

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING  
March 16, 2010**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES:** Larry Yandow (Village President); Deb Billado, John Lajza, George Tyler, Peter Gustafson.  
**ADMINISTRATION:** Dave Crawford, Village Manager.

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**I. CALL TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Village President, Larry Yandow, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**

Add under 'Old Business': Annual Meeting Format

**III. GUESTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

1. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda  
None.

2. Presentation/Discussion of "All Aboard for Downtown Essex Junction" Report from Forum on February 10, 2010

Susan McCormack and members of the Railroad Ave. Revitalization Project Steering Committee presented recommendations from the forum(s) held to discuss revitalizing the Railroad Ave. and Main Street downtown area of the village. The forums were a collaborative effort and partnership with community activists of all ages. Revitalization of Railroad Ave. has a track record of success that includes increased train ridership, beautification of the area, increased awareness and community involvement in continuing to make the area pleasant, inviting, and safe. Recommendations from the forums include developing and support of a Railroad Ave. event series (including a farmer's market), renovating the train station, creating/enhancing green spaces in the core area, developing/maintaining a marketing plan for the village, developing plans to respond to traffic, parking, and pedestrian needs, updating the zoning regulations for the commercial area. The role of the village government with the recommendations includes, but is not limited to, co-sponsoring events by coordinating street closures with the police and public works, providing event tents or making arrangements with a vendor for multiple use of tents for events, holding liability insurance as host of events, pursuing grants for events, bringing stakeholders together (e.g. railroad and bus companies) to identify resources and mutual interests in renovating the train station and to begin the process, investing in beautification of the area (plantings, signs, and such as well as future maintenance), implementing a marketing and communication plan (website, communication with the community) to maintain momentum of the revitalization effort, continued exploration of plans to enhance the area (e.g. crescent road proposal, pedestrian path connections), and updating the commercial zoning regulations to assist the revitalization effort. Ms. McCormack thanked the Trustees for getting the momentum going to address the Railroad Ave. situation. Thanks were also extended to all who helped with the forum and

events to date, recognizing it is the energy and desire of the community to make the community better. Larry Yandow mentioned Brattleboro wants to use the village's revitalization model in their community.

George Tyler read a letter of thanks from the Trustees to Susan McCormack for her effort with the neighborhood forum on 2/10/10.

**MOTION by Deb Billado, SECOND by John Lajza, to accept the recommendations as outlined in the "All Aboard For Downtown Essex Junction" report, dated 3/11/10, and submitted by the Railroad Avenue Revitalization Project Steering Committee, and further, that the Trustees will take the report and recommendations under advisement and consideration at the Trustees retreat in April, 2010. VOTING: 5 ayes; motion carried.**

Residents were urged to attend the annual meeting on April 7<sup>th</sup> to support the revitalization effort. Susan McCormack stated to keep momentum going it is suggested three community committees be formed (two of which already exist), including Railroad Ave. committee (would be stewards of events in the area), farmer's market committee, and a green up committee. The three committees will report to the Railroad Ave. Revitalization Steering Committee which meets quarterly. The steering committee reports to the village government and both stay in touch with the broader community.

#### **IV. OLD BUSINESS**

##### **1. Business Radio Advertising**

There was discussion of continuing the contribution toward radio ads for the village. Local businesses also contribute to the advertising. Deb Billado stressed the need to ensure the ads are right for the target audience. Colored informational brochures may be a better use of limited advertising funds. There was further discussion of ideas for effective use of limited advertising funds, incorporating the words "Essex Junction" in the ads, getting feedback on the effectiveness of the ads, and the frequency of the ads being run. Dave Crawford noted there will be a meeting to discuss ways to present the village, use of electronic media, alternatives, how to get a more consistent and coordinated method of communication on events, and feedback. The Trustees felt it may be prudent to put a hold on spending for radio advertising until after the annual meeting.

**MOTION by Peter Gustafson, SECOND by Deb Billado, to table discussion of radio advertising until after the annual meeting. VOTING: 5 ayes; motion carried.**

##### **2. Annual Meeting Format**

There was discussion of the presentation of local option tax information at the annual meeting. John Lajza suggested the focus be that the village has a revenue problem, not a spending problem. The change in the percentage paid by IBM in support of the municipal budget from 2000 to 2010 could be shown (IBM paid 65.2% of the municipal budget in 2000 and 19.2% in 2010). There was agreement significant changes that impact tax revenue should be mentioned, such as the discontinuance of machinery and equipment tax and the reappraisal. The changes resulted in a shift onto village residents for taxes.

Deb Billado, George Tyler, and Dave Crawford will develop information for the presentation on the General Fund budget which will stress the principal reasons for the budget as presented and the increases. Explanations will be drafted to anticipated questions relative to level funding or reducing the budget. Peter Gustafson will handle the presentation on the Land Acquisition Fund. The Fire Chief will handle the presentation on the charter change relative to appointment of the Fire Chief.

**V. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**VI. VILLAGE MANAGER'S REPORT**

**1. Meeting Schedule**

- March 23 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- March 30 @ 6:30 – Annual Meeting Preparation (tentative)
- April 7 @ 7:00 – Village Annual Meeting (community dinner at 6 p.m.)
- April 13 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- April 13 from 7 AM to 7 PM – Annual Village Meeting Australian Ballot Voting
- April 22 @ 8 AM – Special Meeting: Board Retreat
- April 27 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- May 11 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- May 25 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- June 8 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- June 22 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting

**VII. TRUSTEES COMMENTS/CONCERNS**

John Lajza recognized the good work by village staff, noting the letter received from Terry Pitts, Iroquois Ave., dated 3/8/10, regarding repair of a water leak by Public Works.

**VIII. CONSENT AGENDA & READING FILE**

**MOTION by George Tyler, SECOND by Peter Gustafson, to approve the consent agenda as follows:**

- 1. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting (3/2/10)**
- 2. Request by 2010 Essex Memorial Day Parade Committee for Memorial Day Parade, candlelight vigil, sign, and street closings**
- 3. Invitation to Safe Streets Summit on 4/10/10 at CVE**
- 4. Reading List Acceptance (Letters & Communications)**
  - **Planning Commission Minutes 2/18/10**
  - **Article in *Essex Reporter* re: EPA Award for WWTF**
  - **Updated Train Day Trip Flyer with 2010 Discount Fare**
  - **Thank You Letter from Resident on Iroquois Ave.**

**VOTING: 5 ayes; motion carried.**

Thanks and appreciation was extended to all the volunteers working on the Memorial Day Parade.

**IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION by Peter Gustafson, SECOND by Deb Billado, that the Board of Trustees go into Executive Session to consider legal matters, contract negotiations and personnel matters, and potential budget changes related to personnel issues where premature general public knowledge would clearly place the Village at a substantial disadvantage, and to invite the Village Manager to attend for a portion of the session. VOTING: 5 ayes; motion carried.**

The Board entered Executive Session at 8:10 p.m. Dave Crawford left the session at 9:15 p.m.

**MOTION by George Tyler, SECOND by John Lajza, to adjourn Executive Session and reconvene the regular meeting. VOTING: 5 ayes; motion carried.**

Executive Session was adjourned and the regular meeting reconvened at 9:59 p.m.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION by John Lajza, SECOND by Deb Billado, to adjourn the meeting. VOTING: 5 ayes; motion carried.**

The meeting was adjourned at 10 p.m.

*RScty: M.E.Riordan*