

JOHNSON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MONDAY, APRIL 7, 2025

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

Others: Tom Galinat, Rosemary, Paul Warden, Diana Osborn, Tasha Wallis, Lois Frey, Seth Jensen, Scott Griswold, Howard Romero, Kathy Black, two other people

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 executive session for employee evaluation.

3. *Public Comment*

No members of the public wished to comment.

4. *Selectboard Issues and Concerns*

Duncan said the mud abatement line item in the budget that was in the town report was zeroed out. He thinks the amount that previously was budgeted for mud abatement was moved into gravel or another line item. But he thought we had asked for money to be budgeted specifically for mud abatement. He thinks mud abatement is a valid use of money that was budgeted and that we should direct Jason to come up with a mud abatement proposal for this year. We were trying to set aside money every year to correct bad mud situations so eventually we would have all those situations corrected and we could spend less annually on gravel to deal with mud.

Eben said he doesn't recall the board asking for money to be put back into the mud abatement line item for this year, but he is open to doing a mud abatement project.

Tom said he thinks Jason's logic was that we now have deeper ditches and that makes mud season less of an issue. Jason says the work is harder to track if there is a separate mud abatement line. Eben suggested that the board ask Jason about it. Duncan said he finds it hard to believe that there are no spots in need of mud abatement. But maybe we have gotten to the point where we no longer need that line item. We can have Jason tell us.

Duncan said in the past the highway crew has picked up bags for Green Up Day. He would be in favor of them doing it again this year. The board agreed that they should.

Adrienne said she has heard that in the past the town crew has brought a truck to the Village Green for people to put tires into to be taken to the dump. Could we do that again? Duncan said we had it built into our agreement with the Lamoille Regional Solid Waste Management District that they would accept our Green Up Day tires. Eben asked Rosemary if that is correct. Rosemary said she doesn't remember ever seeing a bill for tires.

Tom said in order to reduce overtime we might leave the Green Up bags on the road until Monday and have the crew pick them up during regular work hours. That might benefit everyone because it would give people more time to pick up trash.

Adrienne said work on the new website is going well. She met with Town Web and they presented a draft website concept. She gave them feedback and provided some content.

Adrienne said she, Tom and Randall applied for Congressionally Directed Spending funding from Sen. Welch's office.

Adrienne said the library is looking for volunteers to help move shelves being donated by VTSU. Volunteers are needed on April 11 at 1:00 p.m. on the second floor of the college library.

5. ***Consent Agenda***

The consent agenda consisted of the minutes of March 3, 4, 5 and 17 and appointment of Mike Mignone to the Planning Commission. **Mike moved to approve the consent agenda, Peter seconded and the motion was passed.**

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

Duncan moved to approve a liquor catering license for a Vermont Studio Center event on May 11, Adrienne seconded and the motion was passed.

Rosemary said she submitted the first request for reimbursement for the library project. Tom said tonight's warrants include the total cost to move the library.

Duncan moved to authorize Rosemary to sign the engagement letter from RHR Smith & Company for the 2023 and 2024 audits. The motion was seconded and passed.

7. ***Town Clerk/ Treasurer Job Description and Job Offer Letter***

The board reviewed the draft offer letter to Rosemary. **Duncan moved to approve the town clerk/treasurer offer letter with "wage estimates" changed to "wage and benefit estimates" and with the letter to state that the 6 month probationary period and 6 month evaluation are waived, Peter seconded and the motion was passed.** Duncan said the letter should be put on town letterhead.

Duncan said the job descriptions don't discuss who appoints the assistant clerk and treasurer. Eben said he thinks that is set in statute. Rosemary said she has heard that the clerk has the authority to appoint and also that that the clerk can appoint with approval of the selectboard. Eben said he had thought that the clerk/treasurer would continue to have authority to appoint an assistant. Duncan said he would be happy with that concept while Rosemary is the clerk/treasurer. When she is no longer in that position the board can discuss it.

Duncan said he thinks the treasurer job description should state that it is a part-time FLSA exempt position.

Eben asked about delinquent tax collector duties. It was discussed that that is still an elected position. Rosemary said the voters can vote at town meeting to make it an appointed position.

Adrienne asked if it is typical for there to be two postings. If we plan to hire one person for both positions it might be confusing for applicants to see 2 positions posted. Tom said a great model is what the selectboard did for the community and economic development and town administrator positions. They offered the possibility that they could be two separate positions or that one person could be hired for both. Duncan said he would prefer to keep separate job descriptions because we may not always have the same people doing both jobs.

The board agreed that the job descriptions can be approved at a future meeting after some minor changes are made as discussed.

8. Clarification of Town Meeting Process

Peter moved to resolve an error which occurred during Article 8, Shall the voters authorize the Selectboard to appoint a Town Treasurer as provided in 17 V.S.A. § 2651(f), of town meeting. There was no motion or second during the meeting, however there was a successful vote to pass the article. The lack of motion was a mistake and is to be resolved by the Selectboard through this motion. Mike seconded.

Mike asked what the error was. Eben said there was a motion to appoint a town clerk but no motion to appoint a town treasurer, just discussion. Donna Griffiths said the moderator called for a vote as if there had been a motion to vote on, but there had not actually been a motion on that article. Tom said consulting attorneys advised that there is a mechanism in statute to correct this mistake. That is what this motion will do.

The motion was passed.

9. Process of Town Clerk and Treasurer Appointment

Duncan moved to appoint Rosemary Audibert as town clerk and town treasurer, Adrienne seconded and the motion was passed

Rosemary asked if it is all right with the board if she appoints Susan Tinker as her assistant. Board members said yes.

10. Road Foreman Report and Any Action Items

Tom said Jason has only been able to get one quote so far for the replacement pickup we plan to buy. The quote was \$71K, which is \$29K higher than what we budgeted. Would the board like to authorize a purchase or wait for other quotes? Jason wants to get a Dodge again but is still waiting on quotes from Ford and Chevrolet. Mike and Duncan said they think we need to wait for the other quotes.

Duncan said he knows Jason is interested in a crew cab but he is interested in the price for a regular cab. Tom said currently when the public works crew goes to trainings they need to take a tandem because they don't all fit in the pickup. If we replaced the pickup with one with a crew cab all 5 employees would be able to go to trainings in the pickup.

Eben asked how board members feel about getting sealed bids vs. using the state bid. Tom said we got sealed bids in the fall. It took a long time to get all the prices. The state Office of Purchasing and Contracting goes through a bid process and gets pricing municipalities can take advantage of. Duncan said in the past our highway crew has suggested that the state bid specifications are a little under resourced for town highways. Tom said we use the same cab and chassis as the state specs but with higher horsepower. We can pay the state price for the cab and chassis and pay about \$10K additional to get the engine we want. The board agreed that we should go with the state bid.

11. NEMS Contract Review and Approve

Duncan moved to direct Eben to sign the contract with NEMS for \$169,558, Mike seconded and the motion was passed.

12. EDA/Act 181 – LCPC Presentation

Tasha Wallis of the Lamoille County Planning Commission said new state legislation required that a housing needs assessment be completed for the entire state. That was recently done. Future housing targets were allocated to different regions and then the regional planning commission for

each region was tasked with allocating targets across communities. These are aspirational targets. There are no negative consequences for not meeting them. The planning commissions were given discretion in how to allocate targets across communities. LCPC thought they should allocate by population. Tasha handed out copies of the targets. The housing goal for Johnson is to add 187 to 264 units by 2030. A unit is somewhere a person could live. It could be a single family home, an apartment or a condo. Eben asked, the units do not specifically have to be low income housing? Tasha said no.

Tasha said statute requires communities to incorporate the housing goals into their town plans with some discussion. She knows this community has not had enthusiasm for zoning, but a town with zoning is eligible to designate areas in a certain way which can expand opportunities for Act 250 exemptions. That can be an incentive for developers. Regional planning commission staff will work with the Johnson planning commission on incorporating the housing targets into the town plan.

Duncan asked if Tasha has any sense of whether using a blend of population and grand list would significantly change any of the housing target allocations. Would that be a possible thing to think about? Tasha said communities like Stowe would have a significant increase in their targets if grand list was used. We want housing developed in centers around the county. Some other regions have used availability of water and wastewater in centers as a basis for allocating targets. Duncan said for a private developer to develop there has to be a market. There may not be much market in remote parts of the county and there may be much greater interest and marketability in a place like Stowe. The grand list may have some reflection on market realities.

Eben said he would bet Johnson has the highest percentage of state-owned land in the county. We are similar in population to Hyde Park, but Hyde Park has more area that could be developed. Without taking into account other factors, this is an unreachable target. Tasha said it is aspirational. There are many factors LCPC could have taken into account but the total for the county would still have been the same. They wanted it to be transparent and easy to understand. There may be some future opportunities in Johnson with Vermont State University. LCPC has had general discussions with them. They are trying to understand the landscape across their properties.

Tom said this encourages planning commissions to no longer have 2-acre or 5-acre restrictions but to make it easier to develop higher density housing. Tasha said the intent is to address the fact that there is not adequate housing in the state.

Seth Jensen said many communities are giving similar feedback – that due to other factors there are significant challenges to meeting targets. The regional plan and municipal plan will need to address those barriers. The regional plan talks about topographical barriers to development and infrastructural limitations. Communities applying for funding for infrastructure could note how that infrastructure might contribute to meeting the target. Due to Act 250 reform legislation communities now are able to have local land use regulations that free residents up from state Act 250 regulations. State level regulations like Act 250 and technical permitting requirements have an impact on the housing supply.

Tasha said it used to be that the LCPC board would approve the regional plan. Now it has to go to the new Land Use Resource Board, which replaced the Act 250 board. LCPC has to update their land use maps. They are going to work with communities to make sure the land use map reflects

the planning goals of each community. Seth said every region used to develop its own criteria for planning areas. Now they all have to use the same criteria.

Seth said a significant piece of Act 181 is more refinement regarding village centers. Johnson tried to expand its designated village center in the past and was unable to based on old statute. Under the new statute those designations are based on future land use maps and can be broader. Duncan said the town has nothing to do with the request to expand the designation. That came from the village trustees.

Seth discussed different types of areas shown on the map, such as conserved, working lands and rural general. These maps will be the basis for potential future Act 250 tiers. To be eligible to be a Tier 1B area with an Act 250 exemption for up to 50 units, an area needs to be mapped on the future land use map as a village center, a downtown center, a village area or an area planned for growth. There needs to be available infrastructure and local zoning and subdivision regulations. On Johnson's map there is not a village area or an area planned for growth, but there is a transition zone – an area where growth might happen. The community can have discussion at the local level about where growth might be appropriate.

Mike said there is a lot of land that is in current use. If the state wants people to open that land up, they will have to do away with the fines for selling property that is in current use.

Tasha said LCPC needs to get their new regional plan and land use map approved by the Land Use Resource Board before the end of December 2026 or all communities in the region will lose their designated village and downtown areas. LCPC needs to have their work done by May 2026.

Adrienne asked if they could have our Conservation Commission give input. Tasha said yes.

Duncan said he thinks the village corporate boundaries should be put on the map. Paul said the town sewer service area should be shown too.

Tom asked if there will be flexibility to make changes once the mapping is done. Seth said there is a process to do minor amendments to the maps without a full Land Use Resource Board review process, but major changes need to go before them. Tom said once we put in a new sewer line for the industrial park, neighboring properties will become more developable. Seth said if there are areas that are likely to be affected by sewer service expansion it would be beneficial to include them in the transition zone. This would be a good time to provide feedback about that. Tasha said they have already found some areas that don't fit into the state's categories, like the asbestos mine.

Tom suggested that if we knew what the bare minimum zoning was that would be needed to meet requirements for Act 250 exemptions, that might make discussion about zoning more fruitful.

Tasha said that is a broader discussion that it might be helpful to have.

13. *Weathervane*

Eben said today the selectboard received a formal request from the Historical Society to allow them to pick up the weathervane that is at the municipal building. Duncan said the Historical Society board is concerned about putting the weathervane out into the elements, though he explained to them that he thought things could be done to protect it. When the town sold the former town hall (now the Lowe Lecture Hall) to the Vermont Studio Center, they specifically reserved out the weathervane and monuments in the deed. The weathervane is still there. Several years ago

the Historical Society went to the Lowe Lecture Hall to look at how they might remove the weathervane and they found an old weathervane in the tower that probably used to be on the town hall. VSC donated that weathervane to the Historical Society. The Historical Society still thought it would be a good idea to remove the weathervane that is on top of the Lowe Lecture Hall and display it. But the selectboard decided not to invest in doing that.

Mike said we couldn't do it because of Act 250. We were going to take it down and put up a facsimile but we were told we couldn't do it. Duncan asked if the town ever got a jurisdictional opinion. Mike said he doesn't know. Duncan said he can't believe removing the weathervane would be considered a significant change.

Duncan said the Historical Society would like to take back the weathervane that is in the municipal building and display it in the Historical Society building or the library. They want it inside, not outside exposed to the elements.

Eben suggested that the Historical Society come get the weathervane and that Mike and Duncan contact the Studio Center and remind them that we own the weathervane on the Lowe Lecture Hall. Duncan said it won't be a cheap process to remove that weathervane. We could request a jurisdictional opinion on Act 250. That is probably the first step. Duncan noted that he heard recently from an employee of VSC that VSC would be willing to give the Lowe Lecture Hall to the town for a dollar. He said the weathervane may be religiously significant. The building was originally a church. The points on the vane are scrolls. He said the Historical Society paid for a plaque to go with the weathervane that is in the municipal building. He thinks that plaque was probably thrown away after the flood.

It was agreed that Duncan and Mike should inform the Studio Center that the town owns the weathervane on the Lowe Lecture Hall, the Historical Society should be notified that they can take the weathervane from the municipal building, and the town should pay for a new plaque if the old one can't be found.

14. Grading Legion Field

Tom said this year Tuesday Night Live is moving to Old Mill Park so this would be the least disruptive year to do anything on Legion Field. We would need a general construction permit to grade the field. We could consider changing the location of the ice rink on the field but we don't need to decide now.

Howard Romero said the Tuesday Night Live committee is going to move the bandstand to the other side of the field in back. They are figuring out how to make that happen without it costing the town anything. Duncan asked if the bandstand will go where the backstop is. Howard said yes. The backstop is coming down. Power will need to be brought to the new bandstand location. A trench could be dug for that when the field is graded. There are water and sewer lines under the field and it is known where they are. Both are rather shallow.

Mike asked if the ice rink is okay where it is. Howard said he doesn't know. He got the engineering site plan for the new library so that can be figured out. Casey said there is a Legion Field group that can figure out the details.

Tom said he can get the permits for grading. Eben said we might need to hire someone if the public works crew has too much other work. Howard said Greg Tatro said he can do it. Tom said there

will be fill coming from Holmes Meadow that we can use. The board agreed that Tom should pursue having the field graded.

15. Car Charger at Municipal Building

Tom said the car charger is 10 years old and it is not fast. One side doesn't work. It no longer connects with the phone service. At some point it will break. It doesn't seem to him that we should advertise it on the state list of charging stations. There is a potential liability issue if it breaks when a car is charging. Erik Bailey is the primary user. Erik suggested that he could turn it on when he gets to work and turn it off when he is done charging and that he be the only one to use it; it would not be available to the public.

Eben asked if we have asked VLCT about liability. Tom said no, but we are advertising that it is there.

Duncan said he thinks the board previously told Brian Story to get it fixed. Do we have any idea what would be involved in fixing the other side? Tom said the flood destroyed its ability to communicate. We no longer know how much electricity it is using. He had Gould Electric look at it. They got one side going and said it would not be worth working on the other side. It would have to be taken all apart. Something is mechanically wrong with it.

Mike suggested that if only the village is using it we should just give it to the village. Tom said that would address his concern about liability. **Mike moved to give the electric car charger to the village.**

Peter asked if there is anything to be said for replacing it with a newer unit. Eben said there is uncertainty about the future location of the wastewater treatment plant. Adrienne said she thinks the library would be a great place for a future charging station.

Eben said he doesn't know if a "Use at your own risk" sign, as suggested by Tom in his written report, really absolves us of liability. Duncan suggested we could put up a sign saying "Not for personal use." Maybe we could have an MOU with the village stating that we will continue to share the cost of the electricity it uses (which is part of the electricity cost for the municipal building, split between town and village), but if it breaks we are not paying to fix it.

Adrienne seconded Mike's motion. The motion was passed with Duncan opposed.

Duncan said if the town has continuing obligations with regard to the charger under the grant that paid for it then he wouldn't want to give it to the village. Tom said we could also transfer the ongoing obligations. Eben said he is okay with researching whether we have any continuing obligations. Peter pointed out that we don't even know if the village will accept it.

16. Mowing RFP Review and Award

Three bids for mowing were received and included in the meeting packet.

Mike moved to accept the \$18,000 bid from Robert & Sons for mowing. The motion died for lack of a second.

It was discussed that Robert & Sons has been the town's mowing contractor for a long time but their price jumped from \$9K to \$18K. They are not the low bidder. Duncan said in his opinion if

we are not going to select the low bidder we should have a good reason. Mike said he feels the low bidder's bid was not detailed enough.

Adrienne moved and Eben seconded to accept the \$18,000 bid from Robert & Sons for mowing. Duncan suggested the friendly amendment, which was accepted, that the reason for accepting this bid is that the town has used Robert & Sons for a long time and that their proposal was more detailed than that of the low bidder. The motion was passed with Mike opposed.

17. Library Relocation

Tom said the library project permits are being finalized. No one at AOT can recall a longer 2 lane shutdown than what they are permitting in Johnson. Everyone is working together to coordinate a plan for the move.

Duncan moved to authorize Eben as chair and/or Tom as town administrator to sign contracts for building movers and architectural services, Mike seconded and the motion was passed.

Duncan asked if we know what the estimate from Green Mountain Power is. Tom said no. We found out we will need flaggers on site for 12 hours. GMP will provide their flagging crew so they are coming back with a cost that includes that. We are still significantly under budget on this project.

Duncan asked where we are on the process of having an owner's representative or clerk of the works. Tom said we will have a clerk of the works. They bill based on the total cost of the project, so we need to have the architectural drawings done and go out to bid for a general contractor first, then we will have a price that will let us get a clerk of the works price. We will move the building first because we have a deadline for that, then we will do the rest of the work as a separate project.

Adrienne asked if there is talk of making a list of who will be allowed to be there on the day of the move. Tom said VOSHA will be present. Certain people who have jobs to do will be allowed inside the work zone and no one else will be allowed in that zone. There will be 3 police officers on site making sure unauthorized people don't cross into work zones. Adrienne said she has heard that the tree warden wants to be there. Tom said it was determined on Friday that 3 trees need to be removed. He thinks they should be taken down in advance. It doesn't matter whether the tree warden or the public works crew cuts them down but before the move is the time to do it and remove the brush and debris. Adrienne said the tree warden was concerned that if trimming of any trees is necessary and it is done incorrectly it could kill the trees. If he were there he could give advice. The library wants to do a documentary. It would be good to have an area where the people working on that could stand. Tom said there will be 3 viewing areas along the route. The estimated times when the building will pass through those areas will be publicized. Three people will be there to film the move. They will be allowed into the work area and will have to meet VOSHA requirements.

Tom said the tree board is planning to prune trees that need to be pruned before the move. The library windows will be boarded up so branches can brush against it. We worked to preserve as many trees as possible. Every tree that could be saved will be saved. There are just 4 trees that need to be removed, all on Pearl Street. Peter said as he understands it at least two of them are small. Tom said they are ginkgos that are not doing well.

18. VHB Amendment for Scribner Bridge Scoping Study

Mike said he does not think the town should pay the additional amount VHB is asking for beyond what was in the contract. We had a binding contract and as far as he is concerned we don't owe them anything more and they need to give us the report we paid for. Duncan said he tends to agree. We had a contract but their contention is that we asked them to investigate an additional alternative. At no point during the meeting when that was discussed did they say it would cost \$4K more to do it. Tom said the request for additional payment should have come before the work. Duncan agreed.

Tom said most of the work to investigate the other alternative had already been done. It was not a brand new idea. Duncan said it was all done. Eben explained to the new board members that VHB is doing a scoping study for potential changes to Scribner Bridge. We need this study in order to get grant money. A study was already done but it was 15 years old, which was too old to use for grants, so we are doing another study.

Eben said we should ask them to send the final report and not pay anything additional. If they want to hold back the information on the additional alternative, that is fine. Duncan said he would like that information. They didn't tell us it would cost more to provide it. Adrienne and Peter said they want to push back against the request for more money. Tom said he will try to get the complete report for no additional cost.

19. Industrial Park

There was no industrial park update.

20. Project Management and Tracking

Adrienne said she and Tom have been talking about software that can help us keep track of projects that are going on, with a dashboard that selectboard members can look at to see project status. Tom could use the software to make updates on projects and send out notifications to the board. She thinks it would help us avoid losing track of smaller projects. We could set up reminders. Projects can be assigned to specific people. She looked at different options and her recommendation is SmartSuite. It costs \$120/year. **Mike moved to pay \$120/year for SmartSuite, Peter seconded and the motion was passed.**

Duncan said he doesn't want to see something like this take the place of Tom's reports to the board but maybe it can be used as an adjunct. Adrienne said she and Tom will learn how to use it, then give a quick tutorial to everyone. Eben said he just wants to make sure it is used. He would like some measure of its productivity.

21. Committee Access to Remote Meetings, Laptop Setup

Adrienne said she put together price estimates for equipment to make remote meetings more accessible to residents and committee members and help boards that need to record their meetings meet that requirement. She proposes buying a laptop that would be kept in one spot, a TV or ceiling mounted projector and computer speakers. She looked into a way to directly upload Zoom recordings to YouTube but she was not sure if it could entirely replace GMTAV. Would we still need them for town meeting? The total cost of all the equipment she suggests is \$376.

Duncan asked if the TV would take the place of the screen we currently use. Adrienne said yes. Duncan said he likes what we are currently using. Tom suggested maybe we could use both. The TV could be for the Zoom meeting and the screen could be for whatever is being shared from his computer.

Eben said the cost is below the amount that requires board approval under the procurement policy. Adrienne said she and Tom talked about reaching out to GMATV to see if we could get an extra set of microphones. Tom said initially they said no. Eben said if we are talking about mounting a TV on the wall we need to talk to the village. Tom said probably we will need to rearrange how the room is set up for meetings. Board members agreed they are okay with the plan to buy the suggested equipment.

22. *Municipal Employee Roles and Responsibilities*

Adrienne said she created a hierarchy chart showing who reports to whom. Her idea is that we would survey employees to see if this chart matches what they think and also ask what their daily tasks are, if there are any responsibilities they have that they feel are outside their role, if they feel anything can be streamlined or improved, if they have the resources they need, and if there are any tasks they want to take on in the future or have reassigned.

Board members agreed they are fine with the concept of doing this survey.

Casey Romero said she sees the skatepark is on the chart, but not other committees. She thinks other committees ought to be on the chart. Eben said the skatepark is on the chart because it has an employee. Casey said the skatepark committee does not currently have a town employee working for it. They contract with someone to do some work. Eben suggested removing the skatepark and the skatepark employee from the chart. Adrienne agreed to do that.

Peter asked if there is a way to represent on the chart how the community and economic development specialist, road foreman, town administrator and town clerk/treasurer relate to each other. Adrienne said she doesn't think we know that yet. That might be something we can add after employees fill out the survey.

It was agreed that Tom will give employees the survey.

23. *Restructuring Committees*

Adrienne said she thinks we could evaluate how our committees function and start a conversation on how we would like them to serve us better in the future. She suggests a meeting where the chairs of all committees, commissions and Reimagine Johnson task forces look at all the tasks they do, put them into new buckets and come up with new committees to recommend to the selectboard. We have Reimagine Johnson task forces that are not town committees but want to go after grants and get donations. We can also revitalize our committees. For instance, we have an inactive recreation committee but there is a Reimagine Johnson recreation task force that is very active right now. The chairs could also come with lists of projects and then prioritize them together and give the list of priorities to the selectboard and to Randall to work on getting funding for them.

Eben said he thinks Johnson has too many committees. Rosemary has pointed out that the taxpayers may not always be able to continue to support their growing needs. He and Shayne Spence talked about the idea that many of the committees could fit under parks and recreation. There could be a parks and recreation committee with subcommittees. He thinks subcommittees don't have to follow open meeting law if they have fewer members than a quorum of the committee. Paul Warden agreed that is right. Casey asked if Eben is talking about a parks and recreation department or a committee. Eben said he was talking about a committee.

Adrienne said she also wants better communication with committees. In the past different committees have gone after the same grants because they didn't know what each other were doing.

Adrienne said she wants board approval for her, Tom, Randall and perhaps Peter (who she has asked and who is willing) to organize and hold this session. The board agreed to that.

24. Communication and Relaying Information

Tom suggested trying the new software Adrienne discussed and coming back to this topic if that doesn't work. Eben said he doesn't want the software to take the place of reports. Duncan agreed. Casey asked if the software could work for committee chairs. Eben said we can discuss that. Casey said it would be helpful if office staff had a schedule showing when they would be in.

25. School Street Traffic

Peter said School Street is a busy street and it will get busier with the library there. Mike said there may be 50 apartments going into McClelland Hall. Peter said traffic on School Street moves way too fast. He talked to VLCT earlier today. It was brought up at another meeting that insurance has a problem with speed bumps. VLCT said they have not heard of our insurance carrier having an issue with them. They would be the most effective way of slowing down traffic. However, they are unpopular, especially with plow drivers. We can request that the sheriff's department put a speed cart on School Street for 2 weeks as a start. It would probably be a good idea to make that request after the library move. The board agreed Peter can make that request.

Duncan said the speed limit ordinance is a village ordinance. Peter said it is also a town one. The town ordinance says the speed limit on School Street is 25 mph and the village ordinance says it is 20. That is not legal. The state will not accept a limit less than 25 mph. Duncan said he thought lower limits could be set in school zones. Tom said maybe there is more to know but he was told the lowest the limit could be reduced to was 20. We had talked about having flashing lights there. He talked to Sgt. Watson about that but the speed limit is already 25 so the lights wouldn't provide jurisdiction for any additional action. Duncan said he knows there is a specific statute about school zones. He thought the limit could go down as low as 20 in a designated school zone. Mike read from some information he found that said the speed limit in school zones in Vermont is typically 20 mph. However, there may be variations. The local governing body can establish speed limits on town highways ranging from 25 to 30 mph.

Peter said the village's ordinance says the speed limit is 20 but the state will not allow that unless it is a designated school zone. Only the town's ordinance is in compliance with statute and the signs match that limit. A speed cart will tell when people are going faster than 25 mph.

Peter said he believes the sheriff's department provided the town with 2 digital speed signs. One works and the other one is not working. We should find out why. Tom said public works has to take it down and take it to an electrician's shop to have it fixed. An electrician can't work on it in its current location. Peter suggested moving it to School Street.

Peter said the sheriff's department said the single most effective way to address speeding would be speed bumps. He has a safe traffic toolkit from VTrans that goes into various options in more depth and he can share that with the rest of the board.

Adrienne said the current crosswalks by the school are not in the locations where people actually cross. We could add flashing lights at the crosswalks. Adding stop signs at College Hill and Sterling Hall Drive might slow people down. Tree-lined streets can create visual narrowing, slowing speeds. Maybe we could increase the tree board's budget so they could plant more trees. Lines on the side of the road could also provide a narrowing effect. Casey said if parking areas are

visually strongly marked it makes the street appear narrower. Duncan said the village has a parking ordinance but he doesn't know if it deals with School St. Tom said he has seen a 3-dimensional painted crosswalk that is supposed to slow traffic because it makes it look like you are about to hit something. Mike suggested we could use speed tables rather than speed bumps because they make it easier to plow.

Diana Osborn said when she was on the JES school board they worked with the selectboard to hire a crossing guard. They looked at different options and concluded that a crossing guard was the most effective at that time. She thinks the selectboard paid for it. Traffic calming that doesn't rely on enforcement is more effective because enforcement is insufficient. Peter said the problem extends beyond the school day. One option would be a sign like the one at the high school showing a lower speed limit when school is in session. But the traffic issue is all day and all night.

26. Executive Session

Peter moved to go into executive session for employee evaluation under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3), Adrienne seconded and the motion was passed at 9:53. The board came out of executive session at 10:23.

27. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:23.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths