

**CITY OF ESSEX JUNCTION
BOARD OF CIVIL AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES OF MEETING
October 12, 2022**

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE/BCA MEMBERS PRESENT: Kelly McCutcheon Adams, Deb Billado (via Zoom), Marcus Certa, Raj Chawla (also City Councilor - via Zoom), Brian Christie, Diane Clemens (presiding officer), Bernie Couture, Dylan Giambatista, Seth Manley, Robyn Moore, Scott Moore, Pat Murray (via Zoom), Katherine Stebbins.

CITY COUNCILORS PRESENT: Andrew Brown, Amber Thibeault (via Zoom), George Tyler.

ADMINISTRATION: Regina Mahony, City Manager; Susan McNamara-Hill, City Clerk/Treasurer.

OTHERS PRESENT: None.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Councilor Brown called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

Councilor Brown suggested adding agenda item #5a prior to the Election of Chair for a round of introductions.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

GEORGE TYLER made a motion, and MARCUS CERTA seconded, to approve the agenda as amended. VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

a. Comments from public on items not on the agenda
None.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Introductions

Board of Civil Authority members introduced themselves in person and via Zoom.

b. Election of Chair

Councilor Brown resigned as the chair of the Board of Civil Authority.

DIANE CLEMENS made a motion, and GEORGE TYLER seconded, to nominate DYLAN GIAMBATISTA as Chair of the Board of Civil Authority. VOTING: unanimous; motion carries (Dylan Giambatista recused).

Dylan Giambatista is now the Chair of the Board of Civil Authority.

c. Appoint Election Workers

Clerk/Treasurer McNamara-Hill noted that according to State statute, election workers must be appointed by the Board of Civil Authority prior to participating in an election in this official capacity. She said that they have a slate of previously appointed election workers, many of whom who have already served in that capacity.

Mr. Christie asked about keeping track of political affiliations for election workers. Clerk McNamara-Hill said that in Vermont, residents don't register with an affiliated party (though justices of the peace do need to disclose their party affiliations). Mr. Christie asked how many election workers are needed. Ms.

Clemens said that there is currently one individual in each of the current slots, but that she will look to the Board of Civil Authority members to step up and volunteer should additional workers be needed.

KELLY McCUTCHEON ADAMS made a motion, and MARCUS CERTA seconded, to appoint the election workers as a slate. VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

d. Early Ballot Processing

Clerk/Treasurer McNamara-Hill said that State statute requires that municipal Boards of Civil Authority must decide whether they will process ballots early.

Chair Giambatista said that the most recent guidance from the Secretary of State, which was updated in July 2022 sets out detail, process, and procedures, as well as corresponding State law. He encouraged others on the Board of Civil Authority to review the material as well. He noted that there is significant interest in elections, and that this guidance helps to lay out processes in a transparent way.

Mr. Manley noted that the Australian ballot system involves being able to vote in secret and only counting ballots once ballots are cast. He said that this system has served democracy for quite some time, and emphasized the importance of maintaining a secure election. He said that based on this criteria, he would recommend not allowing early voting. He cited concerns that they cannot guarantee that vote tabulating machines aren't connected to networks and thus be vulnerable to tampering. Chair Giambatista confirmed with the Clerk/Treasurer that the machines aren't connected to the Internet. Mr. Christie agreed with Mr. Manley's concerns. Councilor Chawla said that there is a procedure set forth by the legislature and Secretary of State and advised that the Board of Civil Authority move on and vote on this item. Mr. Murray noted that simply having the ability to connect to a network does not inherently mean that that machine can be hacked.

RAJ CHAWLA made a motion, and ROBYN MOORE seconded, to call the question. VOTING (by roll call): Kelly McCutcheon Adams – aye, Deb Billado – aye, Marcus Certa – aye, Raj Chawla – aye, Brian Christie - aye, Diane Clemens – aye, Bernie Couture – nay, Dylan Giambatista - aye, Seth Manley – nay, Jason Maulucci – absent; Ryan McLaren – absent, Robyn Moore – aye, Scott Moore – aye, Patrick Murray – aye, Katherine Stebbins – aye, Amber Thibeault – aye, Andrew Brown – aye, George Tyler – aye, Dan Kerin – absent; (14 ayes, 2 nays, 3 absent; motion carries).

BERNIE COUTURE made a motion, and ANDREW BROWN seconded, that the Board of Civil Authority approve the early ballot processing procedure as set forth. VOTING (by roll call): Kelly McCutcheon Adams – aye, Deb Billado – aye, Marcus Certa – aye, Raj Chawla – aye, Brian Christie - nay, Diane Clemens – aye, Bernie Couture – aye, Dylan Giambatista - aye, Seth Manley – nay, Jason Maulucci – absent, Ryan McLaren – absent, Robyn Moore – aye, Scott Moore – aye, Patrick Murray – aye, Katherine Stebbins – aye, Amber Thibeault – aye, Andrew Brown – aye, George Tyler – aye, Dan Kerin – absent; (14 ayes, 2 nays, 3 absent; motion carries).

e. Politicking Policy

Clerk/Treasurer McNamara-Hill said that this is a policy that the Town has adopted that has worked well and asked whether the City should do the same.

GEORGE TYLER made a motion, and MARCUS CERTA seconded, that the Board of Civil Authority adopt the policy on politicking campaigning, and signs at polling places as presented. VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

6. **ADJOURN**

DEB BILLADO made a motion, and MARCUS CERTA seconded, to adjourn the meeting. VOTING: unanimous; motion carries. The Board of Civil Authority adjourned at 6:36PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amy Coonradt