

JOHNSON VILLAGE TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
MONDAY, APRIL 10, 2024

**Present:**

Trustees: GiGi Beach, Steve Hatfield, Will Jennison, BJ Putvain, Ken Tourangeau

Others: Erik Bailey, Rosemary Audibert, Dan Copp, Seth Jensen

**Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.**

**1. *Call to Order***

Ken called the meeting to order at 6:00.

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

No changes to the agenda were needed.

**3. *Administer Oath to Newly Elected Trustees***

Rosemary administered the oath of office to Will Jennison and GiGi Beach.

**4. *Election of Chair and Vice Chair***

Will nominated Ken for chair and Steve seconded. **Ken Tourangeau was elected chair.**

Will nominated BJ for vice chair and Steve seconded. Ken said he will ask BJ to share a lot of his duties this year because this will be his last year as chair and he thinks BJ would be the best person to serve as chair next. **BJ Putvain was elected vice chair.**

**5. *Appointment of Water & Light Commissioner***

Ken said at the annual village meeting he said the water and light commissioner is being elected for one year because that is what we have done in the past, but the real reason is that the one-year term is in the village bylaws.

**Ken moved to appoint Erik Bailey as water and light commissioner, Will seconded and the motion was passed.**

**6. *Review and Approve Minutes of Trustee Meetings***

**Will moved to approve the minutes of March 1 and April 2, 2024 as printed, Steve seconded and the motion was passed.**

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

Erik said the Vermont Bond Bank is assuming loans for Johnson and some other hard hit communities. They have paid off our \$978K Union Bank loan and now we owe the money to the Bond Bank instead. They offered a rate of 1.3% for 7 years, with interest only for the first 2 years. But we actually will have no interest because PACIF covered it.

**8. *Members of the Public***

No members of the public were present.

**9. *Village Manager's Report and Action Items***

Erik gave his report. He asked LCPC for ideas for another Congressionally Directed Spending Request and they suggested a grant to fund installation of a USGS river gauge in the Gihon and others in the Lamoille. He sent Senator Welch a letter of support.

Dan and Erik met with Seth Jensen and Melissa Manka of LCPC to discuss their roles going forward with the WWTF relocation project under MTAP funding. Seth is trying to energize the process with the FEMA BCA staff and there is a meeting with Wayne Elliott tomorrow to tour

possible WWTF relocation sites. The town administrator has been made aware and he assures the town is supportive.

Erik attended the VLCT free webinar “Grant Basics. Pt 1: Before The Grant” yesterday. He will continue to attend this helpful series as they come out.

The office furniture is being sourced and planned for downstairs. Erik informed Tom and Rosemary that village staff would not be relocating until the moldy paper is out of the vault. Rosemary indicated that she is also not in favor of any office staff moving until then. A plan to get that out quickly is in the works.

Erik will be on vacation the week of April 22-26<sup>th</sup>.

Erik said construction downstairs at the municipal building is basically done. At best the furniture is about 6 weeks out. Some papers in the vault will be copied or saved. Some are not needed and can be thrown out.

GiGi asked what sites are being considered for the wastewater plant. Erik said the town administrator’s favorite idea is right behind the municipal building. Then the town offices could be moved to the new library building. The village offices could be adjacent to the wastewater facility. Other options are Lot 6 of the industrial park, the northwest corner of the skatepark parcel and the field near the water plant.

GiGi asked if the most cost effective would be our property. Erik said yes, or the location by the water plant. Rosemary said there are covenants on that deed that we might want to look at. Erik said one possible problem with the water plant area is that it could become an island during a flood.

Dan said the least amount of pumping would be needed at the municipal building property. Everything would have to be pumped at the industrial park location. Some pumping would be needed at the skatepark and Wescom Road locations. It costs money to pump.

Steve asked, would we tear the municipal building down if we put the WWTF on this property? Erik said we would hope it could fit behind the existing building. Then we could have village offices here.

Erik said not a lot of pressure would be needed to pump to the industrial park because it is not a high rise, but the volume would be high. Dan said one new pump station would be needed.

Erik said he and Dan are thinking the new WWTF would be a smaller and slightly updated version of the Morrisville plant. It would use the same SBR technology.

#### ***10. Water/Wastewater Report and Action Items***

Dan gave his report.

##### Operational Status of Wastewater Plant and Callouts

- E-DMR and Wr-43 were submitted to the State
- We hauled 32,000 gallons of sludge to Morrisville for processing.

- A&E had an engineer take flood elevations at the plant
- Gave a tour to Vermont Rural Water Association staff and the national Wastewater program director for VRWA.
- Had a good meeting with Eric and LCPC regarding how they can help with projects at the WWTF and Village
- Met with Perry, our FEMA PDMG and his boss regarding moving the transformers at the plant to the adjoining room. They agreed to reimburse the cost of moving them and discontinue renting the office trailer.
- We also discussed buying a permanent generator and sizing it appropriately that it could be transferred to the new plant when the time comes. I am working on getting quotes again to get that done. They agreed to reimbursement for those costs and discontinuing the weekly rental of the mobile generator when that is completed.
- Alliance finished up the installation of the Modine heaters for the heating system
- Goulds finished the lighting project and the village will be getting reimbursed for that job through Efficiency VT
- The Village is receiving a \$16,000 rebate for the energy efficiency rating on the new boiler that was installed.

Dan said the state funded camera views and jetting of all the sewer lines that were flooded. They found some deficiencies. There are 3 sewer lines that need to be taken care of. His plan is to fix one this year with a fiberglass liner that goes inside.

#### Operational Status of Water Plant and Callouts

- Monthly reports were submitted to the state.
- Coliform samples were negative
- Sampled for Nitrates. Results were below detection
- Water production was down .5 MGD
- Water loss was 35%

#### ***11. Electric/General Report and Action Items***

Erik read the report submitted by Nate Brigham:

##### Electric Dept.

Helped Hyde Park Electric for 16.5 hrs on 4-4 and 4-5

Tree on Line with a broken phase and neutral in the Gulf. 53 customers out for about 5 hrs. Town assisted with flagging

Fixed service at 389 West Settlement Rd due to the heavy snow

Fixed service wires at 5 Lower Main West

59 Railroad St Disco/Reco for meter pan /service swap out done by electrician

78 Railroad St, Disco/Reco for meter pan /service swap out done by electrician

Did Street Light Inventory

Changed out Gloves, Sleeves, and blankets for testing

Fixed two hot sticks that had failed the dielectric testing

Met with H Bros Tree service for quote on tree trimming

Fixed the lights left on the St. Light poles

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

Completed the Vermont Dept of Taxes Property Tax Inventory.

Coordinated with Consolidated to relocate and replace a pole on School Street.

Located a couple of sources of 1/0 RT cable for the Route 100C project. There is an issue with the minimum order quantity and I have requested to have a reel tacked onto a run of cable for another utility. I have not heard back on this possibility. If necessary, we can use 1/0 triplex instead. Nate found a new type of connector that would make tapping the triplex cable easier.

Ordered a new decorative light standard for the one that was damaged.

Completed a survey of the route to move the Johnson Library to School Street.

Met with Gene Richards about expansion at the Woolen Mills.

#### Water/Sewer

Ordered new 1" water meter, Dual Check valve, and remote reader for 93 River Rd West - Andy Minks new apt building

Turned on water at 66 Lower Main West Barn Apts

71 Mack Mudgett Dr. had the sewer plugged up, was on the customers side Again

#### General Dept.

The S595 Bobcat is back and running good

Helped the Village Clerks office by setting up for voting for Village meeting

Picked up Snow on 3-12 and 3-24 hopefully the last time this season

Did maintaence on S450 Bobcat

Plowing/sanding of sidewalks

### Safety

Safety meeting with NEPPA in March was on Work Zone safety

Safety Meetings in April were on Reclosers and another on Capacitors

Erik said the work on the Bobcat was mostly covered under warranty.

### **12. Fire Department Report and Action Items**

Erik read the fire department report submitted by fire chief Arjay West:

#### Johnson Fire Department Report

*Mar. 1 – Mar. 28, 2024*

JFD responded to 4 calls. 3 calls occurred during the daytime (6 am - 6 pm) and 1 call occurred during the nighttime (6 pm - 6 am.) The average duration was: 184 minutes

#### Nature:

Those calls were: 2 – vehicle crashes, 1 – chimney fire, 1 – mutual aid (structure fire)

#### Staff:

The average number of firefighters that responded was: 10

Total hours of service was: 114

#### Other:

We have determined a committee for continuation of the Engine 2 replacement project. I have spoken with the Village Manager about resuming this project. The committee will conduct current research and create a project update & scope of work recommendation(s), which I'll be presenting to the Board when completed.

### **13. Lamoille County Planning Commission: Update on 2024 CDS Request for USGS River Gauges** GiGi asked if the board wants her to continue representing the village on the LCPC board.

**Will moved that GiGi be the Village of Johnson representative on the Lamoille County Planning Commission Board until the end of her term on the village trustee board, BJ seconded and the motion was passed.**

Seth Jensen said there are only 2 gauges on the main stem of the Lamoille and none on tributaries like the Gihon. That leaves some gaps for prediction and planning. Sen. Welch's office reached out to LCPC about possible Congressionally Directed Spending related to flood preparedness. They were very interested in supporting installation and at least 3 years of operations and management of additional gauges. LCPC put together a request for additional gauges in Johnson. There would be one on the Gihon that would also have a precipitation monitor and one near the confluence of the Lamoille and the Gihon. They have also requested gauges in Wolcott and Morristown, an upgrade to the one in Jeffersonville, and new gauges in Cambridge. If this request is granted they would

probably talk to local communities about optimal locations. The hope is that the new gauges would provide additional data for planning. USGG provided a proposal on the type of gauge. They would install them.

Will said he sees no use in having a gauge at the confluence of the Lamoille and the Gihon. That will only give us historical data about what levels were. He could see the relevance of having gauges upstream on the Gihon and in Wolcott and Morrisville. Seth said the application called for one at the confluence or below. Will suggested somewhere around Willow Crossing might provide better data for Cambridge. Gauges in Wolcott and Morrisville will be helpful to us and having one to the north on the Gihon could be helpful.

Ken asked if Seth has any information on how the village garage funding is moving. Seth said it was included in one of the budget extensions that just passed through Congress. Alec Jones is working with Erik and USDA on that. Tori Hellwig and Alec also believe they may have worked out a way to fund the Phase 1 brownfields assessment.

**14. *Appoint Emergency Operations Coordinators 1 & 2 for Johnson Emergency Management Group***

Ken and BJ said they are willing to be the Emergency Operations Coordinators again. The board agreed to reappoint them.

**15. *Discuss Cold Spring Maintenance Needs and Possible Upgrades***

Steve said he just looked at the cold spring. He thought the steps were in decent shape but the floor is really rough. It is concrete and it is all chipped. The steps have a couple of little cracks. The board discussed using money from the sidewalk fund to put new concrete at the cold spring. It was agreed that Erik should talk to Nate about having the village crew do it. The board agreed they should also look into painting the steel railing.

**16. *Appoint a Member to Work on Scheduling and Organizing of Rosemary Audibert Green Dedication Festivities***

Ken said the board wanted to do something for Rosemary when the weather was nicer. He mentioned the possibility of a parade. He was thinking of a community celebration of flood recovery and thanks to Rosemary. Rosemary said she would not like a parade. She does like the idea of celebrating flood recovery. It was agreed that GiGi (with the help of Steve) will work on coming up with ideas for a celebration. Will asked her to bring more than one plan for the board to consider.

**17. *Potential Joint Meeting Topics***

Ken said building maintenance is one topic for the two boards to discuss.

Erik said another is diesel fuel. Ken said he and Eben Patch have talked about the possibility of getting a new fueling system. What we have now is not very accurate. Someone can put in a key and then pull it out and it keeps fueling. He thinks we should have a system that uses cards rather than keys. It was agreed that the fuel system would be a good topic for a joint meeting.

Ken said he and Erik may go to a selectboard meeting to try to get them to commit a lot at the industrial park, or first right of refusal for a lot, to the village. It would be better for them not to put in infrastructure yet at the location where the WWTF might be located because changes would need to be made later for the WWTF.

It was agreed to suggest finalizing an MOU on shared properties as a joint meeting topic.

Ken said the village needs to file for a state permit for the grate replacement the tree board wants to do, because the village has the right of way permit. He suggested that Erik mention that to Tom Galinat tomorrow. It was agreed that does not need to be on the joint meeting agenda.

It was agreed to suggest mowing for the joint meeting agenda.

**18. Other Business**

BJ asked if we are going to start recording meetings using Teams or Zoom. Erik said the tight security we have with The Tech Group caused problems with using Teams to host a meeting. Tom wiped a computer to use it for Zoom. Ken said he doesn't care if we record meetings or have Zoom access. He would be in favor of GMATV setting up cameras to record meetings. BJ said he thinks the first step is to try to get Teams working.

Erik said he has noticed that people are more respectful and courteous when they come to a meeting in person. Will asked if Zoom or Teams would be used for people just to watch or to participate. BJ said he is thinking more of having a recording people can watch afterwards. He would be just as happy if we only recorded meetings and put them on YouTube. Will said he is not in favor of people participating electronically. If it is important to have someone participate who can't come in person they can join by conference call. We can make concessions if needed. He doesn't care if we record meetings or not. BJ asked Erik to look into what we have to do to record meetings and put them on YouTube. Ken said the board would accommodate anyone with a special request to participate remotely. If can get Teams to work for free that is an option. Steve asked, if someone couldn't come to a meeting they could participate by phone, right? Others said yes. Erik said he will look into using Teams or just putting videos on YouTube.

BJ asked if there is any update on crosswalk coloring. Erik said there is a meeting planned with the state.

BJ asked what is up with a new logo. Erik said Ken brought up the idea of updating our logo. He suggests having a contest for Lamoille Union High School art students with gift cards as prizes. GiGi asked how much stock we have of things like letterhead with the current logo. Erik said we would use up what we have. Will asked, what if the student submissions are all bad? Erik said he thinks we would still give out prizes but not use the ideas. He suggested prizes of \$100, \$50 and \$25 gift cards.

BJ moved to have a village logo contest with prizes of \$100, \$50 and \$25 gift cards for first, second and third place, with the understanding that entries will not necessarily be used for the log. The motion died for lack of a second.

BJ asked if we finished having water tap locations mapped. Erik said the grant-funded work on water main valves was completed. It did not include the whole system. The rest will be finished up with the next round of grants. There was a 100% grant-funded project to clean out and exercise valve boxes, size them, make a condition assessment and GPS locate them.

**19. Executive Session – Employee Evaluation**

**Will moved to go into executive session for evaluation of an employee as allowed by 1. V.S.A. § 313(a)(3), GiGi seconded and the motion was passed at 8:03.** The board came out of executive session at 8:29.

***20. Adjourn***

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:29.**

*Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths*