

JOHNSON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2024

Present: Selectboard members: Mike Dunham, Peter Hammond, Duncan Hastings, Eben Patch, Mark Woodward

Others: Tom Galinat, Rosemary Audibert, Jason Whitehill, Adrienne Parker, Justin Mason (remote), Sarah Henshaw, Jean Engel, Kelly Vandorn, Jessica Bickford

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

It was agreed to add authorization and delegation of signature authority for a rail trail committee grant agreement and discussion of a bill for damage done by the highway department to a village hydrant. Duncan added a cemetery request and a kenneling update. Tom said Crystal got back to him today asking for a couple more weeks to put together a proposal. He hasn't heard anything from Hyde Park about redrafting the agreement. He is thinking of doing it himself.

3. Public Comment

Luke Walters said he is the student body president at VTSC Johnson. He will potentially come to board meetings to talk about events at the college or ways the community can work with the college.

Mark said it would be nice to hear updates about what is going on at the college. Luke asked what specifically the board would like to hear about. Mark said he is personally interested in the health of the college. How is enrollment? How is the student body?

Luke said student numbers are up about 13% from last year. There haven't been any major campus problems this year. There was one medical emergency. The budget for student events just got slashed. At Lyndon the whole student government quit except for the president.

Peter asked if the 13% increase is university wide or just at Johnson. Luke said that is just at Johnson. He thinks there was about an 8% increase university wide. There are just shy of 250 students on the Johnson campus now.

Mark asked if they are mostly in one dorm. Luke said two of the dorms are closed currently. Two other dorms and the apartments are full.

4. Review Invoices and Orders

Duncan said he is curious about how close we are getting to the original contract amount with Mumley. He asked about the bill from the Village of Johnson for \$3,322.28 related to the arboretum. Tom said the arboretum expense was for the village putting in electric power for a watering system. That was grant-funded work with zero match.

5. Selectboard Issues and Concerns

No selectboard members brought up issues.

6. Consent Agenda

Consent agenda items consisted of the minutes of September 3, 9, and 16 minutes, retroactive approval of a \$3800 planned purchase of excavator rental for landfill maintenance and permission for the Beautification Committee to plant perennial bulbs at the food shelf, the Historical Society building

and the trailhead. **Mike moved to approve the consent agenda, Duncan seconded and the motion was passed.**

Peter asked where the landfill is. Eben said the old landfill is behind the transfer station. The town has to maintain it in perpetuity. Duncan said there is a closure plan. (*Adrienne Parker arrived at 6:42.*)

7. Clerk & Treasurer's Report: Warrants, Licenses and Any Action Items

Rosemary said there are some orders to approve that were not in the packet – payment of \$16,164 to Boissonneault Excavation for work on the arboretum water system and payment of \$100 each for 8 soccer referees and \$125 for one soccer referee.

Mike asked about the damage done to the sidewalk by Boissonneault. Tom said he thinks Sue Lovering should reach out to the contractor and if the contractor chooses not to make it right we should wait for the village to come to us and say we are responsible. Duncan said he thinks the village should contact the contractor and the town should not be involved at all. Eben said if he hired a contractor who damaged someone else's property that would be between the other person and the contractor. Mike said the contractor should be insured and should pay for the damage. Duncan agreed. Mark said if the contractor was working on behalf of the town we should ask him to make it right. Eben said he believes Sue has already reached out to the contractor.

Duncan moved to approve payment of \$16,164 to Boissonneault Excavation and payment of \$825 for soccer referees.

Mike said if someone who was working for him damaged someone else's property he wouldn't pay their bill until they took care of the problem they caused.

Mark seconded.

Duncan said he thinks Mike raises a good point.

The motion failed with Mark in favor and Mike, Duncan and Peter opposed.

Duncan moved to approve payment of \$825 for soccer referees, Mike seconded and the motion was passed.

The board agreed that Sue Lovering should contact Boissonneault and explain that we did not pay the bill because of the outstanding damage issue.

Duncan moved to authorize payment of \$16,164 to Boissonneault Excavation upon satisfaction that Boissonneault Excavation has taken care of the damaged village sidewalk claim, Mike seconded and the motion was passed.

Rosemary said this year the ten cents on the grand list the town owes the village is \$61,640.05. Mike said he thinks we need to study the ten cents on the grand list. Duncan said tonight the board will be asked to approve errors and omissions that would impact the village grand list. Is our payment based on the current grand list or the one after the errors and omissions are accepted? Rosemary said the one adjusted for errors and omissions.

Mike thinks the town ought to get out of paying the ten cents on the grand list and assume the responsibilities it pays for. Mark agreed. Eben explained to Peter that the village charter says that on or before November 1 each year the town selectboard shall direct the treasurer to pay ten cents on the village grand list to the village. Once that payment is made it absolves the town from building, repairing or maintaining sidewalks, storm drains, gutters, or sewers. We pay them about \$60K, which is 10% of the village grand list. Mike said there have been issues with catch basins and culverts and disagreements about who is responsible. It would alleviate the disagreements if we assumed all responsibility ourselves. Duncan said the way the legislative document for the village is worded, it says that the town will pay 10% on the grand list and if the town doesn't the village is no longer responsible for building, maintaining and repairing sidewalks, sewers and storm drains. That implies that if we did not make the payment we would assume the responsibility. He agrees in principle with Mike but he thinks it requires further study. Mike said if the upcoming court decision is in the town's favor maybe we won't have to be interested in the possibility of not paying the ten cents on the grand list.

Eben said he is in favor of having the payment to the village on the next set of orders. If the board wants to pursue not continuing that payment, that is okay, but he doesn't know if we can make a change in a short time frame.

Duncan explained to Peter the situation Mike referred to. On River Road East the town paid 100% of the cost (about \$20K) of replacing what we believe was a storm drain. We had to do it because the road was caved in. Tom said it is a dead end road and people were trapped on the other side. Duncan said we filed a declaratory judgment request with the Superior Court. If we win, the village owes us \$20K. We had talked about possibly withholding half the cost of the repair from the ten cents on the grand list and putting it in escrow. Do we give them the whole amount or escrow some? Eben said for maintaining a good relationship he thinks this year might not be the best year to do that. If the ruling is in our favor they owe us the whole amount anyway. Duncan said he is in favor of paying the whole amount and seeing what comes out of the court case.

Eben said the ten cents on the grand list payment can be on the next set of orders.

Rosemary distributed a list of delinquent taxes. Mike asked if we are going to move forward on a tax sale. Rosemary said yes. The process is harder than it used to be.

The board agreed Rosemary can issue a one-time liquor permit for an event at the Vermont Studio Center on October 18. (*Jason arrived at 7:08.*)

8. *Damage to Village Hydrant*

Tom said a member of the road crew was mowing tall knotweed higher than the flag on the hydrant and damaged a hydrant. The village tried to repair it but had to replace the whole hydrant. The bill is \$5824.44. Tom will run it through our insurance. Duncan asked if the bill includes labor and markup. Tom said he hasn't looked it over.

9. *Errors and Omissions*

Duncan moved and Mike seconded to approve the assessor's Errors and Omissions Certificate as presented.

Duncan said it appears that some of these changes were made on the town grand list but not the village grand list. Why? Justin Mason said some properties were not within the village (so they would not be on the village grand list) or were only partly in the village (so different amounts would be on

the town and village grand lists.). For the Vermont Transco property, we are required by statute to use the utility value they report to us and the state. The same amount was originally recorded for the town and village, but the village amount should be lower. (*Sarah Henshaw arrived at 7:15.*)

The motion was passed.

10. *Inspection Announcement*

Justin said he will be doing preliminary property inspections on October 8, 15, and 22. In January or February 2025 he will send out forms to property owners requesting them to report any changes. There will also be a place for them to report changes in dog ownership and mail in their rabies certificates and dog license payments. An announcement about the property inspections and letters was included in the board packet.

Duncan said his concern is that people won't read the announcement because it is long. He suggested maybe sending out a notice now about property inspections and another one later with the form. Justin said the notice included in the packet is not to be mailed out. He put it up outside the assessor office door, at the town clerk's office and at the post office and hopes to put it on the town website and Facebook page. The only mailing will be the form sent out in January or February. He is not planning to mail out a notice now.

11. *Assessor Assistant*

Mike and Justin recommend hiring Mimi Burstein, who works for the Town of Randolph, as assessor assistant. She has offered to come up and work a full day on October 8 and also hopefully on October 15.

Duncan moved and Mike seconded to approve hiring Mimi Burstein as assessor assistant.

Eben asked if we will be able to do a background check if she is coming tomorrow. Eben asked, she is currently an employee of the Town of Randolph? Justin said yes. Duncan asked if he knows whether she got a background check for Randolph. Justin said she told him the last time she had a background check was 13 years ago. Tom said he thinks he or Rosemary can make a phone call tomorrow after getting her information from Justin and it will not take long to get the background check.

The motion was passed. (*Justin left at 7:30.*)

12. *Road Foreman Report and Action Items*

Mike asked Jason, if he did work for the village and used town material, would he charge the village an upcharge? Jason said no, he would just have them replace it when they could. Mike said the village gave us an upcharge of 25%.

Tom said we got bids from 4 companies. Jason said two of the manufacturers were quick to get back to him with bids. The other two contacted him today and wanted specs to put something together.

Jason said Peterbilt is not in the municipal market. Their trucks take some specialty ordering for municipal use, but they have the fastest turnaround time. We could have a truck in 8 to 10 weeks. They are not interested in our trade-in. Eben said their cab and chassis is \$5K less than International. Tom said that is not a municipal chassis. It does not have the heavier front end and left side needed for plowing and dumping to the side. Jason said the two manufacturers who looked at our trucks and provided bids that best match what we have were Western Star and International.

Mike said he believes those who drive the trucks should make the decision. He asked what Jason wants. Mark asked who gives the best service.

Jason said 7 or 8 towns are switching to Western Star because of the service. Their truck costs more. Eben said Western Star is offering less for our trade-in but we could decide not to trade in the truck.

Jason said his recommendation would be to go with Western Star and put our truck out to bid. He thinks we will get more money for it that way. He thinks we can get closer to the amount International offered or more.

Tom said all 4 vendors got the same number from Viking for the setup Viking will do. A couple of the companies don't want to deal with Viking and we would have to handle that on our own. Western Star and International will send the chassis to Viking to get set up.

Jason said both Western Star and International quoted trucks that are just like our last truck. For better service, he wants to try Western Star.

Mike moved to accept the bid of \$294,510 from Western Star and to put our old truck out to bid.

Jason said trucks from Western Star are about a year and a half out. Mike asked, this is a firm price? Jason said yes. Duncan asked if the time frame from International is about the same. Jason said yes. Only Peterbilt would deliver the truck faster and then it still would need to sit in line at Viking.

Eben asked, why is Viking the only company that will outfit the truck. Jason said Fairfield is an option but their hydraulic lines are not as good. Everyone is going with Viking because there are less problems. Tom said in Peacham they switched from Tenco/Fairfield to Viking and got \$20K more in trade-in value. They use better quality steel. Jason said the paint is better too. It is coated from the factory.

Mark asked what the rest of our trucks are. Jason said International.

Mark asked where Western Star trucks get serviced. Jason said Charlebois in Milton.

Eben said we budgeted \$280K for replacement. We budgeted salvage at \$65K. We budgeted for a net expense of \$215K. He doesn't think will be far off from that with Western Star if we get a decent price on the old truck.

Duncan said he understands Peterbilt trucks are not built for municipal applications but most of that has to do with additional leaf springs, right? Jason said yes, and additional framing on the front. Peterbilt can do that. (*Jeanne Engel, Kelly Vandorn and Jessica Bickford arrived at 7:44.*) Duncan asked if the bid from Peterbilt includes that additional head frame work. Jason thinks so.

Peter seconded.

Duncan asked if Jason has experience with Peterbilt trucks. Eben said the Peterbilt total is \$296,308 and Western Star is \$294,510. Mark said we would get the Peterbilt a year earlier. Eben said the Peterbilt comes with a 5-year warranty and the Western Star has a 7-year warranty. Mark asked if

there is an extra cost for the warranty. Tom said he is guessing the Peterbilt comes with a 5-year warranty. He could not find that in the information. Western Star comes with a 1-year warranty unless we pay \$18,185. He found that out at the last minute. So we need to add \$18K to the \$294K. That is \$312,695, which makes it almost the same as International. Duncan asked, a 7-year warranty is included in the International price? Jason said yes, if we get a horsepower that ends in 0. If it ends in 5 we get a 5-year warranty. He is okay with one that ends in zero. He has no problem with Internationals. It is the service he is concerned with. Tom said the price for the Western Star is \$312,695. The price for the International is \$310,611. Mike said the best thing about International is that they are offering \$100K for our trade-in. Tom said with Western Star we would need to sell our current truck privately and get \$100K for it to get the same deal.

Mike and Peter withdrew the motion.

Mike moved and Mark to accept the truck bid from International for a total of \$210,611 including the \$100,000 trade-in.

Eben said if Mike's motion passes we will be \$4,398 ahead of what the capital budget calls for but once we are done paying interest we will be \$6K behind.

Jason said next year, due to new legislation, for every 6 trucks ordered one will have to be electric. Allegiance will only be able to order 6 diesel trucks if someone buys an electric truck. That will make everything slower.

Eben asked if the International bid matches Jason's specs. Jason said yes. Duncan asked how that relates to the state bid spec. Tom said the price we were offered includes a \$10K state discount. The state spec truck costs \$320K for an HX. An HV is \$10K less and the trade-in is only \$45K. That wouldn't make sense.

Peter asked what the timetable for the International is. Jason said about a year and a half. They will deal with the body manufacturer and we will just pay them.

Eben said he would still prefer to sell our truck ourselves rather than trade it in, so he will vote against the motion. Tom said he asked the Western Star dealer what he thought we could sell it for privately and he said \$90K.

The motion was passed with Mike, Peter and Mark in favor and Duncan and Eben opposed.

Duncan said he voted no for the same reason as Eben. (*Jason left at 7:58.*)

Duncan moved to authorize Tom or the board chair to sign the agreement to purchase the International truck, Mike seconded and the motion was passed.

13. LeARN Presentation

Sarah Henshaw said she is the coordinator for the Lamoille Area Recovery Network (LeARN.) It was formed in 2023 in response to the flooding. They have a small community fund under United Way to provide financial support to help people with unmet needs like moving oil tanks, repairing walls and foundations, replacing things lost in self storage, getting dumpsters and helping people clear out their homes. They also help people navigate forms and get the support they need. She passed around a report about how LeARN uses its funding and the types of projects they have done. They have responded to people impacted by floods in 2024. They will continue to exist going forward. They are

mostly staffed by volunteers. Sarah is paid part-time. United Way helps support their work. They don't recommend specific contractors but have connections to contractors. They have engineers who have helped them. If there is a smaller, more localized emergency they are ready to help support people in their recovery efforts.

Eben said he appreciates everything they do. Mark agreed. Mark asked if Sarah thinks the general public is aware of LeARN. Sarah said people hear about them from other families they work with. Three weeks ago she felt they had caught all the biggest problems but then she learned about two really complicated situations, one in Johnson and one in Cambridge. One situation involved a heating system that was affected but the family did not immediately realize that.

Eben asked if LeARN was contacted about the situation on River Road East. Tom and Sarah said yes. The residents were grateful.

Tom said LeARN was a valuable resource in dealing with flooding.

Mark asked if Sarah feels people are comfortable with the long gaps between contacts after they file applications. Sarah said one thing LeARN is thinking about for winter is how to stay in touch with people so they remember about LeARN. Mark suggested sending an email every 5 or 6 weeks to let people know they haven't been forgotten.

14. Recreation Economy for Rural Communities – Approval and Delegation

Duncan said Randall had asked Eben and Duncan if he should submit an application for this. One of Eben's concerns was whether we were jumping the gun doing this based on task force items coming out of Re-Imagine Johnson. Duncan said we already have a Rail Trail committee, a Recreation Committee and a Conservation Commission. He asked Randall if our application can be somewhat generic and not focused on the task forces coming out of Re-Imagine Johnson. Randall said he thinks it can be. If we get the assistance, we can decide how to use it.

Duncan moved to direct Randall to send a letter of request for assistance to the EPA Recreation Economy for Rural Communities program, Mark seconded and the motion was passed.

15. MOU: Town and Village Beautification Moving Forward

Tom said when Adrienne spoke to the board at the last meeting he didn't fully understand that the Beautification Committee was looking for one MOU with the town and one with the village. He thinks the MOU should be between the town and the village since the Beautification Committee is working on behalf of the town. The points the Beautification Committee is asking for need to be articulated well in the MOU.

Eben asked if the Beautification Committee has a proposed MOU. Adrienne said Tom mentioned he wanted it to be between the town and village and she wanted to get clarification on that first. Eben said he thought the Beautification Committee would draft one and present it to the selectboard and also present the same one to the village. He noted that this selectboard can't bind a future selectboard. The library needs to renew its MOU every year with the selectboard.

Eben said he sees no harm in having one MOU that is sent to both boards. Duncan said if the town and village each sign an MOU with the Beautification Committee, that has the same effect as an MOU between the town and village.

Eben suggested maybe the MOU should be signed at the reorganization meeting after town meeting. But he is not opposed to signing it in December.

Mike said probably 95% of the beautification takes place in the village. He doesn't see why the town should sponsor this committee. He thinks it should be something the village takes care of. He has had people who live out in the country say to him that no one is planting anything in front of their house. If it is a town committee the town should be getting more beautification. Adrienne said the committee has been shifting its focus to more town-owned properties like the Historical Society building and the trailhead. Mark said the village is part of the town. Mike said he understands, but the village could run it.

Peter asked, if we wait to sign the MOU until there is a new board, does that enable the Beautification Committee to go forward with planning now for next year? Adrienne said she thinks that will be fine but she wants to get input from the rest of the Beautification Committee.

16. Library Grant Accept and Delegate to Have the Administrator Sign (Retroactive)

Mark moved to retroactively delegate the town administrator to sign and execute the library grant, Peter seconded and the motion was passed.

Mike said people want to move the library. But he hears a lot of talk about building a new, modern energy efficient building. He would prefer that to moving the existing building. Mark said he disagrees. Mike said it is nice to save older buildings but we need to get modern with our buildings and be energy efficient. That building is not energy efficient. He will be surprised if we can move it without getting a crack. Tom said he thinks there will be decision points along the way. It will become clear as we go through the process if it can be done and what the cost will be.

Duncan asked about the status of the alumni house lot. Is there a deed for that? Tom said there is a not a deed. That is part of the process. The next steps are to figure out elevations on Legion Field and the alumni house lot. Howard Romero is supposed to be making a design that includes crosswalks, hydrants, flow patterns, etc. Water/wastewater permitting for the alumni house lot will be pretty expensive. It was suggested that maybe the school should be responsible for that. The new idea is that maybe the town should accept the lot as is, with unknown ability to get water and wastewater permits.

Duncan asked if there is any money in the grant for engineering or design services. Tom said yes. The grant covers total project cost. Duncan said we haven't seen a site plan. If there is money available for design services he suggests paying for that. He thinks we need input from the library trustees. We could put out an RFP for design. The trustees are talking about an addition. We don't even know where it will go on the lot.

Tom said the RFQ for engineering that went out mentioned two projects that need immediate attention – relocation of the library and armoring of Lendway Lane. The engineers who responded understand that both those projects are on a tight timeline. The board will choose an engineer tonight and then we will have them work on the library project.

Duncan asked if there is a possibility that the engineering firm could provide construction services too. Tom said he had no responses as of Friday so he called engineering firms. He told them we are looking at relocating the existing library and possibly new construction and that we need all aspects of that project overseen.

Mark asked if the library board is leaning toward moving the existing building or new construction. Kelly Vandorn said the library trustees prefer to keep the historic building if possible. Preliminary inspections indicate we can move it safely. They love their building. It has historical value in Johnson. Should we run into difficulties they are also open to building a new building. Jeanne Engel said they also want to put an addition onto the building. Kelly said it would have community meeting rooms and restrooms. There would also be a full basement.

Duncan said he believes one purpose of the grant is to increase internet connectivity. We have to be cognizant of meeting those requirements.

Eben said he thinks there will be a lot of pushback to the idea of the library being on Legion Field. Duncan said he previously thought the assumption was that the building would only be located on the alumni lot. Tom said now that we have accepted the grant we will get LIDAR elevations so we will know where the floodplain is. Then the board needs to decide where the building will go. Duncan said he can't imagine any portion of Legion Field is higher than the alumni lot. Peter said he heard speculation that the corner with the backstop is higher, but nobody knows.

Duncan said one question is whether the town should own the lot the library is on or whether we should consider giving it to the library. Who will be responsible for the grant – the town or the library trustees? Tom said it was decided that it should be the town because the town owns the building.

Duncan said he thinks we need a clerk of the works or construction management services. Tom said the conceptual idea would be to have building moving and utility line moving contracts and a general contractor running the whole job working with the engineer who is selected. The town would just administer the grant. Duncan said he is suggesting we need to see a site plan that shows where the building will be and the configuration of the building and addition. Tom said both contractors who bid on the library contract to restore in place have the ability to provide architectural services within their price. He felt everything interior should be up to the library trustees and the exterior should be up to the town.

Duncan said we need to decide what kind of a contractor we want. We could do a design/build and ask the contractor to come up with a building design or we could come up with a design and then ask contractors to bid on it.

Mike said we first need to know how much it will cost to move it and to move the power lines. The cost could be prohibitive. And what if the building gets damaged? Eben said he wants to know where the building will go and if elevations will even allow it. He doesn't care if we move the existing building or build a new one.

Tom asked if he can get elevations, work with Howard to finish the plan, put together an RFP for movers and get firmer numbers from the village on moving utilities.

Eben said he wants to know what it will cost to get permitting for the alumni lot and if that is likely to happen within the necessary time frame. Duncan said sewer and water hookups are probably already there. He thinks a big question is whether the building will require sprinklers. If we hire an engineer they could get elevations. We probably need the lot surveyed. Tom said he doesn't know that we need a survey. It is all within town roads.

Duncan said he agrees with the idea of putting out an RFP and getting firm numbers for moving the building and utilities and he agrees with Eben that we need to know where we will put it. Why is Howard involved? Tom said because Tuesday Night Live will be impacted and he has the skill set to do a site plan. He will do a conceptual plan for free and then we can take it to an architect.

Duncan asked if there are specific grant requirements in terms of putting out an RFP. Tom said we just have to follow our procurement policy. He can make a formal request to the Department of Libraries to be sure.

Duncan said we had approved a contract for flood mitigation work on the building. What is the status of that? Tom said we got FEMA approval for engineering because the basement floor has hydrostatic uplift. That engineering was going to come from the RFQ we put out. Now we will probably not do any engineering on the building in place. That would have been FEMA reimbursed but they will only reimburse if there is a project to reimburse. If we move the building we don't have a project anymore.

Duncan asked, FEMA won't cover any of the interior restoration? Tom said the cost of restoring to pre-flood condition came in at \$156K. We received more than that from insurance. FEMA would only have given us enough to cover what insurance did not cover. Kelly said returning the interior to pre-flood conditions will occur after the library is moved. That is not part of this grant.

Mark asked if the library trustees feel the \$1.6 million grant will be enough to move the building and put on an addition. Tom said based on the two contractors he talked to, yes. The addition would be 40x40 ft. with a 16x40 ft. covered porch.

Mike asked about the cost of moving the building. Tom said for the grant application we budgeted high at \$600K. We budgeted about \$120K to move utilities.

Eben said this project has to be done by December 31, 2025. Tom said we are looking at May 1 for moving or construction. The mover schedule and the schedule for village water and light are most critical. He has already met with the village twice.

Eben suggesting filling out a project form for the Conservation Commission. (*Jeanne, Kelly, Jessica, Luke and Adrienne left at 9:01.*)

17. Scribner Bridge Scoping Study

Tom said the draft scoping study is complete but the options in the scoping study are the only things we can get grant funding for in the future. We may want to include other ideas. Someone suggested to him the idea of taking the bridge out and putting it on display elsewhere. That is an example of an idea we can't even consider if we don't have them look at it now. Duncan said he thinks removing the bridge should be an alternative under consideration. He thinks we have to keep the bridge, but not necessarily in that location. Eben suggested board members consider other ideas they would like to include.

18. Scribner Bridge Repairs

Eben said a citizen asked us to consider budgeting for Scribner Bridge repairs. There was discussion about the \$30K budgeted for bridge repairs in a previous year. Mark asked what happened to it. Duncan said it became surplus because we didn't spend it. Mike said he thinks a volunteer would work on the bridge and he would help. Mark said he would also help. Duncan suggested researching whether there are any historic bridge grants. The board agreed that Duncan should reach out to Randall to look into that.

19. *MERP Grant Delegation and Grant Process Policy*

Tom said we can skip the grant process policy discussion in the interest of time. **Duncan moved to authorize the board chair and/or town administrator to sign any documents required for the MERP grant, Mark seconded and the motion was passed.**

20. *Holmes Meadow Signature Delegation*

Duncan moved to delegate the town administrator to sign all permits and agreements for Holmes Meadow flood plain restoration that does not incur any costs to the town, Mike seconded and the motion was passed.

21. *Engineering RFQ Opening and Selection*

Tom said there were 5 respondents. They include:

- SLR – currently handling the Holmes Meadow project - \$305/hr
- Network Building & Consulting - specialize in utility fiber and line work but have in-house structural and civil engineers and partners who will bill out at the same rate – \$130/hr
- Mumley Engineering – currently handling our light industrial park and the Vermont Electric Coop public-private partnership stormwater project – \$150/hr
- DuBois & King

Mike moved to select Mumley Engineering, Duncan seconded and the motion was passed.

22. *Fuel Bid Review and Selection*

Tom said he contacted all fuel suppliers in Lamoille County and still only received bids from the same two suppliers who previously bid. Brosseau's price would go up and down. Fred's gave a fixed price and a price above rack. We asked in the RFP for both fixed and above rack prices and Fred's was the only response that met the requirements of the RFP.

Mike said he thinks in the future we should work together with other towns in the county to get a better deal. Mark agreed.

Duncan said Fred offered 30 cents above rack. Do we know what the rack price is today? Mark looked it up. He said it is \$1.69.

Eben and Mark said they would like to go back to Brosseau and try to get an above rack price.

Duncan moved to reject the two bids received and direct Tom to try to negotiate a cents over rack price with Brosseau Fuels, Mike seconded and the motion was passed.

23. *Cemetery Request*

Duncan said he communicated with Tina Bradley in relation to the burial of Leona Whitehill. Tina told Duncan that the family was told by Red Hooper 40 years ago that they could all be buried in Grow Cemetery. She was going to get back to him about how many extra burials they are talking about. He is willing to meet with her at the site to look at the plot. He told her that technically the cemetery is closed.

Mark asked, who was Red Hooper to say they could be buried there? Duncan said maybe he was speaking as a selectboard member. Maybe it was approved by the selectboard. Or maybe not. He has no idea. Red is dead and Rocky Hooper is dead.

Duncan asked if the board is open to the idea of allowing more interments. Mike said if there is room. Mark asked how much we charge. Duncan said the family maintained the cemetery for decades. The deal was that Leona could be buried there if they did not charge for maintenance.

The board agreed that Duncan should get more information about the number of interments desired.

24. Rail Trail Committee Grant

Tom passed around a contract for a scoping study by VHB for the amount of \$49,118. Mike asked what the study is needed for. Duncan said we already approved it. Eben said it is grant funded. Mike asked if it is actually needed. This money has to come from someplace. Tom said we are spending this money to justify spending money in the future. It is to prevent bad ideas and fraud. Scoping studies protect taxpayer dollars.

Duncan moved to authorize the board chair and/or town administrator to sign the contract with VHB for a scoping study after Doug Molde and Randall Szott have reviewed the contract to ensure that it covers everything in the grant proposal, Mark seconded and the motion was passed with Mike opposed.

25. Kennel Update

Tom said Crystal asked for a couple more weeks to submit a proposal. Does the board want to move forward with Hyde Park or focus on Crystal? Eben said he would move forward with all avenues.

Tom said he went to a training last week on animal control officers. We thought we needed ticket training but it is actually far more than that. We have to register everybody who will issue tickets.

26. Budget Development

Eben said at the next meeting we will probably talk about the process the board wants to use to develop the budget.

27. Other Business

Duncan said October 12 will be 31 days since the bond vote. He wonders if the board should authorize Randall or Tom sign any documents needed related to the bond for the industrial park project before the next meeting. He is not sure if we should apply immediately for the bond. Interest may go down a little more or they could be as low as they will get. There probably is not anything that needs to be done before the next meeting. Eben said he doesn't see a need for it. Duncan said at the next meeting we should discuss using the revolving loan fund.

Duncan said in his report Tom had noted that the ditch bank mower needs to be replaced. Is that something we will discuss during budget season? He thinks it would be good to have it in the capital budget plan. Tom said he would like to discuss whether to replace it or consider hiring out roadside mowing.

28. Executive Session - Personnel

Duncan moved to enter executive session with the board only for a personnel item under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3), Mike seconded and the motion was passed at 9:47. The board consented out of executive session at 10:24 with no action taken.

29. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25.