

JOHNSON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES  
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
MONDAY, JUNE 17, 2024

**Present:** Selectboard members: Mike Dunham, Duncan Hastings, Eben Patch, Shayne Spence, Mark Woodward

Others: Tom Galinat, Rosemary Audibert, Jamie Roy, Matt Nemeth, Adrienne Stevson, Howard Romero, Casey Romero, Sophia Berard, Charles Flaum, Lois Frey

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

**1. Call Meeting to Order**

Eben called the meeting to order at 6:30.

**2. Consider Additions or Adjustments and Approving Agenda**

Tom added discussion of a recent dog situation, presentation of a proposed interlocal dog kenneling agreement, a suggested motion regarding liquor licenses, and approval of liquor licenses for Marsala Salsa and a special event at Vermont Studio Center.

**3. Public Comment**

No members of the public wished to comment.

**4. Selectboard Issues and Concerns**

Mike said the planning commission drafted a sewer line extension policy in 2021. He doesn't know if it was ever acted on. He was on the selectboard at the time but he doesn't remember acting on it. He thinks it could have slipped through the cracks. Shayne said he was on the planning commission at the time and he doesn't recall the selectboard acting on it.

Duncan said there is an ordinance about connections in the town sewer service areas. He is not sure what effect this policy would have on the ordinance. He doesn't want to have a policy that conflicts with the ordinance. He asked what the impetus was for the planning commission to draft this policy. Shayne said the idea was to create a clear process in writing for people who might want to get connected and to establish the ability for the town to proactively identify areas where we might want connections. Mike said he thinks it is a good policy.

Mark asked how this came to Mike's attention. Mike said there is someone in town who wants to hook into village sewer. That person reached out to Mike and Mike told him he would look into it. It looks to him as if based on this document the individual would be able to hook into village sewer. He would like to see this policy adopted so the individual can connect.

Mark asked how dealing with the village sewer system falls to us. Shayne said he thinks we have the ability to define the areas included in the special sewer service area. If there are going to be additions to the sewer service area he thinks they have to be done by the selectboard.

Eben said he thinks this would be a good work session item.

Duncan said he has not heard any more about follow-up on the River Road East complaint from the Eldridges. Tom said he has nothing new to report.

Duncan said we got a complaint from Kim Marble about dogs on Stearns Street running loose and trying to get onto her property. He hopes that is being followed up on. Is there anything to report?

Tom said he thinks that is relevant to the dog issue later on the agenda. Duncan said he thinks we need short-term and long-term plans for where dogs will go if they are picked up.

Duncan said VLCT asked him if he would serve on the environmental policy committee that is involved in setting municipal policy for the legislature and municipalities. They are looking for someone with a particular interest in flood related impacts.

Duncan asked for an update on the speed radar sign on the east end of the village. Tom said he and Jason talked about it. His memory is that we need an electrician to look at it. He thinks the thought was that it might be in too shady an area so the battery was not charging properly. Duncan said we may have used a grant or help from the sheriff to obtain that sign but he believes it is our responsibility to maintain it. If it is going to be there it should work. If it is not going to work we should remove it. He would like to see it fixed.

Duncan said he thinks Tom was going to give the board information on potential costs for School Street radar signs for budget season. (*Adrienne Stevson arrived at 6:42.*) Tom said he, Jason and Dylan Laflam of the school district talked about putting up flashing yellow school zone signs with hours. The school board will be talking about contributing a portion of the cost. He thinks the cost of installing the signs could be up to \$10,000.

**5. *Planned Purchases – Grow Cemetery Fence***

Duncan said at one point we talked about fencing two sides of Grow Cemetery. Is that what is being proposed for this expense? Tom said he thinks this is just for putting split rail fence in front of the cemetery. After the adjacent property owner moves some things then we can fence one side. We should establish boundary line agreements on the two sides and the back. There is \$7,500 in the budget for cemetery maintenance that hasn't been spent yet. Tom hopes Jason can buy the fencing before July 1 even though it probably can't be put in before October. He doesn't think it will cost the full \$7,500.

Duncan said it would be nice to have some sense of what our final surplus will be because we dedicated money from the estimated surplus in our budget process. He would like some idea how close we are. (*Howard Romero arrived at 6:47. Casey Romero arrived at 6:48.*) Once we know what the surplus is, we can reserve \$7,500 for fencing. It wouldn't be spent in the current budget year but it would be reserved out of the surplus. Shayne asked if Rosemary thinks spending the money now would bring us close to our limit. Rosemary said no.

**Mike moved to purchase fencing for Grow Cemetery for an amount not to exceed \$7,500, Shayne seconded and the motion was passed with Duncan opposed.**

**6. *Liquor License Approvals***

Rosemary said Marsala Salsa has requested renewals of Class 1 and Class 3 liquor licenses and the Vermont Studio Center is requesting a license for a 40th anniversary party on Saturday. Marsala Salsa does not have outdoor consumption. **Duncan moved to approve the Class 1 and Class 3 liquor license renewals for Marsala Salsa, with the standard letter to be sent, and the motion was seconded and passed.**

**Shayne moved to approve the special event liquor license for the Vermont Studio Center event on June 22 and the motion was seconded.** Rosemary said it will begin at 1:00 p.m. and end at 6:00 p.m. **The motion was passed.** (*Sophia Berard arrived at 6:53.*)

**7. Committee Report – Tuesday Night Live**

Howard Romero said Tuesday Night Live started 35 years ago in 1989. It has never taken a public dime. It is funded by sponsors, vendors and donations. There are typically 350 to 550 people at concerts. They have had over 1,000 at one point. The Tuesday Night Live committee is a full committee of 7. Everyone works hard and right now they are working very hard to get ready for the upcoming season. Until this year they have had sound done for free by the college but that has gone away. They have contracted with a professional for this year at a cost of \$6,400. They have enough money to pay the bands and the sound company. The poster for the upcoming season will come out this week. Some committee members are working on a better social media presence using Instagram and a web page independent of the town site. (*Charles Flaum arrived at 6:56.*)

Howard said the committee is very protective of Legion Field. He will refuse to give up one square inch outside of the property the school is selling the town. He would like the selectboard to bear that in mind. Vendors take up space in a ring around the field and reduce seating space. It is important to the town to leave Legion Field open. He will go to war over it if he has to.

Shayne asked if the committee has any big goals or vision. Is there anything the committee would ask for as a public investment if they thought the town could pay for it? Howard said he doesn't think so. Cal Stanton's original vision is a good, simple one. The committee is now spending about \$8,000 on musicians. It has gotten to be a fairly substantial nonprofit business. He has no ambitions to take it to another venue. He would be very surprised if it truly outgrows Legion Field. He doesn't have any grand visions. He would just like to see it run more smoothly and have things done in a more timely manner with less confusion.

Sophia said for a long time the committee was paying \$100 per person for band members. They are trying to increase the amount to something more like livable pay for musicians. Since she has been involved the committee has been trying to get a wider array of music with more diverse sounds and greater diversity of people on the stage. (*Tom Moog arrived at 7:02.*)

Shayne asked if there are other advertising avenues the committee is exploring that they haven't used in the past. Howard said Lois Frey does TNL publicity in the newspaper and on the radio. He doesn't know where else to advertise besides the web. Shayne said he thinks the committee is barking up the right tree by using Facebook and Instagram. He would also suggest TikTok and YouTube shorts. Putting out short clips of something happening at Tuesday Night Live would bring more people. Charles said it would be nice if the committee could have its own page on the town website to manipulate.

Mark asked if Tuesday Night Live events are recorded. Tom Moog said GMATV records them every week. Howard said he thinks it would be nice to put out the recordings on social media.

Duncan asked if there is any worry that Tuesday Night Live will become a victim of its own success. A thousand people is a big gathering. Howard said we do have to be careful of that. He thinks it would be a mistake to advertise the events too much and get 2,000 people with no place to park. Sophia said attendance has only ever been an issue due to weather. Tom said attendance has been way down since COVID. Howard said Tom pointed out at the last committee meeting that if we have too many vendors or not enough people the vendors will not make enough money. We have to be careful of that. We have 10 vendors this year. The committee has had a problem in the past where only one or two

vendors have shown up for the last two performances of the season. That is a problem because people come to the event to eat.

Shayne asked if it is a lack of the infrastructure needed for a large scale show that holds the committee back from making the event bigger. Howard said he doesn't want to outgrow Legion Field. He likes the size and density of our crowds. If we could keep it that way it would make him happy.

Casey Romero said Legion Field is not only important for Tuesday Night Live. Before Tuesday Night Live there was a Vermont Rural Community Development project in Johnson that identified Legion Field as critical because it could be a meeting point where college students and the rest of the town could draw together. The bandstand is used by the elementary school. The town has made a big investment in that field as a gathering place.

Howard said it would be nice to light the field for the last three performances of the season but he doesn't think the committee should take public money for that.

Shayne said he sees Tuesday Night Live as an economic and community development thing. The community and economic development specialist could look for grants for Tuesday Night Live.

Howard said there is 100 amp service to the bandstand and it is really not enough. Redoing the electricity on Legion Field would be great. Tom Moog said he doesn't think a few upgrades would be that costly.

Eben asked if the committee is planning to run a surplus. Howard said they have typically been going into the next season with \$3-5K. He doesn't think they will do that this year because of the new \$6,400 expense.

Adrienne asked if there are enough trash and recycling receptacles and if much cleanup is needed after the event. Howard said the only trash and recycling receptacles are at the bread oven. That is also where committee members are located. They always have someone there guiding people as to where they can put their trash and recycling. The committee takes care of disposing of it. The solid waste board has given him signage and schooled him on what can be done with different types of waste. The committee started out with 500 gallons in trash bags and they have gotten it down to about three. They compost everything they can. Generally the place is really clean when they leave at night but he always goes back and walks the field on Wednesday morning. Older kids play at the basketball court at the elementary school during performances and they often make a mess. He asked the principal if there is anything we can do about that and he said that is his problem, not ours. Sophia said Geoff Hollis, a new committee member, would like to take on being a liaison with the elementary school and checking out the playground after events. Howard said the plan is to have all seven committee members on the field for the first night this year.

Duncan said he thinks it would be useful if the committee could jot down the ideas just discussed. Randall Szott could potentially seek grant funding to make some of the visions real. He suggested giving ideas to Tom Galinat, who can give them to Randall.

Tom Moog said lights and safety would be good to focus on. It would be good to have a nice first aid kit.

**8. Committee Report – Bread Oven Committee**

Sophia Berard said the bread oven committee is shifting its pizza nights to Thursday so the first part of the week is not overloaded for people who also do Tuesday Night Live. The committee plans to have weekly updates on Front Porch Forum reminding people of the bakes. A lot of people are using the oven outside of committee events, for example for Father's Day, graduation or birthday parties. The committee has a list of purchases they want to make such as a new ash brush, a cooler and a hand washing station. They will get the list to Rosemary. They have funds to pay for the things they want. They have about \$1,500. They are considering getting a stainless steel table to replace their plywood one. They have two new committee members, Aubrey Wagner and Adrienne Stevson. This year the library is partnering with the bread oven committee for a couple of events. The No Strings Marionette Company is coming to a bake night and there will be a few musical events.

Adrienne said one future goal would be a shed for the Tuesday Night Live committee and the bread oven committee to store equipment in. She heard that might be happening. Howard said that has changed for Tuesday Night Live because the Tuesday Night Live committee no longer uses its own sound gear so they no longer need a shed. He could do a drawing of a shed. He would probably suggest putting it by the bread oven rather than near the backstop where he was originally thinking it would be. Sophia said it could be used for the ice rink too. Howard said it would be useful to have a place to lock things up.

Tom Moog said the event the bread oven committee put on during the eclipse was amazing. Others agreed.

Duncan said Nate Kinney always used to say that we ought to develop an overall plan for Legion Field. A lot is happening there and there can be competing interests. He thinks it would be nice to have a community vision of what Legion Field should be. Adrienne suggested maybe there should be an event committee and a calendar of events. Or maybe just one person could manage that. Tom suggested a form to fill out for events that auto populates a calendar.

Adrienne said she thinks having someone push out information about events to social media would also be helpful. Shayne said he likes the idea of more committees having their own social media accounts and posting information.

Eben said committee chairs should contact Tom about meeting recording requirements.

**9. Future Report**

The selectboard agreed to invite the recreation committee to meet with the board at the second meeting in July.

**10. Selectboard Issues and Concerns**

Duncan said we have gotten concerns and complaints about fireworks. There is a town fireworks permit process that has to be gone through. He thinks it would be good for Tom to post information on that numerous times on Front Porch Forum before July 4. Shayne said he thinks it would be worth calling the sheriff's department to let them know we have a town ordinance. *(Tom Moog left at 7:30.)*

**11. Scribner Bridge Alternatives**

Jamie Roy and Matt Nemeth of VHB gave a presentation. Jamie said following the previous local concerns meeting they have evaluated alternatives. The project purpose and need is to provide a cost-effective solution to preserve Scribner Bridge while enhancing flood resilience to mitigate future storm damage. After this presentation they will prepare a report. There will be a final meeting and they will submit the report.

Overall the structure is in fair to satisfactory condition. Some of the siding has come off. There has been some deterioration of the steel stringers underneath. The abutments are satisfactory. There is some cracking but overall they are in good shape structurally.

The Gihon departs its channel and damages the road sometimes. The channel is very constricted. The span of the structure is much smaller than the bankfull width. A 100-year flood overtops the roadway by about 4 to 5 ft. archaeologically sensitive areas were identified in all four quadrants. As the project moves forward the recommendation is to proceed with a phase one archaeological survey before any ground disturbing activities. The bridge is historic. There is an adjacent farmstead. We want to avoid impacts to the historic bridge and minimize impacts to the viewshed and setting. There are wood turtles in the area, which are on the rare, threatened and endangered list, and there are protected lands in all four quadrants.

The first alternative considered was to do nothing. Alternative 2 is resilient roadway / low water crossing, which involves armoring the roadway. Alternative 3 is adding a high flow relief culvert in the spot where the road gets overtopped. The bottom of the culvert would be at the normal elevation of the river so it would only get used during a flood event. They showed us sketch of what the low water crossing would look like. There would be a sub base that would stay in place during the flood event.

Mike said he doesn't think that culvert will work. It would have to be very big. He noted that there is already good rock on the road that was put in after the Halloween flood. Matt said that would not be the exact stone that they are proposing to put in. Mike asked if they are saying we would have to dig out the stone that is already there. Matt said that is what is proposed. Mike said that is crazy. Those rocks are fine. They are built to do exactly what they are talking about. Matt said he agrees with Mike that a very large culvert would be needed. There is not space to meet existing design standards for the culvert but we could potentially fit a culvert 20 ft. wide and 5 ft. high. They are proposing some stone that is not the same as what is in the area now. The proposed 20-foot span is pretty large for a culvert. There will likely not be much material on top of it or vehicles might drive right on it. Jamie said they are showing it made of precast with a thicker top slab.

Duncan said one issue is that all the sediment goes down the river when it floods. Fish and Wildlife is not keen on that. They will have some input on what gets done. One idea we had talked about that he is not seen as a potential idea is a concrete spillway instead of material that would be washed away in a flood.

Jamie said the problem with that is that typically a covered bridge does not have concrete or pavement up against it because it is incompatible with the historic setting and changes how the area looks. Duncan said a big culvert will also change the look.

Charles Flaum asked, why not push all the water into the nearby field? Eben asked, isn't the field five or six feet higher than the river? Jamie explained that the river does not want to go that way. Charles said it backs up pretty far into the field.

Alternative one would have no cost. Alternative 2 would cost 3/4 of a million dollars.

The board discussed some other alternatives that had been suggested in the 2010 study. Eben said if there were more coordination with Hyde Park and their dam upstream was used to reduce the flow of the river that could help.

Casey said many other bridges in the area have spans that are too narrow, not just this one. It makes her nervous to think about expensive solutions for one bridge when it is a regional problem. This has to be looked at in conjunction with the rest of the watershed.

Howard said he and Casey have a house in the middle of the Gihon River. In the last two floods the Gihon was less flooded because of the capacity of the fields by the river. Flooding damages the road above the bridge but there are ways around that. In New Mexico they use concrete whale humps with culverts through them as a cheap easy solution. He would prefer that things stay pretty much where they are so that the fields continue to flood properly. He would suggest doing very little other than armoring the road well. Mark said he thinks that is alternative 2. Howard said he thinks the owners of the house near the bridge will tear it down. That would open up possibilities.

Mark asked if the alternatives include some bridge repairs. Jamie said yes. The costs shown do not include that because they assumed it would be the same for all alternatives. Those costs will be included in the final report.

Mike said he thinks there was a study that said the bridge had issues like powderpost beetles. Jamie said they are basing their assessment off the most recent VTrans inspection. Howard said it is essentially a steel frame bridge.

Jamie said alternative 3 would increase hydraulic capacity the most but it won't increase it enough to justify the cost. Alternative 2 will have little effect on hydraulic capacity but it will reduce maintenance costs.

Matt said alternative 2 calls for 4 ft. stone which is different from what is existing. Jamie said they can look at the existing stone. It is possible some stone can be reused.

Mike said he suggests replacing the boards of the bridge and forgetting the rest for a while. Shayne said his preference is probably alternative 2. Mark said he thinks alternative 2 make sense.

Jamie said VTrans wants to repair the ends of the steel beams. Mike said he is thinking they will end up wanting to replace them, which will be expensive.

Tom asked about the idea of an additional bridge span to extend the existing one. Jamie said they considered that as part of alternative 3. We wouldn't be able to fit a large enough bridge in there to get the capacity we need. There would be increased costs. Eben said that was recommended against in 2010 because of the ice jam issue. Jamie said there would be a pier in the middle that would collect material.

Duncan said one reason the bridge is still there is that the road washes out when it floods. He likes alternative 2 but he doesn't see anything wrong with a concrete swale so debris doesn't wash down the river every time the road washes out.

Casey asked if alternative 2 requires the same archaeological studies. Jamie said yes. The cost of a phase one archaeological study is about \$14,000.

Eben said he thinks the board is leaning more towards alternative 2. He said visually concrete in the roadway doesn't bother him. Jamie said maybe some concrete could be added that does not go all the way to the bridge.

Jamie said VHB will have a draft report next month. She can coordinate with Tom about the final meeting.

## 12. Website

**Shayne moved and Mike seconded to authorize Tom to draft an RFP for redesign of the town website.** (*Jamie and Matt left at 8:08.*)

Duncan asked if on an interim basis we could allow the Tuesday Night Live committee to have their own page on the town website. Charles said the committee has a Facebook page. That is where they are aiming their traffic. Shayne said he is open to that as well. He thinks it can be separate from his motion.

Adrienne said she has some logos to present to the selectboard. She is looking to do that at the next meeting. And she is willing to show some options for new website designs. She thinks the town should do an RFP but maybe it should be a web developer RFP. The rail trail committee has done some work organizing information about what the town offers with regard to shopping, art, culture, etc and that could go into the redesign of the website.

**The motion was passed.**

Eben asked if we want the RFP to be for the town or the town and village. He thinks that would be important to the structure of the RFP. Shayne said he thinks we need to know if the village is interested and willing to help pay for it. He feels the need for a new website is pretty clear and he thinks we should move forward whether or not the village wants to be involved. It would be great to have them on board. Tom said he will ask them to put it on the agenda for their next meeting. He will ask them if they want to be part of the RFP and pay 50% of the cost or if they want to go on their own. Eben said he thinks it would be good to have the RFP for the second meeting in July. (*Adrienne left at 8:15.*)

## 13. HMGP Update

Tom listed some ideas that have been suggested for pre-application for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program: alleviating the damming impact of the bridges on Route 15, flood benching on farm property (lowering land to the two-year floodplain level), mitigation at the skatepark, and relocation and upsizing of bridges and culverts. We might be able to use this money for Scribner Bridge. There could be regional multi-town projects but the problem is that a single municipality needs to administer the grant. Our administrative capacity is maxing out so we might want to ask another town to carry the torch for grant administration. Tom will talk to Seth about adding moving the library as a possible project, in case the Department of Libraries grant falls through. Another thing that was discussed was modeling of the Gihon. We can't identify critical properties along the Gihon because it was never modeled so he will not be reaching out to landowners along the Gihon. He thinks LCPC or other agencies will reach out to them.



Duncan listed items that came out of an LCPC meeting on Thursday night: flood benches in various locations including buyout properties and the arboretum, Scribner Bridge, skatepark flood mitigation, the Main Street bridge, the Hogback bridge and the bridge under Foote Brook. The bridges are state assets but we could put them on our list. Seth Jensen suggested we reach out to VTrans about them. Perhaps they could put in bypass culverts.

Duncan said Seth wants the board to take action on the pre-application proposals. Eben said if they were all listed, the board could take action on them in July. Tom suggested doing it at the July 1 meeting.

The board discussed some possible locations for flood benching. (*Charles and Howard left at 8:28.*)

#### **14. Purchasing Policy**

Eben asked if Rosemary had any questions, concerns or comments about the proposed purchasing policy. Rosemary said we allow committee members to make purchases and get reimbursed. Are we going to reimburse for sales tax? She thinks that should be in the policy. Shayne asked if the purchases would be tax-exempt if they were made by a town employee. Rosemary said yes. She can issue a single purpose tax exempt form for committee members to use when making a purchase. Board members agreed that the policy should include that and should say that people will not be reimbursed for sales tax.

Lois Frey said she is perfectly happy to pay sales tax rather than have to go back a second time. She sees it as a convenience, not a penalty.

Tom said he is suggesting in this draft increasing the threshold for selectboard approval to \$3000.

Duncan said if we are going to have a purchase order system he would rather have the minimum amount requiring a purchase order lower than \$500. He would rather go to \$100 or less.

Duncan questioned whether the rec coordinator needs to be one of the people with purchasing authority. Tom said each purchase order needs to be signed by two people. If the rec coordinator signed a purchase order he or Rosemary would also sign it. He thinks committee chairs should also be included the list of purchasing agents.

Mike suggested \$200 as the minimum requiring a purchase order. Mark suggested \$100.

Shayne said he likes the idea of adding committee chairs as purchasing agents but it gives them the ability to spend up to \$100 or \$200 and expect reimbursement from the town when we don't necessarily know what they are buying. Tom said he thinks we have to trust the committee and the chair. When the bills come in Rosemary will enter them into the computer and then we can check them out. Mark pointed out that often committees are spending their own money. Lois said she thinks it would not get reimbursed if documentation was not attached.

Casey said she did not know this was coming up. Since it affects committees, could the draft be circulated to committees?

Eben said he doesn't see the need to add committee chairs as purchasing agents. Duncan asked, do we even need a purchasing agent if we have a purchase order system? Eben said if we don't have

purchasing agents then he or any other employee or elected official would be able to buy an item costing less than \$100. Tom said the invoice will show who bought the item.

Mike asked what the definition of a purchasing agent is. Tom said it is one person to review purchases before they get to Rosemary or Tom. Mike said purchasing agent usually refers to a person who finds the best deals and makes the purchase. He suggested calling it something else.

Shayne said he likes the idea of giving committee chairs purchasing ability. Duncan said he is okay with the idea of the chair or designated person having purchasing authority. Mike said that is fine with him. Mark said he agrees with Duncan. It is not necessarily the chair who would always make the purchase. Rosemary said the chair signs off on it. Tom said this is not for the actual purchase, just approval of the action.

The board agreed that “purchasing agent” should be replaced with something like “authorized person” or “purchasing authority.”

Eben said the amount that requires a purchasing order should be reduced and asked if Tom could work on proposed wording about not reimbursing for sales tax and that if people need a one-time tax exemption certificate they should see this town treasurer or assistant town treasurer.

#### **15. *Rec Director Job Description***

Shayne said language for the new job description is not completed. The first community listening session was last Wednesday and another is planned for this Wednesday. There was a lot of really good feedback. He thinks one of the main things they heard was a feeling that 24 hours a week is not enough to do all the work that is needed, especially some of the physical maintenance tasks that eat up a lot of time. There is a broader conversation needed about the role of the recreation committee. He found out that there have not been regular reports given to the recreation committee so committee members are in the dark unless they look into where money is being spent on their own. Maybe clarification is needed about how the rec coordinator interacts with the committee.

Shayne said he and Tom both thought of the idea of pursuing an interlocal solution. He has heard Hyde Park is talking about whether they need a recreation director. Cambridge may have interest. It might be possible for us to expand and get buy-in from other towns. Tom said then we could justify increasing the position to 40 hours.

Shayne said after the listening sessions he is going to come back with a job description that fits 24 hours a week. The first listening session was fairly well attended. He thinks eight people were there. Someone drove all the way from Lowell because her kids are in recreation programs here and she is that passionate about the programs. A lot of towns don't have recreation programming. If we are able to say we want to hire a coordinator for multiple towns in the area maybe others will be willing to chip in a little.

Tom said in some other town schools run recreation programs and the towns pay for them. Maybe it is worth having a conversation about the possibility of doing that. Then the programs would be coordinated through the supervisory union, not at the town level. Shayne said they heard that a lot of people want the recreation coordinator to be someone who is connected with the schools.

Eben asked if any board members are opposed to the idea of an intermunicipal solution. No one indicated opposition. Duncan asked if the thought would be to work it into the budget for next year. Shayne and Tom said yes.

Tom suggested maybe other towns would be willing to help pay for maintenance of Old Mill Park. Shayne said Robert & Sons has not been very consistent in mowing Old Mill Park and they increased their price a lot this year.

Mark asked if this is strictly a youth coordinator position. Shayne said yes. In the previous job description there was some talk about non youth programming, but that did not happen.

**16. 10-hour Workday**

Eben said the union has presented proposed language for a memorandum of agreement allowing four 10-hour work days for the public works crew. (*Casey left at 8:56.*) They would be able to work four 10-hour days per week from the first pay period of May 2024 to the last pay period October 2024. The proposed language says that all holidays will be paid out as 10 hours. He does not think that is a fair practice if other employees are getting 8 hours of holiday pay.

Duncan said he is not keen on the language that says overtime will be paid after 10 hours Monday through Thursday and for all hours on Friday. We now have full coverage for Friday. He is in favor of 10-hour days. The crew can get more done and they get a 4-day work week. Eben said regarding Friday coverage, Jason is planning to work 5 days a week for the rest of the summer. He is not part of the union. Duncan said that could potentially help, but what are they going to do for the two hours of each day that he is not working? Will they be out there without a foreman? Eben said he was not overly concerned about that. Shayne asked if they need a foreman on site when they are working. Duncan said he is sure they would argue that they don't.

Duncan said the way this is structured is that the work week is Monday through Thursday but the pay period ends on Wednesday. If overtime was calculated based on the pay period and someone had to work on Friday then they could take Monday or Tuesday off to make up for it. There could be more flexibility if overtime was based on the pay period rather than the Monday-Friday week. Tom asked if we can change the workday week so it matches reporting for state and federal grants. Eben said he should bring proposed language to the board.

Mike asked, this is something the union wants? Tom said it came from the union rep. Mike asked what they are going to trade. If they want something there has to be some equitable compensation for the employer. What do they want to give up? We don't need 10-hour days.

Shayne said he is open to 10-hour days with the changes to the language that have been suggested. Duncan suggested telling them that getting overtime for work on Friday is a non-starter. Mark said he has an issue with them getting overtime for anything over the normal work hours on one day. He is thinking overtime should be based on going over 40 hours for the week. Are there a lot of small amounts of overtime, like half an hour a day? Rosemary said not in summer. The majority of overtime is in the winter. (*Lois left at 9:03.*) Mike said if we make one change to the contract it could open up the whole contract. Eben said he thinks that is why they are calling this a memorandum of agreement. Eben said we have a 3-year contract and we are a year and a half into it. Duncan said he would be willing to entertain another proposal that addresses the issue of no employee coverage on Friday. Shayne said he would be as well. He also thinks the holiday pay language is important. Board members also want the proposal to cover overtime only after 40 hours. The board is not coming up

with a counter proposal, just telling them that this proposal is not accepted, listing the concerns the selectboard had and saying the selectboard will entertain another proposal.

**17. RFP For Townwide Reappraisal**

A draft RFP for townwide reappraisal was included in the board packet. **Duncan moved to approve the proposed RFP for townwide reappraisal.** Rosemary said we got a letter from the state today saying that we need to reappraise. **Shayne seconded and the motion was passed.**

**18. Revolving Loan Fund**

Duncan said part of this will be discussed in executive session but he and Randall had a conversation with the Vermont Community Development Program, the underwriting entity for the original Sterling Market. That was how we got our revolving loan funds. They had a positive conversation and afterwards VCDP sent Randall an email asking very specific questions about using the revolving loan fund. They want the board to submit a letter of request to be approved by VCDP in order to use the funds. Duncan feels we need further clarification on whether they or the board have approval authority. He wants to know if the board wants to push that issue further. He suggested waiting until after the attorney opinion is discussed in executive session to finish the discussion.

**19. Recent Dog Situation / Interlocal Agreement for Kenneling**

Tom said this weekend a dog was seized by the sheriff's department in an animal cruelty case. They then called Dean to pick it up and he brought it to the kennel in Morrisville that we are starting to build an agreement with. There are a lot of unknowns about who is responsible for the dog, the town or the sheriff. Dean only has the authority to pick up stray dogs. There is information needed about how long we have to hold the dog while the investigation is happening and if the town is responsible. It does not fall under our dog ordinance. Dean has been reaching out to VLCT for guidance. He is under the understanding that he can't give away the dog to a humane society while the case is still under investigation. Tom thinks there will need to be continuing conversations with the sheriff's department, VLCT and the ACO about responsibility in this scenario.

Duncan said this has happened before. There was language in our contract with the sheriff's department regarding animal cruelty. He doesn't know if it is still in there. That language was added years ago because the sheriff wanted the animal control officer to take possession of an animal picked up by the sheriff and he said no.

Tom said Dean brought the dog to the kennel in Morrisville. We don't have a completed interlocal agreement for use of that kennel yet. No one knows who will pay for the dog to stay there and the kennel is expecting to get paid \$25 per day. Perhaps someone could be delegated to sign the agreement before the next board meeting. Shayne said he thinks board members need time to look at the proposed agreement. He had concerns about some of the language he saw. There may need to be discussion on the language.

Eben said his view is that the sheriff is very clearly responsible for the dog.

Duncan said this raises the issue of what we will do if the animal control officer picks up a dog. We have no place to put it.

It was agreed that Shayne will work on the interlocal agreement with Tom. Eben said he can weigh in if another board member is needed.

**20. Suggested Motion on Liquor Licenses**

Tom asked the board to consider a motion to have Rosemary approve all catering, renewal and one-day liquor licenses. All new liquor licenses not in those categories would come to the board. Eben said

he thinks this should be on a future agenda. Duncan asked if the selectboard can delegate authority to one person. Rosemary said some towns have done that, especially for catering licenses, which often are applied for on short notice.

**21. Executive Session**

**Duncan moved to enter executive session for employee evaluation under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3); for pending or probably civil litigation or a prosecution, to which the public body is or may be a party under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(E); and for confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the body under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(F), inviting Tom to remain, Shayne seconded and the motion was passed at 9:27.** The board consented out of executive session at 10:09.

**Duncan moved to accept the terms of the Manturuk plan with the proposed schedule and to have the property owner sign a waiver of liability for the town if they are accepting the town's offer of ditching material, Mike seconded and the motion was passed.**

**22. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10.

*Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths*