

JOHNSON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MONDAY, MAY 19, 2025

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

Others: Tom Galinat, Rosemary Audibert, Lois Frey, Randall Szott (remote), Noel Dodge, Sue Lovering, Joe Salerno, Howard Romero, Kim Dunkley, Kathy Black, Paul Warden (remote)

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. *Call Meeting to Order*

Eben called the meeting to order at 6:32.

2. *Consider Additions or Adjustments to the Agenda*

At Mike's suggestion, it was agreed to discuss the open highway position in executive session and have further discussion following item #19. Tom added discussion of paying half the cost of the village cell phone that is sometimes used in emergencies, discussion of a potential maintenance agreement for a bike charging station, and an executive session for a real estate item.

3. *Invoices and Orders*

Duncan said he wants to make it clear that there is an invoice tonight for Dale Tatro Construction that is about \$125K but should actually be \$47,800. Rosemary and Tom will make that change tomorrow.

4. *Selectboard Issues and Concerns*

Duncan said Doug Molde asked him if there were any bids submitted for the rail trail building improvements. Tom said he received none. Randall said he circulated the RFP. Questions were supposed to go to him and submissions were supposed to go to Tom. Duncan said he would like to extend the opportunity to bid until the next board meeting. Eben said Randall's report says the RFP was already reposted with a May 14 deadline. Duncan suggested discussing this under Randall's report.

Adrienne asked if any board members are opposed to changing the title of this agenda item to "Updates and Concerns." She would like to give and hear updates if there any that are important. The board agreed to change it to "Updates and/or Concerns."

Adrienne said on May 28 she, Peter, Tom and Randall will hold a working session on possible reconstruction of town commissions and committees.

Adrienne said at the last meeting we decided we weren't going to post the agenda packet online. If someone messages her for the agenda packet, should she send it or have Tom send it, possibly with items redacted? Tom said information that has to do with executive session shouldn't be sent out. Anyone can send anything. If a board member has concerns they can redact information and send the packet out. If the request comes to him he may treat it like a FOIA request, which is a slower process. Board members can each make their own judgments about what to send out.

Duncan said he doesn't think any of us individually should send out the packet. That should be something Tom does and what to include should be his judgment. The consequence of board members sending out the information is that they might send something that shouldn't be sent out. Even though state law prevents us from being sued individually for acting in our role as selectboard members that wouldn't necessarily prevent someone from suing. There is a liability issue. Tom will just have to make a judgment. He would not treat it as a FOIA request. Tom said if anyone asks him for the packet

he will handle it if he can, but he may not be able to take time out of his day on a Monday to send it out.

The board agreed that people who want the packet should contact Tom and he will respond when he can, and that Donna and Rosemary can be sent the packet at the same time it is sent to board members. Duncan said if Tom sends out a redacted report and someone submits a FOIA request, then our attorney could advise us whether the information was properly redacted. But he thinks an initial request should not be treated as a FOIA request.

Duncan said at the last meeting he and Tom were authorized to put together an RFP. He asked Tom to add that to the list of old business.

5. *Planned Purchases*

No planned purchases needed to be approved.

6. *Committee Update – Conservation Commission*

Eben said he noticed that Lois hadn't sent her committee report to Tom's main email address. Lois said it would be helpful for all the volunteers if there was a list of correct addresses and what goes to whom. Is it still necessary to send minutes to everyone in the office? Adrienne said she only sends them to Lydia. Lois said she was told to send them to everyone. Eben said a committee communication check sheet would be great. He asked to have that added to old business.

Eben said we need numbers for the land survey of the Gomo Town Forest. He is not comfortable approving something without a dollar amount. Tom said he did get some numbers. He is trying to negotiate with one surveyor who gave a quote for a boundary line survey on all sides of the property. We really only need 4 corners and one line. That would save time in the field.

Duncan asked why that is a high priority. Lois said because we need to know what our boundaries are. There is the potential of people encroaching on our land and the Conservation Commission thinks that may be the case. There is good existing survey information for some lines.

Duncan said he thinks under Vermont law the first survey to be done is the one that gets recognized unless there is a second survey done and there is a dispute. Is there already a recorded survey for the line where there may be encroachment? If there is and we do our own survey and it disagrees we will be in the position of having to defend our survey in court. Tom said he did some deed research. It looks like it has not been surveyed. There seems to be an error in the description on a recent deed. It is likely that is where the problem is occurring.

Peter said the Conservation Commission is also looking to develop a management plan and possibly identify some trees for harvesting. They want to make sure we harvest on our property and not someone else's. Lois said this management plan would be different from an ecologically informed management plan that would look at all opportunities.

Eben said there was discussion at a couple of meetings about using the Gomo Town Forest as a prime ag offset for the industrial park. Is there angst about that from the Conservation Commission? Lois said she doesn't have any angst about it. Noel Dodge said he doesn't think it would be an issue because the stipulation is just that it not be developed.

Lois said she understands there is a plan for flood resiliency on Wescom Road that will involve taking a lot of land for flood control. The Conservation Commission would like to be part of that. Tom said

he thinks Lois is referring to the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program project that will involve flood benching on the east side of the road on the skate park property. The pollinator garden may be removed and lowered. Duncan asked if this is the 10 acres the town owns that used to be part of the Wescom trailer park. Lois said yes. Tom said a portion of the property would be lowered 7 feet. He thinks that is where the pollinator garden is now. It is a critical project because if we lower Holmes Meadow it will shoot water directly into that area, so the project will be helpful to provide flood storage to protect the village. Noel said the Conservation Commission also has bat boxes on that site. Tom said we are just at the beginning of the process for that project. Lois said it would be helpful if the Conservation Commission could see what they have in mind. Tom said so far we have just done a feasibility study.

Lois said the Conservation Commission received \$500 from the Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions for this project. The bulk of it is for working with the skatepark and community garden to put up a sign for the pollinator garden, the community garden and the skate park.

Mike asked why the town administrator is getting involved with trying to look for a surveyor. Tom said he is fast at doing title searches. He quickly pulled up the deeds and identified an issue. It probably took him less than 20 minutes. Lois said the Conservation Commission doesn't have much money. If a survey is to be done it has to go through the town. Sue Lovering said she doesn't think the Conservation Commission has the right to get in touch with a surveyor and work out a deal. Mike said he doesn't think it is the town administrator's responsibility to find a surveyor. Peter said that is not what Tom is doing. He can fill Mike in later. Duncan said the Conservation Commission has generously managed it on behalf of the town for years, but it is town property.

Lois said the Conservation Commission is looking to expand its conservation reserve fund. Eben read a passage from the report Lois had submitted where she said "this project needs a dedicated individual" – what project is she referring to? Lois said the conservation reserve fund. The Conservation Commission needs to have one of its members managing it.

Duncan said if the Conservation Commission is interested in seeking town contributions to the conservation reserve fund, the process of developing the next budget would be when that would be put in the budget.

Adrienne said Lois had mentioned that the land management review form is not on the town website. She asked Lois to send it to her so she can put it on the new website that will be launching soon.

7. *Future Committee*

It was agreed to invite the Tuesday Night Live Committee to be the next to present to the board, with the Bread Oven Committee as well if they are willing to share the time.

8. *Sharing Cost of Village Cell Phone*

Eben said the village has a spare cell phone a former supervisor used. They continue to pay for it monthly. Rosemary said the village is asking the town to pay half the cost. Eben said it is used for emergency management. He sees value in having a dedicated phone for emergencies. He doesn't want the emergency management line tied to his phone. Rosemary said the cost is about \$70 a month.

Adrienne asked who holds onto it. Rosemary said it is kept in the office. Duncan asked if it was used in 2023. Eben said yes, but not right off the bat. The town office phone was forwarded to Eben's cell phone until Ken Tourangeau said they had this phone available. Mike said thinks it should be an even

trade for the village dominating use of the car charger. Adrienne asked who would have it in an emergency – Eben? Eben said yes.

Peter moved to have Tom draft an agreement with the village to split the cost of the emergency cell phone, Adrienne seconded and the motion was passed with Mike opposed.

9. *E-Bike Charging Station Maintenance Agreement*

Eben said he believes the Rail Trail Committee is trying to get an e-bike charging stations and a sign put in at the Village Green. His understanding is that the request is for the town to sign an agreement for maintenance once those are in. They are being put in with grant funds. The town would own them and we always pay for maintenance of our property.

Duncan said he thought the committee was moving away from using the Village Green. Adrienne said committee members met with the Masons to discuss another option, but ideally they would like to put these on the Village Green. Bicyclists could sit at the picnic tables there and look at the map better there. They are thinking that if they could go back to the village and say the town would maintain the sign and chargers that would make them more willing to accept having them on village property.

Duncan asked what we would be responsible for. Adrienne said things like painting. Duncan asked, and electricity? Eben said he would assume so. He is not sure how that would work. Duncan said there is a meter on the Village Green. Eben asked, don't food trucks plug in there? Would we need our own meter? Rosemary asked if the chargers would be free or paid. Adrienne said free. The amount of electricity involved is very small.

Duncan asked if we have a formal request from the Rail Trail Committee or the village. Eben said the request came from Kim Dunkley. She asked him if the town was willing to maintain an e-bike charging station at the Village Green. As far as he knows, it will be town property sitting on village property.

Mike asked Duncan how long it takes his e-bike to charge. Duncan said 6 or 7 hours. Mike said his takes about the same amount of time. Are people going to wait that long? Duncan said his is a 3 amp charger. There are 5 amp chargers but they don't cut the time in half. Mike asked, if it takes so long to charge, what good is a charger? If you are going to go on trip you will take an extra battery. Duncan said he thinks the hope is that someone would plug in and go have a meal or something for a couple of hours.

Adrienne and Peter said they are willing for the town to accept responsibility for maintenance. Mike questioned what good it will do. He is not in favor. Duncan said if it has the potential to bring bikers in he is okay with it, but he tends to agree with Mike that it won't be a big attraction. Eben said the majority of the board is willing for the town to accept responsibility for maintenance.

Kim Dunkley said having a sign in town that people can see as they walk out of the Woolen Mills or Butternut Mountain Farm with information on attractions like the swimming hole and the rail trail may encourage people to come back to Johnson. ‘

Duncan said he remembers Doug saying that the company the committee was trying to get a charger from didn't have the capacity to do maintenance. Adrienne said she thinks the committee started looking at a different type of charger.

10. Community and Economic Development Specialist Update

Eben said Duncan had a question on the RFP timing for the welcome center work. Randall said he has not received any responses. Tom suggested that Doug Molde talk to possible bidders but the person Doug talked to did not submit a bid. He thinks we need to extend the deadline again and the Rail Trail Committee can try to find someone. **Duncan moved to extend the RFP filing deadline for the welcome center work to 4:00 p.m. on May 30, Peter seconded and the motion was passed.**

Randall said there is going to be a local concerns meeting on the rail trail connector piece on May 22 at 6:00 at the municipal building. Duncan said Doug is encouraging selectboard members to attend.

Randall said the FEMA Community Assistance document will be long and will include many potential funding sources. It was generated for Johnson but he thinks FEMA intends to make it available to communities around Vermont.

11. Industrial Park Next Steps

Eben asked if Mumley got their edits back to Clark Group. Randall said not yet. They had scheduling issues. He believes they are hoping to send it tomorrow.

Eben noted that Randall had sent out an email saying that VHB will not be using a traffic counting study from LCPC. Randall said VHB will do the study.

12. School Street Traffic

Peter asked how to go about getting a cost estimate for speed tables. He would be willing to get that information. Eben suggested calling an asphalt company. Tom asked if Peter has visited any towns that have speed tables. Eben said he doesn't want speed tables. Mike said he thinks they are quite effective. Duncan said he would be interested in cost numbers. Adrienne said she is fine with semi-permanent ones but not the big ones. She is worried about them crumbling in winter if they are not maintained, but if maintenance is cheap and we will have a system to keep up with it, her opinion could change. Tom suggested asking the public works department in a town that has them who they use.

Peter said he thinks Tom's idea of stop signs has some potential, but they are dependent on law enforcement that won't be there. Speed tables will force people to slow down whether law enforcement is present or not. He would like to hold off on signs. Maybe he and Tom could look more at that. Mike said Tom had mentioned that he personally feels law enforcement is not effective, but he disagrees. He gave the example of when a deputy frequently used to park at the bottom of Clay Hill. And he said everyone knows about Danville. They rigidly enforce their speed limit. Word would get out if we enforced ours. Peter said it is hard to predict when law enforcement would need to be there and they are stretched pretty thin. Mike said we pay a tremendous amount of our budget to them. We need a deputy down there a couple of hours a day for a while.

Duncan said he thinks we should make a formal request to get a speed cart set up on School Street. He noticed that the speed sign coming into town was taken down. Is there a plan to put that on School Street? Tom said he took it to 802 Electric for repairs. Duncan said he thinks those signs are pretty effective. He doesn't like the idea of putting a stop sign at George Hill Road. He would rather try one at the intersection of College Hill and School Street.

Eben said he had emailed Tom about the sheriff's department monthly report. Are they not emailing them? Tom said no, they send them by regular mail. Eben said he thinks the selectboard needs to start

receiving those. Tom suggested that maybe when the report comes in Susan could scan it and then send it out.

Eben said Duncan had sent out an email about a village streetscape improvement study that talked about narrowing the entrance to School Street to slow traffic down. Duncan said the study was done and in about 2013 or 2014. He thinks the firm was Otter Creek. They may still have it or our copy of the plans might have survived the flood in the vault. Eben said he thinks someone should look for it or call Otter Creek. Peter said he will do that.

Adrienne said she still thinks narrowing effects would be the best tactic for slowing down traffic – things such as planting trees or putting lines on the road. Trees do take a while but they are a good investment and they also help flood resiliency. And we could add stop signs. She thinks we could approach the issue in a multifaceted way. Peter agreed. Eben said apparently the south side of the street isn't even in the town right of way. Adrienne said the tree board could get the permission of property owners.

Mike said he would like to see police presence 2 hours a day, 7 days a week for 2 weeks. Tom said he will call the sheriff's department to ask about that and the speed cart.

13. *Speed and Stop Sign Ordinance Review*

Peter said he would be happy to take the two ordinances that were in the packet and the samples Adrienne got from other towns and put together a draft. Eben said this came up because Duncan had mentioned that our speed limit ordinance does not have fines. Tom said if our ordinance doesn't meet statute and we ask law enforcement to take action, we are liable. We might be responsible for their cost to go to court if someone got a ticket when they shouldn't. Eben asked if the board is comfortable with one traffic ordinance that covers speed limits and signs.

Duncan said he thinks it is a big project, more complex than just updating the existing street sign and stop sign ordinances. He does think we need it. Peter suggested that maybe initially we could update the existing ordinances and then work on a new one. Duncan said the village has an ordinance related to parking. Technically the town owns and controls roads, but it is probably worth recognizing that the village has done that. Tom said the village speed limit ordinance says the speed limit on School Street is 20 mph. Adrienne asked if they could adopt ours. Duncan said they could. Tom said he thinks it is important for the ordinances to match.

Adrienne asked if Peter would be okay with her helping with the ordinance update. Peter said yes.

14. *Library Relocation*

Tom said he spoke with the architect this morning. We hope to be ready to go out to bid this week or next for the site work and the addition.

Duncan said he would like to make sure that we are not spending more than the amount of the grant. If the project exceeds the grant amount, we need to either scale back the scope of work or get a commitment from the library trustees that they will fundraise for the difference between the grant amount and the estimated cost.

Duncan moved and Mike seconded to make a firm commitment that the town will not spend more than the grant amount on the library project and that if the cost goes above that the library board of trustees will be asked to come up with a plan to meet the shortfall.

Peter said he thinks the library trustees agreed to that at the last meeting. He thinks that is very reasonable.

Eben noted that the motion says the library trustees will come up with a plan. A plan and actually coming up with the money are two different things. Their plan could be to raise the money over 4 years. Duncan said the library board either has to agree to come up with a plan to cover the overage or they could circulate a petition asking the voters to raise the money to cover the difference. He doesn't really like that plan but they could do it. Adrienne asked if the motion means that if they find another grant and they need a match from us, we wouldn't give it to them. Duncan said he thinks that would be a different conversation. They would have to come to us for that.

The motion was passed with Adrienne opposed.

Eben asked how the library project is looking financially. Tom said last he saw the expense was at \$509,000. He thinks getting it on the foundation will raise the expense to a little over \$800,000.

Duncan asked about eligibility for administrative expenses. Tom said we are not eligible. Duncan asked about public works expenses. Tom said we have to show that using our town staff was less expensive than using an outside vendor, so we are getting costs from outside vendors. It will be less than half the cost of using an outside vendor.

Eben asked if we can at least get reports of administrative time spent as the project progresses.

Duncan said he won't be terribly concerned about adding the cost of town staff time to the grant amount. Eben said he is not opposed to that.

Duncan said he was approached by a citizen who suggested jacking the building up a little higher and putting a floor in under the existing building. Would that give the total square footage that we are looking at for the project? Tom said that was discussed but we were worried about being below the 100-year flood plain. But we should probably revisit that idea if the bid comes back too high. We could consider it as long as the base elevation of the first floor is above what we think the 100-year flood level will be.

15. *Appointment Policy*

Adrienne noted that the Beautification Committee was left off the draft appointment policy. Tom said it is very conceptual at this point. Board members agreed they are fine with the draft. Lois recommended that whatever the selectboard comes up with get added to the checklist we discussed earlier. Tom said he will send out a draft before the second June meeting.

Adrienne asked if we could have an email address for all committee chairs so that we could email them all at once. It might be worth the additional cost if that would be easier.

16. *Legion Field Planning / Curb Cut Location*

Eben said the backstop should come down regardless of any other plans for the field. Isabelle Sullivan had asked if she could reach out to other communities and ask if they wanted it. He asked her to wait until the selectboard could discuss it. Do we need to ask a lawyer about a liability waiver in case someone gets hurt taking it down or putting it up somewhere else? Tom suggested the road crew could take it down and we could donate it as is. Eben said he thinks if someone wants it they should take it down themselves rather than having the road crew do it. Tom said he thinks if the road crew takes it down there is no liability. He thinks there would be more liability if a group came onto town property

to remove it. Eben asked, if there is a high amount of lead and we give it away, do we have liability? Tom said we would ask someone to accept it as is. If we want someone outside the town to take it down, that would be a different waiver. Peter said he thinks we should have public works take it down and ask whoever takes it to release the town from liability. Adrienne said if they have to sign a waiver anyway we could have it include a waiver of liability for them taking it down. Tom said that is more complicated. There are tall poles that need to be removed and the deep holes that will be left need to be filled in.

Duncan said he would like to find out if there is any interest in it. He has a feeling no one will want it. He agrees with Eben that if someone wants it we should let them come and get it rather than having the town crew take it down, but we may have to take it down anyway. The board agreed to find out if someone wants it as a first step.

Howard Romero said he is a member of a group that has been discussing Legion Field use. He created a site plan. He tried to fit in the needs of the oven, Tuesday Night Live and the skating rink. Tuesday Night Live requires a bandstand and a storage box for audio gear, etc. The community oven needs a place to store firewood and the ice rink requires a leveled area measuring at least 50 by 100 ft and use of the storage box. He has found that we can get one a one-trip Conex steel shipping container with a door on one side and double doors on one end for a good price. The bandstand has to move. Where it is now will be in the total slope for the soil surrounding the library. He has to get it out of there before construction starts on that part of the project. He thinks he has found someone to move it. He will provide volunteer labor to help that person. Probably they will just move it somewhere on the north side of the field until we know where it is going and the site is ready. What he showed on the site plan is the bandstand sliding all the way west on the field with a shipping container behind it. At the moment there is no access to the field from School Street. The library is on top of the old curb cut. There's no way in except through the Vermont Studio Center. They have been good about allowing that but we should have our own way in. The only place to put a new curb cut is on the western edge of the property near the Studio Center boundary. There are trees all along School Street that are so close together that there is not room for a curb cut. He painted across the sidewalk with white paint last week to show where he is thinking the curb cut would go. We need to upgrade the electricity on the field. Last summer there were a couple of blackouts during concerts when too much electricity was drawn. If we are going to move the bandstand anyway, we will rewire everything for 200 amps. That would make it possible to put lighting on the field. His plan shows two light poles. We possibly could put one on the library annex. We will also wire for PA system capability at the light poles. The Rail Trail Committee wants a kiosk and that is fine. His plan calls for the ice rink to be brought near the oven. There is good lighting there and there are benches. He has no personal opinion on whether we want to truly level the entire field. That is a big job. He knows the electricity has to go in first. We have to know where the bandstand is going to dig the trench, so we have to figure it out soon. He would like board approval tonight for a curb cut.

Mike said there is nothing we can do about it now, but it appears that the library encroached more on Legion Field than we originally thought it would. He recalls seeing that it would be to the right of the bandstand. We lost a lot of land because of the way the library ended up being set. He doesn't know how that happened. Howard said he and Mumley both did site studies. They were the same except that Howard put parking for the library on the field side. But the library really wants it to be on the school side so people are not looking over cars to see the field from the library. Tom said the bandstand was not entirely on the town's property until we acquired the parcel the library is on. There is better drainage for parking on the school side of the building and the porch on the other side of the library

can be incorporated into Legion Field activities. Duncan said it would be nice to see the property lines on the site plan.

Joe Salerno said he was led to believe that this was being paused and this plan would not be put forth until after further discussion. Why was he under the impression this was not moving forward? Howard said all he is looking for is permission for a curb cut. Eben said he doesn't think the board is approving the site plan specifically.

Adrienne said she appreciates the work Howard has done. She is in full support of Tuesday Night Live. But at the meeting when we look at committee organization she would like us to look more holistically at how green spaces are organized. Hopefully we could have a committee that would be more involved in planning. It feels like we will run into this again. Her hope is that we could pause on this. She knows we have money to spend. She hopes it could be spent on things that won't move no matter what the plan is. Seeing how Tuesday Night Live goes at Old Mill Park this summer may give good insights.

Eben said we need a permit from the village for a curb cut. Adrienne asked, we don't need a road, just a curb cut? Howard said we need to be able to get one ton trucks in. We could use the Studio Center entrance for now but we do need a curb cut.

Kathy Black said she is in favor of putting a pause on this. She understands the need for a curb cut and she is not opposed to that, but making plans for a road and electricity further diminishes the field. She has had numerous people tell her they think Tuesday Night Live has outgrown Legion Field. She doesn't think we should spend money to lock us into one plan for the field when we don't even know what the library will look like or how the field will feel if there is a road on one side. Her concern is that the bandstand does not end up right behind her house. Legion Field is great for community gatherings. That was what TNL used to be, but it has turned into a big event. It may not be appropriate on a smaller field. We may learn this summer that it is wonderful at Old Mill Park. Or we may learn that FEMA buyouts were approved and some other community space that would be more appropriate than Legion Field might be available. She would appreciate not locking in town money for uncertain plans.

Howard said that is a good point, but everything he has on his plan will fit into the \$30,000 grant money that is available. No town money will be used. Kathy and Joe Salerno said it is a town grant so it is still town money. Joe said no one in the town seems to know much about this grant. Who is in charge of how the money is spent? Legion Field is a public field available to everyone in town. He was led to believe the process would be put on hold and there would be a more open process. This is a very TNL-centric plan designed by one person who is not really in dialogue with all the stakeholders.

Eben said the bandstand has to move and it can only move in one direction. Mike said Howard will just move it over for now and the final location will be determined at another time.

Mike asked if the access through VSC could be used to move the bandstand before there is a curb cut. Howard said probably. Mike said Tuesday Night Live might turn out to be better at Old Mill Park.

Peter said the curb cut is also needed for access for whoever is working on the ice rink and for the tractor parade. Eben said also for the people who mow the park. Peter said no matter what, we need a curb cut.

Eben asked, can a crane not lift this building? Howard said that would be too expensive. He talked to somebody who has moved buildings before and said he can move this one easily. He just wants to get it out of the way before construction starts. He will put it up against the woods.

Duncan said his understanding is that phase two of the library is potentially months out. Tom said it will take him a week to put together an RFP and it will be a month before we select someone, then they have to mobilize. Duncan said so it doesn't have to be moved in the next two weeks. Howard said the person he is relying on to move it has stage 4 cancer.

Tom said the Studio Center is putting in plants along the property line. He thinks we are on borrowed time as far as accessing the field from their property. Duncan asked if it might be possible to get access to the field by using the curb cut where the library is now and squeezing past the library on the left side.

Mike moved and Peter seconded to authorize putting a curb cut in the general location showed on the site plan presented by Howard, provided that it is not encroaching on anyone else's property.

Howard said if it isn't possible to get around the library to access the field he thinks all we need to do is take the curb out of the way and hand trowel in a ramp. Duncan said the town can't give permission to remove the curb. The village owns it.

Duncan asked, the motion does not include a road, just a curb cut? Mike said yes.

The motion was passed with Adrienne opposed.

Joe Salerno asked what the plan is for making a plan for Legion Field. Eben said he doesn't know. Mike said that is not decided yet. Duncan suggested it would be appropriate to have a public hearing to discuss a plan for Legion Field. The public could come in and express their thoughts on the planning process. It may be that Tuesday Night Live will end up in another location. We may find out that Old Mill Park is a good location. Tom suggested having the public hearing preceding a regular selectboard meeting.

Adrienne said she thinks getting public input just on Legion Field is a little narrow when we could be getting input on all green spaces. She is hoping that through committee restructuring we might add a committee that would look at green spaces and develop a process for planning for them. Duncan said that is a big idea and maybe we can get there but he thinks we should talk about Legion Field for now.

Paul, Warden said LCPC got a grant for Johnson visioning. Currently it is somewhat focused on the Sterling Market property, but there is an opportunity to roll in other sites. There could be an opportunity to include Legion Field. LCPC hired DuBois & King to work on it. Eben said he will touch base with Paul tomorrow to talk about that. It was agreed to hold off on scheduling of a public hearing until after Eben talks to Paul.

17. TA and CEDS Priority List

Eben suggested that board members get priority lists to him by this Friday and he will share them with Adrienne.

18. Road Reclassification

Tom asked if the board wants to take up some road reclassifications. Can he work with the Planning Commission and the highway supervisor to come up with recommendations for reclassifications? It is easier to do a lot of reclassifications at once. Duncan said except that a site visit to each road is needed. Tom suggested all the visits could be done in one day. Eben said in the past we have discussed a grand idea to reclassify a lot of roads and nothing has happened. He suggests a smaller plan. There are a couple of potential reclassifications that are no-brainers to him.

Mike asked, if we don't absolutely have to reclassify roads, why bother? Tom said control of legal trails is being challenged in court. Right now we have financial responsibility for Class 4 roads. That is a motivation to reclassify them as legal trails, but the board should consider whether the selectboard will still maintain control of legal trails. That question is in the courts. We should understand our legal responsibilities before we reclassify anything.

Peter asked if it is better to hold off on doing anything. Tom said he thinks we could safely discontinue a few roads. Some have trees growing up in the middle of them. Do we want to say those are legal trails? The Municipal Roads General Permit will be identifying more segments that we have to fix. Right now we are required to fix the end of Coddington Hollow Road, which is completely gone.

Duncan said a few years ago he got LCPC to generate some maps of the town highways. He thinks it would be great if every board member had one. He agrees with Eben that we should try to focus on a limited number of roads. People who live on Class 3 roads that are essentially driveways to a single house where town trucks are having trouble backing up need to be informed that the town has the right to put in a turnaround and they cannot block it or we won't plow the road. **Duncan moved to send letters to all residents on dead-end roads that require turnarounds for snow removal informing them that the town has the right to put in a turnaround and if they block it the town will not plow the road. The motion was seconded.**

Adrienne asked how long we will give them. Duncan said they aren't responsible for putting in the turnaround. That is the town's responsibility. But what has happened is that a lot of those people have said they don't want trucks turning around and they have parked their vehicles in a place that blocks the town trucks. Eben asked who will prepare and mail the letters. Duncan said he thinks the town administrator. Eben asked who will sign it. Duncan said as long as the letter says "per order of Johnson selectboard" it doesn't matter who signs it. Eben asked Tom what date it would be reasonable to have the letter sent out by. Tom said June 1. Adrienne asked if we will send a second one right before the snow falls. Tom asked if it would be possible to consider giving them the option that either we will put in a turnaround for a tandem truck or we will discontinue the road.

Duncan said we probably have to double check but he believes that if we are not able to turn around or effectively plow we can refuse to plow the road. Tom said the road foreman has mentioned that some people have an interest in discontinuing their roads altogether. If we give them the option they might want that. Mike said they will want the road maintained, but maybe not plowed. Tom said he doesn't feel we should separate out winter and summer maintenance. Eben said we should follow up on the legal question. Since June 1 is a Sunday the letter should be sent out by June 2.

The motion was passed.

Adrienne asked, what if a new person moves in before the first plowing? Tom said if there are issues with plowing there probably are also issues with getting a loader, grader or 10-wheeler with equipment onto the road. The turnaround will handle all the equipment. Duncan said the property owner has some responsibility to pass that information on to a prospective buyer.

Eben asked what board members want regarding reclassification. Peter, Adrienne and Eben all said they would like a small plan. Mike said he would not like to reclassify any roads. Duncan said he is not sure. Eben asked Tom to bring to the second meeting in June a recommendation for three roads or portions of roads to be reclassified.

19. Interlocal Agreement Signature Delegation

The board agreed to delay action on this until June 2. Duncan said the board packet included a copy of the spreadsheet showing updated costs for the interlocal agreement. Even under the worst case scenario, we are still under our budgeted cost.

20. Old Business

Duncan said Tom had circulated an email about the library deed having some conditions about selling the property. He thinks at a future meeting we should discuss how to approach that.

21. Executive Sessions

Duncan moved to enter executive session for potential negotiating or securing of real estate purchase or lease options under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(2), with Tom and Rosemary invited to remain, as well as an executive session for employee evaluations under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3), with the board only, Adrienne seconded and the motion was passed at 9:42. The board came out of executive session at 10:30.

22. Highway Open Position

Duncan presented the impacts of a 5th public works employee if the grand list is reduced. Mike asked for the highway mile comparison with other towns.

Adrienne moved to not hire a 5th public works employee but to hire a groundskeeper. The motion died for lack of a second.

The board decided not to post an opening for a 5th public works employee.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths