

JOHNSON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2026

Present: Selectboard members: Mike Dunham, Peter Hammond, Adrienne Parker, Paul Warden
Others: John Sutherland, Carl Rogers, Harry and Tori Rempert
Absent: Eben Patch

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. Call Meeting to Order

Paul called the meeting to order at 6:00.

2. Consider Additions or Adjustments to the Agenda

No changes to the agenda were needed.

3. Public Comment and Public Announcement

No members of the public wished to comment.

4. Selectboard Updates and/or Concerns

No members of the selectboard had updates or concerns. (*Adrienne arrived at 6:01.*)

5. Review and Consider Proposals for Tree Cutting in the Industrial Park

Carl said the low bidder was Josh Gervais Trucking. He bid on Option 1 (just removing trees from the town's work area – the area where roads, utility rights of way and stormwater retention will be located.). The bid amount was \$15,000. The next lowest bidder was N.A. Manosh with a bid of \$40,615.

Carl spoke with Mr. Gervais and found out that he visited the site on his own. He has been in business 15-20 years. He has large equipment for doing this kind of work. He indicated that the chips would go to the Burlington Electric Department, where he is working on a chipping contract. Carl checked two references. No one had any problems with his work. Carl checked online and found that he does have the big equipment he indicated he had and he also has another forest products business. DOT inspection reports Carl found showed everything was okay. Mr. Gervais told Carl that normally he pays the landowner some royalty for logs and chips he takes. He was able to bid low because he will make money selling the chips.

The State of Vermont and the Vermont Land Trust asked about what is happening and Carl gave them the bid tally sheet. They really want to get trees from the industrial park site. Carl told them he couldn't imagine that the selectboard would pay \$25K more to go with Option 2 (providing trees for the state.) So Vermont Land Trust plans to meet with Mr. Gervais to talk about having him pull trees by their roots for their use. He has equipment to do that. That is between him and them. He is still planning to charge the town \$15K but he might be getting additional payment from VLT to harvest some trees. Carl made it clear to VLT and AOT that he still has to honor the deadline of getting trees on the ground by April 15. Carl imagines he will be able to do that with the equipment he has. Vermont Land Trust offered to come to a meeting and talk about their project in Jericho and how the trees will be used if the board is interested.

Carl recommends awarding the contract to Josh Gervais Trucking.

The Prindle lot deer wintering conservation easement has been signed by the governor. On the Gomo lot, the state is saying they will be satisfied with one sign being placed at the place where Codding Hollow Road comes to the Gomo lot, as well as a certain map which Mumley Engineering can prepare.

There is deer wintering area on land adjacent to the industrial park site. Deer wintering area buffer is on the industrial park site. Carl just learned that trees cannot be removed from deer wintering buffer areas between December 15 and April 15 unless the state approves. With the other restriction preventing trees from being removed after April 15, we would not be able to remove trees at all without state approval. Noel Dodge is the person who makes that call and he has indicated he will approve it. That is expected to happen next week.

Mike moved to award the industrial park tree clearing contract to Josh Gervais Trucking for the amount of \$15,000 to be effective upon the town's receipt of an Act 250 permit, provided the permit is issued in time to complete tree cutting by April 15, 2026, Peter seconded and the motion was passed.

Board members said they are okay with providing the requested sign and map for the Gomo lot.

Peter asked how far the deer wintering buffer area extends onto our lot. Carl said the buffer is 300 ft. wide and the deer wintering area border is about 30 ft. from the town's property line. Some parts of the cul de sacs and Road B are included in it. Not much of the tree clearing area is in it, but some is.

6. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 6:14.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths