

JOHNSON VILLAGE TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2012

**Present:**

Trustees: Gordon Smith, George Pearlman, Ellis O'Hear, Walter Pomroy, Chris Parker

Others: Duncan Hastings (Manager), Rosemary Audibert (Clerk), Steve Towne, Tom Elwood, Lea Kilvadyova

**Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.**

**1. *Call to Order***

George called the meeting to order at 4:05.

**2. *Wastewater Treatment Facility & Water System Operator's Report***

Everything went smoothly while Tom was out of town recently. Tom and Steve gave an update on the Cabin Cove situation. It had appeared that there was a leak there. There was a discrepancy between the master meter reading and the sum of the individual meter readings. There was a positive test for chlorine in water trickling from the bank and when someone from the VT Rural Water Association investigated he listened to the line and heard sounds indicating a leak. But recently the Rural Water Association worker came back and discovered that the meter head of the master meter was the wrong size. Given the figures the meter supplier gave us, we were able to back calculate what the meter reading should have been and have so far found little variance, so there may be no leak. The meter head has been replaced with one that is the correct size. Duncan said he still thinks there is a strong possibility there is a leak there. One Cabin Cove homeowner is seeking reimbursement for the work he had done to look for a leak in his line, based on the notice we issued. If we determine there is no leak, we may need to consider that request. (*Gordon arrived at 4:12.*) Duncan drew a picture showing places where there could be a leak in the Cabin Cove lines. (*Tom left at 4:19.*)

**3. *Treasurer' Report & Review and Approve Bills and Warrants***

Duncan distributed a quarterly sales report for water/sewer and electric that Susan had prepared. Rosemary said she hadn't yet come up with all the money to make the loan payment that was due December 1. **George moved to approve the bills and warrants, Chris seconded and the motion was passed.**

**George moved and Chris seconded to accept the audit report as printed and the motion was passed.**

**Walter moved and Chris seconded to authorize Gordon to sign the management representation letters for the audit.**

**Ellis moved and Chris seconded to authorize holiday pay of \$100 for village employees.**

**4. *Review and Approve Minutes***

Duncan suggested some edits. Walter suggested another. **Walter moved to approve the minutes of November 14 as amended, Chris seconded, and the motion was passed.**

**5. *Public Works Superintendent Report***

Steve said the next safety meeting will be December 12. It will be on safety for green power.

V-Tel has decided it is cost-prohibitive to run fiber optic up 100C and has requested a make ready project on Pearl and School Streets instead. Steve will be meeting with FairPoint's general manager for construction in Vermont and other FairPoint representatives to discuss 100C issues. Steve said we will do the planned work on 100C and FairPoint will set poles, but it might not happen this year. Duncan composed a letter to V-Tel that was submitted to them along with Steve's estimate for the make ready work on Pearl St./School St. If they use that route they will need to re-do their licenses for 100C. In answer to Walter's question, Steve said the work on 100C will need to be done as the line is in bad condition. If VTel does not use that route for their fiber we have to recalculate the bill for Comcast for any pole where their attachment puts us out of compliance and that funds a significant portion of our cost.

Stan Ellow on Plot Rd. had inquired about the status of a transformer that fed power to his house and if it had PCB's. The primary and secondary system there will be reworked and the transformer will be removed. A customer at 792 Clay Hill called for a service upgrade but the pole was inaccessible and in poor condition. A new pole was set and this area is being reworked. Steve reviewed recent Linex/billable work, including a couple of broken poles.

Steve recommended continuing the current contract for generator maintenance service as he is happy with the service and the price offered (\$1652) is good. **Walter moved to renew the generator maintenance contract with Brook Field Service for 2013, Chris seconded, and the motion was passed.**

**6. Manager's Report**

Ellis is taking a copy of the Sterling Snow Riders lease for the French Hill property to be signed.

We now know that CDBG will fund the full \$509K requested for the grocery store loan. We still haven't gotten word whether the project is exempt from Act 250. We will need to have loan documents prepared to loan the money to Mike Comeau once he applies for it. The board agreed to schedule a special meeting if necessary to review the loan application.

George asked who has priority when it comes to getting paid back for the loan. Walter said he thinks the bank will come first and the other 3 parties (LEDC, the town, and the village) should agree to take the hit equally if Comeau defaults. He thinks the parties should come to some agreement about that.

The Whittemores have submitted their water and sewer applications. Duncan will sign them and send them off. They will come here for final approval once they have the state permits.

Fay Scott applied for an adjustment to his water and sewer bill. He had a problem with a toilet running through and with an outside hose that was left running. **George moved to adjust Fay and Bonnie Scott's sewer bill to \$42.47 (the highest amount billed during the last 12 months) and their water bill to \$64.98 (three times the average for the last 3 months), Chris seconded, and the motion was passed.**

Duncan and Steve proposed hiring George Lague to assist with development of a detailed cost proposal for electric system voltage conversion. The board agreed. Duncan will come back to the board with a cost proposal and scope of work.

The village trustees board will need a joint meeting with the selectboard to consider wage adjustments, the fire contract, 10% on the Grand List, and possibly other items. Duncan thinks it will end up being in January. Anyone with items to add to the agenda should tell him or Gordon. Walter suggested adding discussion of the grocery store loan.

Gordon said he got an email from Eric Osgood about a state police cruiser that was photographed parked on the wrong side of the road in Johnson. Duncan said the trooper involved will be getting a note in his personnel file.

Duncan will sign and return the Lobbyist Employer Registration.

Duncan said he thinks the agreement with Morrisville Water & Light is a good one. Morrisville would like to allow for future buy-in by other municipalities. If we sign the agreement, then DPS finance approval comes in and then the question will be answered as to whether we can do a 5 year lease purchase.

Duncan said ANR Sites Management Section is requesting more study and possible remediation at the Talc Mill property. Duncan sent them a letter outlining his concerns about the extent of what they want studied and has not heard back from them. He wants a clear explanation from them of the authority under which they can require us to do these additional investigations.

Duncan and Steve described the issue observed in one of the cross walks. One concrete curb rail is severely cracked. All of them are cracked to some degree. Duncan thinks it is a design issue. Steve and Duncan met with Roger Dickinson and Carl Crawford today to discuss what happened and potential solutions. Duncan thinks we should wait and see what happens this winter.

Duncan sent a reminder to Mark Cattelona and Rick Jewett about the lease, but hasn't heard back and hasn't received the signed lease. **Walter moved to send a letter to Mark Cattelona and Rick Jewett asking them to provide a copy of the signed lease for the board to act upon at the next trustees' meeting and stating that if it is not provided the board will pursue other options. Chris seconded, and the motion was passed. (Lea arrived at 5:58.)**

Duncan has applied for a grant for \$5K worth of radios which would be compatible with the new VELCO radio network.

Lea said she would like to get the board's thoughts on a potential grant application for a sidewalk project. The town applied for a grant for a trail from the rail trail to Railroad St. and that was denied for several reasons. One is that VTrans is primarily concerned with logical transportation connections. They pointed out that the proposed trail has more recreational

value to local residents than value to rail trail users. Another possibility is applying for a different project connecting the rail trail to Railroad St. starting at a point closer to the village, going through the area where Parker and Stearns is located. The grant requires a 20% match. The cost estimate to do the project meeting VTrans requirements is \$113K, with the cost per linear foot of sidewalk \$180. Without VTrans funds, the cost estimate is \$80K, with a cost per linear foot of sidewalk of \$120. So we could either pay 20% of \$113K or \$80K. Board members agreed this would not be a worthwhile project for the money at this time. One issue would be coming up with the 20% match as we have a current match commitment for the School St. project.

Lea gave an update on the School St./College Hill project. The current proposal is to improve the drop-off area in front of the school and extend the sidewalk in that area. The school board, the general public, and Johnson State College have been asked for input about which side of College Hill Rd. the sidewalk should be on. The school board feels the sidewalk would have limited use for school traffic. They would prefer to have the sidewalk on the side across the road from the school because they don't want to cut into the schoolyard to make room for a sidewalk. Johnson State is in favor of putting the sidewalk on the same side as the school. They feel that is the best route for college students. Lea spoke with someone from Otter Creek who said the school fence would have to be moved inward in order to put the sidewalk on the school side, unless the road is moved. Lea mentioned that another proposal that was well received by the community was to have a 3-way stop at the School St./College Hill intersection to slow down traffic. Lea feels the way to proceed would be to go back to the school board and give them a better idea exactly how much would have to be cut out of their yard if the sidewalk were put on that side of the road. Walter said he would like Lea to find out more about the option of moving the road to the side.

Walter asked about the status of the village plan. Lea said it expires in June 2013. She has started to work on it. LCPC has provided input about where our plan is lacking and she has tried to adjust it to comply with state statute. She thinks the revisions are basically done. Walter said he would like an opportunity to give input on the plan. He suggested that in order to protect us there should be language in the plan about wind power, saying that we oppose degradation of our scenic views and industrial development of our ridgelines. Duncan said he doesn't share that opinion. He doesn't know that we have enough information about what the citizenry thinks. Lea said the Conservation Commission had been talking about hiring a consultant to see what other towns have done in their town plans to protect themselves. Walter said he had talked to Sue and Lois about that and they haven't gotten very far yet. Gordon suggested a non-binding vote at the village and town meetings in the spring to see how the public feels. Lea said she wants to figure out how that fits into our timeline. If we wait until April then our plan might expire before the new version is done. Duncan said the plan can always be revised. Lea said the Planning Commission is meeting tomorrow. She will let them know there is interest in seeing the plan sooner than last time and in adding language about wind power or polling the public about wind power.

Duncan mentioned complaints he had received about handicapped parking. He said he got comments about the winter parking ban after posting it on Front Porch Forum and realized

the notice needed to be changed to reflect the different times parking is forbidden for Main St., all other village streets, and parking lots. He re-posted the notice to reflect the changes.

Duncan said a couple of years ago the trustees supported letting Steve hire part-time help for snow removal and he would like the trustees to re-affirm that Steve is able to do that. Walter said he strongly encouraged Steve to have someone else come in to help.

The state performed a final inspection for the 4/27/11 flood on December 5. We will get our state share of 15%, which is \$6118.00.

Duncan responded to Andre Nadeau asking for a better understanding of his specific concerns about the Source Protection Plan so they could be discussed. Andre sent a response asking for a meeting.

We received a letter from NHEC thanking us for mutual aid assistance.

The trees in the Gihon have been removed. The town agreed to cover the costs.

We are still holding the last pay req for the Main St. project. There are a couple of outstanding items. We may end up holding some money, primarily for seeding and mulching. Chris asked about a puddle on the sidewalk in front of the book store. George mentioned another puddle in the dirt driveway of the Village Green.

7. *Adjourn*

**Ellis moved and Chris seconded to adjourn at 6:50 and the motion was passed.**

*Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths*