

JOHNSON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MONDAY, APRIL 21, 2025

Present: Selectboard members: Mike Dunham, Peter Hammond, Duncan Hastings, Adrienne Parker, Eben Patch

Others: Tom Galinat, Beth Foy, Lynda Hill, Mary Lou Kopas, Jan Gearhart, Ronald and Sandy Dixon, Diana Osborn, Noel Dodge, Sue Lovering, Howard Romero

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 to the Agenda*

Tom added an update on FEMA buyouts. Duncan added choosing someone to represent the town in the discussion on the interlocal agreement on May 8.

3. *Public Comment*

Ronald Dixon, who owns property on River Road East, said his neighbors have a right of way through his property, but their survey map filed at the town clerk's office shows it is not where they have been traveling. The Dixons have been having a lot of vandalism. People have come to their house at night and put sugar in their gas tanks. He named people who he says have admitted to the vandalism. There is also an issue with people speeding up and down the road on motorcycles and ATVs. He said he has tried filing a formal complaint but the police don't respond. He feels it is a drug problem. Other people on his road sell drugs and want to drive the Dixons off their property. He hopes someone will talk to his neighbors about the right of way issue.

Eben said settling a property line or right of way dispute probably will require a lawyer. If the neighbors want to prove there is an issue it will be up to them to hire a real estate attorney or surveyor. The town contracts with the sheriff's department. It is concerning to him if the Dixons are not hearing back from them. He thinks we should follow up with Sheriff Marcoux. We could reach out to the ATV club or the sheriff's department to try to get patrol on the road.

4. *Selectboard Issues and Concerns*

Adrienne said she wants to make sure we are posting the meeting packet online. She didn't see it this time. Tom said he emails it to Lydia and she posts it. He will follow up with her. Duncan said the packet is for the selectboard, not the general public. It is a public document but the primary purpose of the town administrator's report is for the board's benefit. In his opinion it doesn't need to be posted. Adrienne said before she was on the board she found it nice to have before meetings to educate herself.

Peter asked what the town can or will we do about Ron Dixon's complaint. Tom said all we can do is call the sheriff and try to figure out what the communication break is and resolve it. We can assist the Dixons with research on deeds and surveys. Eben suggested also reaching out to the ATV club.

Duncan said a while ago we decided we were going to try to make the second meeting of the month a work session meeting and it seems we are strongly migrating out of that and into regular business. He would rather have the second meeting reserved for things we can't get done at a regular meeting. Mike agreed. Eben said he thinks we can get there. He has interest in getting back to that.

5. ***Planned Purchases***

No planned purchases needed to be approved.

6. ***Appointment of Adrian Schmidt to Rail Trail Committee***

Peter moved and Adrienne seconded to appoint Adrian Schmidt to the rail trail committee.

Duncan asked if this is a recommendation from the Rail Trail Committee. Eben said yes. **The motion was passed.**

7. ***Accept Resignation of Kyle Nuse from Beautification Committee***

Duncan moved and Peter seconded to accept the resignation of Kyle Nuse from the Beautification Committee with thanks. Adrienne thanked Kyle for her service as chair and vice chair of the committee. **The motion was passed.**

8. ***Tree Board***

Sue Lovering said the maintenance plan (the Johnson Community Forestry Plan) was written in 2016 and it is way out of date and should be updated. The committee is also working on a shade tree plan and they suggest rolling that into the maintenance plan. Selectboard members agreed they are comfortable with the Tree Board working on an updated maintenance plan.

Mike asked if the Tree Board's goal is to get downtown Johnson back to the way it was 125 years ago when the streets were completely lined with trees. Sue said they would love to have that as their goal but there is so much infrastructure under the sides of the road that it is not possible.

Eben said when the shade tree plan was first brought to the selectboard a couple of years ago there was a little pushback from the board. His issue was landowners' rights. He is not willing to take rights away from landowners. Sue said they updated that plan. They think it would be a good idea to talk to landowners and see if they agree to it.

Eben said he likes the arboretum. He would like to see more about that in the plan.

Sue said the water system for the arboretum will be finished soon. The Tree Board has some signage coming for the restoration grant work.

Adrienne said Sue had mentioned she would be interested in a trailer for mulch. Sue said the tree board would like a dump trailer. It could save a lot of money if they could go pick up mulch. Eben said mulch is probably something to discuss when we talk about committees as a whole. The Beautification Committee also wants mulch. Perhaps the committees could purchase it in bulk and store it somewhere. Sue said at one point mulch was stored at the town garage but it disappeared. The town said the village took it and the village said the town took it. So she has issues with storing mulch elsewhere. It is too labor intensive if Tree Board members need to go pick up mulch whenever they need it. Duncan asked if it could be stockpiled at the arboretum when the ground is dry enough to drive in there. Sue said yes. Tom suggested meeting with Jason about improving the situation with the road into the arboretum.

Eben asked if the tree board has thought about sculptures in the arboretum. Sue said no. Eben said he likes the idea of sculptures there. Sue said the question is who will be liable for a sculpture. Who will trim and mow around it or move it? Who will be responsible for it? The Tree Board doesn't want to be involved in that.

Peter said he had not seen the Johnson Community Forestry plan before. It is an amazing piece of work. He is really impressed.

Adrienne asked who does mowing at the arboretum. Tom said Robert and Sons. Sue said they don't do the greatest job. Eric Osgood and Bill Perkins finish up after they are done.

Sue asked if the board has any thoughts about a wheelbarrow for the Tree Board. Eben, Peter and Adrienne said they are in support of purchasing one. Eben asked Sue to make a formal request for the board to address at a future meeting. Tom suggested he and Sue could sit down and review the Tree Board budget and make a plan.

Noel said the Tree Board recently moved a crabapple tree to the arboretum. The Urban Forestry program is interested in doing a piece on it. Tom said it is amazing what the Tree Board pulled off in a short amount of time.

9. Future Committee

It was agreed to invite the Conservation Commission to meet with the board next month.

10. Rail Trail Committee Permission for Kiosk on Legion Field

Information was included in the board packet about a kiosk the Rail Trail Committee would like to put on Legion Field. Rail Trail Committee members showed the board pictures of the kiosk they have in mind. Jan Gearhart said they are interested in getting 3 kiosks. They have spoken to Brian Currier, who is interested in making them. They want one for Legion Field, one for the Village Green and one for the Welcome Center. They have already talked to the village.

Eben asked if the village was in support. Jan said they are waiting until the town makes a decision.

Beth Foy asked if there is a plan for Legion Field. There is a lot happening there and it is not a big space. She is worried about the design of it. Howard Romero said that is why he is here. Mary Lou showed where the committee is thinking about putting the kiosk.

Mike suggested getting a Boy Scout to build the kiosk for a merit badge.

Peter said he thinks anything highlighting the rail trail is wonderful. His concern is that he is hearing multiple conversations about Legion Field and he thinks someone should be thinking about the whole picture. Lynda Hill said the Legion Field committee is doing that.

Mary Lou and Jan said the Rail Trail Committee has a \$20K grant from the Vermont Community Foundation and they have to spend it by the end of the budget year. They have a list of things they want to spend it on. They want a kiosk that shows the rail trail and also businesses and things for people in town.

Mike moved and Adrienne seconded to approve placement of a kiosk on Legion Field by the Rail Trail Committee.

Howard said he is part of the Legion Field group. He is working on a site plan for Legion Field. So far the oven and TNL committees and recreation have been involved. The group would be happy to have more stakeholders like the Rail Trail Committee.

Committee members said they are thinking of putting the kiosk in the southwest corner of the field. Adrienne suggested maybe it should not be cemented in, so it can be moved. Jan said that would be fine. It will be pressure treated and can be moved.

The motion was passed.

Jan said Doug Molde suggested that the committee get approval for all the projects they want to do with the Vermont Community Foundation grant. Eben asked them to send the list. It can be approved at the next meeting.

11. Vermont 250th Move Up

Duncan moved and Mike seconded to approve the Vermont 250th Anniversary resolution as presented. Eben noted that the name of the town needs to be filled in. Once that is done, the board can sign it at the next meeting. **The motion was passed.**

Mike said he also wants the board to approve another resolution he sent out. Diana Osborn said the resolution is about the 250th commemoration of April 18, 1775. Before she saw the Vermont template she drafted a resolution that acknowledged history since April 1775 through the founding of Vermont in 1791. The one she sent Mike that was included in the packet is a template based on one passed in New Jersey. She has some proposed language to add to that, saying that the town endorses a "Two Lights If By Sea" initiative calling on citizens to display two lights. April 18 has already passed, but the town could choose to commemorate other revolutionary events. Eben said he would like to see a draft presented that could be signed at the next meeting. Duncan said the town could pick a specific date when people would hang two lights. Duncan suggests Battle of Bennington Day. It was agreed that Tom will prepare a draft resolution.

12. School Street Traffic

Tom suggested a motion to appoint him and Adrienne to work with others to create a proposal for an Orange Book compliant crosswalk on School Street to present at the May 16 meeting. He would especially like the road foreman and the sheriff to be involved.

Duncan said in the past the village crew has always painted the crosswalks within the village. If we accept the responsibility for painting this one, we will probably take on the responsibility for painting all the village crosswalks. Tom asked if the town pays half the cost of painting them. Duncan said to the best of his knowledge the village just does it.

Beth suggested that since Peter lives on School Street and has a vested interest, perhaps it should be him rather than Adrienne who works on this.

Eben asked if the board is receptive to the idea of painting crosswalks in the village every year. Mike said painting one crosswalk doesn't mean we will be responsible for all of them. Tom suggested we could ask the village to make a contribution equal to what they have spent before. Labor will be provided by the Studio Center. Duncan said painting crosswalks doesn't affect their budget other than the cost of paint. Their employees do it.

Adrienne asked, if we increase the amount of crosswalks, will the village still pay for painting them? Duncan said he doesn't know. Generally warrants are needed to establish where a crosswalk is located. Tom said the current crosswalks aren't in great locations. Once library construction is done there probably will need to be a new configuration. Where they are now may not be the best location. The intent is to slow down traffic.

Beth said if the Studio Center is going to paint, that is great, but this is a long-term commitment. Do we know if there would be a long-term maintenance commitment by the Studio Center? Also,

the ideas presented in the packet look cool, but she worries they might encourage playing in the road. Are they compliant with road crossing standards? The situation is not safe now. She knows that from being a parent dropping kids off at the school. She worries that this type of crosswalk might not help.

Eben said that is why Tom mentioned the Orange Book. Tom said the pictures in the packet are just ideas. The crosswalk will be different from typical white lines but the Orange Book will tell us what we can and can't do. We will also talk to Jason and the sheriff.

Beth said there is another crossing point by the basketball court.

Mike said he thinks we should increase police presence. We have very little sheriff presence on that street. The town pays half a million dollars a year for police protection. Johnson is supposed to get at least 8 hours a day. To him it doesn't seem that we get that full 8 hours.

Board members agreed they are receptive to this idea but not committed to it.

Eben said we also get speed complaints on other roads. It is important to protect children but we are currently targeting just one road that is near and dear to one person on the board. Peter said many people use it, not just children. He wants to avoid tragedy on that road. There is a school there. There will be a library. There is a field used by little children. Lynda Hill brought up people walking to Beard Park.

Peter said the VTrans traffic mitigation booklet is full of information and calming possibilities. But we need to address people who are driving 60 mph. He thinks we need at least two speed bumps on School Street and we also need enforcement.

Duncan said Peter was right that there is a speed limit ordinance and it has a speed limit of 25 for School Street. But there is nothing about penalties. At the next work session meeting he would like to look at that ordinance and see if it is adequate.

Tom suggested he could look up the prices of speed tables and speed bumps. Duncan said he thinks putting a speed cart on School Street is a good idea. He doubts people are going 60 mph. How fast people are going is often different from people's perceptions.

Diana Osborn said when she hears thoughts about speed enforcement combined with the comments of the resident earlier, she concludes that we have a law enforcement problem. We are not getting follow-up from the sheriff that we are paying for. She thinks we need a system in place to launch complaints and hold the sheriff accountable for enforcing rules that are already on the books before adding ordinances that aren't going to be enforced.

Adrienne said she and Sue Lovering walked down School Street and looked at possible locations for trees but they didn't have a way to check whether there were utilities there. Sue looked up the prices of some different tree options. They estimate a total budget of \$3,000 would be needed for planting 12 to 15 trees, including compost and mulch. Signs at two different intersections would be \$800 to \$1,600.

Adrienne moved and Peter seconded to increase the Tree Board's budget by \$3,000 to plant trees on School Street. Duncan said he thinks this is premature. He doesn't know what the actual traffic

calming benefit will be of planting trees. The motion failed with Peter and Adrienne in favor and Duncan, Eben and Mike opposed.

Adrienne moved to put stop signs at two intersections at a cost of \$800 to \$1,600. Peter said he thinks we might be better off looking at the whole package before taking this action. The motion died for lack of a second.

13. Library Relocation

Tom said the night before the library move power will be cut off at 9:00 p.m. south of the Gihon and will go back on around 6:00. a.m. North of the Gihon the power will be out from about 7:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. People can call the village with questions about when their outage will be.

Tom said recently one road crew member left and another is on vacation so the highway crew needs help that night. They would like to hire two employees of other road crews who are already part of the same drug testing pool. They will not operate vehicles, just put up and take down signage and barricades. They will not drive our trucks. Mike asked if this is absolutely necessary. Tom said yes. If we hired a subcontractor they would need to provide insurance. We need people who understand the importance of the work zone and these people are familiar with our employees.

Duncan moved and Peter seconded to approve hiring temporary help for the library move.

Tom said they will be compensated at their current overtime rate for the town where they normally work. The cost will come out of the project budget. **The motion was passed.**

Lynda Hill asked if when the power is out it will be solidly out the whole time. The trustees seemed to think there would be rolling outages. Tom said it depends on your location. Power will go out at 9:00 p.m. on Main Street and Railroad Street and will remain out until the building is off Main Street. Lynda asked, what about side streets like Clay Hill or College Hill? Tom said power on those streets will be out from about 7:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. The college should not lose power at all. He suggests calling the village for specifics. The village will have the least amount of disruption possible.

Diana thanked Tom for his outstanding communication around this enormously complex project. The Front Porch Forum posts have been outstanding. It seems the project has been managed beautifully.

Tom said this move will save the library for less than it would cost to fix it in place.

14. CDBG Funding Option

Tom said the state has a special interest in Johnson. Now that the village is no longer planning to move the wastewater treatment plant, he would like to reach out and ask about their priorities for Johnson so we can match our CDBG application to their priorities. Eben said he would rather identify the projects we really need. But he is not opposed to matching with state priorities for federal money.

Peter said he thinks it would be well worth investigating what we might be able to do to increase housing. He doesn't think the town ought to get into the real estate or development business but, for example, if there are parcels of land that might be suitable for housing, it might be good for the town to purchase them so they are available to a private or non-profit developer.

Tom said previously the sewage treatment plant, housing and the grocery store were mentioned as possible uses for grant funding. This could be a chance to get funding for a grocery store, but he

thinks it is valuable to understand their priorities. The board agreed Tom should reach out and find out about the state's priorities.

Duncan said we met with Pomerleau and they were pretty clear about some of their needs. To him, having a grocery store in Johnson is pretty important. He thinks we should definitely be thinking about that. He believes Tom and Randall should work together on this because this is community and economic development. Mike agreed. The board agreed that Tom can reach out to Randall and pass this off to him.

15. Appointment Policy

It was agreed that board members should send their thoughts on an appointment policy to Tom and he can have a draft copy ready for the next work session meeting.

16. Marvin Awards

It was agreed that any ideas for Marvin Award nominations should be sent to Eben.

17. LEMP Adoption

Duncan moved and Mike seconded to adopt the Local Emergency Management Plan and to authorize Eben to sign it on behalf of the selectboard. Eben said there may be some addendums later in the year. The state is pushing towards written agreements – for instance, with the college for shelter. He may need to come back to the board with proposed changes. **The motion was passed.**

18. Vermont Electric Coop Agreement/MSI Contract for VEC Stormwater Project

Tom suggested a motion to authorize him and the chair to sign the VEC agreement and MSI contract for the 3-acre stormwater public-private partnership. In this situation a private entity is receiving public ARPA funds but they needed a municipal pass-through. This benefits us because all the stormwater leaving the industrial park goes into this system. He had some strong concerns that we should not be responsible if costs go over the grant amount. We are paying the bills and getting reimbursement so there is risk for us. He also made it clear that we should be reimbursed either a percentage or the maximum amount allowed by the grant agreement for our administration cost. Eben noted that the percentage is left blank in the grant agreement. Duncan suggested just referring to the maximum amount allowed by the grant agreement. Tom said we have a disagreement with Vermont Electric Coop about indemnification so he would like to avoid going back with more changes if possible.

Beth said she is certain we already have a signed agreement with Vermont Electric Coop from about 3 years ago. Tom said he doesn't know that this agreement takes away from prior agreements. Mike said he thinks we need to find out about the prior agreement Beth mentioned. He wants to know what is different in this agreement compared to the original one. Peter said if this covers everything it needs to for both parties he doesn't see the need to find the previous agreement. Duncan asked, what if the prior agreement is in conflict with this one? Which one controls? It was agreed that Tom should look into the prior agreement.

19. Website Update

Adrienne said she thought things were going well with the website. It sounded like the designers could accomplish everything she requested. But four or five days before the meeting she heard back that some of those things would require paying a developer an hourly rate. They have done some of the things she requested and she wants to know if we have been charged. She doesn't feel like the design matches the amount of money that we are paying. The template they are using has many limitations. She is wondering if it is worth moving forward with this company. She showed the board what the website looks like currently.

Eben asked if her issues are with design or function. Adrienne said both. One example is that on the Beautification Committee page, she asked for there to be an events calendar and they put on a very large calendar. They are very limited by their template.

Eben said we went through a long process and got multiple quotes. If the website works and committees can add minutes, he would like to see this to fruition. If eventually, after feedback, we need to pay for a little development he would be okay with that.

Adrienne said if we want any development it will cost \$150 per hour for a developer to make page changes. She thinks that is an excessive amount of money. She has issues with the design. Charles Flaum's recommendation was to follow through with this company for a year and do our own work on a website on the side. She has offered to design the website in Wix. We could switch over to that either now or by the end of the year. She would be happy to design it for free. The cost would be under \$350 per year to maintain it. Beth suggested that she should use WordPress rather than Wix. We already have that and we would get more functionality out of it.

Eben said he would like to see this project to fruition. And then if Adrienne is still willing to design another page for free 6 months from now she can take it up then. Mike said he was never happy with this plan. Adrienne has a lot of good points. She has skill in this type of thing.

Mike moved to terminate the contract with TownWeb, check for any refunds we may be due and have Adrienne design our web page. Adrienne seconded.

Duncan said he doesn't think we should burn out Adrienne. This could do that. At least this company is a known entity. We have a signed contract. Tom said we have already paid out \$4,400. Duncan asked what we would gain by canceling the contract. Peter asked if we really have anything to lose by letting this play out and getting something for our money and then revisiting the website in 6 months. Mike said Adrienne had mentioned that if they had to do more work that wasn't part of the scope we would have to pay \$150 an hour for that. Eben said that is if the work is out of scope. Duncan said it would come to the board and the board would decide whether to spend the additional money. Adrienne said they want to charge us to move the news on the homepage to a different area of the homepage. Tom said we could do that easily ourselves in WordPress. Beth said the town has paid out money to someone who has done work. Adrienne could be working on improvements to the existing WordPress site on the side on her own time. She would argue that we should let this run and work on something else strong in addition. Randall said he is concerned about going through the process of soliciting bids, selecting a bid and then wanting to change gears before the product is fully delivered. He doesn't think we should do business that way, especially based on one board member's opinion. He thinks we should wait until the product is delivered and see if the public and the committees have concerns.

Adrienne said another concern is that they told her there would be two more reviews and then they emailed her to say they were ready with the final site. There has been bad communication. Tom said he didn't initially like going with this company. We were getting wishy-washy messages about what they could and couldn't do. The vote on selecting a developer was rushed. One concern he has is that he believes in putting money into our community but all the money for this website is going to Romania. He agrees with Randall's point and he thinks Beth makes a good point. We might be able to renegotiate the annual fee if another site is available in less than a year. Mike asked, didn't

they say we would be dealing with someone in the U.S.? Tom said yes. Eben said he agrees with Randall.

Peter asked, if we are going to terminate the contract, how do we know we are going to get any money back? Eben said we may not. Tom said because this website is proprietary, if we cancel the contract it might be hard to retain any of the work they have done.

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

20. Interlocal Agreement Discussion Representative

Duncan said each participating town needs to appoint one member to discuss the interlocal assessor's contract. Our agreement with Justin is up on June 30 of this year. The towns want to have a meeting to hammer out any issues. It looks like St. George wants to increase their hours and so does at least one other town. Justin is suggesting we may want to increase our hours from 8 to 10. The bottom line is that this would likely end up being a 40-hour per week position. He suspects our total cost would stay the same or go down if other communities increase their hours. He has been the representative for these meetings. Does the board want him to continue? He is happy to do that but it might be a good idea to have an alternate because he may have surgery coming up. Eben agreed to be the alternate. **Mike moved to appoint Duncan as the primary point of contact for the interlocal assessor agreement discussion, with Eben as alternate, Peter seconded and the motion was passed.**

21. FEMA Buyout Update

Tom said all 16 buyout applications for the town were approved and the town was awarded \$5.627 million. Duncan noted that that does not include Sterling Market. Tom said that is under a different program. Tom said appraisals should be completed within 2 months. He thanked LeARN and Sarah Henshaw who were instrumental in submitting applications and facilitating with the state. Tom noted that some of the buildings have tenants and some are single family homes. The town should be mindful of the people living there. The timeline might depend on who is living in the buildings.

Duncan asked if individual property owners still have an opportunity to say they don't accept the buyout. Tom said yes, right up until closing. And so does the town.

Duncan said his understanding was that Vermont Emergency management was going to act as the agent for demolition and removal. Is that still the case? Tom said yes. They have contracted with an attorney to handle all the transactions. Tom wanted to make sure the attorney would be representing the town and not the state and that is the case.

Tom said board members had talked about saving and recycling some of the building products when the buildings are demolished. The state is finalizing a mechanism to allow that.

22. CEDS Update / Industrial Park Next Steps

Eben said Randall had noted in his report that the NEPA contract had a \$5K line item for hiring an environmental consultant which will not be necessary. He is asking if it is acceptable to the selectboard for that money to be available for other areas in the contract. The board agreed to that.

Eben said Mumley Engineering did some out-of-scope work and they are looking to submit an invoice for about \$1,500. Randall said they acknowledged that they should have asked first whether we wanted them to do that out-of-scope work. Peter said a key factor for him was that in Randall's opinion they were acting in good faith. The board agreed to sign the invoice when it is

submitted. Duncan said he would like it to be reiterated to them that they should not do out of scope work without prior approval.

Eben asked if there has been movement on whether we can substitute land for prime ag mitigation. Randall said the amount impacted is 2.6 acres. We have to offset it by providing twice that amount somewhere else or pay about \$19,000. That amount of acreage is available at the Gomo Town Forest, which has prime ag soils. There was also a conversation about using the Prindle lot, but that is identified as an offset for deer wintering and we don't know if it can be used for both. We are still waiting for an official state determination on prime ag mitigation. Peter asked what it means for the Gomo Town Forest if we use some of the land as prime ag mitigation. Does it encumber the Gomo Forest in any way? Duncan said the state will get an easement on 5.2 acres that will prohibit any future development. Eben asked if the easement is in perpetuity. Duncan thinks it is, but he suggested we should have Mumley tell us all the ramifications.

Eben said VCRD is looking to use the town as a pass-through for funds for the recreation task force. The cost should be around \$1,000. Randall said the idea is that the co-chair will submit invoices to the town and the town will reimburse them and then VCRD will reimburse the town. Peter moved and Adrienne seconded that the town accept reimbursement from VCRD on behalf of the recreation task force.

Duncan said we have been through this with other groups. The town decided we would not be a fiscal agent for entities that were not town sponsored. Eben said he doesn't think Duncan was at the meeting where the board agreed to accept a reimbursement grant for the food access task force as well as donations from businesses. Duncan said no matter how good the cause is, he thinks this sets a precedent.

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

Eben suggested maybe we need to make this group a town committee. Maybe they could partner with the town rec committee. Tom asked, what if Isabelle Sullivan made the grant request?

Diana Osborn said she agrees with keeping the task force and the town separate. Having task forces as separate groups provides an opportunity to empty the selectboard's plate of some work. She doesn't want to turn the task force's work into the selectboard's work. As a separate group they can dedicate themselves to projects in a more in-depth way and not burden the town. She thinks they can look into alternatives that VCRD will be comfortable with. She doesn't think they have to go through the town.

Randall said the Vermont Community Foundation provided funding for Legion Field. A group of stakeholders have met to talk about it. They will figure out a use for it. Adrienne asked if the Legion Field group is a committee. Eben said it is not technically a committee but it includes stakeholders from different committees. Randall said it includes representatives from the oven and Tuesday Night Live committees and the recreation coordinator.

23. Highway Open Position

Tom said he would like to put together an estimate of what the fifth public works employee costs versus saves the town. He doesn't have that yet. He feels the question is whether the town wants the department to be public works or a highway department. If we want it to be a highway department, 4 employees is probably enough for 42 miles of road. If the board wants more from them, they

probably need a fifth employee. **Adrienne moved to table action on the highway open position until Jason is here, Peter seconded and the motion was passed.**

Duncan asked Tom to do a survey of towns with a similar number of miles of roads to find out how many employees those towns have. If we do have a fifth person, maybe we need to think about having the highway department do some things that could save us money, such as mowing.

24. *Pickup Truck Review and Approve Bids*

Eben said he thinks Jason needs to be here for this item. He has some questions. We are way above what we budgeted. He doesn't understand why we need some of the items that are being proposed.

25. *Executive Session for Employee Evaluation*

Peter moved to go into executive session for employee evaluation under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3), inviting Tom and Randall to remain, Adrienne second and the motion was passed at 9:16.

The board came out of executive session at 10:07.

26. *Adjourn*

The meeting was adjourned at 10:07.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths