

Town of Johnson
Town Administrator's Report
For Monday, October 7th, 2024

6:30 p.m. Call to order and Standing Items

1. 6:30-6:35pm Consider additions or adjustments

Possible Kennel Update, I have not heard back from Hyde Park and our ACO, If I have anything on Monday, I'll fill you in.

2. 6:35pm Review invoices and orders
3. 6:35-6:40pm Public Comment
4. 6:40-6:45pm Selectboard issues and concerns
5. 6:45-6:50pm Consent Agenda
 - a. Consider approving Minutes for September 3rd, September 9th, September 16th, 2024
 - b. Planned Purchase of Excavator Rental for Landfill Maintenance (retroactive), \$3800

The road crew did an amazing job clearing the landfill cap. With a very tight schedule and ongoing grant projects, they are still on schedule because of their hard work and dedication. Please visit the transfer station and see the difference, WOW! In the packet are three photos of the machine and landfill after clearing. This maintenance is required and likely has not been done since the landfill was capped. This annual maintenance may require the addition of a brush hog or the annual rental of one for next year's budget.

- c. Permission to plant Perennials Bulbs at the Food Shelf, Historical Society Building, and the Trailhead

The beautification committee is planning on doing some fall plantings on Town property and the joint property of the mill house. Adrienne's request is in the packet.

6:50 p.m. Clerk & Treasurer's Report: warrants, licenses, and any action items.

7:00 p.m. Road Foreman Report and any action items.

6. Truck Bid Opening and Selection

Decision: As of 4pm on Friday no submissions have been received. We previously had two sets of numbers from International and Western Star. The original process was not in compliance with the procurement policy. I feel the procurement policy does not fairly represent the intricacies of large purchases with highly detailed specifications. Creating work for the foreman and the administrator. The responses are not always apples to apples. I believe the board should either make an exemption and provide a clear motion with instructions OR add specific language for large items like Trucks, Graders, Backhoes, Loaders, Tractors, etc. The process has delayed the decision, and we risk having no responses at this time.

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7:20 p.m. Administrator's report, action items, and business of the Selectboard

7. 7:20-7:25pm Assessor's Report

Information: Justin Mason will be in the house!...well on zoom...so in the laptop, which isn't as exciting.

- a. Errors and Omissions
- b. Inspection Announcement

Information: Justin needs to get the inspection notice out to the residents. Please review the notice in the packet and help spread the word.

- c. Assessor Assistant

Decision: Justin and Michael Dunham have worked together to repost the job and recruit candidates. Michael has reviewed the process and will provide a recommendation with Justin on Monday night. Applications close at 4pm on Monday, we have two so far.

8. 7:30-7:45pm LeARN Presentation – Sarah Henshaw

Information: Sarah Henshaw will be providing a presentation to the board to go over the resources available from LeARN for our residents and our municipal leaders. LeARN was hands down the most invaluable resource for the Town and the residents for long term flood recovery resources. We could not have processed all the Buyout applications without their help. I hope we can continue to work together to help our residents with long term recovery and immediate needs in future events.

9. 7:45-7:50pm Recreation Economy for Rural Communities – Approval and Delegation

Information, Decision: This was sent from Randall Szott to the board on 9/26. He has not heard a response yet or any direction. He will not be attending. Please review his notes in the packet, as this topic may be a larger discussion than just approval and delegation.

10. 7:50-7:55pm MOU: Town and Village Beautification Moving Forward

Information, Decision: This item has all the best intentions and is needed for future relations. I believe there is a misunderstanding between the SB and the Beautification Committee. The MOU is requested between the Village and Beautification Committee, and a second between the Selectboard and the Beautification Committee. I believe the MOU should be between the Selectboard and Village Trustees only, with the requests from the Beautification Committee within.

11. 7:55-8:10pm Scribner Bridge Scoping Study

Information, Decision: The draft scoping study is complete with topics we reviewed, but the final report is not out yet. I think we need to seriously consider the benefits of doing nothing, removing the bridge for display purposes elsewhere and widening the channel, and any other ideas the board has. The bridge itself is an icon of Johnson, however removing that bridge would not cut off any residents. This has been a topic of concern for the board for several years and we have invested a lot of resources into this project over two scoping studies. We need to move on and put this to bed. This decision is only to include other ideas in the final report or not. Please see the draft report in a separate email.

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12. 8:10-8:15pm Scribner Bridge Repairs

Scribner Bridge needs siding repairs. The question for the board is do we address this right away with an RFP for prices or do we wait until we have a final scoping study? The project with likely be very expensive due to the need for scaffolding to work on the outside of the bridge.

13. 8:15-8:20pm MERP Grant Delegation and Grant Process Policy

Decision: Tori Hellwig has submitted our MERP grant. I am asking the board make a motion to delegate signature authority to the Administrator for any required signatures that do not incur costs, including acceptance of the grant.

Suggested Motion: Move to delegation the Town Administrator to sign all required signatures to submit and receive the MERP grant that do not incur additional costs to the original grant.

14. 8:20-8:25pm Library Grant Accept and Delegate to have the Administer Sign (retroactive)

Decision: The Town Administrator was sworn to secrecy for the Library Grant per the conditions of the grant. This led to a very awkward situation where I had to sign by talking only to the Chair. This is not how do, or should do business. This does bring up a topic of efficiency, why does the board need to approve acceptance of a grant they approved the application for? Moving forward, I believe the delegation of signature authority should be made from the onset for both the application and acceptance unless otherwise directed by the board. This is a large project and I believe I should be the point person to follow it through. We are already on a very tight timeline. I ask the board the delegate me to prepare RFP's and to start working with the potential bidders. I would like to have a work flow plan complete by 10/21.tA

Suggested Motion: Move to delegate the Town Administrator to sign and execute the library grant.

Suggested Motion: Authorize the Town Administrator to prepare RFP's for Movers, Utilities, and General Contractors for the 10/21 meeting.

15. 8:25-8:30pm Holmes Meadow Signature Delegation

Decision: The Holmes Meadow flood plain restoration project is moving ahead quickly. Signatures will be needed for permitting, amendments, and possibly other needs. LCPC is managing this grant for us, but it's our grant. This is a zero match and the Town will not incur additional costs. The need for board approval will delay the project that is already on a very tight timeline.

Suggested Motion: Move 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.

16. 8:30-8:40pm Engineering RFQ Opening and Selection

Decision: As of 5pm on Friday we have only received one response. Responses are due by 4pm on Monday.

17. 8:40-8:50pm Fuel Bid Review and Selection

Decision: As of 5pm on Friday we have not received any responses. Responses are due by 4pm on Monday.

Executive Session

18. 8:50-9:00pm Executive Session if needed

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Old Business

- Town Administrator & CEDS priority list
- ATV Ordinance
- Capital Budget and Plan
- Town Sewer Service Area, Light Industrial Park
- Plan to separate ownership of buildings
- Drainage clarification in village
- Communication to the Public
- Interlocal Pound Agreement
- Road Reclassification
- Town Website
- NBRC with a positive bond vote

Other Points of Note

-Road Reclassification, Jason and I will be meeting with Alec from LCPC to help identify roads that will significantly affect our MRGP. We will also compile a list of roads with recommendations in conjunction with planning commission's suggestions.

-Holmes Meadow is underway! Jason will be working with the Archologist for permitting to dig trenches. This will make our grant stretch further and remove more soil.

-Budget, budget, budget! I strongly recommend the board start thinking about a new way of tackling this project. I would love to see the board delegate two board members to work with committees and the administrator to produce a strong first draft to present to the board during the first meeting in November.

-Ditch bank mower, the mower is on its last leg and approaching a major safety concern. Parts are no longer available. We should move to sell this item as soon as the mowing season is over. This item should be budgeted for during the FY26 budget or at the end of this year. The options would be to buy an articulating mower, a ditch bank mower, contract out all mowing, or rent.

-The library is moving! This will be a very fast project with lots of details. Be ready, this is about to get fun!

Landfill pictures:



TOJ Administrator

From: Adrienne Parker <adiestevson@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 24, 2024 9:36 AM
To: TOJ Administrator; Eben Patch
Cc: Kyle Nuse
Subject: Beautification Committee Updates

Hey Tom and Eben,

The Beautification would like to do one more round of planting before the first snow. What we would like to plant:

Perennials Bulbs at the Food Shelf, Historical Society Building, and the Trailhead. We have permission from the people in charge of the Historical Society Building and the Food Shelf. Just waiting to see if we have approval from the Village in regard to the Food Shelf. When planting fall bulbs at the trailhead we might create a couple of beds. Let me know if you need more information about this. We also plan to do winter planting on the covered bridge. We have already started creating dry flower arrangements but more elements will be added. So far that is all we have planned for winter but I will let you know if anything changes.

Last Selectboard meeting we discussed storage and I said I would provide a list:

- Soil (around 5 bags)
- Mulch (around 5 bags)
- Pop up canopy tent
- 2 folding tables
- Wooden planters from Railroad Street Bridge with inserts
- Planters from along Main Street. Can be stacked inside of each other if soil is removed.
- Other random planters
- Fall and Winter decorations around 3 storage bins worth

We would like a bit more room than what is listed because we plan to make more purchases next year.

I was also curious if the Town had any space for two yards of soil and two yards of mulch to be delivered to the Town garage (or another area) so that we could start ordering in bulk to save money? This might be something to discuss at the next meeting.

In addition, I wanted to remind you Tom to put us on the next agenda to discuss a MOU that we will write.

Thank you,
Adrienne

Dear Johnson Selectboard,

Please find attached the Errors and Omissions submitted for your approval.

The first 3 properties listed on the form are for the Village Grand List and do not affect the Town Grand List. I contacted VLCT and PVR and both agencies informed me that the Selectboard signs the Errors and Omissions, and the Town then notifies the Village Trustees and Staff of the change.

- Vermont Transco reports their valuation for the Town and Village separately. The values have previously been entered as a whole entry and should have been broken out individually. I contacted my District Advisor to discuss the change prior to making it. I have updated the Grand List to reflect the correct valuation, and in 2025 I will be creating a separate Parcel ID for the Village Utility portion so the valuations will remain separate.
- The second and third properties are within the Village of Johnson and were not added to the 2024 Grand List.

The Demar properties were originally 1 whole property. In December 2023, a deed and 2 MHBOS' were recorded separating the Mobile Homes from the Land. The change was not reflected in the 2024 Grand List.

Please note that I am analyzing the Grand List and marking errors from the current or previous years as I continue to work for the Town of Johnson and correct and validate the current data. Some data errors are minor and will be corrected or further investigated for the upcoming Grand List. If the error is significant and the Town was somehow notified prior to April 1, 2024 (or previous years) and the information was not reflected in the Grand List, I then present the Errors and Omissions. Previous Grand Lists cannot be changed.

Please also note Change of Appraisal Hearings (Grievances) are scheduled after the Grand List is lodged in Spring 2024 and the public is warned of the hearing date, along with those that individually experienced a valuation change. All property owners are welcome to inquire and request a hearing at that time. I've witnessed in many Towns that owners attempt to grieve after their Tax Bill is received, and these grievances are not accepted unless there was a change reported/recorded by April 1, or at the formal hearing, and not reflected in the Grand List.

If you have any questions, please contact me directly at listers@townofjohnson.com. I look forward to continuing to ensure our valuations and practices are fair and accurate throughout the Town of Johnson.

Thank you, Justin Mason, Municipal Assessor & E911 Coordinator, Town of Johnson, VT











Form PVR-4261-E

ERRORS AND OMISSIONS CERTIFICATE

The Board of Listers of the Town of Johnson are hereby supplying the following changes to the 2024 Grand List. Specifically:
(Year)


Owner	SPAN	
<u>Vermont Transco LLC (Village GR only)</u>	<u>11837</u>	
Change From	Change To	Difference
<u>\$361,900</u>	<u>\$220,613</u>	<u>= - \$141,287</u>
Reason <u>2024 Reported Village Value - The Village GR Was not updated</u>		
Owner	SPAN	
<u>Jenna Tatro Memorial Fund (Village only)</u>	<u>11899</u>	
Change From	Change To	Difference
<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$34,700</u>	<u>= + \$34,700</u>
Reason <u>This Parcel is in the Village but was not added to the village Grand List</u>		
Owner	SPAN	
<u>Ouellette Sarah (Village only)</u>	<u>11924</u>	
Change From	Change To	Difference
<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$101,000</u>	<u>= + \$101,000</u>
Reason <u>This Parcel is in the village but was not added to the village Grand List</u>		
Owner	SPAN	
<u>Demar Roger Ray Trust (Town only)</u>	<u>12000</u>	
Change From	Change To	Difference
<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$31,300</u>	<u>+ \$31,300</u>
Reason <u>The 2 mobile homes were sold to the trust in 2023. Need to re-evaluate</u>		
Owner	SPAN	
<u>Demar Lawrence (Town only)</u>	<u>10968</u>	
Change From	Change To	Difference
<u>\$175,400</u>	<u>\$144,000</u>	<u>- \$31,400</u>
Reason <u>Removed 2 mobile homes as above - \$100 difference</u>		
Owner	SPAN	
Change From	Change To	Difference
Reason		
Owner	SPAN	
Change From	Change To	Difference
Reason		
Owner	SPAN	
Change From	Change To	Difference
Reason		

LISTERS/ASSESSOR AND SELECTBOARD

Signature of Lister/Assessor 	Date 9/24/2024	Signature of Selectboard/Alderman 	Date
Signature of Lister/Assessor 	Date	Signature of Selectboard/Alderman 	Date
Signature of Lister/Assessor 	Date	Signature of Selectboard/Alderman 	Date
Signature of Lister/Assessor 	Date	Signature of Selectboard/Alderman 	Date
Signature of Lister/Assessor 	Date	Signature of Selectboard/Alderman 	Date

TOWN CLERK

I, _____, town clerk of _____, certify receipt of these changes. This certificate will be attached to or recorded in the grand list of _____ for tax year _____.

Signature of Town Clerk 	Printed Name	Date
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32 V.S.A. § 4261. Correcting omission from grand list

When real or personal estate is omitted from the grand list by mistake, or an obvious error is found, the listers, with the approval of the Selectboard, before December 31, may supply such omissions or correct such errors and make a certificate thereon of the fact; provided, however, the listers may make a correction resulting from the filing or rescission of a homestead declaration without approval of the Selectboard.

MUST BE ATTACHED TO THE FINAL GRAND LIST FILED WITH THE TOWN CLERK.

Town of Johnson Property Inspection Announcement

The Town of Johnson Assessor will be performing preliminary property inspections on Tuesday, October 8, 15, and 22, 2024, in preparation for the 2025 Grand List. The Assessor will be inspecting properties that have reported or visible changes, properties with a discovered error, and those where clarification is needed. The second round for final inspections will be performed in 3-4 consecutive weeks through March and April 2025 for the final valuations for the 2025 Grand List, reflective of condition and ownership as of April 1. Any properties that have a value change will be notified of the change in Spring 2025 via mail, and a Change of Appraisal Hearing Date will be included in the notice and posted in 5 physical locations in the Town of Johnson.

The Town Assessor is also working with the Town Clerks Office to send letters to all Johnson property owners to inform owners of the inspection dates and request owners to report any changes that their property has experienced. The form is intended to help maintain equity and fair market valuation practices throughout the Town of Johnson as a whole and in lieu of Municipal Zoning. The form will also include a section for property owners to submit their animal licensing information for dog registration with the Town Clerks Office. The form is anticipated to be distributed in January or February 2025 with a requested return date of Mid-March to reflect the anticipated condition and changes as of April 1, 2025. Additional information will be included in the letter and provided as time progresses.

If you would like to schedule an appointment or find out if you are on the inspection list, please contact Justin Mason, Municipal Assessor & E911 Coordinator, at 802 635 2611 or listeners@townofjohnson.com

Information for 10/7/2024 Selectboard meeting

Here is more information about the *Recreation Economy for Rural Communities* program ([link to program page](#)) as was requested at the last Selectboard meeting:

What is provided

As I mentioned, it is not a grant program, the EPA provides planning assistance with a focus on the recreation economy and revitalizing downtowns. This would directly support the work of the recreation economy taskforce from the VCRD process but could also help the downtown reconfiguration taskforce. Similar to VCRD, this planning workshop could be a means to create and solidify working relationships with community partners.

As to potential cost for a community here is the direct quote from their FAQ:

“Most communities incur little to no cost aside from staff and volunteer time devoted to planning and participating in the workshop. The program does not provide any funds directly to communities. The community is responsible for securing a venue for the workshop, although most communities are able to identify a no-cost venue. In addition, the planning assistance award does not include funds for refreshments at the workshop; any refreshments are provided at the community’s discretion and cost.”

Potential venues are obvious, and should refreshments be provided, the taskforces could be responsible for that if desired.

Timeline

Work would begin in 2025. The entire process takes between 8-12 months with planning calls starting about 3-4 months ahead of the community workshop and follow up calls afterward in the 3-4 month range.

Responsibilities

“Applicants must identify a point of contact from the lead organization who will be available for the duration of the project to lead coordination of local participation and to work with the planning assistance team.”

The quote above indicates that the other “cost” of participation would be the need to designate a point of contact (I assume me) to coordinate. So that is the other consideration in terms of impact.