JOHNSON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MONDAY, MAY 18, 2026

Present: Selectboard members: Mike Dunham, Peter Hammond, Adrienne Parker, Paul Warden
Others: John Sutherland, Rosemary Audibert, Doug Molde, Ryan Stygles, Richard Bailey, Stephanie Smith (remote), Lee Rosberg (remote), Diana Osborn, Scott Meyer, Duncan Hastings, Michael Mahnke, Seth Jensen, Dan Noyes, Rich Westman, Casey Romero, Jeremy Becker (remote), Carl Rogers
Absent: Eben Patch

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. ***Call to Order***
   Paul called the meeting to order at 6:31.
2. ***Consider Additions or Adjustments to Agenda***
   Peter added discussion of the architect's bill the town is not paying
3. ***Public Comment***
   No members of the public wished to comment.
4. ***Consider Additions or Adjustments to Agenda***
   Mike added discussion of trees at Holmes Meadow.
5. ***Selectboard Updates and/or Concerns***
   Paul said there was a symposium last week on the future of Vermont's colleges. Several people from Johnson went: Diana Osborn, Doug Molde, Kathy Black and Charles Flaum. He hopes to get a report from them at the next meeting.
6. ***Consent Agenda***
   The consent agenda consisted of the minutes of April 29 and May 4, 2026. **Adrienne moved to approve the consent agenda, Peter seconded and the motion was passed with Mike abstaining as he was absent on April 29.**
7. ***Clerk/Treasurer's Report: Warrants, Licenses and Any Action Items***
   Rosemary said expenditures to date are almost 69% of budget. There was a question last time about the $50K in miscellaneous revenue. That was the Lamoille FiberNet reimbursement.

   Rosemary said she noticed a large bill for Green Up Day tire disposal. She double checked and found that it was less than she had thought: $1200. Adrienne said she thought there was an arrangement that the solid waste district would take our Green Up Day tires at no charge. Rosemary said the bill is for 188 tires. Ryan Stygles said some of the tires went to the transfer station but most went to K-N-S Tire Recycling, which usually takes the town's tires.

   Rosemary said this year's taxes are 96.09% collected, leaving a balance of $283K. She showed the board a list of properties with delinquent taxes that our tax sale attorney, Jim Barlow, is willing to do a tax sale on. He selected those with over $1500 in delinquent taxes. His price is an estimated $960 to $1100 per parcel, plus the demand letter fee. Paul suggested the board can decide at the next meeting whether to authorize a tax sale on the listed properties. Mike suggested maybe the town can find a less expensive attorney.

   Adrienne asked Duncan Hastings, don't we have an agreement with the solid waste district that the transfer station will take tires for free? Duncan said he thinks that is correct. His understanding is that that was rent for hosting the site. Ryan said K-N-S comes and picks up tires. They picked up most of them and about 30 were dropped off at the transfer station. He always assumed we were charged when we took them to the transfer station. Adrienne said it seems like we need better communication next time.

8. ***Gravel Processing***

Paul said we opened bids for gravel processing at the last meeting. He reviewed the bid amounts. G. Tatro included a lower bid for screening rather than crushing, if we want to do that.

John said Jason Whitehill's preference is to go with crushed gravel. Ryan said he thinks crushed gravel is a superior product. We used to screen gravel but he thinks the result was not top quality sand. Round rock bounces and rolls and ends up in the ditch. Fractured rock freezes in and provides better traction. There was a question about more silt from crushing. He doesn't know how much more there would be.

Mike said we recently got some change orders from Boulder Excavating, the lowest bidder. He doesn't want to take a chance on more change orders. Dale E. Percy's bid is only $600 more than the low bid. <u>**Mike moved to award the gravel processing contract to Dale E. Percy, Peter seconded and the motion was passed.**</u>

9. ***Julian Scott House***

Stephanie Smith of Vermont Emergency Management said from her perspective there are two main options. The Julian Scott house is one of the FEMA buyout properties. The town can continue with the FEMA buyout, have the property demolished, and close out the grant with FEMA. The site needs to be open space but the town could potentially use it for a park or have historic signage. If the town doesn't want to lose the historic structure, the other option is to withdraw the grant. Just under $425K in FEMA and state dollars has already been spent on the buyout project. All the funding would need to be returned in order for VEM to withdraw the grant. The town now owns the property and there is a FEMA deed restriction on the site. If the grant is withdrawn the town would probably have to have a survey done and have an attorney figure out how to remove that deed restriction, at town expense.

Paul said we don't have $424K, so repaying that amount would be problematic, to say the least.

Doug Molde said he watched the video of the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions meeting where the State Historic Preservation Officer appeared. It is not clear to him that the process was properly handled. He asked Stephanie if she knows that it was properly handled.

Stephanie said yes. VEM put together an application, which went through the FEMA process. That includes an assessment of needs related to historical significance, such as signage or photo documentation. Coordination and agreement with the State Historic Preservation Officer is needed. That happened. She is not an expert on historic sites, but it wasn't flagged for anything specific.

Doug said his understanding was that the property was noted as being eligible for the federal register, which would prompt a need to look at mitigation. The State Historic Preservation Officer talked about how they had 230 applications. It sounded like things were done out of sequence but they weren't going to go back and change anything. This was listed as the Shattuck-Patch house on the list the selectboard saw. When people from the state looked at it in March, they said the spray foam that had been added confirmed their opinion. Most of the original construction has been built around, but it is still there. This a state historical site, but VEM is saying all the burden is on the Town of Johnson. He doesn't understand why this is not being looked at at the state level, or at the federal level, since Julian Scott received the Congressional Medal of Honor. He is not convinced the property was evaluated properly.

Paul asked Stephanie if her understanding is that the site was evaluated as a historic site early in the process. Stephanie said VEM hears about it if some mitigation is needed. Her understanding is that they did their review and didn't see a need for mitigation. The way out is finding funding that would allow the town to save the structure. VEM doesn't fund historic preservation so she can't assist with funding. There is an opportunity to approach other entities.

Duncan Hastings said he also listened to Laura Trieschmann's testimony and was confused about a couple of things. She indicated that the Division of Historic Preservation concurred with FEMA that the property was eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. She also indicated that because it was eligible it was therefore eligible for the buyout program and, absent that, it wouldn't be eligible. But that makes no sense. He knows of at least two properties eligible for buyout that are manufactured homes. The other thing he found confusing was that she said in March when the site visit was made (2 months after the property was closed on), representatives from Historic Preservation were there and concluded that the property had been so changed from the original historic structure that it would probably not be eligible for inclusion on the National Historic Register. But he is seeing nothing in documentation about eligibility regarding degradation of the property. There are 4 key components of eligibility. One is that the site is associated with a person of historic significance. If Julian Scott – Medal of Honor recipient, Civil War veteran, and artist of national and international repute – is not eligible, he doesn't know who would be. He asked if Stephanie could talk about the idea of the property being eligible for the Register of Historic Places and about that being a requirement for being eligible for a buyout.

Stephanie said she did not listen to Laura's testimony, but a building is not required to be historic to be eligible for a buyout. Her understanding is that the alterations were considered a reason the building was not eligible for the Register of Historic Places, but she thinks he would need to ask Laura.

Duncan said Laura said she knew nothing about the FEMA program. There are two state programs that know nothing about each other. He understands they had 230 properties to deal with, a big burden, but the State Historic Preservation Officer has specific requirements. He has seen little to no evidence those procedures were followed. He was at the site visit in March. He asked the two people from the Division of Historic Preservation if a report had been prepared on historical significance. They said that instead of that they had executed an agreement with FEMA where they were looking at all the applications in their entirety rather than individual properties. He doesn't think there is anything in the FEMA regulations saying it is okay to do that.

Stephanie said there is a grant to build a database of historic sites to allow reviews to be completed more easily in the future. She thinks what Duncan heard about was probably a reference to that system. Duncan said that is a great idea but it doesn't address the fact that the Scott house is clearly a historic site and structure. He agrees that we should do something with that site. The Town of Johnson does not have the money to devote to it and he doesn't think Johnson should have to. Scott was a person of state and national historic significance. Funding should be able to be found so this site could be protected and become what it should become, honoring Julian Scott.

Stephanie said the funding she manages cannot be used for this type of project. She thinks there probably is funding that can be explored.

Rep. Rich Bailey said he and Rep. Dan Noyes drafted a resolution. There was testimony about withdrawing the buyout application and doing a new one. Dan Noyes said they heard there were two possible tracks – a historic preservation FEMA buyout track and the regular FEMA buyout track.

Stephanie said that distinction is unclear to her. All buyouts go through historic review. Dan said apparently there is one type of buyout that can be used for historic preservation. There was talk about being able to rewrite the grant to take advantage of that and using it to take the place of the one the people that owned the house got.

Stephanie asked if this would be for relocation of the structure or keeping it on site. Dan said that is a good question.

Paul said in the testimony it was mentioned that there are two tracks and that the first grant could be cancelled and paid back and then we could apply through the other track to move or elevate the building.

Stephanie said relocation projects are eligible for FEMA funding. VEM would have to withdraw the grant and apply under a new funding round. But there is not a funding round currently where they could do that. A relocation grant could cover the cost of moving the structure, but the town would still need to pay back the existing grant.

Paul said FEMA made the determination that the structure was eligible for inclusion on the National Historic Register and the State Historic Preservation Officer concurred, and yet somehow we went down the non-historic FEMA buyout track.

Stephanie said it is still possible to demolish something that is on the Historic Register. There might be conditions like photo documentation.

John asked Stephanie, if at this point funding is not available for a relocation grant, would it be possible to extend the demolition stay until that funding is available? Stephanie said VEM can give it more time. The period of full performance for the grant is multiple years. As long as we are within that period, VEM can work with the town. Dan said the resolution he and Rich drafted is basically about that – giving time to look for other funding sources. Stephanie said VEM is not about to demolish the house. They know the town needs more time.

Sen. Rich Westman asked how to make a formal request for extension. Stephanie said the town can talk to the VEM team about it. VEM will probably want to check in every couple of months. They don't need anything more formal than that.

Rich Westman asked what the process is to start a new grant application. Stephanie said right now there is no funding round they can apply under. She doesn't know when there will be one to apply for relocation. Funding will become available if there is a disaster. If a funding program becomes available, VEM will help the town submit an application. Dan asked, funding is contingent on another federally recognized disaster in Vermont? Stephanie said yes. For this program it doesn't matter where in the state the event is. It could be anywhere in the state.

Richard Bailey said selectboard members can testify in front of the Committee on Corrections and Institutions. Dan said he and Richard can update the committee chair. Dan said there is no mention of funding in their resolution. It says the legislature will ask for more time.

Stephanie said more time is not an issue. There is no pressure from her team to demolish the house.

Duncan said at the committee meeting there was discussion about how the ball was in the town's court and the town had to make a formal request to withdraw the application. What is the timeline on withdrawing the application and moving down a different path?

Stephanie said VEM is not withdrawing the grant until the selectboard tells them to. The period of performance for the grant is a couple of years. Paul said we can't withdraw the grant without paying it back, so that is not an option.

Adrienne asked who is looking for money – the state? Do we need to? Paul asked if there is a way to enlist the help of the state Historic Preservation people. Stephanie said the town can ask. Dan Noyes said he reached out to them and also to some other potential funding sources. He was contacted by the Congressional Medal of Honor Society. Maybe they could help. Rich Westman said he thinks Historic Preservation should be invited to the next board meeting.

Doug said he called Sen. Welch's office today. There is a federal connection with Scott and the selectboard might want to present the situation to Sen. Welch him to see if any doors might be opened on the federal level.

Dan said he has started to reach out to the adjutant general.

Diana Osborn asked if there are other properties in the state that were deemed of historical significance that might inform our process. Stephanie said the state Historic Preservation office would probably have the best list. Dan said he found information on a historic house that was flooded years ago and then taken apart and reassembled somewhere else. Paul said that sounds like what Scott Meyer told the board about. Scott said there was a historic building in Milton that had its framing taken out and put into storage with the intention to rebuild it when there is money.

Michael Mahnke said Julian Scott was connected to well-known artists. He studied at the National Academy. Art institutions might be interested in providing funding. He thinks there are a lot of directions for funding.

Peter asked if there is material in the Julian Scott house that could be saved the way Milton saved the framing of its historic house. Scott Meyer said he doesn't know. The old flooring appears to be there, covered over. The post and beam structure has foam stuck to it. It was buried under lath and plaster anyway. The group that visited didn't get to look in the attic. We would need an architect to look at it. There is the question of how to get the foam off the beams, but if the post and beam structure is buried, we won't see the foam. The old stone foundation is there. It has been lifted once. We would have to get a flood zoning permit but he doesn't imagine that would be an obstacle. The extension could be torn off. Old flooring tells the story of a building because it shows old wear marks.

Seth Jensen said it seems like the alternatives are going through with the buyout and demolition, converting the project to an elevation or relocation, or doing something like the Milton example (demolition with salvage.) Where is the line where salvaging materials becomes moving the building vs. salvaging parts of it?

Stephanie said that is a good question. FEMA makes it complicated. There is some potential for salvage. Usually FEMA is thinking of, for instance, a standing seam roof that the contractor doing the demolition could take off and sell to reduce the cost of the demolition. This would not decrease the demolition cost; it would increase it. That gets more complicated. And there is asbestos in the building that needs to be remediated before demolition. She doesn't know if that would impact salvage.

Mike said he thinks the building needs to stay where it is. We should just raise the foundation. He will chain himself to that building before he will allow it to be demolished. We should resolve right now to save that building. We should not tear it down, salvage a piece of it, or move it. Julian Scott was born there.

Adrienne asked if Michael could make a list of significant art-related points about Julian Scott that could be used when applying for funding. Michael said yes.

Duncan asked whether the board will discuss tonight or soon his idea of establishing a committee to assist the board in this process. Paul said the board will discuss it, but maybe not tonight. We will certainly be looking for help.

10. Skate Park Update

Paul said the town got 2 bids for the skatepark bowl project. Catamount Skateparks bid $232,155. Rampage Skateparks bid $232,000. We asked the bidders how their bids could be lowered. Catamount offered a $28K in-kind donation of concrete and said the price could be lowered by $4K if we did the hydroseeding ourselves. They also offered to fundraise. They said they expected to raise an additional $5K. Rampage proposed that we could provide some of the items that were included in their original quote, leading to cost savings. John listed some of the savings Rampage is offering if we provide equipment or materials ($4K savings if we provide a skid steer for up to 5 weeks, $1400 if we provide a mini-excavator for 10 days, etc.)

John said he is asking the board to make a decision about which contractor we want to work with so the contractor not chosen can look for work elsewhere. Casey Romero said we need to make a decision. We can't sign a contract until more is known but she assumes the selectboard might take the same path as with the library project. The skatepark committee talked about the bids. The committee has experience with one of the contractors. They recommend accepting the Catamount bid. They have full confidence in how they operate. The Rampage cuts are contingent on conditions that may not make sense, such as providing material. Paul said that would cost us money. John said Catamount is offering to donate $28K of concrete and also donate the cost of some t-shirts to be provided to anyone who donates. We are looking at a full donation of material from Catamount vs. us providing work for reductions with Rampage. He recommends Catamount.

Paul asked, the request is to decide which contractor to work with, not to sign a contract, right? John said yes.

Mike moved and Adrienne seconded to continue discussions with Catamount Skateparks, not Rampage Skateparks, with the intention of using Catamount Skateparks for the bowl project at the skatepark.

Adrienne asked how much money needs to be raised if we go with the Catamount bid. John said an estimated $40K. Paul asked, there is still a $40K funding gap with the $28K in kind donation? John said yes. He and Casey have been looking at funding options.

The motion was passed.

11. Categorical Disposal Facility

Paul said the agenda says the board will consider a vote on this item, but we voted at the last meeting to authorize initiation of tabletop review and field testing. There is no further decision that needs to be made tonight. We can decide in the future whether to submit an application for a facility.

Scott Meyer said he sent a document to John and Eben about different contaminants that may be in soil that comes to the facility. He thinks it is worth a good look. If the board decides to apply for a disposal facility, he recommends getting people from the Health Department and the DEC to come to a meeting and talk about contaminants. Values that are considered acceptable can get lowered over time. They rarely get increased. He is nervous about this. He wants the board to be well versed in what the town would be getting into.

Paul said if we decided to accept soils and if we accepted only Johnson soils, we would be taking them from a public area to a secure location, which could be considered a public good. Scott said yes, but then the responsibility is on the town.

12. Summer Facilities Groundskeeping Bids

Paul opened the bids received for mowing. Robert and Sons bid $22,000. JJ's Green Mountain Plowing bid $19,500. Paul said the Green Mountain Plowing bid listed some estimated cost avoidance savings. He is not sure what that means.

Jeremy Becker of JJ's Green Mountain Plowing said by using his business the town will be able to streamline efforts and not need to communicate with multiple contractors.

Peter asked who has provided this service before. Other board members said Robert and Sons. Peter asked if they have done a good job. Adrienne said she hears complaints about certain areas.

Mike moved to accept the $19,500 bid from JJ's Green Mountain Plowing for summer facilities groundskeeping, Peter seconded and the motion was passed.

13. Request from Healthy Lamoille Valley

Paul said Healthy Lamoille Valley has requested an extension on the amount of time they have to spend the funds the selectboard granted them from the opioid settlement, to allow the period for use to continue into FY27. Rosemary said as far as she knows, there is no deadline for spending the funds.

Mike moved to extend the deadline for Healthy Lamoille Valley to spend opioid settlement funds through FY27 as long as this does not violate any settlement conditions, Peter seconded and the motion was passed.

14. Community and Economic Development Specialist Update

Carl said the tree cleanup at the industrial park started today, but there was heavy rain in the morning, so they quit. They might be back tomorrow. If not, they will be back later in the week. They asked him about the wood chips we were reserving for the Conservation Commission and the arboretum. He put John in touch with Ryan from the road crew so they can work out how to get the wood chips to where they will be stored.

Late this afternoon Carl got an email from Mumley Engineering with contract and bidding documents. He hasn't had a chance to go through them yet. He is planning to talk to Mumley tomorrow afternoon.

Painting of the outside of the Welcome Center hasn't started yet.

A representative from the state VOREC office will be coming to the Recreation Economy for Rural Communities community workshop. The workshop will be August 27 and 28. The community participation part starts on the evening of August 27. The location is yet to be determined. The public can participate in sessions all day on August 28. People who participate can provide their name and email address to get all drafts of the action plan and they will be able to comment on them. Carl suggests that selectboard and planning commission members attend. He will contact the planning commission about it.

Paul asked what the RERC steering committee needs from the selectboard in the interim, if anything. Carl said they are completing the community assessment now and then they need to plan workshop logistics. The hope is that they can use a room at the university. He is not aware that they need anything from the selectboard now.

Carl said Isabelle Sullivan asked what will become of the playground equipment currently at Legion Field. He checked it and it is not cracked or broken. It needs to be cleaned and the color is faded, but it is usable. At a future meeting, Carl and Isabelle can talk to the board about whether to relocate the equipment closer to where the new equipment will be going, move it to another town location, or sell or donate it.

Mike asked, if the equipment is still good, why do we need new equipment? Carl said the town has a grant. Mike said the money comes from somewhere. Carl said the new equipment could have different features. What is there now mainly seems to consist of something a child can walk up and then go down a slide. Peter said he thinks we can do better than what is there now. It shows its age.

Diana Osborn said she believes that playground was funded by a group of parents, so it might be good idea to consult with them and get their involvement regarding what to do with it. Board members said that is a good idea.

Scott said it is important to make sure the equipment is compliant with standards for playground safety. If it is not, it should not be used. He is not sure if the town has an insurance person who looks at that.

Carl said he stopped by Holmes Meadow this morning. Redstart is there working. They were planting larger trees with root balls. Bare root shrubs and small trees have been planted. They may be there tomorrow or will be back later in the week. It will not be a problem for them to finish up by the end of May.

Mike asked why we are planting stupid trees all over that meadow. Carl said he doesn't know for sure. He was brought into this project on the day of the preconstruction meeting. From what he has seen in the plans, the trees are intended to help with stabilization. Mike said one idea was to bring the level down so there would be a place for ice sheets to go in an ice jam. If there are trees, where will the ice go? The trees will grow up and stop the ice. Carl said the species they are planting along the river are those typically seen along a river, like alders. The bigger trees are further from the river. Mike said they will still restrict the flow of ice.

Adrienne said she doesn't think board members or Carl can answer Mike's question. Maybe we should email SLR or someone else to ask. Paul said he will email LCPC and SLR to ask.

Peter said he is curious about how far apart the trees are planted. If they are close, they could be a barrier to ice flow but if they are far apart they might not be.

Carl said Boulder Excavating will return to finish their work once Redstart is done planting. Boulder will define an entrance area with boulders and create paths for the public.

Adrienne asked, the Welcome Center still needs to be painted by Back Forty Builders? Carl said yes. Brian Raulinaitis told him the weather hadn't been great for painting.

Mike asked, the steps at the Welcome Center are still held up by Act 250, right? Carl said yes. Mike said he feels like we should have asked for forgiveness rather than permission. It is crazy that the project has been held up so long.

15. ***Annual Finance Plan for Town Highways***

John said the town has to fill out a form annually showing miles of road in different classes and the estimated amount of money to be spent on them. The board reviewed the form he had prepared. If we don't send it in to the state it could affect the money we get from the state.

Mike moved to sign the Annual Financial Plan for Town Highways, Peter seconded and the motion was passed.

16. ***Town Road and Bridge Standards***

The board reviewed the Road and Bridge Standards. John said he got the information about roadway construction standards from Jason. We need to submit a document saying we are following the standards. **Adrienne moved to approve the Town Road and Bridge Standards, Peter seconded and the motion was passed.**

17. ***RFP for Forestry Services for the Gomo Lot***

John said he put together an RFP for forestry services and sent it to Lois Frey, who ran it by the Conservation Commission. Noel Dodge had some recommendations that John added. At a recent visit to the Gomo lot, it was discovered that someone is building a house on what Lois thinks may be our property.

Mike said we need to have the lot surveyed quickly before someone gets too far along with building. Paul asked if the line in question is the one the Conservation Commission wants to get surveyed. Peter said yes, it is.

Paul said a survey is not part of the RFP. John said the forester will want to know where the boundaries are. Paul asked how he will do that if the lot is not surveyed. John said if he has questions we will need to work with him to get it surveyed. Peter said he thinks it is in next year's budget to get a survey done.

Mike said he thinks this is somewhat of an emergency. John said he will try to go back and leave his card and a letter with concerns about the property line. Paul said we should definitely notify the possible encroacher in some way.

Mike asked what the price was for a survey. Peter said he thinks it was about $10K for the whole lot. Mike said he thinks we should get a surveyor working on that. Rosemary suggested that perhaps the surveyor would be able to start work now but wait to get payment until July 1.

There was discussion about whether the whole lot needs to be surveyed. Some board members said they feel it should be.

Diana Osborn said her husband is a trail monitor for the Green Mountain Club. He is highly aware of state forest boundaries. There is some encroachment and lack of respect for boundaries in that area. The boundaries the GMC monitors are in good shape, but the town forest parcel is at a disadvantage because there isn't someone there all the time. She feels it would be good to get an up-to-date survey using contemporary methods, as Mike recommended.

The board discussed awarding the contract to survey the Gomo property to the least expensive of the previous bidders if they will still honor that price, but decided to wait to take action until Peter could look up what the previous bids were.

Adrienne moved to post the RFP for forestry services for the Gomo lot, Mike seconded and the motion was passed.

18. *Create a General Ledger Account for Flags*

Paul said the American Legion has placed flags on graves of past veterans but the American Legion is dissolving due to lack of active membership. John's question is if we can create an item in the general ledger account so the town has funds to provide flags if necessary. If we don't expend the funds this year, they will go into the account and can be used the following year. Mike said even though the American Legion is disbanding, a core group of volunteers will still put the flags up.
Rosemary said we typically send them $200 dollars a year. They have 2 or 3 years' worth of flags already. They are asking us to roll over the unspent amount.

Paul said that is a reserve fund. He thinks that needs to be approved at town meeting. Mike said he thinks there will be no difficulty getting it passed at town meeting. Paul suggested making a line item for flags and then adding establishment of a reserve fund to the town meeting warning. The board agreed to that.

Adrienne asked, we already pay $200 and they use some of their own funds too? Rosemary said she doesn't know if they use their own funds. She thinks they buy quite a few flags at a time, at a cost of about $1100. Paul said in that case, a reserve fund make sense.

Mike moved to create a general ledger account for flags and to put an article on establishing a reserve fund for flags on the 2027 town meeting warning, Peter seconded and the motion was passed.

19. *Gomo Lot Survey*

Peter said one surveyor gave us a $9K price for the entire lot. Another proposed breaking down the work and starting with the research portion for $3K. That would determine how much surveying would be needed. There are existing surveys that show a couple of the property lines. That is currently the lower price but we do not have a price from that surveyor for the whole boundary. Peter will get back to that surveyor to get a price for surveying the entire boundary. Peter said both surveyors have been used a lot and have good reputations.

Mike moved to award the contract to survey the Gomo property to the least expensive of the previous bidders if they will still honor that price, Peter seconded and the motion was passed.

20. Selectboard Goals for the Upcoming Year

Paul said today he sent out another way to look at the potential selectboard goals identified at the April 29 meeting. He sorted the items into different buckets. Those involving grant money in hand, those with urgent timelines, obligations, facilities-related items, longer term projects and others not included in the previous buckets. This does not prioritize any of the items. He feels we should identify priorities in the longer term, facilities and other categories. We don't really need to prioritize items in the obligations, urgent or grants in hand categories.

Adrienne suggested that the urgent timeline group should be in timeline order based on which items need attention soonest. Adrienne asked why Paul put rail trail connection in the urgent timeline group. Paul said in his mind it is urgent because the longer we don't have a good connection to the rail trail the more Johnson becomes a place people bypass. We don't have a good fix, though.

John said this summer we could put in sharrows, direct bicyclists and maybe have public works fill in some of the major potholes to smooth up the road. Then we could start looking at longer term solutions.

Paul said VTrans said we should wait on painting a bike lane across the road to direct bicyclists because they are working on a statewide program. We were talking about painting a lane in front of the old lumber yard, but he is not sure we can do that right away.

Mike said he thinks we need to totally fix Railroad St. He thinks band-aids are not the answer. He never advocates putting paving on top of a road until the underlying road is fixed.

Paul said his hope for the short term was to paint a bike lane, paint sharrows, and put some sort of gridding over the sunken areas around the storm drains. We are not supposed to paint a line where the rail trail crosses the road. VTrans regards that as their jurisdiction. Diana Osborn said the town can do what it wants outside of their right of way. Peter asked, the problem with VTrans is just where the trail crosses the road, right? Paul said yes.

John said he talked to Jason about sharrows. The public works crew paints the streets a little later in the spring after it is swept. Painting sharrows is on their agenda. John asked if we can put up signage indicating where downtown is, what businesses are there, etc. Paul asked John to reach out to Doug Molde and get more information about VTrans' exact objection.

The board agreed to table this discussion now and return to it at the next meeting.

21. Library Update

John said the library trustee board met May 11. Brian Raulinaitis was there. A Department of Libraries representative participated via Zoom. They discussed that cash is running out. They asked what has to be done to satisfy the conditions of the grant. There are 4 objectives that must be met. The building must be open to the public and ADA accessible and have telehealth operations and wi-fi. The library board asked Brian how best to achieve those objectives. He said he had supplies ordered for the new section. He recommended completing the new section, opening the library and waiting for additional funds to complete the old section.

Paul asked if we have an estimated cost to get to completion of those 4 objectives. John said there is a $215K payment due and then he thinks $270K. Brian has a lot of items pre-ordered. There will be another library board meeting in June. Peter said he thinks it will be near the beginning of June. They talked about that being the breaking point to shift to Plan B and just focusing on the addition if they do not see a way toward finishing the entire project. There is some significant fundraising going on right now that we could see some really helpful answers from in next the few weeks. We may hit that June date and be able to keep going, or we may need to shift to Plan B. Given the possibilities, it would not make sense to shift to Plan B right now.

Paul asked when the next invoice is due. John said May 31. Paul asked, we have enough for that? John said yes. Paul asked, there will be some money left over after that, but not much? John and Peter said yes.

Mike suggested seeing if a granite company would donate steps for the library. Then we could have granite steps that would last forever and not concrete. John said money from Rep. Balint's office could also potentially pay for granite steps.

There will be a report to the selectboard with facts and figures at the second meeting in June.

Peter said he felt like everyone present at the library board meeting was really working hard to make a Plan B and understood the necessity. John said he was concerned about what Brian's reaction might be, since is the contractor and is invested, but he was on board with developing Plan B.

22. Review LEMP

Eben had sent out a copy of the updated Local Emergency Management Plan and urged the board to adopt it. **Peter moved to approve the Johnson 2026 Local Emergency Management Plan and to authorize Eben Patch and the selectboard chair to sign it, Mike seconded and the motion was passed.**

Adrienne noted some errors in her information in the LEMP.

23. Unpaid Architect's Invoice

Peter said he thinks he has already made his objections known to our non-payment of the architect's invoice. He feels like we are not being fair to our architect ,who has worked in good faith and has been responsive. We as a board approved an RFP for the foundation work. Attached to the RFP were the drawings that show no cut. He doesn't think it is fair for us to dun the architect now when we had the chance ourselves to see there was no cut when we voted on the RFP.

Mike said he talked to the contractor for the concrete, who claimed he had asked why there was not a cut and was told it would be done at a later date. The contractor thought it was odd that a hole was not incorporated in the forms.

Peter said before we had a foundation contractor we issued an RFP that showed no cut. He thinks it is not fair for us to dun the architect for drawings done by the engineer when we could have caught the mistake. Paul said it does sound like we had the opportunity to catch it, but that assumes we are experts on all phases of construction. Peter said we were expert enough to catch it after the fact.

Paul asked if there was a structural reason not to make the cut ahead of time. Mike said the architect said it was to support the building, but the building was already on cribs, not resting on the concrete.

They could have put an I-beam in the hole and lowered the building onto it. Peter said he thought the issue had to do with when the building was lowered onto the new foundation.

Peter said we should not put the architect in the position of having to go back to the engineer to try to dun him for the money. The architect has worked in good faith throughout. The board voted for an RFP where there was an error. He feels like the board has a responsibility. He appreciated Greg Tatro's comment at the last meeting about letting this be a learning opportunity. He has learned a lot.

Paul asked if we have talked to the architect. Mike said he did, but he didn't think he got a good answer. The answer was something about the concrete not being able to support the building, but the building was up on cribs.

Paul said he thinks the fact that we put out drawings for the RFP that were wrong shifts some of the burden to us. Peter said the engineer drew what went with the RFP and we approved it. A later drawing from the architect had the note "To be cut at a later time." The foundation contractor was working from the drawings that went with the RFP. The architect isn't even mentioned in the drawings. They have the engineer's name. Mike said he would have inspected the drawings more carefully if he had ever thought a cut would not be incorporated.

Paul said it is really the engineers we should be withholding payment from, but we can't do that because the architect paid them. Paul said if there was a way to go back to the engineer it might be different, but it seems that unfortunately a good portion of the responsibility is on us.

Peter moved and Paul seconded to pay the previously flagged architect's invoices. The motion apparently failed, with Peter and Paul voting in favor, Mike opposed and Adrienne abstaining. Adrienne said she is not voting on any library motions. There was discussion about whether a motion needs a majority of board membership or a majority of those present voting in favor in order to pass. It was agreed that John should check with VLCT to be certain.

24. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:36.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths