

JOHNSON VILLAGE TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
WEDNESDAY, JULY 19, 2023

Present:

Trustees: GiGi Beach, Steve Hatfield, Lynda Hill, Ken Tourangeau

Others: Erik Bailey, Rosemary Audibert, Dan Copp, Aaron Calvin

Absent: BJ Putvain

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. Call to Order

Ken called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

2. Sign Emergency Line of Credit

Steve moved to approve obtaining a \$1 million line of credit from Union Bank at an interest rate of 4.75% for one year and the motion was seconded and passed.

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

No changes to the agenda were needed.

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

Rosemary said there are warrants in the amount of \$107,969 for the board to sign.

Erik said the utility bills due August 4 are still due as usual. For the next billing, due in early September, late penalties will be waived for one month. Ken said after one month we will consider whether to extend the waiver. Taxes are late getting out and people will have 60 days rather than 30 to pay. Rosemary said we probably won't send them out until we get a better printer/copier.

5. Flood Event

Erik said the town office was flooded and moved upstairs. We lost multiple computers and the printer/scanner. The phone line went down and we had to fix the elevator.

Ken thanked the trustee board, Rosemary, office staff and Erik. In tough times we all did the best we could. We owe huge thanks to the water and light crew. They were outstanding. The fire department and swiftwater rescue were the heroes of the event. We need to keep them supported. Wallingford Electric from Connecticut delivered 50 meters to us free of charge and they have offered more.

Lynda asked, when people get a new meter do they pay for it? Ken said no; we own the meters.

Ken said Wallingford Electric from Connecticut and Enosburg Village Electric sent mutual aid. Wallingford reached out and offered electric meters. Anne put out a request on the NEPPA board and we had multiple offers. Lynda said Chittenden County has come to our rescue. We have had volunteers and donations from Chittenden County and other places in Lamoille County and elsewhere. It is unbelievable the number of people who have called to donate goods and time. The other board members thanked Ken for the time he has put in dealing with the flood. The board also thanked Dan and the crew and H2O solutions. Dan said Burlington sent us a man and a pump for 2 days and they helped us get the rental pump we have now. H2O Solutions personnel from New Hampshire came for 2 days. Communication with Erik and Ken has been great. Erik said he sent

maple syrup and thank you notes to Wallingford and Enosburg. FEMA and the governor have toured the wastewater plant. We have been assured it will be fixed. The FEMA representative assured us that we will get money to replace what we had and FEMA will also spend money on flood mitigation so this doesn't happen again. Ken said all our local representatives and our senator have visited. Lynda said the church groups have been amazing. Church groups came from down south and from Montpelier. Scott Meyer said some came from Pennsylvania. Erik said Heather Collins of the state Department of Environmental Conservation has gone above and beyond to help us. This afternoon she found out there was a supply chain issue with the ductile iron we need for the bridge crossing and she arranged to have some pipe delivered to us. Dan said she has been one of the few from the state who cares. Ken thanked Beth Foy and Eben Patch. They lent him a lot of assistance. Lynda has been taking care of the resource area. Lynda said she is desperate for volunteers at the donation center. Ken said our fire station was damaged. The fire department crew did an awesome job. Lynda said all the food trucks have been a godsend. Ken said we will send cards and thanks to a lot of people. He thanked Scott Meyer, who has given him a lot of advice and done a lot.

Dan said flood water reached about 7 feet inside the wastewater plant and compromised everything in the building. Our system is currently removing only things like rags, sticks and grit and pumping wastewater to the river. The state wants us to set up drip chlorination as soon as we can. Then we will at least be disinfecting some of the raw sewage. He explained what "raw sewage" actually means. What comes to the plant is not just what is flushed down the toilet. It includes a large amount of dishwater, shower water, etc. Erik said it is more than 99% water. Dan said we still don't have power at the building. We probably will have it to some degree tomorrow.

Dan said he thinks we can be up and running with total secondary treatment within two weeks. He is leaning towards that rather than working to get primary treatment in place first. The state agrees with that plan. We are getting new equipment and a SCADA system from the state. He would like to put in a job trailer by the building. He is currently working out of his truck and has no internet and no place to put a laptop. He would like a place for the crew to get in out of the sun. The board agreed Dan should get a job trailer. Lynda suggested a pod. The board agreed to let Erik and Dan choose the best and most cost effective option. Ken asked them to be very fiscally responsible. Scott noted that the trailer is not a comfort measure; it is necessary for workplace safety.

Dan said he was told today by a FEMA representative that we can expect reimbursement of current expenses within 2 weeks. Anything he is spending on now is considered emergency spending. The amount available for reimbursement of emergency expenses is a large sum and what he can see us spending is well within that amount. Ken said it is just the emergency spending that will be reimbursed so quickly. We will be waiting a lot longer for the rest. Dan said he spoke to the FEMA representative about how we may be able to get some equipment running temporarily but it may be compromised and really need replacement. He assured Dan that getting something running temporarily will not prevent us getting money to replace it.

Dan said the new River Road pump station got damaged because the ground was still soft and it eroded. He hired a general contractor to handle immediate repairs so when the bridge crossing is fixed we will be ready to pump there. We are now pumping directly to the river. Nothing but the tanks and concrete at that site is salvageable

Erik said to work on the bridge crossing he hired American Mobile LLC, a company that does difficult construction jobs. It is owned by two people from Johnson but does most of its work out of state. Dan said they came highly recommended. Erik said they are very innovative. He made it clear we need a temporary solution before the permanent fix can be done and one of the engineers has an idea about how to install a temporary line quickly. Ken said we did not break our procurement policy. The state and FEMA said we should contact three contractors and if they were not all getting back to us we should just pick one. We have provisions in our policy for emergencies when we can't wait for people to get back to us.

Dan said the water system was not compromised at all. The wellhead and plant stayed above water. We were able to continue sampling throughout. There were no broken lines anywhere.

Dan emphasized that people should not flush anything down the toilet right now other than urine and feces because whatever is flushed is going direct to the river. Lynda said she will make a sign for people coming to get cleaning supplies reminding them of that.

Erik said power was back to all areas but Wescom Road in 2 days and Wescom Road got power back in 2 more days. We got help from Enosburg on that. Enosburg also helped connect people back up. There are still people without power – those who haven't gotten certification from an electrician that it is safe to restore power.

Lynda asked who people can contact if they can't find an electrician. Erik named some electricians he has seen working in the area. Lynda said she has told people that if they see an electrician they should stop them and talk to them.

Erik said the fire station had about 8 inches of water on the first floor. The fire department did some mitigation and SERVPRO has done the rest. The fire department hosed out the lower storage building and the smoke house. Ken said the water and light crew mucked the buildings out first with skid steers. Dan said the fire department hosed down the road to the wastewater plant.

Lynda asked if the heavy thunderstorms have added to the problem. Dan said we can pretty much keep up with what is coming. Erik said he thinks the storms have helped clean the village.

Scott said a lot of the firefighters responding to the flood had property themselves that flooded. Erik and Ken said even so they did not stop helping others. Ken said he feels we have the best fire department and water rescue in the state. Lynda said we have a good team all across the board.

Lynda said the volunteer-staffed donation center will be open this week and next week if it can be manned, then intermittently. Around the end of August when people start trying to move back in they will put out the word that donations of bedding, kitchen supplies, etc. will be needed. Any leftover clothing will go to the United Church's thrift shop. They lost everything.

Ken said we will see a lot of budget cuts because of flood expenses.

Ken said we are still in a state of emergency. Lynda asked if it is up to the state or the town to lift it. Ken said he thinks it is up to Eben Patch but he doesn't think Eben will lift the state of emergency for the town until it is lifted for the state.

Lynda moved to rescind the authorization given to Ken and Erik to make decisions on their own authority as of July 26, Steve seconded and the motion was passed.

Ken said we will be hiring Municipal Resources Inc. to be our FEMA liaison as long as they accept. They are getting us a contract. Erik said most of their work will be done remotely but they will visit. They are located in New Hampshire. Ken said for the first couple of weeks they will be here a lot.

Scott said he asked a FEMA representative about whether the village can get reimbursement for income loss due to the flood. They weren't sure and were going to try to get an answer. He suggests documenting loss of income in case funds are available to reimburse for it.

Aaron Calvin asked if the village is going to be coordinating with Ron Rodjenski, who the town hired to deal with FEMA. Ken said no. The town will be taking the lead on FEMA claims for the jointly owned buildings. Scott said Ken explained well at the joint selectboard-trustee meeting that the village would overwhelm the town's resources if they used the same person for the FEMA liaison work.

Lynda thanked Ken and Steve for the work they have done. She said Steve's wife has been a godsend at the donation center. Ken thanked past trustee board chairs Gordy Smith and Will Jennison for their help, as well as Beth Foy, Eben Patch and Scott Meyer. Lynda said Beth and Eben have put in very long hours.

Erik said he got a moose permit for this year, but because he will be too busy with flood-related work he asked for and received a deferment from the state.

6. *Adjourn*

Lynda moved to adjourn, Steve seconded, the motion was passed and the meeting was adjourned at 5:13.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths