

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF MEETING
December 5, 2011**

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: George Tyler (Village President); Mary Morris, Lori Houghton, John Lajza. (Dan Kerin was absent.)
ADMINISTRATION: Dave Crawford, Village Manager; Darby Brazoski, Management Assistant.
OTHERS PRESENT: Aaron Martin, Erin Needham, Wendy Needham, George Dunbar, III, Nick Meyer, Ron Engel, Shirley Zundell, Jason Starr (Essex Reporter).

I. CALL TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

II. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

Additions to the agenda:

- Information on the Health Plan under ‘Old Business’
- Meeting agenda for Amtrak Great American Stations under ‘Old Business’
- Information on the high school pump station under ‘New Business’
- Notice of training burn by Fire Dept. under ‘Manager’s Report’
- Executive Session to discuss personnel and Employee Association negotiations

III. GUESTS AND PRESENTATION

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

2. Public Comment on Proposed Ordinances (Backyard Chickens, Vacant Buildings, Litter Control) and Policy on Appeals Board

Backyard Chickens

George Dunbar, III, questioned why chickens were specified in the ordinance when other animals, such as a backyard goat for lactose intolerant individuals, might be desired. George Tyler explained the same process to develop the ordinance pertaining to chickens can be followed for other animals/birds. Mr. Dunbar expressed concern about circumventing the land development code (LDC) which prohibits chickens by drafting an ordinance that allows chickens. Dave Crawford explained making changes to an ordinance is less cumbersome than changing the LDC. The Trustees can take action without the hearing process necessary to change the LDC. The Village Attorney feels the linkage between the ordinance and the LDC can be made at the next update of the LDC.

Vacant Buildings

George Dunbar, III, noted minor editing corrections to the text. Mr. Dunbar expressed concern about charging fines when the reason a building is vacant could be financial. Other alternatives to fines should be explored, such as using the land acquisition fund to

provide low or no interest loans to bring the property into conformance. George Tyler explained it could take time to be able to use the land acquisition fund and the Village does not want buildings to continue to be vacant.

Litter Control

Shirley Zundell pointed out there is no provision to deal with junk or junk motor vehicles. The definition of litter should include items #1 through #18.

Policy on Appeals Board

The ordinance appeals board to hear appeals by violators will include one Trustee, one planning commissioner, one Zoning Board member, and two citizens at large, all to serve three year terms.

George Dunbar, III, asked if the fee for appeal of an administrative determination has been set and the fee schedule updated. George Tyler clarified there is a penalty for a violation, but not to go forward with an appeal. Mr. Dunbar urged consistency of approach with all civil ordinances and expressed concern about creating a second quasi-judicial body per the ordinance. George Tyler assured the appeals board will be like the Board of Abatement which works with the appellant to find a solution versus punitive action.

The final version of the ordinances will be posted on the Village website.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

1. Amtrak Station Discussion/Preparation for Great American Stations Meeting
George Tyler will draft a summary of the efforts to date with the Essex Junction train station and contact information. Staff will email the summary to the Amtrak representatives prior to the 12/8/11 meeting.

2. Health Insurance

MOTION by Lori Houghton, SECOND by Mary Morris, to approve and sign the Formal Record of Action to enact the HRA Plan Amendment for 2012. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

The Trustees signed the document.

3. Village Office Technology Upgrade

The Board reviewed the flowchart of information on server function. Staff will move forward with severing email service with Sovernet and taking the appropriate associated actions to bring email in-house.

4. Circ Task Force Planning Projects 2nd Tier List

Pearl Street sidewalk and streetscape improvements from the fire station to the post office are on the 2nd tier project list. Other projects have been mentioned (Route 2A/Susie Wilson Road intersection), but are low on the task force list. Questions and comments on the Crescent Connector can be found on Front Porch Forum. There appears to be some

misunderstandings about the road. The Village Engineer is compiling information which will be posted on the Village website. The Trustees will respond to comments/questions. George Tyler will draft comments on the Crescent Connector, acknowledging that the road is a change and that there has not been a change in roads in the Village Center for decades. Also, the Board had to move rapidly to meeting the Governor's deadline for projects. It was noted property owners along the Crescent Connector have requested some changes in the alignment to allow more parking. Staff is meeting with VTrans to discuss the right-of-way and funding. Nothing is finalized with regard to the alignment.

Nick Meyer, Planning Commissioner, reported feedback he has heard on the road is that the village setting and walking community need to be maintained. On street parking should be in place to slow traffic and parking should be maintained for the retail component. The Planning Commission needs to be brought up to date on the project and all parties involved should be informed and understand the plans. There was discussion of the process before the state, Village Planning Commission review of the project, and permitting. The road will be done in accordance with the complete street design to include sidewalk, curbs, street trees, bike lane(s), and 12' driving lanes posted at 25 mph (essentially expanding the footprint of the downtown area to shuttle traffic around Five Corners). The developer and the Planning Commission will work together on landscaping, buildings, and lighting.

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. Legislative Priorities 2012

John Lajza stressed it should be made obvious to the state representatives that the Circumferential Highway is still needed even if the roadway is divided into smaller segments to make the project affordable. The state owns the right-of-way from the Village to the interstate exchange in Williston and a segment of the highway could be built in Williston to alleviate traffic through the Village. George Tyler suggested adding a priority such as "Maintain control of rights-of-way acquired for the original circ highway layout in anticipation of possible future construction of the highway." Staff will modify the draft list for review by the Board.

Dave Crawford noted the list of legislative priorities was circulated to Department Heads and all agree unfunded mandates are unacceptable. Paving Class 1 roads is important to the Village. Timely accounting by the State so Village tax bills are not delayed is also important as is funding libraries, phosphorus reduction, and storm water mitigation.

2. Pump Station Update

Further engineering and design work for construction was necessary at the high school pump station due to ground water and poor soils.

MOTION by John Lajza, SECOND by Lori Houghton, to authorize the Village Manager to sign documents related to the pump station upgrade as they become available to include:

- **Pump Station Engineering Agreement Amendment for Ground Water and Soils Problem (\$1,200 increase)**

- **Pump Station Engineering Agreement for Construction Inspection (\$115,400)**
- **Pump Station Cost Estimate Revision for Ground Water and Soils Problem (\$35,000)**

DISCUSSION: The project cost summary for the pump station upgrade at the high school was reviewed.

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

VI. VILLAGE MANAGER'S REPORT

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

1. Meeting Schedule

- January 3 @ 6:30 – Special Trustees Meeting (tentative)
- January 10 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- January 17 @ 6:30 – Special Trustees Meeting (tentative)
- January 24 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- January 31 @ 6:30 – Special Trustees Meeting (tentative)
- February 14 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- February 28 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- March 13 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- March 27 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- April 10 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- April 24 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting

Special Meetings/Events:

- December 7 – Light the Village Celebration and Train Hop
- December 13 – Budget Day
- March 7 – Special Meeting with Prudential Committee
- April 4 – Village Annual Meeting
- April 10 – Australian Ballot Voting

2. New Configuration of Crescent Connector

The new configuration per the request of business owners along the proposed roadway will allow for more parking. The Trustees concurred with the new configuration.

3. Training Burn

There will be a controlled burn by the Fire Department of a house on Lincoln Street.

VII. TRUSTEES COMMENTS/CONCERNS

None.

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA & READING FILE

MOTION by John Lajza, **SECOND** by Lori Houghton, to approve the consent agenda as presented:

- 1. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings (11/8/11 & 11/21/11)**

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2. Approval of Fire Department Grant Request
 3. Approval of Five Corners Farmers Market Sign in Village Right-of-Way
 4. Approval of Donation for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service 1/16/12
 5. Reading List Acceptance (Letters & Communications)
 - Planning Commission Minutes 11/311
 - ECOS Project Newsletter November 2011
 - 2012 Legislative Breakfast Series

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

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION and/or ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by George Tyler, SECOND by John Lajza, to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues and Employee Association negotiation preparation where premature public knowledge would place the Village at a substantial disadvantage, and to invite the Village Manager and Management Assistant to attend. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

The regular meeting was adjourned and Executive Session convened at 8:10 PM.
Executive Session was adjourned at 8:37 PM.

RScty: M.E.Riordan