

JOHNSON VILLAGE TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2024

Present:

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

Others: Erik Bailey, Nate Brigham, Peggy Williams, David Williams, Kyle Nuse, Lynda Hill, Darrell Wescom, Adrienne Parker (remote)

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. Call to Order

Ken called the meeting to order at 6:01.

2. The Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge was recited.

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

No changes to the agenda were needed.

4. Members of the Public

Adrienne Parker asked if the state is communicating with the village about the ongoing roadwork and, if so, if the village is communicating updates to businesses on Main St. Erik said there is a Friday update email from the state that he believes Lydia posts on Front Porch Forum. Anyone can sign up for those VTrans updates. Adrienne asked, you don't have emails of business owners on Main Street? Erik said not all of them. Adrienne said she is hearing they are really struggling with the construction. Any updates the village can provide them would be helpful. Ken said the construction will wind up soon for this year. The village area should be done soon. It will take longer to finish the area between here and Cambridge.

5. Possible Sponsorship of Green Mountain Fund Grant to Finance Holiday Jubilee

Kyle Nuse said she is organizing the Holliday Jubilee again this year. Insurance is required to use the Audibert Green. Last year she bought insurance and the village reimbursed her. She is hoping that can be done again this year. She has already purchased the insurance and filled out the form to request use of the green. The insurance cost \$150.

She is hoping to apply for a Green Mountain Fund Grant through the Vermont Community Foundation to help fund the Jubilee. She needs to have a fiscal sponsor. It could be a nonprofit or a municipality. She is hoping the village might consider being the fiscal sponsor. She also would like help with a permit to have a parade on Route 15. The village would be a pass-through for the grant. The funds would go to the village and then either a check would be written to her or she would be reimbursed for her expenses.

Ken said the village has reimbursed for insurance before but did not do it when Johnson Works was doing the Jubilee.

Will asked how much money Kyle is applying for. Kyle said she is still figuring out the budget. It will probably be \$1000 or less. The grant can be for \$500 to \$5K. Will asked if the grant would cover the insurance cost. Kyle said maybe. It is not guaranteed that she will get the grant. Will asked, why not include that cost in the grant application? Kyle said she can.

Will asked, a VTrans permit is needed for a parade? Erik said yes. It is pretty simple. Kyle asked if there is a fee. Erik said there usually is not for a municipality. If he puts it in as a village parade there probably will be no fee.

Ken said the sheriff's department will probably be needed to shut the road down. Kyle said she contacted the sheriff's department about helping people safely cross the street and they are willing to be there.

BJ asked if this will be a village or a town Jubilee. Kyle said it has always just been called the Johnson Jubilee, not a town or village event. She is asking for the village to be the fiscal sponsor.

Will said he would like Kyle to submit receipts and then be reimbursed based on the receipts.

BJ moved and Steve seconded to reimburse Kyle Nuse \$150 for insurance for the Holiday Jubilee.

Ken asked if she will use grant funds to cover the insurance cost if she is able to. Kyle said she can wait to see if the cost is covered by the grant.

Will asked if Kyle will still do the Jubilee if she does not get the grant. Kyle said yes.

The motion was passed.

BJ moved that the village be the fiscal sponsor to facilitate Kyle Nuse's application for a Green Mountain Fund Grant for the Holiday Jubilee, Steve seconded and the motion was passed.

Ken moved to direct Erik to apply to VTrans for a permit to have a Holiday Jubilee parade on Route 15, Will seconded and the motion was passed.

6. Electric Department Lift Truck Replacement Proposal

Nate said he found a 2019 Ford bucket truck to replace our 2012 bucket truck. It has 50K miles and looks very clean. It is from Texas so it has no rust.

BJ asked if there is a warranty. Nate said he doesn't remember.

Steve asked what a new truck like this would cost. Nate said \$250K. We previously thought that price was for a hybrid, but it is not. A brand new hybrid would cost a lot more and there would be a long lead time.

Steve asked if we will try to sell our 2012 truck. Nate said yes; we were told we should be able to get an amount in the low to mid 20 thousands for it. BJ asked if it would be worth keeping it as a backup. Ken said no; we have two trucks already. The one we are replacing is the smaller one.

Erik read the description of the work and testing Altec does prior to delivery. They offer a 30-day warranty from the date of delivery.

Erik said we asked the voters for \$140K for truck replacement. This is \$120K minus what we get from selling the old one. Ken noted that that does not include shipping charges or the cost of someone going to get it.

Will moved to authorize purchase of a 2019 bucket truck as presented and to authorize the board chair and Erik to decide on the best method to transport the truck to our location, BJ seconded and the motion was passed.

7. *Beautification Committee Planting Requests*

Adrienne said we had previously talked about her coming back with a list of planting requests, but the beautification committee decided it is important first to get information on what the trustees want from the committee. Ken and BJ have said they want a focus on the municipal building, but the committee doesn't have the manpower to work on that while keeping up with other projects.

Other options are:

- Having the beautification committee maintain the municipal building within their capacity using all or most of the \$500 budgeted by the village for beautification, while still also working on other areas in the village that they have approval to work on
- Creating a green space committee that would use the \$500 to maintain the municipal building plantings while the beautification committee works on other areas of the village
- Hiring a landscaper with the \$500 to maintain the municipal building year-round with the beautification committee handling other areas in the village
- Creating a green space committee to handle all areas in the village

Adrienne thinks hiring a landscaper makes the most sense. The beautification committee could then work in other areas with other funding.

Will asked what other areas that are village properties the beautification committee is interested in working on. Kyle said the Cold Spring and the Village Green are the two big ones. They also want to put planters on the pedestals. And there are town properties they want to work on.

Will said if the beautification committee doesn't want to do the municipal building he thinks that is fine. The board can discuss work at the municipal building another time. It was mentioned that the committee wanted to put mums on the pedestals? Kyle said the committee had already bought the mums and didn't have permission to put them on village property so they distributed them to businesses. Will asked if the committee puts other types of flowers on the pedestals throughout the year. Kyle said yes. Ideally they would start in early summer with other flowers on the pedestals. Historically they have decorated the pedestals with things like holiday boughs in winter. Will asked, there is only one pedestal with art currently on it? Erik said yes. Will asked if the beautification committee uses that pedestal. Kyle said no. Will said he just didn't want any conflict between flowers and art.

BJ said he is fine with putting the \$500 toward the beautification committee's work. He feels strongly about having the municipal building looking good. But if the committee doesn't have the manpower to do that we can let them do other projects. Others agreed. Ken said he is all for what they have always done. He would just like them to ask permission so the village knows the plantings are there and can assume liability. He has no problem with flower pots going back on the pedestals and no problem with the committee working at the Cold Spring and the Village Green.

Will asked, the plantings on the Village Green are not bushes or trees, right? Kyle said they have put bulbs and perennials in the ground and they have a planter at the Cold Spring with mostly annuals. They have planters next to benches. All the big plantings have already been done at the Village Green. They just want to keep those plantings nice and last year they planted some tulip and daffodil bulbs. Will said it would be great to plant things that can be weed whacked after they die. Ken said if the committee wants to plant any trees or shrubs they should come back and check with the village.

Kyle said just to be very clear, the beautification committee would like to draft an MOU that would include all the details just discussed and then bring it back to the board to consider. Then the committee would not have to spend time coming back asking for permission for plantings. The board agreed to that.

Kyle said the committee would like to plan tulip and daffodil bulbs at the food shelf. The board agreed to that.

Ken suggested that the beautification committee use the \$500 budgeted. He doesn't think that would be enough to pay a landscaper. He thinks the trustees should talk to the selectboard about the cost of getting someone to maintain the municipal building property.

Will moved and Steve seconded to give the beautification committee permission for beautification at the Cold Spring, the Village Green, the food shelf and on Main Street pedestals from today through the end of 2025.

BJ brought up the possibility that the village might get artists to put art on the pedestals. He is okay with giving permission until spring, but not for all of 2025. Ken said we will agree on an MOU before spring and it can include that flowers will be taken off the pedestals if they are needed for art. Kyle said getting art is also a mission of the beautification committee. They would like to work with the village on that. Ken said he thinks if we need to change something the beautification committee would work with the village.

The motion was passed.

8. ***Interview and Possibly Appoint New Village Trustee to Serve Until Village Meeting 2025***

Darrell Wescom had submitted a letter of interest in the trustee position. Ken asked how long Darrell has lived in the village. Darrell said he is 50 years old, so 50 years, or maybe 49.

Ken said a lot of what the trustees do is figure out ways to do things without costing the ratepayers and taxpayers too much. He asked what Darrell thinks he can do for the board. Darrell said he hasn't been on a board before so he is not set on one way of thinking. He can bring new ideas and help find common sense answers. He can answer questions on road construction. He has been a supervisor at a construction company for 15 years. He is good at working with employees.

Steve asked if there are times of the year when he is very busy. Darrell said in the winter he does snow removal. There will be times when he is unable to attend a meeting due to work obligations. Steve said he wondered if there would be any time of the year when he might be unable to attend for 2 or 3 months in a row. Darrell said no. He will try to find someone to cover for him at work so he can attend meetings. He thinks he would attend as much as anyone else.

Will moved to appoint Darrell Wescom as a village trustee until the village meeting in April 2025, BJ seconded and the motion was passed.

9. Executive Session – Evaluation of Public Official

BJ moved to go into executive session under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) for evaluation of a public official or employee, Will seconded and the motion was passed at 6:43. Ken said Erik and the trustees would be included in the executive session. The board came out of executive session at 7:34. No action was taken

10. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:34.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths