

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
July 19, 2011**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES:** George Tyler, Dan Kerin, Lori Houghton, John Lajza.  
**ADMINISTRATION:** Dave Crawford, Village Manager.  
**OTHERS PRESENT:** Kevin Collins.

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

Village President, George Tyler, called the regular meeting to order at 6:30 PM and led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**

Add under "Manager's Report".

- Information on the train station grants, update on the waste water treatment facility improvements, and crescent connector information.

Add under "Executive Session":

- Real estate matters.

**III. GUESTS AND PRESENTATION**

1. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda

There were no comments from the public.

2. Public Hearing: FY12 Water/Sewer Rates

The second public hearing on the FY12 water and sewer rates was opened at 6:33 PM.

Dave Crawford reported the following proposed increases:

- Water rate increase of 1.9%
- Sewer rate increase of 6.6%
- Sanitation rate increase of 5.5%
- Large water uses rate increase of 1.6%
- Wholesale rate increase of 5.6% (rate for the treatment plant)

There were no comments from the public. The hearing was closed at 6:34 PM.

**IV. OLD BUSINESS**

1. Set FY12 Water/Sewer Rates

**MOTION by John Lajza, SECOND by Dan Kerin, to adopt the rate structure as submitted by staff and the Village Manager in the memo, dated July 8, 2011, and the document titled "Village of Essex Junction Water/Sewer/Sanitation Rate Schedule, Effective for billings July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012". VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.**

2. At-Large Appointment to the Essex Police Facility Committee Phase II

**MOTION by John Lajza, SECOND by Lori Houghton, to appoint John Alden as the public at-large representative from the village on the Essex Police Facility Committee Phase II. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.**

3. Update on Transfer of Town of Bradford Bond to Village of Essex Junction  
Dave Crawford noted there are legal costs associated with the bond transfer and the Town of Bradford incurred legal costs and paid some interest on the bonds prior to transfer (\$30,000). The negotiated amount to be paid by the two communities is \$15,000 each. Even with the payment Essex Junction will realize a good interest rate into the future. If the state does not provide a 2% interest rate on the revolving loan then there will be a higher cost to the borrowing, but this is unlikely.

**MOTION by Dan Kerin, SECOND by Lori Houghton, to authorize the Village Manager to proceed with the purchase of the Bradford bonds as defined in the Board of Trustees June 14, 2011 resolution with the understanding that the Village of Essex Junction will pay the Town of Bradford \$15,000 for transfer and interest costs. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.**

4. Update on Essex Town Contribution to Purchase Ladder Truck  
George Tyler provided background information on the previous commitment by Essex Town to pay a total of \$200,000 (in \$50,000 increments) toward the purchase of a ladder truck (\$900,000 cost for the truck). Essex Selectboard will discuss the matter at a future meeting and keep the Trustees informed.

5. Discuss F-35 Resolution

George Tyler reported a new environmental impact statement on the F-35 jets is forthcoming according to the Air Guard. Action on the resolution could be delayed until the report is received.

**MOTION by John Lajza, SECOND by Lori Houghton, to support the resolution of support for the assignment of F-35 aircraft to the Vermont Air National Guard and to sign the resolution at the next Trustees meeting.**

**DISCUSSION: Positive comment was made on the contribution by the Air Guard to the community. The F-35 aircraft are the latest technology.**

**VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.**

## **V. NEW BUSINESS**

1. Discuss Village On-Line Communication Policy

There was discussion of using current technology for effective communication with the public, including the following comments:

### *Village Website*

- Procedure to post items on the village website needs to be established. Typically items are submitted to the Village Manager or staff for posting if appropriate. An individual cannot post an item unilaterally. Dave Crawford stated procedurally the Trustees adopt a policy and management administers the policy. Items should not be posted on the website with a view out of synch with the management charged with representing the majority. Community events, announcements, public interest and news items should be posted, but not political statements. A website policy has informally evolved through the Village Manager, continued Mr.

Crawford, and having all department heads review each item to be posted as suggested may be cumbersome. There are department webpages (library, public works, water quality control) handled by department staff. The Trustees are setting policy for the village website only, not the separate department webpages. Lori Houghton suggested forming an action committee to ensure the policy once set is working to communicate effectively who the village is.

- There was discussion of linking businesses in the village from the village website rather than simply having advertisements for businesses. There could be a business link that shows a map as well as the business name and address. John Lajza suggested having a welcome message for any village business to request a link.
- There was discussion of online surveys which can be done from the website to gather public opinion on issues. The survey is not scientific or indicative of a vote. Dave Crawford suggested the majority of the board should decide if a survey should be done, and if so the survey should be done with management's and/or staff's assistance. Any survey done should be a multi-pronged approach (electronic, newspaper, paper mailing and such).

#### *Facebook Page*

- There was discussion of having a Facebook page for the village similar to the Downtown Essex Junction and Brownell Library Facebook pages. Dave Crawford cautioned about potential liability exposure for the village relative to inappropriate communications. A Facebook page would be good for announcements and other outgoing messages from the village with links to other pages, but that is one-way communication and not interactive as social media is designed to be. It was noted Facebook appears to be the communication tool used most by younger members of the community. Lori Houghton suggested the library create a push-only Facebook page (Lori Houghton will follow up on this). Dave Crawford mentioned budgetary considerations relative to staff time to maintain and monitor the page(s). George Tyler suggested using volunteers.

#### *E-Mail Accounts*

- There was discussion of each Trustee having an individual email account with the village for communicating village affairs or having one group email. There was agreement both types of email accounts should be set up. Dave Crawford mentioned his very preliminary investigation into possibly issuing to each Trustee an I-Pad containing all the meeting information and eliminating the paper binders. Information would be displayed on the screen at the meeting or accessibly electronically by the public. It was noted Park Street School is already configured for electronic meetings.

#### *Front Porch Forum*

- Each Trustee has publishing privileges on Front Porch Forum. There is a limit to the number of postings, but the village has not exceeded the limit to date. Dave Crawford commented village notices are getting lost in all the advertising on Front Porch Forum. Lori Houghton suggested having a list serve where people sign up to get sent an email notice of news. Dave Crawford advised identifying where to best direct the expenditure of funds for services.

George Tyler will rewrite the draft online communications policy with consideration of the comments and suggestions, and in support of the most important issue of how the Trustees and the administration communicate with the public.

## **VI. VILLAGE MANAGER'S REPORT**

The Trustees received a memo on items in the Manager's Report.

### **1. Meeting Schedule**

- July 26 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- August 2 – Interviews for Board of Trustees vacancy
- August 9 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- August 16 @ 5:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting (Maple Street Park)
- September 13 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- September 27 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- October 11 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- October 25 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- November 8 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- November 22 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- December 13 @ 6:30 - Regular Trustees Meeting
- December 27 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting

#### **Special Meetings/Events:**

- July 23 – 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Block Party
- October 6 – VLCT Town Fair, Killington
- December 7 – Light the Village Celebration and Train Hop

### **2. Candidates for Trustee Position**

To date only one individual has submitted a letter of interest. The date can be extended if desired. Advertisement will be done on Front Porch Forum and the Downtown Essex Junction Facebook page. The Trustees will draft a list of questions to be given to each candidate prior to the interview.

### **3. Crescent Connector**

There is positive support at the state level and with CCMPO for the crescent connector. Staff is developing a plan for right-of-way acquisition. John Lajza mentioned asking Essex Town to contribute toward the cost of the roadway since property values along the route will increase adding to the town's grand list. In addition contributing to the project would begin a process of supporting projects at large. George Tyler mentioned the town has projects to submit to CCMPO and the village should hear comments and questions before the projects are submitted.

### **4. Energy Grants**

Staff continues to pursue various energy grants.

### **5. Redirection of Funds from Security Camera at Train Station**

Staff is proposing to redirect funds for a security camera at the train station (\$10,000) toward a video camera covering the Five Corners intersection (\$3,000) and for methods of communicating with the public by the Board of Trustees (social media tools) as well as potentially purchase of I-Pads for meetings. Pictures from the Five Corners camera will be posted on the village website. The camera and pictures will be a marketing tool and for security. Public Works will be able to view the intersection in winter for snow accumulation.

**6. Summit Street Project**

The road project on Summit Street continues to progress. Residents are being kept informed.

**7. Resurfacing Main Street**

Resurfacing on Main Street will occur as soon as the contractor is available. July 1<sup>st</sup> was the initial date, but that has slipped.

**VII. TRUSTEES COMMENTS/CONCERNS**

Lori Houghton reported on the Heart & Soul grant application that is due July 20, 2011 and thanked all on the committee for their hard work. Information will be posted on the village webpage.

**VIII. CONSENT AGENDA & READING FILE**

**MOTION by John Lajza, SECOND by Dan Kerin, to approve the consent agenda as presented below:**

- 1. Approve Minutes of Previous Meetings (6/14/11 & 6/28/11)**
- 2. Approve Warrants**
- 3. Approve Application for Green Mountain Power Windmill Grant Program**
- 4. Approve Waiver of Bid Process for Emergency Generator**
- 5. Approve Re-designation of FY10 Surplus for Surveillance Camera/Upgrades**
- 6. Approve Revised Letter of Support and Commitment for 2011 Heart & Soul Community Planning Grant Application**
- 7. Reading List Acceptance (Letters & Communications)**
  - Block Party Committee Minutes 6/27/11**
  - Letter to Linda Myers, Essex Selectboard Chair, 7/1/11**
  - Press Release re: Heart & Soul Grant Application Advisory Team**

**VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.**

**IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION and/or ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION by Dan Kerin, SECOND by John Lajza, that the Board of Trustees go into Executive Session to discuss real estate matters where premature general public knowledge would place the village at a substantial disadvantage, and to invite the Village Manager to attend. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.**

The regular meeting was adjourned and Executive Session convened at 8:25 PM.  
Executive Session adjourned at 8:45 PM.