Joie

LCPC Services Survey



Dear Town Official,

Local governance isn't getting easier. New programs, laws, regulations, and technological challenges frequently require additional staffing and expertise that many towns don't have. LCPC may be able to help. Completing and returning the enclosed LCPC Services Survey will help gauge member town interest in getting additional staffing and expertise, either by sharing staff with other towns, creating an in-town position, or obtaining services directly from LCPC.

Your responses are very important and will directly impact LCPC's discussions of future services. The more surveys we get back, the better your interests will be represented. This is the first step in the process. We will be building on this information for the future.

If you have any questions about the purpose or use of the enclosed survey, please contact me by phone: (802) 851-6346, or by email: tasha@lcpv.org

Sincerely,

R. Tasha Wallis | LCPC Executive Director



To take this survey online, scan this QR code or go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TRORCSurvey>
Complete this survey on a computer for the best experience.

LCPC Services Survey



Survey Information

- This survey will take approximately 6 minutes to complete.
- Results will be published in aggregate in the LCPC newsletter.
- Survey respondent information will not be released. If you are uncomfortable providing your information, you may complete the survey anonymously.
- There is space at the end of this survey for comments.

1. Which Position(s), shared or not, might you be interested in discussing for your town? (Select all that apply)

- Assessor/Listener – Determine fair market value of real property
- GIS/Mapping Coordinator- Create digital maps showing information relevant to the town, manage town geospatial data
- Grants Manager- Administer active grants, identify and apply to additional grants
- Information Technologies (IT) Manager- Plan and lead necessary changes to computer hardware and software, troubleshoot technical issues, manage town databases and listservs
- Purchasing Manager- Manage procurement, coordinate bulk purchases
- Road Foreman- Direct staff activity, approve timesheets, approve contracts, provide recommendations, purchase necessary materials and resources
- Sustainability/Resilience Coordinator- Coordinate, develop, and manage local programs and initiatives promoting sustainability and resilience, ex. recycling, food, safety, water use, health, etc.
- Town Administrator/Administrative Assistant- Assist the selectboard, scope of duties determined by selectboard
- Town Energy Coordinator- Coordinate and manage energy projects by soliciting and negotiating bids, securing outside funding, supervising contractors, and advising municipality on climate and energy policies
- Town Manager- Contribute to the day-to-day and long-range operation of the town, coordinate between departments, public relations, personnel administration
- Town Planner- Work with Town Boards, conduct short and long-range planning, develop bylaws and town plans
- Zoning Administrator- Receive permit applications, draft recommendations to the Planning Commission, assist ZBA or DRB with reviews, address permit questions
- Assessor/Listener – Determine fair market value of real property
- Community Development Coordinator– execute strategies for effective communication with community members; maintain and create high quality relationships with organization staff; and

LCPC Services Survey



provide resources, training, and other services that will benefit and grow community relationships and membership.

- Equity Coordinator - coordinate and liaise between community, governmental agencies and other stakeholders throughout the communities
- Other (please describe)- _____

- We are not interested in any position or discussion at this time.

LCPC Services Survey



2. Given your needs and the Positions you selected above, which Position Option might you be interested in? (Circle one option per position)

Option 1: LCPC creates a shared-service position and contracts with towns to cover their needs.

Option 2: LCPC helps towns create a joint contract for the position(s), which will be filled and housed at the town level.

Option 3: LCPC helps individual towns develop the position(s), which will be filled and housed at the town level.

Option 4: Not Applicable (N/A), we are not interested in this position at this time. (Select this option if you already have the position and do not need more support.)

<u>Assessor/Listener</u>	Option:	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Community Development Coordinator</u>	Option:	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Equity Coordinator</u>	Option:	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>GIS/Mapping Coordinator</u>	Option:	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Grants Manager</u>	Option:	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Information Technologies (IT) Manager</u>	Option:	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Purchasing Manager</u>	Option:	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Road Foreman</u>	Option:	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Sustainability/Resilience Coordinator</u>	Option:	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Town Administrator/Administrative Assistant</u>	Option:	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Town Energy Coordinator</u>	Option:	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Town Manager</u>	Option:	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Town Planner</u>	Option:	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Zoning Administrator</u>	Option:	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Other (please specify)-</u>	Option:	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>

3. Which of the following contract-basis Direct Services might you be interested in receiving from LCPC? (Select all that apply)

- Brokering joint paid emergency response systems (police, fire, or ambulance)
- Budgeting or Capital Improvement Plan creation
- Bulk purchasing

PROPANE VOLUMES & PRICES

WWTP-110 Sewer plant Rd

22-3331.4 gal

21-4039.4 gal

20-4516.4 gal

20-21 avg: 4277.9

Municipal Building/Town Clerks

22-483 gal

21-1256.60 gal

20-1215.50 gal

20-21 avg: 1236.1

Water Treatment Plant-Wescom Rd

22-141.8 gal

21-203.4 gal

20- 183 gal

20-21 avg: 193.2

Water Pump Building

22-270.1 gal

21-259.5 gal

20-212.7 gal

20-21 avg: 236.1

Holcomb House

20-21 avg: 634

Total 20-21 avg: 6577.3 gallons

Corse current price: \$1.589 +\$0.02 tax/gallon

Fred's current price: \$2.15/gallon. Fred's will honor the quoted price for 6000 gallons vs the 12,000 gallons quoted in the bid.

*2022 wasn't used in average calculation because it is incomplete and would skew the data.

From: kim hoffman <tsimkim37@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 6, 2022 7:59 AM
To: Diane Lehouiller <Dlehouiller@townofjohnson.com>
Subject: Tree board budget request

Hey D,

Writing you to consider funding the tree board for their incredible work maintaining the trees in the village as well as creating the Johnson Arboretum. Sue Lovering continues to put in tremendous effort in writing grants, finding deals, and contributing her own \$ at times. The work that the volunteers on the board does is a great benefit to the village and I believe it is a reasonable ask.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kim Dunkley
Village resident

Village of Johnson, Vermont
Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedure

It is against the policies of the Village of Johnson and illegal under State of Vermont and Federal Law, for any employee to harass another employee or other persons based on their membership in a legally protected classification. The Village of Johnson is committed to providing a workplace free from this unlawful conduct. It is a violation of this Policy for an employee to engage in any form of harassment.

It is the policy of the Village of Johnson to provide a work environment that is pleasant, professional, and free from intimidation, hostility or other offenses that might interfere with work performance. Harassment of any sort - verbal, physical, and visual - will not be tolerated, particularly against employees in protected classes. These classes include but are not necessarily limited to: race, ancestry, religion, gender, age, marital status, national origin, sexual orientation, place of birth, citizenship, veteran status, or disability, or any other protected status defined by law.

What is "harassment"?

Workplace harassment can take many forms. It may be, but is not limited to, words, insulting comments, offensive jokes, cartoons, pictures, posters, pranks, intimidation, bullying behaviors, and physical gestures, assaults, contact or violence that substantially interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Harassment is not necessarily sexual in nature. It may also take the form of other activity, including derogatory statements, not directed to the targeted employee but observed by the affected employee. Other prohibited conduct includes but is not limited to written material such as notes, photographs, cartoons, and articles of a harassing or offensive nature. Retaliation against an employee for complaining about the behaviors described above or for participating in an investigation of a complaint of harassment is also prohibited.

To be unlawful, the conduct must create a work environment that would be intimidating, hostile, or offensive to reasonable people.

The Village of Johnson employees, and particularly Department Heads, have a responsibility for keeping our work environment free of harassment. Any employee,

who becomes aware of an incident of harassment, whether by witnessing the incident or being told of it, or when a member of the Village of Johnson management becomes aware of the existence of harassment must report it to the Village Manager, who has been designated to receive such complaints and/or reports.

While the Village of Johnson encourages you to communicate directly with the alleged harasser and make it clear that the harasser's behavior is unacceptable, offensive, or inappropriate, it is not required that you do so. Any incidents of harassment must be immediately reported, and it is essential to notify the Village Manager, who has been designated to receive such complaints and/or reports, immediately even if you are not sure the offending behavior is considered harassment. Or, if the Village Manager is the alleged harasser, you may report the offensive behavior to the Chairperson of the Village Trustees.

Appropriate investigation and disciplinary action will be taken. All complaints and/or reports will be promptly investigated with due regard for the privacy of everyone involved. However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Any employee found to have harassed a fellow employee or subordinate would be subject to severe disciplinary action up to and including termination. The Village of Johnson will also take any additional action necessary to appropriately remedy the situation. Retaliation of any sort will not be permitted. No adverse employment action will be taken against any employee who makes a good faith report of alleged harassment and/or who participates in the investigation of such a complaint. False and malicious complaints of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation (as opposed to complaints that, even if erroneous, are made in good faith) may be the subject of appropriate disciplinary action.

What you should do if you believe you have been harassed:

Any employee who believes they have been the target of harassment or who believes they have been subjected to retaliation for having brought or supported a complaint of harassment, is encouraged to directly inform the offending person or persons that such conduct is offensive and must stop. If the employee does not wish to communicate directly with the alleged harasser(s), or if direct communication has been ineffective, then the person with the complaint is encouraged to report the situation as soon as possible to the Village Manager, or to the Chairperson of the Village Trustees if the Village Manager is the alleged harasser, both of whom have been designated to receive such complaints and/or reports. It is helpful to an investigation if the employee keeps a diary of events with dates and the names of the people who witnessed or were told of the harassment, if possible.

If a complainant is dissatisfied with the Village Manager's level of action or the complaint is against the Village Manager, she/he shall file a complaint in writing to the Chairperson of the Village Trustees.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the Village Trustees action, they may file a complaint by writing or calling any of the following State or Federal agencies:

1. Vermont Attorney General's Office, Civil Rights Unit, 109 State Street, Montpelier, VT - 05609 - 1001

Tel: (802) 828-3657 (voice)

(888) 745-9195 (Toll Free VT)

(802) 828-3665 (TTY)

Fax: (802) 828-2154

Email: ago.civilrights@vermont.gov

Online: <http://ago.vermont.gov/about-the-attorney-generals-office/divisions/civil-rights/>

2. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 1 Congress Street, Boston, MA - 02114 - Telephone 617.565.3204 (TDD)

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

JFK Federal Building

475 Government Center

Boston, MA 02203

Tel: 1 (800) 669-4000 (voice)

1 (800) 669-6820 (TTY)

1 (844) 234-5122 (ASL Video)

Fax: 617-565-3196

Email: info@eeoc.gov

Online: www.eeoc.gov

Complaints must be filed within 300 days of the adverse action.

Each of these agencies can conduct impartial investigations, facilitate conciliation, and if it finds that there is probable cause or reasonable grounds to believe harassment occurred, it may take the case to court. Although employees are encouraged to file their complaint of harassment throughout this Policy, an employee is not required to do so before filing a charge with these agencies.

In addition, a complainant also has the right to hire a private attorney, and to pursue a private legal action in State court.