

**Johnson Historical Society Meeting
14 October 2026 Holcomb House**

Present: Dick Simays, Linda Jones, John Sutherland, Mary Jean Smith, Kelly Vandorn, Mike Dunham, and Lois Frey. Absent: Alice Whiting.

President Dick Simays called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM. There were no additions to the agenda.

Secretary's Report: **It was moved, seconded and approved to accept the 9 September 2026 Minutes as printed.**

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer, Kelly Vandorn shared copies of the Current Year Paid to Date and the Current Year Income to Date sheets, indicating no unusual expenses. (Copy on file with the minutes.) The checkbook balance is \$35,051.57.

Kelly announced the 2027-2028 proposed budget needed to be prepared by the JHS November meeting as the Selectboard is starting their budget deliberations. The present budget committee is Dick Simays and Kelly. John Sutherland agreed to replace Dean West for budget work. They plan to meet October 28, 2026 prior to the November 4, 2026 Selectboard meeting.

There was also a discussion identifying JHS priorities for future action which included the following:

1) Prepare for Spring 2027 a permanent fix to address the leaks in the East Room and implement it. Mike will take the lead in getting the project done.

2) Prepare a conceptual plan for the Holcomb House improvements that remain on the Building Committee's project list using the May 2025 General Conditions Assessment provided by the Preservation Trust of Vermont for guidance. Dick Simays will follow-up with Don Blake and coordinate with Mary Jean Smith to keep the project moving.

3) Clarification with the Selectboard for the status of the Holcomb House roof project is needed.

Additionally, Lois Frey moved and John Sutherland seconded the motion to ratify the expenditure of \$200 for Howard Coffin for his presentation about Julian Scott on 20 September 2026. The motion passed unanimously.

Administrative Items:

Holcomb House Hosting: The Program Committee will host a talk about VT Schools on October 25, 2026 with the Holcomb House open at 1 pm and a talk by Charles Farrell at 2 pm.

Friday, November 13, 2026 Mike Dunham will host from 9 am to noon and on Sunday, November 22, 2026 Lois Frey will host from 1 to 3 pm. On Friday December 11, 2026 JHS will host a late afternoon/early evening Open House.

Mary Jean Smith reported an enthusiastic visit and village walk-around with Jasmine Yuris and six home-school children on October 5, 2026.

Social media: Linda Jones reported she is finding it difficult to find pictures for her postings.

Standing Committee Reports:

*Buildings, Grounds and Facility Development: See discussion at Treasurer's Report above and the September 9, 2026 JHS minutes.

*Collections & Program Development: Mary Jean reported that Howard Coffin appreciated the donation to help with his travel expenses on September 20, 2026.

Kelly Vandorn reported that Charles Farrell will discuss the Vermont School House project on Sunday, October 25, 2026 at the Holcomb House at 2 pm. The JHS collection of Johnson one-room schools will be on display. All are welcome and homemade cookies will be served.

***Revenue Development:**

Sarah Williams of Jenna's Coffee House approached Linda Jones about having the Historical Society occasionally sell pies at the coffee house. Following discussion, it was decided not to accept the offer. Thank you Sarah for thinking of JHS.

Secondly, Linda reported that Andrea Blaisdell has volunteered to make a quilt during the winter for the Historical Society to raffle. All agreed to accept the offer with Linda and Andrea deciding the theme for the quilt. Thank you Andrea.

***Membership:** Linda Jones reported that 16 previous memberships were not renewed for 2026. The 2027 membership request will be prepared and mailed during November 2026. She suggested completing a review of the membership list with Mary Jean Smith and Lois Frey offering to help. (Date to be determined.)

***Acquisitions:**

Linda Jones reported items donated by Mary Beard include a notebook with 47 Riddle Brothers invoices dated 1898 – 1917. Also 1914 & 1917 tax notices, freight bills from St. J and L.C. Railroad, and other miscellaneous items.

Mary Jean Smith donated a 1961 *Easter Ideals* magazine from Rachel Smith and she shared an illustrated paper, *Davis Hay Barn* written by Travis Smith documenting the history and condition of the Plot Road barn.

John Manley donated an 1883-1884 Gazetteer with maps, a jack knife, and a collection of old keys. Lydia Putvain donated some items filed at the Municipal Building including a picture of the stage curtain from the old Town Hall, a Town of Sterling proclamation, Oread Club information dated 3.7. 1981, Rocky Hooper's police badges, and other miscellaneous items.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 am.

Minutes recorded by Lois Frey, Recording Secretary.