

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF MEETING
January 31, 2012**

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: George Tyler (Village President); Dan Kerin, Mary Morris, Lori Houghton, John Lajza.
ADMINISTRATION: Dave Crawford, Village Manager; Darby Brazoski, Management Assistant Intern.
OTHERS PRESENT: Diane Clemens, Carl Houghton, Bridget and Nick Meyer, Brad Luck, Matt Reed, Susan Plunkett-Dunning, Burton Bunning, Jen McKenzie.

I. CALL TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Following taking the picture for the annual report 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:

- Pictures of the proposed dog park on West Street
- Draft warning article on the use of the Land Acquisition Fund
- Information regarding contract negotiations
- Information on increase in insurance premium

III. GUESTS AND PRESENTATION

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

IV. OLD BUSINESS

1. Review Proposed FY13 Budgets

Dave Crawford reported in addition to the revisions made by the Trustees \$5,500 was added to the budget because an employee who previously was not taking insurance coverage is now taking advantage of the benefit.

2. Update on Amtrak Station Renovation Project

The meeting with the UVM engineering students to discuss the train station project went well. The students visited the site. Scope of service will be discussed at the meeting on Saturday, February 18, 2012 (Kolvoord Room in the library). The public is invited.

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. Discuss Request for Item on Annual Meeting Warning

Carl Houghton, resident, requested the following be included on the annual meeting warning:

“We, the citizens of Essex Junction, request the Vermont legislature require the Green Mountain Care Board and the Governor to release the financing plans

(estimated cost and source of payment) for Green Mountain Care no later than September 1, 2012.”

Lori Houghton disclosed Carl Houghton is her father-in-law, but they have not discussed the issue.

The Trustees discussed setting a precedent by including a statewide issue not initiated by the village on the warning (nonbinding vote). The village would only be able to express an opinion on the matter, not provide information. Carl Houghton pointed out the impact of Green Mountain Care is as pertinent to every citizen as the budget, and it is time to set a precedent and have the voice of the people heard. It was noted the Essex Selectboard debated the issue and asked that a signed petition be submitted to put the item on the ballot. The petition must be signed by 5% of the total number of voters. Bridget Meyer suggested the item be discussed as ‘other business’ following the annual meeting. If the matter is brought up from the floor of the annual meeting the moderator will determine when the discussion will be held. Staff will provide some options to get the issue before the citizenry. The Board will address the matter on 2/14/12.

The Board reviewed the articles relative to the Land Acquisition Fund (transfer of funds and use of \$25,000) and amended the article on use of \$25,000 to read:

“Shall the village authorize the Trustees to use up to \$25,000 of the remaining balance in the Land Acquisition Fund for the purchase of property or to put a deposit on property?”

2. Dog Ordinance Amendment for West Street Dog Park

Susan Plunkett-Dunning reported there was a public meeting on April 16, 2011 regarding the dog park and all the area neighbors were notified, but only three people attended. Two of the people were in support of the dog park. The third individual had concerns about noise.

MOTION by George Tyler, SECOND by Dan Kerin, to adopt the amendment to Section 305(c) of Chapter 3 – Regulation of Public Parks to allow dogs in the fenced-in dog park at 111 West Street per the regulations for use of the park and to add new Section 504 to Chapter 5 – Regulation of Dogs to read: “Dogs accompanied by an owner, agent or guardian shall be permitted to be off leash within the confines of the fenced-in dog park located at 111 West Street according to the regulations for use of the park as adopted and enforced by the Essex Junction Recreation Department.”. VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

3. Request for Waiver of Public Parks Ordinance on Prohibiting Dogs

MOTION by Dan Kerin, SECOND by John Lajza, that the Trustees hereby grant approval for a one day event on July 14, 2012 at Maple Street Park for dogs to participate in a Disk Dog Tournament, and the dogs when not participating shall be on a leash.

DISCUSSION: Dave Crawford pointed out waiving an ordinance for an event is not unusual practice.

VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.**4. Appointments to Village-Wide WiFi Committee**

Announcement will be made on Front Porch Forum and the village website for volunteers to work on the committee. The Prudential Committee will appoint three members and the Board of Trustees will appoint three members. George Tyler volunteered. Dave Crawford will also be involved. Ryan Hegreness was mentioned as a potential member. The committee will discuss legislative and legal issues. Letters of interest noting the skill set that would be helpful to the committee should be submitted to the village office. The Board will review the letters on 2/14/12 and make the appointments on 2/28/12.

5. Proposal to Discuss Village-Town Administrative Collaboration with Essex Selectboard

George Tyler read a statement regarding the activities of the Village Manager as a community redevelopment director and changing the village-town governance structure to help decrease costs. The statement urged looking at other governance models, such as a part time village manager or full time redevelopment manager or sharing a manager and consolidating duties, but maintaining separate charters and governing boards. CCSU is an example of a model with one chief administrator who serves three chartered communities. There are other logical steps to decrease costs, said Mr. Tyler, such as merging administrative functions in planning and zoning. The Essex Selectboard should be asked to consider the matter. The Board concurred, noting the Orton process may help identify what is wanted and needed. George Tyler will approach the Essex Selectboard about the matter after the annual town meeting. Dave Crawford spoke in support of having healthy discussion and examination of the issues on how the communities can operate more efficiently.

Lori Houghton clarified the Orton process will help get the pulse of the community and facilitate how to gather information and frame values to put in the planning process.

Brad Luck cautioned against saying “merge”, but rather refer to a shared service model for collaboration and integration and redevelopment of a resource. There was mention of the need for a full time redevelopment director in the village and the town and village centers working together rather than competing against each other.

VI. VILLAGE MANAGER’S REPORT

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

1. Meeting Schedule

- 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:

- March 7 – Special Meeting with Prudential Committee
- April 4 – Village Annual Meeting
- April 10 – Australian Ballot Voting

2. Bids for High School Pump Station

The bids came in higher than the construction budget without the contingency. There is enough money to cover the bids if the contingency is used. The bid will be awarded at the 2/14/12 meeting.

3. Tri-Town Sewer Committee Meeting

The operating budget was accepted by the Tri-Town Sewer Committee at the 1/25/12 meeting.

4. Scoping Studies

Scoping studies for the Railroad Street portion of the crescent connector and Pearl Street from Post Office Square to Five Corners will be done.

5. Meeting with CVE

The meeting with CVE on the noise waiver will be held in February.

6. Town Government Day

Town Government Day is 2/15/12.

7. Railroad Crossing on Crescent Connector

Discussions continue on the best way to go through the railroad crossing process with VTrans.

8. Grants

The Trustees authorized staff to apply for a grant through VLCT PACIF for carbon monoxide detectors. The 50% match is covered by the Fire Department budget. Darby Brazoski reviewed her memo on grants in process, dated 1/31/12. It was noted staff is exploring a grant collaboration with CCTA to improve bus service into IBM to better match work shifts.

9. Community Table

Ideas are welcome for a community table at the annual meeting.

VII. TRUSTEES COMMENTS/CONCERNS

- Mary Morris reported the first meeting of the Block Party Committee was held. The focus was on identifying community activities and providing information at the block party. The next meeting is March 12, 2012. Volunteers are needed to serve on the committee.
- Dan Kerin announced the Parks and Rec Committee needs ideas for community events.

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA & READING FILE

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

- 1. Minutes of Meeting 1/17/12**
- 2. Approve VLCT Equipment Grant Application for Fire Dept.**
- 3. Reading List Acceptance (Letters & Communications)**
 - **Recreation Advisory Council Meeting Minutes 12/15/11**
 - **Email Press Release from Vermont Dept. of Health**
 - **Thank You Note for MLK Day Donation**

VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION and/or ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by George Tyler, SECOND by Dan Kerin, to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters (Village Manager's evaluation) and Employee Association negotiations 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 (5-0); motion carried.

The regular meeting was adjourned and Executive Session convened at 8:10 PM. (Village Manager Dave Crawford and Management Assistant Darby Brazoski left the meeting at 8:40 PM)

Executive Session was adjourned at 9:50 PM.

RScty: M.E.Riordan