



TRUSTEES MEETING NOTICE & AGENDA
TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 2015 at 6:30 PM
LINCOLN HALL MEETING ROOM, 2 LINCOLN STREET

1. **CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO FLAG** [6:30 PM]
2. **AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**
3. **GUESTS, PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS**
 - a. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda
 - b. Public Hearing on FYE 16 Water/Sewer/Sanitation Rates
4. **OLD BUSINESS**
 - a. Set FYE 16 Water/Sewer/Sanitation Rates
5. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - a. Reappointments to Boards, Commission and Committees
6. **CONSENT AGENDA**
 - a. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting 6/9/15
 - b. Approve Warrants including check #10051651 through #10051757 totaling \$491,508.42
7. **JOINT MEETING WITH ESSEX SELECTBOARD** [7:00 PM]
 - a. Essex Governance Group (EGG) Follow-up Discussion
 - b. Handbook for the Evaluation of the Municipal Manager
8. **ADJOURN**

Meetings of the Trustees are accessible to people with disabilities. For information on accessibility or this agenda, call the Village Manager's office at 878-6944.

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 2015
6:30 PM**

AGENDA

**PUBLIC HEARING FYE 16
WATER/SEWER/SANITATION RATES**

This meeting will be held in the meeting room at the Village Municipal Building, 2 Lincoln Street, Essex Junction, VT. Meetings of the Trustees are accessible to people with disabilities. For information on accessibility and/or this agenda, call the Village Manager's office at 878-6944.

FYE16
WATER/WWTF/SANITATION
RATES



Village Water User Rate

FYE16 Proposed Rates

Usage	.0155/cubic foot
Fixed Charge	\$22.35/quarter or \$89.40/year
Increase over FYE15	2%
Cost to average user	\$179.92/year or \$14.99/month
(Fixed charges represent 50% of budget)	

Reasons for Increase

- 1) 1% increase in Operating budget
- 2) 3.4% increase in CWD Wholesale rate
- 3) 2% decrease in estimated usage

Village Wastewater Treatment User Rates

FYE16 Proposed Rates

Usage	.0099/cubic foot
Fixed Charge	\$26.44/quarter or \$105.76/year
Increase over FYE15	2%
Cost to average user	\$163.58/year or \$13.63/month
(Fixed Charges are 65% of the budget)	

Reasons for Increase

- 1) 2% increase in Operating budget

Village Sanitation User Rates

FYE16 Proposed Rates

Usage	.0051 /cubic foot
Fixed Charge	\$22.04/quarter or \$88.16/year
Decrease from FYE15	-2%
Cost to average user	\$117.94/year or \$9.83/month
(Fixed charges are 75% of budget)	

Reasons for Increase

- 1) 1.5% decrease in Operating budget
- 2) \$10,000 added for WWTF Bond Payment
- 3) \$10,000 increase in anticipated hook-on fees

Village Combined Utility Rates

FYE16 Proposed Rates

Usage	.0305 /cubic foot
Fixed Charge	\$70.83 /quarter or \$283.32 /year
Increase over FYE15	1%
Cost to average user	\$461.24 /year or \$38.44 /month

Large Water User Rate

FYE16 Proposed Rate

Usage	\$0.080/1,000 gallons
Decrease from FYE15	-1%

Reasons for Decrease

1.5% increase in estimated water use by IBM.
The rate is decreasing while the amount being collected is increasing

Other pertinent information

The Large User rate for IBM/GlobalFoundries is calculated as 13% of the Village's water operating budget plus a proportionate share of unaccounted water divided by estimated water usage.

At the end of the fiscal year there is a reconciliation. IBM either pays more or receives a credit depending on how much water they use and the amount of unaccounted water.

In addition, the Large User also pays the CWD Wholesale rate and the State of Vermont Water Supply Fee on all water used. These charges are a pass-through on the Village books.

Wastewater Treatment Wholesale Rate

FYE16 Proposed Rate

Usage	\$2.6877 / 1,000 gallons
Increase over FYE15	2%

Reasons for Increase

- 1) 2% increase in Operating budget

The Wastewater Treatment Wholesale rate is the rate paid by the Town of Essex and the Town of Williston for the treatment of sewage from these communities. The rate is based upon estimated flows and budgeted costs. At the end of the fiscal year the actual flows and costs are analyzed and adjustments are made.



The economic engine of Vermont.

2 Lincoln Street
Essex Junction, VT 05452
www.essexjunction.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: Village Trustees and Patrick Scheidel, Village Manager
FROM: Lauren Morrissette, Finance Director/Assistant Manager *LM*
DATE: June 23, 2015
SUBJECT: FYE16 Utility Rates

Issue

The issue is whether the Trustees will set the FYE16 Utility Rates as presented below.

Discussion

In order to fund the FYE16 Water, WWTF, and Sanitation Fund budgets staff recommends the Village rates be set as follows:

Village User Water usage rate	\$0.0155 per cubic foot
Village User Quarterly Fixed Charge	\$22.35 per quarter
Village User Wastewater Treatment usage rate	\$0.0099 per cubic foot
Village User Wastewater Treatment Quarterly Fixed Charge	\$26.44 per quarter
Village User Sanitation usage rate	\$0.0051 per cubic foot
Village User Sanitation Quarterly Fixed Charge	\$22.04 per quarter
IBM Large Water User Rate	\$0.08/1000 gallons of water
Wastewater Treatment Wholesale rate	\$2.6877/1000 gallons of sewage

Cost

The cost to the Village resident using 120 gallons per day will increase by 1% or \$4.42 per year. The large user rate is a decrease of 1%. The Wastewater Treatment wholesale rate is increasing 2%.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Trustees approve the FYE16 Utility rates as stated above.



Patrick Scheidel
Municipal Manager
PatS@essexjunction.org

2 Lincoln Street
Essex Junction, VT 05452
www.essexjunction.org

Office: (802) 878-6944
Fax: (802) 878-6946

MEMORANDUM

TO: Village Trustees
FROM: Pat Scheidel, Municipal Manager *PS*
DATE: June 23, 2015
SUBJECT: Reappointments

Issue

The issue is whether or not the Trustees reappoint members of the Zoning Board, Planning Commission, Bike/Walk Advisory Committee and Tree Advisory Committee.

Discussion

Four Village residents who are current members, Tom Weaver of the Zoning Board, Amber Thibeault of the Planning Commission, Jud Lawrie of the Bike/Walk Advisory Committee and Warren Spinner of the Tree Advisory Committee submitted letters indicating their willingness to be reappointed (see attached.)

The follow up interviews with these members shall be held at your July 14th meeting, along with interviews for new candidates. In order to postpone the reappointment interviews, it is necessary that the Trustees waive the section in your policy which requires that interviews be held prior to reappointing current members (see attached.)

Cost

There is no cost associated with this issue.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Trustees waive Section 6c. of the *Trustees' Policy Regarding Appointments to Boards, Commission and Committees* and hold the annual follow up interviews after reappointment. It is also recommended that the Trustees reappoint the following citizens through June 30, 2018:

Amber Thibeault - Planning Commission
Thomas Weaver – Zoning Board of Adjustment
Jud Lawrie - Bike/Walk Advisory Committee
Warren Spinner – Tree Advisory Committee

Patty Benoit

Subject:

FW: Essex Junction Zoning Board of Adjustment reappointment

-----Original Message-----

From: Thomas Weaver [<mailto:tgweaver@comcast.net>]

Sent: Tuesday, June 02, 2015 8:33 AM

To: Patty Benoit

Subject: Essex Junction owning Board of Adjustment reappointment

Hi Pat,

I am interested in being reappointed to the Essex Junction Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Sincerely,

Thomas G Weaver

RECEIVED

JUN 04 2015

Village of Essex Junction

57 Briar Lane
Essex Junction, VT
June 4, 2015

Mr. Pat Scheidel
Municipal Manager
2 Lincoln St.
Essex Junction, VT

Dear Mr. Scheidel:

In response to the May 29, 2015 letter from Susan McNamara-Hill, this is to express my interest in being reappointed to the Village Bike-Walk Advisory Committee. In my opinion, we have been making good progress.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jud Lawrie

Jud Lawrie
Member, Bike-Walk Advisory Committee

April 9, 2015

RECEIVED

JUN 08 2015

Village of Essex Junction

Pat Schiedel
Municipal Manager
Essex Junction, VT 05452

Pat,

Please accept this letter as my continued interest in serving on the Village of Essex Junction Planning Commission.

I have enjoyed the past two years on the Planning Commission. It took some time as a citizen with no Planning Commission or Zoning experience to understand the policies and procedures. Now that I finally feel like I'm getting the hang of this, I don't want to quit!

I hope that my background as an attorney and a former editor will also assist the Commission in the review of the Land Development Code.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (802) 233-5386.

Sincerely,

Amber Thibeault
69 Pearl Street, Unit 4
Essex Junction, VT 05452

Patty Benoit

From: wspinner@comcast.net
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2015 7:23 PM
To: Patty Benoit
Subject: Letter of Interest - Tree Advisory Committee

Pat Scheidel
Municipal Manager
Village of Essex Jct., Vt

Dear Mr. Scheidel,

Please except this email as my request for reappointment to serve another term on the Tree Advisory Committee. I look forward to serving the residents of Essex Junction in helping to manage our community trees. We are fortunate to have a dedicated committee which has made great strides to make this one of the states best!

Thanks for your consideration,

Warren Spinner
Essex Junction Tree Warden
Essex Tree Advisory Committee Member

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
TRUSTEES' POLICY REGARDING
APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES**

PURPOSE: To establish the procedure for Trustees' appointments to the Board, Commissions and Committees.

Section 1. Public Notification of Opening on Boards and Commissions

- a. The Village Clerk shall advertise the opening in the Essex Reporter a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the expiration of existing term(s), or the formation of a new Board or Commission.
- b. The Village Clerk shall post the opening in three public places a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the expiration of existing term(s), or the creation of a new Board or Commission.
- c. In the event of a resignation, the Village Clerk shall advertise the vacancy in the Essex Reporter and post the vacancy in three public places for a minimum of thirty (30) days after receiving notice of a resignation.

Section 2. Public Notification of Opening on Committee(s)

- a. The Village Clerk shall advertise the opening(s) in the Essex Reporter a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the expiration of existing term(s) or the creation of a new committee.
- b. The Village Clerk shall post the opening(s) in three public places a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the expiration of existing term(s) or the creation of a new committee.
- c. In the event of a resignation, the Village Clerk shall advertise the vacancy in the Essex Reporter and post the vacancy in three public places for a minimum of thirty (30) days after receiving notice of a resignation.

Section 3. Letters of Interest

- a. All interested individuals, including incumbents, shall be required to submit a letter of interest to the Village Manager. The letters of interest shall be forwarded to the Village Trustees for consideration.

Section 4. Interview for appointments to Boards and Commissions

- a. All candidates shall be interviewed by the Village Trustees in Executive Session. The Village Manager shall schedule the interviews and notify the candidates of the interview date, time and place.

Section 5. Interview for appointments to Committees

- a. All candidates shall be interviewed by the Village Trustees in Executive Session. The Village Manager shall schedule the interviews and notify the candidates of the interview date, time and place.

Section 6. Annual follow-up interviews for members of Boards, Commissions and Committees

- a. All volunteer members of Boards, Commissions and Committees shall be given the opportunity to meet with the Trustees at a regularly scheduled meeting or special meeting.
- b. The purpose of the follow-up interview will be to discuss how the expectations of each volunteer met the reality of the past year, and to review the mission and focus of the Boards, Commissions and Committees.
- c. Per Sections 4 and 5, the annual interviews will be held prior to reappointing current members of the Boards, Commissions and Committees and for those who do not wish reappointment the interview shall serve as an exit interview.

Adopted by the Village Trustees on 4-8-97 and revised on 9-23-97.
Revised 12-12-00, 1-28-03 and 7-23-13.

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF MEETING
June 9, 2015**

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: George Tyler (Village President); Dan Kerin, Elaine Sopchak, Lori Houghton, Andrew Brown.
ADMINISTRATION: Patrick Scheidel, Municipal Manager; Lauren Morrisseau, Assistant Manager & Finance Director; Rick Hamlin, Village Engineer.
OTHERS PRESENT Glenn & Lori McPeters.

1. 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.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

Additions:

- Essex Public Works Work List Spring, Summer, Fall 2015 to “Old Business”.
- Letter to Prudential Committee, dated 6/8/15, re: EJRP Governance to “New Business”.
- Memo re: Transfer of Funds between General Fund Departments to “New Business”.
- Letter re: Susan McNamara-Hill as School District Clerk/Treasurer to “Manager’s Report”.
- Spreadsheet for Business Card Services to “Consent Agenda”.
- Request by Brian Roy (EJRP) for Waiver of Noise Ordinance for July 4th Fireworks to “Consent Agenda”.
- Revenues/Expenditures Report 6/9/15 to “Consent Agenda”.

MOTION by Dan Kerin, SECOND by Lori Houghton, to accept the agenda as amended. VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

3. GUESTS, PRESENTATIONS, PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda

Glenn McPeters, 6 South Street

Glenn McPeters requested an update on CCTA buses using South Street. George Tyler reported the village is waiting to receive information from CCTA. There are public meetings planned by CCTA to discuss proposed route changes and that may be opportunity for residents to voice their concern about buses on South Street. Mr. McPeters asked who is making the decision about buses on village streets, CCTA or the Board of Trustees, noting that previous Trustees voted to enforce the street weight limit which is exceeded by the buses and sent a letter to CCTA to remove the buses. George Tyler said CCTA indicated they do not have the letter in their files. Following further discussion the Trustees agreed to add the item to the July meeting agenda and to have staff clarify the following information prior to the meeting:

George Tyler noted the Trustees need to discuss how to evaluate for the village and the village administration as to whether the shared manager model is working. Pat Scheidel stated departments with shared services are going through the process of looking for efficiencies which is what the departments would be doing even without the shared services model. With the highway department people outside of those doing the work are evaluating whether the service delivery model is working. There was continued discussion of the need for the Trustees to review how the shared services model is working for the village - what has been made easier, more difficult, or not impacted, and if village needs are being met. It was noted that the current arrangement for the Municipal Manager is the Essex Town Manager serving two entities so the Trustees have no say on replacement, but going forward the individual hired as the Municipal Manager will be a joint employee of the two municipalities governed by both the Selectboard and Trustees. Mr. Scheidel noted he will be providing background information for the Municipal Manager position that can be used by the Selectboard and Board of Trustees when selecting a future manager.

The Trustees will add discussion of the Municipal Manager position to a future agenda and discuss the contract for the existing arrangement in Executive Session.

2. Public Works Work List Spring, Summer, Fall 2015

Pat Scheidel explained Dennis Lutz provides a snapshot of the work to be done by the public works department. The Trustees mentioned work by the village highway department needs to be added.

5. NEW BUSINESS

1. Letter to Prudential Committee re: EJRP

It was noted the letter from the village is in support of any decision by the school district that helps the recreation department.

2. Manager's Evaluation Handbook

Pat Scheidel stated both the Selectboard and Trustees will be involved in evaluating the Municipal Manager. It is recommended department heads also be included. The handbook is a good guide for the evaluation. The matter will be added to the agenda of the joint meeting on June 23, 2015.

3. Transfer of Funds between General Fund Departments

Lauren Morrisseau reported on anticipated deficits and surpluses in general fund departments. Per past practice surplus in the General Fund is used to cover deficits in general fund departments. The water fund which is an enterprise fund will show a substantial loss this year due to the water line breaks and repairs this past winter. The water fund reserve will cover the loss.

MOTION by Lori Houghton, SECOND by Andrew Brown, to approve use of surpluses in the FY2015 Community Development and Brownell Library budgets to cover deficits in other general fund budgets as recommended. VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

-
- Whether CCTA is just deciding on route changes for only Sunday services or is also considering removing the bus from South Street.
 - The ramifications/implications of the village enforcing the street vehicle weight limit of 16,000 pounds (CCTA perspective and police department perspective).
 - Whether there is a specific waiver for public bus transit service.

2. Public Hearing: FY2016 Water Rates

The public hearing was opened at 6:45 PM. Lauren Morrisseau reported the following:

- Water rate is proposed at \$.0155 per cubic foot.
- Fixed cost is \$22.35 per quarter or \$89.40 per year.
- Cost to average user is \$179.92 per year or \$14.99 per month.
- The change in water rates represents a 2% increase over FY15 to the average user.
- Large water user rate is \$.08 per 1,000 gallons which is a 1% decrease from FY2015 because more water is being used (1.5% increase in use). There is a reconciliation at the end of the year where the large water user either pays more or receives a credit for usage.

COMMENTS

There was further discussion of the large volume user paying less when using more water while residential users pay for the amount of water used. Lauren Morrisseau explained the large water user (IBM/Global Foundries) pays the wholesale rate for water to Champlain Water District plus the payment to the village for overhead charges on the water that is used. IBM/Global Foundries pays 13% of the village operating budget. The Trustees felt more explanation of the large water user rate would be beneficial to the public.

Glenn McPeters, South Street, asked about the amount of the fixed cost paid by the large water user. Lauren Morrisseau said the large user fee to IBM/Global Foundries will be \$96,000 even though much of the water goes directly to the site and not through village pipes. The large water user arrangement was set up with IBM years ago and provides a revenue benefit to the village as a surcharge for water through village pipes. Mr. McPeters urged looking at the wording on the discussion of the water and sewer rate changes as well as clarifying the explanation of the large water user rate.

The next public hearing is June 23, 2015 which will also be the public hearing date for the sewer and sanitation rates.

With no further comments President Tyler closed the public hearing at 7 PM.

4. OLD BUSINESS

1. Municipal Manager's Subcontract Extension

Pat Scheidel explained he would like to oversee the projects started with shared services and requested the contract for the municipal manager be extended. The Selectboard authorized extension of the agreement to June 30, 2018 and it is hoped the Trustees concur.

4. Thoughtful Growth in Action Project

George Tyler explained a working group is being formed to look at the governance for Planning with combined services between the town and village and to make recommendations. The working group will include representatives from the Selectboard, Board of Trustees, Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Zoning Board, Heart & Soul, and a citizen at large. Elaine Sopchak and Dan Kerin are not available to serve so either Lori Houghton or Andrew Brown will join the working group.

6. MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Meeting Schedule – Regular Trustees Meetings @ 6:30 PM

- June 23, 2015 (joint meeting with Selectboard)
- July 14, 2015
- July 28, 2015
- August 11, 2015
- August 25, 2015
- September 8, 2015

Special Meetings/Events:

- July 18, 2015 @ 5 PM – Block Party & Street Dance

2. FY2016 Appointments

MOTION by Andrew Brown, SECOND by Dan Kerin, to approve the following Municipal Manager's appointments for the period July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016:

- **Susan McNamara-Hill – Village Clerk/Treasurer/Tax Collector**
- **David Barra – Village Attorney**
- **Chris Gaboriault – Village Fire Chief**
- **Hamlin Consulting Engineers – Village Engineer**

DISCUSSION: George Tyler extended gratitude to Rick Hamlin for all his work on the Bike/Walk Committee and the Capital Committee.

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

3. School District Clerk/Treasurer

Susan McNamara-Hill will serve as Clerk/Treasurer for the Essex Junction School District. The position requires approximately 30 hours per year paid by the school district.

4. Extension of Appointments

Pat Scheidel will get a legal opinion on extending expiring appointments on village boards and commissions for a month in order to schedule interviews of candidates.

5. Condition of Rail Crossing on Park Street

Pat Scheidel reported complaint has been received about the eroding condition of the rail crossing on Park Street. Robin Pierce will contact the railroad company regarding the crossing.

7. TRUSTEES COMMENTS/CONCERNS & READING FILE**1. Board Member Comments**

- Andrew Brown commented positively on the Accelerate Essex open house event.
- Andrew Brown mentioned the pedestrian bridge on the path from Briar Lane to the ADL School not being maintained by CCSU and suggested the Bike/Walk Committee investigate the matter.

MOTION by George Tyler, SECOND by Elaine Sopchak, to ask the Bike/Walk Committee to investigate the concern of maintaining the pedestrian bridge from Briar Lane to ADL School.

DISCUSSION: George Tyler will forward the request to Rick Hamlin.

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

- Elaine Sopchak suggested the Trustees schedule a retreat to discuss shared services and goals for next year. Ms. Sopchak will “doodle” members for a date and reserve Maple Street Park as the location if possible.
- Lori Houghton will talk to Rick Hamlin about the bike path grant by the Bike/Walk Committee.
- Lori Houghton asked when crosswalks in the village will be repainted. Lauren Morrisseau assured painting will be done as soon as the weather cooperates.

2. Reading File

- Minutes
 - Bike/Walk Advisory Committee 5/18/15
 - Planning Commission 5/21/15
 - Capital Program Review Committee 6/2/15
- Emails in Response to Design Five Corners Final Report
- Research on CCTA Buses/Village Weight Limits

8. CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION by Elaine Sopchak, SECOND by Lori Houghton, to approve the consent agenda as presented and with the addition of the spreadsheet for business card services, the noise waiver request for July 4th fireworks by EJRP, and the revenues/expenditures report 6/9/15:

1. **Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting 5/26/15.**
2. **Approve Warrants Check #10051575 to Check #10051650 totaling \$295,645.18.**
3. **Approve Reappointment of Eric Bowker to Recreation Advisory Council.**
4. **Approve Lincoln Hall lease Renewals for FY2016.**
5. **Approve Assistant Library Director’s Revised Job Description.**
6. **Approve Memo and Email Correspondence re: Crescent Connector Funding.**
7. **Approve/Sign Merchants Bank Corporate Electronic Funds Transfer Agreement.**

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

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Dan Kerin, SECOND by Andrew Brown, to enter into Executive Session to discuss the Municipal Manager’s subcontract in accordance with the Open Meeting Law, 1VSA313(a)(1), and to include the Trustees, Municipal Manager and Assistant Manager. VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

Executive Session was convened at 8:20 PM.

MOTION by George Tyler, SECOND by Elaine Sopchak, to adjourn Executive Session and reconvene the regular meeting. VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

Executive Session was adjourned and the regular meeting reconvened at 9:30 PM.

ACTION FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Andrew Brown, SECOND by Dan Kerin, to authorize the Village President to execute the Employment Subcontracting Agreement between the Town of Essex and the Village of Essex Junction. VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by George Tyler, SECOND by Dan Kerin, to adjourn the meeting. VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 PM.

RScty: M.E.Riordan



Check Register Report

BL 6/23/15

Date: 06/19/2015

Time: 11:27 am

Page: 1

Village of Essex Junction

BANK:

Check Number	Check Date	Status	Void/Stop Date	Vendor Number	Vendor Name	Check Description	Amount
Checks							
10051651	06/05/2015	Printed		0795	TOWN OF ESSEX	WATER/MARNI ADHAKARI-WATER	858.46
10051652	06/08/2015	Printed		10732	GASTON BOISVERT	REFUND OF CC CHG VOIDED-ADM	3.59
10051653	06/12/2015	Printed		10734	ENCORE ESSEX JUNCTION SOLAR I,	RECONCILIATION SOLAR CREDIT-WW	13,065.97
10051654	06/23/2015	Printed		10508	ADVANCED DISPOSAL	GRIT REMOVAL-WWTF	182.50
10051655	06/23/2015	Printed		10007	AIRGAS EAST	SUPPLIES-STREET	149.30
10051656	06/23/2015	Printed		10290	ALDRICH + ELLIOT, PC	SPECIAL SVCS-WWTF	469.21
10051659	06/23/2015	Printed		00382	AMAZON.COM CREDIT	CIRCULATION MATERIALS-LIBRARY	1,190.65
10051660	06/23/2015	Printed		00662	AMETEK DREXELBROOK	GAS PRESSURE TRANSDUCER-WWTF	385.76
10051661	06/23/2015	Printed		10735	AQUA-AEROBIC SYSTEMS INC	FILTER SEALS-WWTF	2,291.44
10051662	06/23/2015	Printed		9847	AUTOZONE, INC	SUPPLIES-FIRE	7.49
10051663	06/23/2015	Printed		10301	DAVID A. BARRA, PLC	MAY LEGAL SERV-VARIOUS DEPTS	1,011.50
10051664	06/23/2015	Printed		10408	BAY STATE ELEVATOR COMPANY	EXAM AND LUBE-LIBRARY	261.03
10051665	06/23/2015	Printed		1655	BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF VT	INS PREM-VARIOUS DEPTS	28,802.01
10051666	06/23/2015	Printed		10600	BRODART #2	CIRC MATERIALS-LIBRARY	168.61
10051667	06/23/2015	Printed		0268	BRODART CO.	CIRCULATION MATERIALS-LIBRARY	1,022.36
10051668	06/23/2015	Printed		0455	CANON SOLUTIONS AMERICA	COPIER MAINTENANCE-LIBRARY	54.61
10051669	06/23/2015	Printed		9919	GISELE D CARON	REFUND DOUBLE WTR PAYMENT	127.36
10051670	06/23/2015	Printed		9743	CARQUEST AUTO PARTS	OIL FILTER-SANITA	836.11
10051671	06/23/2015	Printed		10552	RON CARTER	PERFORMANCE 6/19-LIBRARY GRANT	100.00
10051672	06/23/2015	Printed		0461	CENTRAL BEVERAGE	NEWSPAPERS-LIBRARY	216.00
10051673	06/23/2015	Printed		0490	CENTRAL VERMONT PROPERTIES	ROW LEASE 10632/889760-SANIT	50.00
10051674	06/23/2015	Printed		0503	CHAMPLAIN OIL COMPANY, INC.	VEHICLE FUEL-VARIOUS	3,397.11
10051675	06/23/2015	Printed		0500	CHAMPLAIN WATER DISTRICT	WATER USAGE-WATER	286,955.18
10051676	06/23/2015	Printed		10028	CHANNEL 17 - TOWN MEETING TV	CLICKABLE AGENDA-	3,000.00
10051677	06/23/2015	Printed		0525	CHITTENDEN SOLID WASTE DISTRIC	CSWD DIRECT FEES-WWTF	118.89
10051678	06/23/2015	Printed		10353	CIVES CORP	SWEEPER BRUSH-STREET	1,398.23
10051679	06/23/2015	Printed		2305	CLARK'S TRUCK CENTER	VEHICLE MAINTENANCE-FIRE	727.53
10051680	06/23/2015	Printed		9788	COMCAST	CABLE-FIRE	13.59
10051681	06/23/2015	Printed		0560	COPY-SHIP-FAX-PLUS	SHIPPING & SUPPLIES- WTR/LIBRA	78.77
10051682	06/23/2015	Printed		05898	CRYSTAL ROCK BOTTLED WATER	BOTTLED WATER-STREET	12.45
10051683	06/23/2015	Printed		10401	DE LAGE LANDEN FINANCIAL INC	COPIER LEASE-ADMIN	249.52
10051684	06/23/2015	Printed		0636	DESORCIE EMERGENCY PRODUCTS	TACH ALTERNATOR DRIVE-FIRE	155.00
10051685	06/23/2015	Printed		10396	DION SECURITY INC	LOCK SVC/REPAIRS/SPARE PTS-WW	937.94
10051686	06/23/2015	Printed		10177	JAMES DONOVAN	MAIN ST BIKE/PED SCOPING STUDY	4,040.75
10051687	06/23/2015	Printed		10576	ECOPIXEL LLC	WEB SERVICES-ADMIN	99.00
10051688	06/23/2015	Printed		0710	ENDYNE, INC.	COMPLIANCE TAKE SAMPLE-WWTF	547.00
10051689	06/23/2015	Printed		0708	ESSEX HIGH SCHOOL YEARBOOK	YEARBOOKS-LIBRARY	96.00
10051690	06/23/2015	Printed		0780	ESSEX EQUIPMENT SALES	KUBOTA RENTAL-STREET	535.74
10051691	06/23/2015	Printed		0770	ESSEX JUNCTION SCHOOL DISTRICT	SCHL IMPACT FEES	4,665.00
10051692	06/23/2015	Printed		0795	TOWN OF ESSEX	ACH/PMT FOR CC PMT	851.85
10051694	06/23/2015	Printed		1935	FERGUSON WATERWORKS #590	CURBSTOP SUPPLIES-WATER	2,684.56
10051695	06/23/2015	Printed		0899	GAUTHIER TRUCKING CO., INC	RUBBISH REMOVAL-STR/LH	444.34
10051696	06/23/2015	Printed		9726	GOT THAT RENTAL SALES, INC	SUPPLIES-WATER	79.18
10051697	06/23/2015	Printed		0943	MARY L. GRAF	BOOKS REIMB-LIBRARY	227.91

Check Register Report

BL 6/23/15

Date: 06/19/2015

Time: 11:27 am

Page: 2

Village of Essex Junction

BANK:

Check Number	Check Date	Status	Void/Stop Date	Vendor Number	Vendor Name	Check Description	Amount
Checks							
10051698	06/23/2015	Printed		09502	GRAYBAR COMPANY INC.	FLOOD LAMP-STREET	100.20
10051699	06/23/2015	Printed		10733	GREEN MOUNTAIN EARTH CARE	TREE PLANTING-STREET	580.00
10051700	06/23/2015	Printed		10598	GREEN MOUNTAIN POWER CORP #2	ELECTRICITY-VARIOUS	274.90
10051701	06/23/2015	Printed		0965	GREEN MOUNTAIN POWER CORP.	ELECTRICITY-VARIOUS	8,711.20
10051702	06/23/2015	Printed		1035	DONALD L. HAMLIN	ENG SERV-ST	1,072.00
10051703	06/23/2015	Printed		0018	A. H. HARRIS & SONS, INC.	CONCRETE BUNKER WORK-WWTF	88.67
10051704	06/23/2015	Printed		9625	INGRAM LIBRARY SERVICES	CIRCULATION MATERIALS-LIBRARY	112.94
10051705	06/23/2015	Printed		2041	S. D. IRELAND CONCRETE	CEMENT-STREET	834.00
10051706	06/23/2015	Printed		1201	J & B INTERNATIONAL TRUCKS	LIGHT-VARIOUS	24.43
10051707	06/23/2015	Printed		1241	KINNEY DRUGS #21	INERT LINE FLUSH-WWTF	19.96
10051708	06/23/2015	Printed		1292	LAMOUREUX, & DICKINSON	PEARL ST LINK	5,657.94
10051709	06/23/2015	Printed		1322	LEISURE WORLD INC.	FOAM KILLER-WATER	44.99
10051710	06/23/2015	Printed		9454	LENNY'S SHOE & APP	HK UNIFORMS-WWTF	435.00
10051711	06/23/2015	Printed		1353	LIMOGE & SONS GARAGE DOORS INC	WTR BLDG DOOR REPAIR-WATER	170.35
10051712	06/23/2015	Printed		10646	LINCOLN NATIONAL LIFE INSURANC	INS PREMIUM-VARIOUS DEPTS	1,382.53
10051713	06/23/2015	Printed		10130	LOWE'S BUSINESS ACCOUNT	SUPPLIES-STREET	420.56
10051714	06/23/2015	Printed		13631	LYNN PUBLICATIONS	ADS/NOTICES-ADM/COM DEV	347.75
10051715	06/23/2015	Printed		10432	CHELSEA MANDIGO	UNIFORM REIMB-WWTF	212.63
10051716	06/23/2015	Printed		10155	W.B. MASON CO. INC	SUPPLIES- VARIOUS DEPTS	791.64
10051717	06/23/2015	Printed		1516	MILTON RENTAL & SALES INC	MAINT PARTS-STREET	175.05
10051718	06/23/2015	Printed		1539	LAUREN MORRISSEAU	MILEAGE REIMBURSE-ADMIN	47.15
10051719	06/23/2015	Printed		1626	NEW ENGLAND AIR SYSTEMS	BLOWER INTAKE RECONFIG-WWTF	3,109.00
10051720	06/23/2015	Printed		1652	NEWWA	2 SEMINAR REGISTRATIONS-WATER	200.00
10051721	06/23/2015	Printed		10329	NORTH WILLISTON CATTLE COMPANY	LAND APP FEES-WWTF	55,080.00
10051722	06/23/2015	Printed		1660	NORTHEAST DELTA DENTAL	INS PREMIUM-VARIOUS DEPTS	2,188.26
10051723	06/23/2015	Printed		17055	OMEGA ELECTRIC	BISULFITE DRIVE & CTRL FIX-WW	935.05
10051724	06/23/2015	Printed		1755	P & H SENESAC, INC.	POLYMER DEWATERING-WWTF	3,450.00
10051725	06/23/2015	Printed		1174	PERMA-LINE CORP OF NEW ENGLAND	TRAFFIC SIGNS-STREET	292.95
10051726	06/23/2015	Printed		1789	PIKE INDUSTRIES, INC.	ASPHALT-STREET	3,189.97
10051727	06/23/2015	Printed		18068	POLLARDWATER.COM - EAST	SAFETY LINES-WWTF	290.60
10051728	06/23/2015	Printed		18298	POWERPLAN OIB	HYD FLUID-WATER	75.00
10051729	06/23/2015	Printed		1955	REYNOLDS & SON, INC.	TURTLE TILES-FIRE	286.68
10051730	06/23/2015	Printed		10451	RICOH	COPIER-WWTF	115.94
10051731	06/23/2015	Printed		1994	RUSSELL SUPPLY	PORTA-BAND STAND/BLADES-WWTF	448.25
10051732	06/23/2015	Printed		2047	SCOTT + PARTNERS	LH RESTORATION DESIGN	2,480.00
10051733	06/23/2015	Printed		2042	SCOTT'S LINE STRIPING, INC	PAINT & ROAD BEADS-STREET	1,550.00
10051734	06/23/2015	Printed		10680	SECAP	POSTAGE METER-ADMIN	281.88
10051735	06/23/2015	Printed		20732	THE SHERWIN-WILLIAMS CO.	SUPPLIES-STREET	158.22
10051736	06/23/2015	Printed		20835	SIMONS UNIFORMS	UNIFORMS-FIRE	1,357.50
10051737	06/23/2015	Printed		2093	SLACK CHEMICAL COMPANY INC.	CHEMICALS-WWTF	959.60
10051738	06/23/2015	Printed		9627	THE SMALL ENGINE CO., INC	PARTS-FIRE	479.96
10051739	06/23/2015	Printed		10097	ELAINE SOPCHAK	CONFERENCE FEE-ADMIN	75.00
10051740	06/23/2015	Printed		2115	SOUTHWORTH-MILTON, INC.	SEAT CUSHION-STREET	63.22
10051741	06/23/2015	Printed		21153	SOVERNET COMMUNICATIONS	PH/INTERNET-VARIOUS	555.70
10051742	06/23/2015	Printed		2124	STAPLES ADVANTAGE	LEGAL PAPER-WWTF	65.28
10051743	06/23/2015	Printed		2159	SURPASS CHEMICAL CO INC	SOD. HYPOCHLORITE-WWTF	4,175.82
10051744	06/23/2015	Printed		9567	TALKING ABOUT BOOKS	SUPPLIES-LIBRARY	12.00
10051745	06/23/2015	Printed		10663	THERRIEN'S BOILER & MECHANICAL	MAJOR BOILER MAINT-WWTF	809.00
10051746	06/23/2015	Printed		2227	TI-SALES, INC.	SUPPLIES-WATER	16,064.43
10051747	06/23/2015	Printed		2330	UNIFIRST CORPORATION	OFFICE MATS-LH	46.00
10051748	06/23/2015	Printed		23415	VERIZON WIRELESS	CELL NETWORK CONNECT-SANI	232.01

Check Register Report

BL 6/23/15

Date: 06/19/2015

Time: 11:27 am

Page: 3

Village of Essex Junction

BANK:

Check Number	Check Date	Status	Void/Stop Date	Vendor Number	Vendor Name	Check Description	Amount
Checks							
10051749	06/23/2015	Printed		10042	VERMONT BLACKTOP CORPORATION	TOP RAP MIX-STREET	299.40
10051750	06/23/2015	Printed		2374	VERMONT TROPHY & ENGRAVING	WEITH TABLE NAME PLATE-COM DEV	16.40
10051751	06/23/2015	Printed		2380	VLCT PACIF, INC.	WORKER COMP BAL DUE	1,448.00
10051752	06/23/2015	Printed		2380	VLCT PACIF, INC.	CLAIM DEDUCTABLE-SANITA	1,000.00
10051753	06/23/2015	Printed		2406	VT AGENCY OF TRANSPORTATION	TL MAINT-STREET	177.91
10051754	06/23/2015	Printed		9437	VT EMS DISTRICT # 3	ANNUAL DUES-FIRE	60.00
10051755	06/23/2015	Printed		24851	DON WESTON EXCAVATING, INC	REPAIR WATER LEAK-WATER	3,995.00
10051756	06/23/2015	Printed		2510	FRANK WHITCOMB CONSTRUCTION	SHUR PAC-STREET	1,211.00
10051757	06/23/2015	Printed		25261	MATTHEW WITTEN	MAY PERFORMANCES-LIB FRIENDS	200.00

Total Checks: 104

Checks Total (excluding void checks):

491,508.42

Total Payments: 104

Bank Total (excluding void checks):

491,508.42

Total Payments: 104

Grand Total (excluding void checks):

491,508.42

Memo

From: Max Levy, Chair, Essex Town Selectboard
George Tyler, President, Essex Junction Board of Trustees

6/16/15

To: Essex Junction Board of Trustees
Essex Town Selectboard

CC: Essex Governance Group

Re: Reaching consensus on the EGG recommendations and a suggested motion for further work.

As a starting point for discussion we would like to offer our perspective of the current status of the Essex Governance Group (EGG) project.

Our two boards have not reached consensus on whether or how to proceed with the recommendations of the EGG final report. Some of the information in the report provides important insights regarding the barriers and benefits of our existing municipal voting processes. But some of the recommendations require further analysis and deliberation. We believe such work would provide the maximum benefit to the community if it was integrated with our two boards' broader, multi-year effort to explore shared municipal services.

Within the next three years the Selectboard and the Trustees will most likely need to decide whether to permanently establish some or all of the new service arrangements we've enabled by codifying them with policy and charter changes. Included among those new arrangements could be a new planning governance structure, pending the outcome of the Thoughtful Growth In Action (TGIA) effort about to get underway. The net result of this collaborative momentum could compel us to consider additional structural changes in local governance to enhance community engagement and maximize efficiency. The question of whether to maintain two municipal charters or proceed with merger discussions will very likely occur within that context.

Also, the recent preliminary agreement to proceed with a Regional Education District (RED) study among the three local school districts is directly relevant to any further analysis and discussion of local voting processes. Presently, achieving true "same-day" voting throughout the Essex community (an EGG recommendation) on Australian ballot questions would require changes to the two municipal charters AND the three school district charters. A positive community-wide vote to merge the three school districts would present an opportunity to more reasonably achieve that goal.

An ad hoc committee willing to investigate the benefits and disadvantages of different voting processes within potential new models of municipal and school governance could provide valuable information to municipal and school officials as we face the challenges that are clearly headed our way in the next few years. That committee's mission would need to be informed by and coordinated with the municipal shared services effort. We believe an analytic and collaborative approach is likely to achieve a successful outcome.

Recommended Motion: We suggest both boards approve a **motion** to engage an ad hoc committee to analyze present voting processes, including legal and legislative constraints, and provide a comparative review of how those voting processes could be restructured within existing and potential new models of local municipal and school governance to maximize community engagement. The committee's scope of work and timeline will be determined collaboratively between the committee's leadership, the Essex Selectboard, and the Essex Junction Trustees.

Essex Governor Group Report Executive Summary, February 2015

In fall, 2014, the Essex Governance Group explored with residents ways Essex can continue to improve civic engagement and governance, with a focus on budget decision-making and voting. Through a community-wide survey and public forum, EGG identified a number of strong themes. EGG findings and recommendations are briefly summarized below. For more information please see the full report at www.heartandsoulessex.org

FINDINGS

1. More Effective Communication is Needed

Citizens want Essex leaders and staff to communicate with them in ways that are more:

- Explicit, clear, and open
- Proactive, with information well in advance of decisions
- Online, with a more active web presence
- Innovative in using a variety of media
- Direct, responsive, and accountable
- Two-way, with respectful exchanges

2. Inclusion is Critical

Citizens are concerned about low turn-out both at town meeting and local ballot voting. Many reported feeling barriers to participation.

3. High-Quality, Informed Decision Making is Greatly Valued

Citizens value face-to-face decision making. They appreciate hearing directly from leaders, and want the community to be informed and engaged.

4. Essex Could Create its Own Model

Participants in EGG forum and survey are open to creating a new model for local democratic decision making, choosing the elements that work best for Essex.

5. Residents Value the Power and Immediacy of Direct Democracy

Citizens value their power at town meeting, and want to be able to see the clear, immediate results of their participation.

6. Same Day Voting, and a Call for Simplicity

Each spring, Town residents vote three separate times (Village residents five times). Citizens would like all votes on local issues to occur on the same day.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Launch Proactive Communication Program

Adopt an Essex Public Engagement Protocol, train and affirm expectations of staff, revamp website, and host informal community meetings.

B. Empower Neighborhoods

Create Neighborhood Assemblies to serve as official advisors to the municipality.

C. Switch to Enhanced Town Meeting / Australian Ballot Hybrid

Enhance Town Meeting with improved participation options. Citizens would continue to have the power to amend the budget unless Town Meeting attendance is below a specific level.

The final budget would be voted by Australian ballot 45 days after Town Meeting. Additional changes: ballot would include a survey for citizen comment; Town Meeting date would be changed so as not to coincide with school break.

D. Institute Same-Day Voting

Create a staged plan to combine voting dates, and combine Town/Village Meeting dates

Essex Governance Group Discussion-Pat Scheidel

345

346 Mr. Scheidel introduced the issue of whether the SB will discuss the presentation and recommendations
347 made by the Essex Governance Group (EGG) concerning civic engagement and governance. He
348 confirmed for Mr. Levy that this would be a deliberative session between the boards regarding the
349 EGG's four recommendations. Mr. Scheidel added that he was going to be looking for a sense of
350 priorities of what the members want done because there is a lot of work involved with these
351 recommendations. Mr. Levy understood that Mr. Scheidel would like to know which recommendations
352 they supported and those they did not support. Mr. Scheidel suggested maximizing the resources of
353 staff, such as working on communication through the EPG project, which would be focusing on
354 communication. That would be a good time to see what works for communication and what does not
355 work.

356

357 Mr. Tyler referred to Ms. Sopchak to give a summary of the Trustee's discussion last week on the EGG
358 report. Ms. Sopchak stated that both boards received the EGG report and accepted it. There were four
359 recommendations in the report, which were the following: A. Launch Proactive Communication
360 Program; B. Empower Neighborhoods; C. Switch to Enhanced Town Meeting/Australian Ballot Hybrid;
361 and D. Institute Same-Day Voting. The EGG recommended taking these recommendations as a "suite"
362 of recommendations and not individually. Ms. Sopchak stated that she took part in the entire EGG
363 process as did Mr. Levy and Ms. Wrenner. She stated that the entire package of recommendations is
364 necessary to achieve the kind of clear and transparent communication, open access to voting, and the
365 educational component that our community needs to be responsive citizens. That being said, she didn't
366 necessarily feel that the four recommendations could be handled simultaneously. She expressed that it
367 was very important for them to get started right away on recommendation A and referred members to
368 the appendix of the EGG report, which gave an example of a Communication Tool Kit created by the
369 municipal staff from Portland, Oregon. This tool kit gives a spectrum of how to respond to the public
370 based on the level of importance of activity being undertaken, and it itemizes the tools that the staff can
371 use to do those communication pieces. She stated that it is a very useful and comprehensive way to
372 ensure and measure proper communications with the community and that you are giving them enough
373 information at any point in time based on the level of importance of the activity. She highly
374 recommended looking at that tool kit and considering a facilitation process where staff from the Village
375 and Town could work together to develop their own tool kit. She strongly recommended beginning
376 work on this immediately. Mr. Luck reported that the Heart and Soul Group is working on getting
377 money from the Orton Foundation to hire consultants to do the work suggested by Ms. Sopchak. He
378 hoped that there would be an update on that funding in the next few weeks. Ms. Sopchak thought that
379 was great and added that it is so much more meaningful if the ideas grow here.

380

381 With regard to recommendation B, she liked everything outlined in the EGP and thought an aspect of
382 that process could involve neighborhood assemblies. She thought that there were two ways to divide up
383 the communities for neighborhood assemblies, which were by zones or by Front Porch Forum
384 neighborhoods. This would be a great way to test out that process, refine it and make it the first step to
385 incorporating this system on a regular basis in these decisions. She added that one of the Heart and
386 Soul outcomes was that residents wanted input in the planning of their community so this would be a
387 great door to implementing that outcome. With regard to recommendations C and D, Ms. Sopchak
388 stated that they were long-term projects that involve enormous intricately, interwoven aspects of all the
389 machinery of our municipalities. They involve Charter changes, legal input and voting changes, and it's
390 going to take a while to make that work. She fully supported the recommendation of a hybrid model
391 and eventually getting to same-day voting. However, because there is so much going on right now with
392 the study on the consolidation of school districts and the EPG project, the Village and Town staffs don't

394 have the capacity to take on such a big project as changing our voting habits. At the same time, the
395 boards can't lose sight of it. As they consolidate from department to department, they need to remember
396 these four recommendations and think of them in a very thoughtful and unhurried way. She is not sure
397 how long it would take for recommendations C and D and whether it would be three years, five years
398 or six years, but she thought that they were in it for the long haul. She noted that the EGG did an
399 amazing amount of research and came to a really big understanding about how complex this system is
400 and how it is going to take some time to happen. She hoped that the SB agrees with the findings of the
401 EGG and is interested in implementing them, but in a wise way.

402 Mr. Tyler stated that he had some significant criticisms of the EGG report. He felt that there was a
403 really big disconnect between the survey results that were reported and the recommendations, and he
404 didn't see the connection between the two. He understood that the EGG was not tasked with doing a
405 statistically significant survey of the Town and Village; however, 10% of 460 people surveyed said that
406 they were confused about multiple votes and that it was a barrier to voting. He did not see how that
407 translates into the recommendation to have same-day voting. He stated that, personally, he was in favor
408 of same-day voting and in fact, a few years ago there was a charter change in the Village in order to
409 coincide with the school budget vote as a way to move towards same-day voting. Nevertheless, he was
410 in agreement with Ms. Sopchak about recommendation D as he did not know how high of a priority it
411 was with the workload on staff right now. Mr. Tyler would like to see some of these questions fleshed
412 out a bit more before saying that the community has spoken. Ms. Sopchak pointed out that both boards
413 were vetting everything on the Heart and Soul process, which had excellent turn-out, and it was the
414 same process for the EGG. Mr. Tyler stated "when you throw the statistic in there, you say hit me, so
415 that is what I am doing." He found it interesting that when asked open-ended questions about what was
416 on peoples' minds, the most consistent answer on the survey was an interest in merger and/or more
417 collaboration between the Town and the Village, which is exactly what the boards are doing.

418
419 Ms. Wrenner, with regard to same-day voting, was struck that, when she sat at the Village meeting a
420 month ago and the article came up as to when the next Village Meeting would be, not one person raised
421 a hand about making it closer to Town Meeting or to have it on the same night. Perhaps it was a
422 different group than those who responded to the survey, but she was hoping that somebody would raise
423 that issue so that they could have a community conversation about it. However, that didn't happen.
424 People went the same old way, which is fine if that is what they want. However, she then hears that
425 people want same-day voting, so she questions who is showing up where, saying what. Ms. Wrenner
426 got very different messages during the Village Meeting than what she got from reading the EGG report.
427 Mr. Tyler agreed that there was not clear, consistent consensus in the report.

428
429 Mr. Watts commented that tonight was the first he had heard that Orton is working on anything related
430 to communication to the Town. He stated that the SB did some proactive communication before Town
431 Meeting, but he wasn't sure if the Village did as well. Ms. Sopchak agreed that the Trustees did a lot of
432 outreach initially and that there was a bigger article on the warning and turn out is bigger when that
433 happens. Mr. Watts handed out a lot of material to residents, and he wondered if the members thought it
434 helped. In his opinion, it was very one-way as people were running to an event while the members
435 handed out information. He noticed more confusion about being a Village resident and not
436 understanding about being a Town resident as well. He stated that there was very little two-way
437 communication, and even when their phone numbers were included on the information, he didn't
438 receive any calls. He also commented that when they had the public meeting for the repurposing of the
439 police facility money, members of the public felt that the information was getting to them too late and
440 asked why they hadn't heard about the issue before. However, in reality, the Town had been talking
441 about that issue for six months. Therefore, Mr. Watts didn't know if the members were doing something

wrong in communicating their big ticket items or whether it was completely the onus of residents to look at the Town website to read about what is happening. Ms. Sopchak thought that having a Communication Tool Kit could help with that problem. She noted that there is a balance between what the municipality is required to do, which they do to the letter, but then there is the civic responsibility of going to find that information. She added that a lot of people don't realize that they can find that information on the websites or in the classified section of the Essex Reporter. She agreed that there is some hand holding that needs to happen, but that there could also be some additional outreach. Mr. Levy added, or simple solutions, such as press releases.

Mr. Kerin believed that the outreach that was done for the repurposing of the bonds for the 81 Main Street Renovation project, as well as the public works consolidation, was important and successful. He gave the police facility outreach as an example of successful outreach. Mr. Kerin reported how he had suggested moving outside the confines of meetings at the municipal offices to places such as parks or public venues so they can go out to the people. The Village Trustees had one meeting at Maple Street Park about three years ago, and he would like to see more of that because he felt that it was one way to get new engaged citizens. All too often only a few people attend their meetings, so it was something to think about.

Ms. Sopchak wanted to point out one aspect of the Hybrid Town Meeting/Australian Ballot proposal, which is that it would enhance Town Meeting in general. Members have talked a lot about making Town Meeting more accessible and interesting to residents without changing the voting, such as having straw polls, non-binding referendums, discussion topics, etc. Another idea was to have it be Essex Democracy Day with a community project. She felt that there were some low-hanging fruit to make Town Meeting more entertaining and interactive for people, and this could be done with some elbow grease, not changing the Charter. Mr. Levy felt that the Town has taken some baby steps like mirroring the Village Meeting and adding a Public To Be Heard to Town Meeting. Ms. Sopchak agreed and felt that there would be more successes if the boards continued along that path.

Mr. Luck clarified that Heart and Soul, based on the EGG report, is talking to Orton and then will return to the boards with a proposal. Mr. Luck thought that the recommendations come from the survey and the community forum. With regard to same-day voting, although it wasn't the top barrier, there were four tables out of 60 people that spent several hours talking about how they believe that same-day voting was one of their top ideas. Another table's top idea was to simplify governance/communication/education, so he would agree that with the survey results, same-day voting didn't rise to the top, but simplifying things and making things easier certainly seems to be an on-going theme. He would argue that same-day voting is a bad thing. Mr. Tyler clarified that he was not saying that same-day voting was a bad thing at all. He was in favor of it, but he is not sure that what he read in the survey identifies it as a big barrier to voting. He stated that he didn't mean to be critical of the EGG report, but was trying to make a connection between the recommendations and the "guts" of the report. He commented that all six tables expressed some trepidation of one or more of the new decision-making models discussed. The hybrid model raised the most apprehension about implementation with representative town meeting a close second. Clearly any changes should be made with caution and with confusion and upheaval kept to a minimum. Therefore, there's a lot of concern and trepidation about doing anything to the existing structure, and he wondered how that correlates to the recommendation that they change the existing structure. He stated that the Trustees thought that these are good ideas, but he interprets that the EGG report was telling them that there is a lot more work to be done before they just "take the recommendations and run with them." He didn't think there was a really clear, strong consistent message coming out of the findings.

492 Ms. Houghton thought that communication was broken, and if Heart and Soul does not come forward
493 to be able to help them with this, she thought that both boards had to put it as a priority because the
494 public is telling them it is an issue and the members were talking about it enough. To say that they are
495 doing things here and there is great, but she thought that they needed a process or a tool kit that outlines
496 different scenarios.

497 Mr. Brown understood that there are some trepidations given the work load for staff. At the same time,
498 he pointed out the EGG members in the audience and assumed that they would be willing to do more of
499 the leg work for this issue. He was also in favor of using the neighborhood conversations during the
500 EPG and would hope that during the process there would be some new people engaged and new ideas
501 generated. At the same time, if the goal of the EGG group was to help improve civic engagement in
502 governance, then it wouldn't make sense to do the exact same thing and expect a different outcome. He
503 thought that this could be a great way to try something new, and the worst case scenario outside of a
504 lawsuit, is that they have fewer people show up for a meeting. At that point, they could just go back to
505 the old ways of doing things. He didn't think that they had to go down too far of a path to find that out,
506 and he believed that the recommendations were very encouraging. He would love to see
507 recommendations A and B happen sooner than later, which could help with some of the work for
508 recommendations C and D. Mr. Levy agreed that this report identified some real gaps, particularly in
509 communication. He thought that the boards had to address recommendation A before any big change
510 like a charter change. He stated that they can't do recommendations C and D without having that
511 communication with the community first to make sure that they are going in the right direction. Even if
512 the members don't think communication is broken, the people think it is broken, and there are
513 opportunities to fix it that he hoped wouldn't cost a lot of staff time or dollars. He thought that the
boards had to get input or get communication fixed before addressing the other big items.

515
516 Mr. Kerin felt that, other than putting a big loud speaker at a few key locations in town, they only hear
517 from a certain population of citizens. The vast majority of the population is not saying anything and
518 short of "leading the horse to water, you can't force them to drink." He gave the example from Mr.
519 Moreau of how even the best communities can only capture 70% or 80% of waste and were never
520 going to get to 100%. Mr. Kerin understood that they could always try to improve, but he wondered
521 how to measure success. He asked what is the rubric to say that it is working and what constitutes
522 success and whether you've done enough. Mr. Levy thought that Mr. Kerin's question was a good
523 question and felt that the members would need to identify those metrics to see if they are making a
524 difference and doing something meaningful.

525
526 Ms. Wrenner knew of virtual shareholder meetings that were being held at places like bike paths. She
527 stated that there is technology to allow them to do all kinds of things that they may have never dreamed
528 of doing. She understood that some people don't have Internet access or cable. However, there were
529 things that they could do to make sure that more people could participate, such as voting on-line or
530 hearing the meeting in real time.

531
532 It was confirmed for Mr. Watts that the recommendation was not for Representative Town Meeting. He
533 felt that the Town already had empowering neighborhoods because any group could talk with the SB,
534 such as when his neighborhood was opposed to a cell tower. He thought that, to some degree, when
535 issues impact people immediately, people do try to take action even if they might not feel effective.
536 With regard to the hybrid model and having at least the 10-year median of attendees, Mr. Watts asked,
537 what is that number? Mr. Scheidel didn't know, and Mr. Watts asked if it was a fixed 10-year median or
538 a rolling 10 years. He was concerned that if there is one person short, there would only be one
539 information meeting. Mr. Levy clarified that the EGG's intent with the hybrid model was to make sure

541 that the number of people attending Town Meeting did not fall below the critical mass. A 10-year
542 average was proposed arbitrarily in order to prevent a loss of participation at Town Meeting and a
543 budget being adjusted by just a few people.

544 Mr. Luck thought that recommendation A is in the works as far as Heart and Soul finding some funding
545 from Orton and then the boards proceeding with that effort on its own. He thought that
546 recommendation B was going to be partially incorporated into the EGP process by the consultants, who
547 are well aware of the EGG report. He thought that the boards would get some initial results from that
548 work as to whether there is interest or not for neighborhood assemblies and how those could be
549 structured in the community. However, he hasn't heard about recommendations C and D and whether
550 they have a decision regarding those recommendations. He has heard that it would be a lot of work and
551 take a lot of time and that it would take technical ability that the staff doesn't have time to do. Mr. Luck
552 felt that the boards needed to come up with some sort of conclusion for recommendations C and D as to
553 whether they envision moving forward with them or not. He thought that there was an interest in
554 understanding the next steps and he thought they owed a decision about the next steps to the EGG who
555 did all the work last fall and got a report to the boards last February. He noted that this has been
556 discussed a couple of times, and members have not given their opinions about the recommendations.
557 Mr. Levy felt that this was the first time the boards were having this discussion in a joint session. Mr.
558 Tyler didn't think that there was any recommendation that the boards felt that they were not going to do,
559 were not interested in or didn't think was a good idea. He heard that the boards were saying that they
560 could do recommendations A and B right now. However, for recommendation D, for example, he
561 wondered what would happen if they moved forward with it and then along the way, the schools
562 decided to merge. He suggested waiting to see what the schools do because there is no sense in having
563 same-day voting for municipal budgets and then having three different school budget votes. If the
564 community is going to have same-day voting, then he suggested it be community wide, including the
565 schools. Ms. Sopchak agreed with waiting to see what the school districts decide. Mr. Brown didn't
566 think they had to wait to get the process started. The boards have already picked dates for next year for
567 their perspective annual meetings so same-day voting was already going to be a 3-year process. Mr.
568 Tyler and Mr. Brown deliberated over the timing of changes that would need to occur for same-day
569 voting, and Mr. Brown was in favor of working on it now. Mr. Tyler thought that there was a lot of
570 complexity related to the school district and the Australian Ballot part of the process so that it might
571 behoove the boards to wait and see what the school boards decide. Mr. Luck felt that Mr. Tyler was
572 saying that it is too complicated and hard for the boards to figure out, but Mr. Tyler disagreed. Mr. Luck
573 stated that if the decision was made just by the members, he didn't think it would ever get figured out
574 because these decisions are not made through governing groups. He commented that knowing staff is
575 busy with other tasks, he would be curious to hear from the EGG members who were present tonight.
576 Mr. Levy stated that this meeting was just for deliberating between the board members.

577
578 Mr. Tyler asked if any other Trustees had anything to add. Ms. Houghton agreed with Mr. Luck and felt
579 that the board members needed to make a decision on whether they want to move forward with the
580 recommendations. She agreed that the boards should not be making decisions on how it should be done.
581 She suggested that they agree that this is important to the community and that it may start a year from
582 now, but at least they would have the next steps in place. Ms. Sopchak believed that recommendations
583 C and D are complicated and that the boards need to wait. The next step to her logically, would be to
584 start researching and finding a subcommittee of people who can give the boards correct information
585 and report back to the boards. There are members of the EGG who Ms. Sopchak suspected would be
586 interested in taking part in that committee. Mr. Tyler was not sure if there were complicated legal issues
587 involved as well. Mr. Scheidel commented that he was not at any of the EGG meetings, but he
588 remembered a member, Mr. Ron Lawrence, saying that with same-day voting the presupposition is that

590 Australian Ballot voting would be on the same day as schools. Otherwise, they wind up with the system
591 that they currently have. Therefore, in order to get to same-day voting, the community needs one
592 methodology of voting. He agreed with Mr. Tyler that there are a number of legal questions for this
593 issue and whether the community wants to change from Town Meeting voting for municipal budgets
594 and Australian Ballot voting for school budgets. He suggested that same-day voting for all entities is
595 probably the best bang for the buck because the majority of the budget (80%) is education. He was
596 hoping that the members could decide on what they could and couldn't do right now and then decide on
597 how to do what they can't do right away. Ms. Houghton thought that the boards could make a decision
598 that they want to know more about these recommendations and how they would look like with the legal
599 ramifications.

600 Mr. Levy felt that both boards agreed with recommendation A, and he asked the Town Manager to
601 evaluate the current communication methodologies and any potential improvements to these
602 methodologies with reference to the EGG report for review by the members. Mr. Scheidel agreed that
603 he could complete that task for June. Mr. Levy felt that one of the values from Heart and Soul was for
604 the Town and the Village to work more closely together, which is what the Unified Manager position is
605 enabling, and Mr. Tyler agreed. Mr. Tyler pointed out that one thing that the boards did not learn from
606 the EGG report is what they are doing that is not working and whether the people who gave input about
607 communication were aware of all the resources that are currently available. He also didn't know if the
608 comments were directed towards the Village governance or the Town governance so it would be good
609 to say, here is all that we are doing now. Ms. Sopchak agreed with the next steps for recommendations
610 A and B and felt strongly that a group be appointed for continued research and to report back to the SB
611 regarding recommendations C and D. Mr. Tyler thought that how to achieve same-day voting is largely
612 a technical question and that staff would have those answers. He was not in favor of a separate group
613 wading their way through the system as it would take them months to learn something that the staff
614 already knows. He thought that when there is time later on, staff could address what needs to be done.
615 Mr. Plageman agreed and stated that there was a time to get the public involved with this process, but
616 that it was not right now. He thought that a committee would get really cumbersome really quickly and
617 that there was a series of steps that the staff could itemize for the members. Mr. Tyler commented that
618 the public would need to call Mr. Scheidel who would need to call the lawyers.

619
620 Mr. Luck completely disagreed with Mr. Plageman and Mr. Tyler. He felt that there are some very
621 intelligent members of the public who are a lot smarter than a lot of the members in a lot of ways and
622 who are very interested in this topic if the boards would empower them with that role. The boards have
623 said that staff is very busy so to only allow staff to delve into this issue simply means that it is not
624 going to happen for a long time. He didn't understand why the boards wouldn't appoint a task force or
625 working group, as suggested by Ms. Sopchak, and task them with reporting back to the SB in six
626 months or three months. If they are not able to report back with good information, then the boards "go
627 back to the drawing board." However, if they are able to report back with good information, then the
628 boards have good information, and Ms. Houghton agreed. Mr. Kerin agreed that there are many people
629 in the community who are much more knowledgeable in different aspects of government. However he
630 was concerned with how the boards vet that quality and felt that it would slow the process down. He
631 commented that Mr. Tyler's proposal is to bring it to staff and if someone from the public wants to
632 weigh in, they can do that just like with everything else. He didn't think they had to create another
633 committee to slow this process down instead of moving it forward.

634
635 Mr. Levy summarized that recommendation A has been directed to staff and that recommendation B
636 will be a part of the EPG. Then there is a suggestion to address recommendations C and D through staff
637 or through a task force. He saw that step as a way to evaluate whether those recommendations are the

639 right thing for the community. Ms. Sopchak heard Mr. Levy saying that they still need to evaluate
640 whether recommendations C and D are the right things for the community, but the EGG has already
641 made those recommendation as the right ones for the community. Mr. Levy thought that the members
642 should question the recommendations and determine whether they want to put in all this effort and
643 whether the whole community is "on board." He knew that they had this great sampling with the EGG
644 report and that there was a lot of good work done, but he pointed out that recommendations C and D
645 are a big deal with a lot of change. He thought that it was worth the effort to pursue recommendations
646 A and B and determine whether the larger community agrees with recommendations C and D. Ms.
647 Sopchak asked whether Mr. Levy was recommending coming up with a proposal to go to the
648 community first before setting out to do research on recommendations C and D. Mr. Tyler suggested
649 tasking Mr. Scheidel with listing the current community's communication methodologies, in reference
650 to the EGG report, and then determining ways to improve upon those methodologies. Then at some
651 point later in the summer, the SB and Trustees, along with the EGG, could reconvene for another
652 meeting as a first step. He added that if Heart and Soul was going to be contributing as well, then they
653 could be a part of the process as well.

654 Mr. Luck thought that Mr. Levy and Mr. Tyler were missing the point because it is not about
655 communication and putting out the message. It is about public engagement and how the municipalities
656 are engaging people and gathering their input. It is about having meetings where people are and using a
657 different public engagement policy as in the Portland Tool Kit. He didn't think that staff had the time or
658 expertise to evaluate a public engagement protocol, which is a new, specialized phenomenon. He
659 agreed with Ms. Houghton that the boards should have someone else come in and evaluate the
660 community's communication and look at how we are doing and how we can do it better. Ms. Houghton
661 added that we already know many of the ways that the Town and Village get the word out, so that data
662 doesn't help. Mr. Tyler asked what if there is a recommendation from staff to invest dollars on a new
663 on-line methodology and participation doesn't increase? He asked, what is the goal? Ms. Sopchak
664 replied that the goal is more public engagement, more people attending, more people e-mailing them
665 with comments and more people being a part of this process. She knew that this slows things down and
666 makes things messy, but that is also what the boards are here to foster. Mr. Tyler argued that people can
667 e-mail the members now, but they don't. He asked, why are they not e-mailing them now? Ms.
668 Houghton agreed that it was one of the things they have to answer, but that is not where she would like
669 staff spending their time when Heart and Soul might come forward with a proposal. She agreed that
670 communication is important, and she would like to hear more about a timeline about whether an
671 engagement protocol could happen in six months and whether it would cost a lot of money. If it was
672 going to cost more money, then she suggested holding on as they've waited this long to focus on things
673 that will matter. Mr. Tyler stated that the Village spends \$90,000 on communication right now. Ms.
674 Houghton clarified that she was not suggesting spending more money, but doing other things such as
675 setting a policy for when information goes out so people know when to check the website, or having a
676 better website and perhaps cutting that \$90,000 down to \$30,000, but yet the public says we are doing
677 an awesome job getting the word out. She stated that people in this room did not have the expertise to
678 answer this question. Mr. Kerin wondered when the boards would know that they've accomplished
679 what they set out to do. He felt they weren't the only boards having this problem and that it was a
680 problem throughout the country. He didn't think that it was necessarily apathy, but that people are busy
681 with their lives. He recalled one of the biggest turnouts for a meeting was a recreation meeting to
682 support having a baseball field. He didn't think that the boards were doing anything wrong with
683 communication, but that it was the nature of the beast. He thought that as things evolve,
684 communications change, so he agreed with putting information on-line. However, there needs to be
685 some kind of rubric or metric to determine success because they could be "chasing their tails" with this
686 issue.

688 Mr. Levy suggested wrapping up this discussion. Mr. Luck asked if the boards could hear from the
689 public who had been present in the audience for a long time. Mr. Levy told Mr. Luck that he had
690 spoken to the EGG members prior to the meeting that this was a discussion between the members
691 tonight. Mr. Luck thought that there was always a time after a topic for public to be heard. Mr. Levy
692 didn't think that the members had concluded their discussion yet. Mr. Scheidel, with regard to the EPG,
693 saw it as a golden opportunity to communicate and educate citizens. Many times he has heard that
694 people are unhappy about development projects or buildings going on in the neighborhood. There are
695 certain developments allowed and not allowed by law, and people need to understand why things
696 happen. Civic engagement is gathering information, but the information doesn't work too much if it is
697 uninformed information. He is looking forward to this process as a way to educate people and agreed
698 with finding out about civic engagement protocols since Portland and California have been doing it
699 actively for six or seven years. He was happy to come up with a list for the members of communication
700 methodologies, but also agreed that he is not an expert on civic engagement. Mr. Levy thought that
701 getting something on paper to look at with the EGG report in mind would be a good way to see what
702 they could do with the low-hanging fruit for two-way communication. Mr. Scheidel was looking for
703 whether the boards wanted to move forward with the recommendations given in the EGG report. More
704 specifically, what recommendations they want to do and when. Then, how to do them is another
705 discussion.

706
707 Mr. Tyler thought that there were a lot of different conversations going on tonight, and he didn't think
708 there was even fundamental agreement. He had thought this topic was about budgets and now they are
709 talking about planning and zoning and people being unhappy about planning projects and
710 communication methodologies. He thought that this topic was a bigger discussion than what was on the
711 Agenda so he felt that they need to continue this discussion at another meeting. He didn't think they
712 could come to conclusions tonight. He wondered what they could achieve now so they could declare a
713 small victory and move on. Mr. Luck thought that this happened a lot with the SB and wondered what
714 would change between now and the next meeting to help them make a different decision. Mr. Tyler
715 stated that they need to plan to have a meeting where this issue is the only Agenda topic, and members
716 are prepared with all of their questions and can get to some point where they are all in agreement. Mr.
717 Luck felt that they had already had an extensive conversation and were at a point to make a motion. Mr.
718 Tyler asked, what would be the motion?

719
720 **BRAD LUCK MOVED AND MICHAEL PLAGEMAN SECONDED A MOTION THAT THE**
721 **SELECTBOARD CREATE A TASK FORCE TO CONTINUE THE EXPLORATION OF THE**
722 **ESSEX GOVERNANCE GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS C AND D.**

723
724 Mr. Levy asked about recommendations A and B. Mr. Luck replied that recommendation A would be
725 addressed separately through Heart and Soul with consultants and recommendation B would initially be
726 addressed with the work happening with the consultants through EPG. Mr. Luck confirmed his motion
727 for Mr. Levy. Mr. Plageman stated that he would second the motion for the purpose of discussion. He
728 still had more questions about the task force and was not ready to jump in and have staff put together a
729 task force without some kind of definition. He was not sure at this point what the members would
730 direct to the staff. Mr. Levy agreed with Mr. Tyler that the boards need a separate meeting to discuss
731 just this item.

732
733 **THE MOTION FAILED 1-4 (Max Levy, Irene Wrenner, Michael Plageman and Andrew Watts**
734 **opposed).**

735

737 Mr. Tyler saw that the Trustees wanted to make the same motion, but he pointed out that the SB was
738 not yet in favor of this motion.

739 **ANDREW BROWN MOVED AND LORI HOUGHTON SECONDED A MOTION THAT THE**
740 **TRUSTEES CREATE A TASK FORCE TO CONTINUE THE EXPLORATION OF THE**
741 **ESSEX GOVERNANCE GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS C AND D.**
742

743 Mr. Tyler pointed out that he thought that the Trustees would be condemning a group of people by
744 having a task force, and it would have nothing to do with how intelligent they are. There are specifics
745 in the Village and School charters that prohibit things like same-day voting right now. He thought those
746 could be identified quickly by staff, but that this motion would have a group of people going through a
747 lot of information to identify those very specific facts in our charters and policies that staff can get to
748 right away. Ms. Sopchak suggested having an engaged citizen take an hour of their day to interview the
749 staff who know the answers to these questions. Mr. Tyler agreed, but argued that it was not the motion.
750 Ms. Sopchak replied that the task force is an opportunity for more community engagement and for the
751 community members to get to know staff members and gather information on something they are
752 interested in. This process might develop more positive relationships with staff sharing information
753 they already know. Mr. Brown argued that he could have said the same thing about the Village Capital
754 Review Committee when a committee of citizens were tasked to recreate a process that was working
755 with the Village staff. The Village Capital Review Committee did that because they were passionate
756 about it. Having seen the EGG come to the Trustees two or three times, Mr. Brown sees a similar
757 passion. He did not see this motion as condemning a group of citizens, but sees the Trustees giving
758 citizens an opportunity to do something to further their passion and further their interests. He thought
760 that the Trustees would end up with a great report and would also be engaging the community and
761 allowing them the freedom to do something they want to do. Mr. Tyler stated that Mr. Brown had
762 convinced him. Mr. Tyler clarified that he was not condemning people, but thought that the citizens
763 were going to spend a lot of time, and he would rather see their time go into something more
764 constructive. However, if the Trustees think it is a good thing to do for the Trustees, not for the High
765 School or Essex Town School District, then he would support it. Mr. Kerin thought that the task force
766 wasn't going to get them a product that the Trustees couldn't get from somebody else. He felt that the
767 task force would occupy somebody's time and that there were other more productive things that
768 interested people could do.

769 **THE MOTION PASSED 4-1 (Dan Kerin opposed).**
770

771 Mr. Scheidel asked for clarification on the tasks involved with the motion. Mr. Tyler stated that the
772 Trustees are going to create or ask for volunteers for a subcommittee that is going to look into how the
773 Village would achieve recommendations C and D. Mr. Brown understood the motion to be that the
774 Trustees would work with the SB to develop a committee. Mr. Tyler pointed out that the SB voted its
775 motion down. Mr. Brown didn't think they could take this further until the SB agreed. Mr. Kerin agreed
776 and felt that the Trustees should wait until the SB supports creating a task force, and then he would
777 agree. Mr. Tyler suggested putting a topic on the next Trustees Meeting Agenda to discuss what this
778 motion means for the Village. He thought that they were talking about having Mr. Scheidel appoint a
779 group to look into recommendations C and D and how to go about doing that, which is not a decision to
780 make right now, but at the next Trustee meeting.
781

782 Mr. Levy asked if there could be a joint meeting in the future to discuss what the task force would look
784 like and the mission statement for the group. Mr. Luck pointed out that it was a Village Task Force
because the SB doesn't want a task Force. Mr. Tyler clarified that at the next Trustee Meeting, the

Trustees would figure out how to appoint a subcommittee to look at recommendations C and D and ask staff questions and look at charters and policies to identify impediments or problems with having a hybrid model and same-day voting, and members agreed. He thought that the Trustees could do that on its own and report back to the SB. Mr. Luck was not concerned about what the Trustees were doing, but was more concerned about the SB's inaction and lack of clarity on the next steps. Mr. Levy proposed that Mr. Luck come up with more detail about what it is he wants citizens to do on a task force and its mission statement. Right now, the idea is too nebulous for him to support it. Mr. Plageman asked Mr. Levy if he would consider a motion that would empower the members of the EGG to be the task force. It would be very close to what the Trustees have approved, but would be a middle ground. On one hand, he didn't agree with a task force "right out of the gate," but on the other hand, he didn't want this issue to sit. He stated that Mr. Brown made a point that the EGG brought a passion to this topic, and Mr. Levy agreed that they did a lot of good work. Therefore, Mr. Plageman suggested asking them if they want to take it a step further to research this information and report back at a joint meeting with the Trustees and SB. Then if they recommend a bigger task force with the community at large, we would have new information to make that decision.

MICHAEL PLAGEMAN MOVED THAT THE SELECTBOARD DIRECT STAFF TO APPROACH MEMBERS OF THE ESSEX GOVERNANCE GROUP FOR THE PURPOSES OF GATHERING INFORMATION ABOUT THE ESSEX GOVERNANCE GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS C AND D TO PRESENT TO A JOINT MEETING OF THE SELECTBOARD AND TRUSTEES.

Members and staff further deliberated on this motion. Mr. Scheidel did not think it would mean extra work for the staff because all the information about charters and so forth is on-line. Ms. Houghton wondered if the problem was semantics and using the word "task force." She thought she could speak for the Trustees that they were envisioning asking the EGG members. Mr. Tyler pointed out that if it is a committee, then members of the public could not be excluded, and Ms. Houghton agreed. Mr. Plageman explained that he suggested his motion because of the language that was used in the Trustee's motion. He thought that going to the EGG members was a more tightly defined scope. Mr. Scheidel stated that when the Village used "task force" in its motion, it set another meaning to include people external to those already on the EGG. Mr. Brown clarified that the intent of his motion was essentially the same as what was being discussed right now. Mr. Levy did not want to have the SB and Trustees going off in different directions. Mr. Luck wanted action from the SB tonight and felt that the details were for later. He wanted to get consensus of where the SB was going with this issue. Mr. Luck was in favor of the task force, including the public, with an intent to move forward with the recommendations.

Mr. Scheidel asked Mr. Luck what he felt the EGG members would collect for information, and Mr. Luck replied that it would be all of the details and answers to the questions that were asked tonight, such as what is the timeline, who do we need to talk to, how do we change the charters, etc. Some of those pieces the staff knows and some need to be asked to legal counsel. Mr. Luck thought that it was going to take some work and that the EGG members present tonight could read charters and call lawyers and secretaries of state and figure things out. He didn't see the SB having a huge leg up on those EGG members. Mr. Levy didn't want the SB and Trustees going in different directions. Mr. Luck agreed that if the SB was creating a second group to the Trustee's then that didn't make any sense to him. Mr. Brown thought that the Trustees and the SB were going along the same path. Ms. Houghton confirmed for Mr. Plageman that she did not make the motion. Mr. Brown had made the motion. Ms. Houghton stated that her concern was that the boards were making two separate groups, and they had agreed not to have separate groups. Mr. Tyler thought that Mr. Plageman's motion was trying to achieve gathering information about whether there are specific charter policy impediments to having a same-

835 day vote in Essex Junction and Essex Town. He believed that the boards need someone to put this
 836 information all together into a clean package, which shows whether it could be achievable or not. He
 837 thought that the task group approved by the Trustees could do that and then the Trustees could meet
 838 with the SB and present that information. He understood this was a small step, but it would identify any
 839 specific barriers that would have to be addressed to get to same-day voting. Mr. Plageman agreed with
 840 Mr. Tyler, but was trying to avoid a larger step in the process right now. There is a lot of information
 841 that needed to be gathered first and then plenty of time for the public at large to weigh in so he was in
 842 favor of his motion as a smaller step and as a middle ground between the boards. Mr. Tyler felt that the
 843 Trustees could provide that information for the SB, but that the boards should meet again later this
 844 summer with just this issue on the agenda and an earlier start time. Mr. Brown wondered if the Trustees
 845 could appoint non-Village residents on the task force. Mr. Tyler felt this was possible because the
 846 Village already has people who don't live in the Village on Village boards.

847 Mr. Levy confirmed for Mr. Luck that the next step was to have another joint meeting with just this
 848 issue on the agenda. He stated that this process is going to need baby steps and that the boards are not
 849 going to take quantum leaps.

850
 851 Mr. Ron Lawrence wanted to thank the boards because despite this long discussion, he thought there
 852 was some action taken through Heart and Soul. The EGG volunteers would be “knocking on their
 853 doors” because they saw it as something that could be done fairly expediently and that they already had
 854 answers to some of the questions raised tonight.

855
 856 **THE MOTION FAILED FOR A LACK OF A SECOND TO THE MOTION.**

858 **Joint Stormwater Discussion-Dennis Lutz**

859
 860 Mr. Lutz and Mr. Jutras introduced the issue of whether or not the SB and Trustees will authorize the
 861 staff to initiate land acquisition/utilization discussions with private parties with respect to the Flow
 862 Restoration Plans under development for Indian/Sunderland Brooks and the private landowners'
 863 expired stormwater permits. The Stream Flow Restoration plans (FRP) for Indian Brook and
 864 Sunderland Brook are close to final completion. Draft copies of the two reports were provided recently
 865 to the Joint Stormwater Coordinating Committee, and there are some minor edits to be made.
 866 Concurrently, staff is starting the process of meeting with stormwater expired permit holders in
 867 compliance with the stormwater expired permits ordinance/requirements passed by both Boards last
 868 year. There are certain stormwater projects identified as high priority in the FRP that are proposed for
 869 future construction. Some of these require acquiring land or easements from the private sector property
 870 owners with expired permits. It is important for the Town and Village to obtain preliminary
 871 concurrence with landowners on specific sites before the FRP's are filed with the State. It's a win-win
 872 for the Town and some of the private parties involved. It is understood that these early discussions with
 873 landowners are preliminary. The results of all negotiations will be shared with the Manager and both
 874 Boards before any final agreements are made. Mr. Jutras added that part of this issue was related to the
 875 priorities established by the FRP. Having that flexibility will provide the biggest bang for the buck for
 876 the communities. Unfunded mandates from both the State and the Federal governments are being issue
 877 and having that flexibility to work together for consistency in the application is important. He and Mr.
 878 Lutz have discussed both of them going to the meetings so that there is consistency in messaging and
 879 setting guidelines to carry this forward in a parallel way that has the best interest of both communities
 in mind.

880
 881
 882 Members and Trustees agreed with the staff request for Executive Session to discuss the implications of

ESSEX GOVERNANCE GROUP PARTICIPANTS

THANK YOU! The Essex Governance Group was made up of a dedicated group of volunteers, many of whom contributed dozens of hours of their energy and expertise to this effort. The facilitators wish to thank them for their energy, expertise, collaborative spirit and commitment to community. The following people attended one or more of the series of Essex Governance Group meetings between August and December, 2014:

Bob Bates	Roberta PENCHINA
Dorothy Bergendahl	Bruce Post
Andrew Cimonetti	Pam Schirner
Ben Gilliam	Gabrielle Smith
Tim Kemerer	Elaine Sopchak
Ron Lawrence	Saramichelle Stultz
Max Levy	Liz Subin
Brad Luck	Jess Wisloski-Martin
Deb McAdoo	Irene Wrenner
Greg Morgan	Vanessa Zerillo
Toni Morgan	

Special thanks to EGG's "Essex Democracy and You" small-group facilitators:
Annie Davis • Tina Logan • Brad Luck • Stephanie Ratte • Gabrielle Smith • Elaine Sopchak • Saramichelle Stultz • Liz Subin

EGG Co-Facilitators and Report Co-Authors:

Susan Clark is a community facilitator focusing on community sustainability and engagement. She is coauthor of *Slow Democracy: Rediscovering Community, Bringing Decision Making Back Home* (Chelsea Green, 2012, with Woden Teachout), and *All Those In Favor*, a book about Vermont town meetings (RavenMark, 2005, with Frank Bryan). She has taught community development at the college level for ten years, and serves as town meeting moderator in Middlesex, Vermont.

Susan McCormack works side by side with organizations and communities to engage people in productive conversations that lead to change. She serves as a Senior Associate with Everyday Democracy and the Community Liaison for Creating Community Solutions, part of the National Dialogue on Mental health. She recently co-coordinated the Heart & Soul of Essex, a two year citizen led initiative funded by the Orton Family Foundation to identify shared community values, foster collaboration among two linked municipalities and increase civic participation.

Essex Governance Group Final Report

February, 2015

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Executive Summary

2. Introduction

How we got here. Report scope.

3. Context

“What time is it” in American communities?

“What time is it” in Essex?

4. Essex Governance Group: Purpose and Process

5. Essex Democracy: Data and Infographics

6. EGG Survey

7. EGG Findings

8. EGG Recommendations

9. Conclusion

10. Appendices

Appendix A: Portland, Oregon Participation protocol

Appendix B: EGG Survey results, coded

Appendix C: Forum agenda and “Four Approaches”

Appendix D: Forum small-table results, coded

Appendix E: List of EGG Participants; Facilitator/Author Bios

1. Essex Governance Group (EGG) Report: Executive Summary

In fall, 2014, the Essex Government Group explored with residents ways Essex can continue to improve civic engagement and governance, with a focus on budget decision-making and voting. Through a community-wide survey and public forum, EGG identified a number of strong themes. EGG findings and recommendations are briefly summarized below. For more information please go to www.heartandsoul.org

EGG FINDINGS

1. More Effective Communication is Needed

Citizens want Essex leaders and staff to communicate with them in ways that are more:

- Explicit, clear, and open
- Proactive, with information well in advance of decisions
- Online, with a more active web presence
- Innovative in using a variety of media
- Direct, responsive, and accountable
- Two-way, with respectful exchanges

2. Inclusion is Critical

Citizens are concerned about low turn-out both at town meeting and local ballot voting. Many reported feeling barriers to participation.

3. High-Quality, Informed Decision Making is Greatly Valued

Citizens value face-to-face decision making. They appreciate hearing directly from leaders, and want the community to be informed and engaged.

4. Essex Could Create its Own Model

Participants in EGG forum and survey are open to creating a new model for local democratic decision making, choosing the elements that work best for Essex.

5. Residents Value the Power and Immediacy of Direct Democracy

Citizens value their power at town meeting, and want to be able to see the clear, immediate results of their participation.

6. Same Day Voting, and a Call for Simplicity

Each spring, Town residents vote three separate times (Village residents five times). Citizens would like all votes on local issues to occur on the same day.

EGG RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Launch Proactive Communication Program

Adopt an Essex Public Engagement Protocol, train and affirm expectations of staff, revamp website, and host informal community meetings.

B. Empower Neighborhoods

Create Neighborhood Assemblies to serve as official advisors to the municipality.

C. Switch to Enhanced Town Meeting / Australian Ballot Hybrid

Enhance Town Meeting with improved participation options. Citizens would continue to have the power to amend the budget unless Town Meeting attendance is below a specific level. The final budget would be voted by Australian ballot 45 days after Town Meeting. Additional changes: ballot would include a survey for citizen comment; Town Meeting date would be changed so as not to coincide with school break.

D. Institute Same-Day Voting

Create a staged plan to combine voting dates, and combine Town/Village Meeting dates.

2. Introduction

Essex Governance Group: How We Got Here

The Essex Governance Group (EGG) is a project supported by the Town of Essex, Heart & Soul of Essex, and the Orton Family Foundation.

The project was initiated in summer, 2014, when a group of residents concerned about low turnout at Town and Village annual meetings approached the Town Selectboard and Village Trustees about moving budget approval from the traditional Town/Village Meeting format to Australian ballot (ballot-box voting). This group, calling itself “Budget to Ballot” (B2B) pointed out that median voter turnout at Town Meeting since 2005 is 1.5% of registered voters (it’s 1.9% for Village Meeting). Median voter turnout for Australian ballot voting after Town Meeting during this same period was 8.9% (8.3% for the Village). The group requested that the Selectboard help Essex move toward a combined town meeting/Australian ballot system (with a proposed budget figure determined at town meeting, and final approval of budget decided by Australian ballot), and that the Towns’ ballot voting and the three Town-related school budget votes all occur on the same date.

Both the Selectboard and the Trustees agreed that the issues raised by B2B were important, and that’s when Heart & Soul of Essex was brought on board.

Heart & Soul of Essex, a multi-year community effort supported by the Orton Family Foundation, has the goals of engaging community members in dialogue, creating a vision based on what people are saying, and activating community members to take action towards that vision. During Essex’s two-year Heart & Soul community planning process, “Community Connections” emerged as one of six core values of Essex. Heart and Soul participants have extensive experience convening community conversations, and agreed to help engage the community on this question. With funding from the Town of Essex, Heart & Soul of Essex and the Orton Family Foundation, facilitators Susan Clark and Susan McCormack were hired to co-facilitate the effort.

Heart & Soul members joined with members of the B2B group, town and village officials, and interested residents to carry out this work. The newly formed Essex Governance Group (EGG) met throughout the fall to plan and implement a community exploration about decision-making and voting on the budget in Essex. The exploration included a community-wide survey and forum. This report summarizes the results of those efforts.

EGG Report Scope

EGG's findings and recommendations are offered with the understanding of the report's scope and limitations.

- *Time Frame:* The group was charged with completing its work within a four-month time-frame, including planning and carrying out the group's goals and activities, and processing and reporting findings. Limitations of both time and staffing necessarily circumscribed the project's scope.
- *Research Tools:* The EGG Survey and Forum participants were self-selected and likely represented more highly engaged citizens (from all perspectives). While the Survey Monkey tool protects against multiple responses from the same computer, there is no way of knowing whether anyone repeated the survey using multiple devices. Not surprisingly, the online Survey had over seven times the participation of the Forum (450 compared with approximately 60). Even given these limitations, the thoughtful comments recorded through both the Survey and Forum reveal important patterns and offer valuable insights about residents' concerns.
- *Town and Village:* In most cases, the EGG research did not differentiate between citizens' experience in the Town and the Village. While some survey comments reflected specific feelings about Town and Village governance, most data was collected about "Essex" in general.
- *Citizen Focus:* Just as the 6/2014 Morris and Carr "Shared Services" Assessment focused on an internal (staff) perspective, EGG's work focused on Essex residents at large. EGG benefitted from active participation by the Selectboard, Village Trustees and even one School Board member, and the facilitators were also grateful for valuable interviews with the Town/Village Manager, Assistant Manager, and Town Clerk. While the EGG project did not have the capacity to conduct interviews with additional Town and Village staff, this report is offered with appreciation for the knowledge and professionalism of both the Town and Village staff. We hope that through its emphasis on citizen collaboration, this report will support and enhance their important work.
- *Process:* EGG participants agreed on a decision-making protocol, and decisions were made by this protocol. Given their busy lives, not all participants were able to attend all meetings; however, all meetings were reported via email so those who could not attend could weigh in on decisions. The EGG report is the best representation of the group's consensus the facilitators could create given these limitations.

3. Context: “What Time Is It”?

Bill Grace of the Center for Ethical Leadership notes that when working for positive change, it is important to ask “What time is it?” What is the context in which we find ourselves, and what factors will affect our work?

What time is it in American communities?

The big picture is important. Across the U.S., in the aftermath of the “Great Recession,” citizens are struggling economically. Simultaneously they are also struggling democratically, with public confidence in government hitting all-time lows. As federal programs are cut, communities are trying to determine how to do more with less—less money, and less of the citizen confidence they’ve long relied on.

At the same time, citizens’ expectations about decision-making are rapidly changing. Today’s citizens are web-savvy, and possess an extraordinary ability to research issues and self-organize more effectively than at any point in history. The Internet and the “Open Source Revolution” have created dramatic changes in both the business and non-profit worlds, and citizens are now developing a different view of leadership in the public sphere as well. Reliance on “experts” is giving way to decentralized, bottom-up strategies that reward innovation and information sharing. Increasingly, citizens expect to be treated as collaborators, and appreciate systems that look less like a hierarchy and more like a wiki.

The answer emerging in many communities—and now being brought forward as “best practice” by leaders in public administration—is to use creative methods for engaging citizens in decision making.

The National League of Cities represents 19,000 cities, towns and villages across the U.S.; at its recent annual conference, fully one-third of its “Leadership Training” workshops involved “public engagement.” The International City/County Management Association conference recently featured an entire track on “engaging citizens,” and a third of their university workshops related to public engagement. And at the 2012 American Society for Public Administration conference, the major gathering of all public administration schools in the country, the conference theme was “Redefining Public Service through Civic Engagement.”

Through a combination of process tools (outreach, more creative meeting structures, targeted power sharing, etc.) and technical tools (online communication, increased access to information), communities are redefining their local democracy for the 21st Century.

Essex, like every other community, must find the unique recipe that suits it best.

What time is it in Essex?

Essex finds itself in a time of significant change. EGG members created a list of some of the activities affecting citizens in Essex—some positive, some deeply challenging.

- **Shared Services:** The 6/2014 Morris & Carr Shared Services Report suggested a number of significant changes to the way the Town and Village work. Town and Village leaders and staff are working hard to take appropriate action, most immediately in the area of Public Works. Meanwhile, some citizens are expressing concerns about what the changes will mean (“is it a pseudo-merger?”). They wonder how to have a voice in the process.
- **Budget Hits:** The 2010 Census showed that incomes in some neighborhoods dropped 10%, and many Essex residents are expressing concerns about taxes and the cost of living. At the same time, Essex Rescue, the VNA and Winooski Valley Park District are just a few of the organizations likely to ask for increased financial support from the community.
- **Significant development:** Residents will experience the complications of construction in the next several years including the Crescent Connector (federal project), repaving Route 15 (state project), bike lane/sidewalk expansion on Pearl Street, and a new bike path by the train station. The Town has set aside \$1.5 million to renovate 81 Main Street. In the private sector, there will be construction of a major new building at 5 Corners, and new housing developments happening outside the Village with implications for traffic, town character open space, schools, etc.
- **School system concerns:** Like other Vermont communities, Essex is facing changing demographics and rising per-pupil costs. A study of consolidated governance is being discussed.
- **IBM / Global Foundries:** Residents are waiting to see what changes may occur with the shift in this major local employer.
- **Planning:** Village officials, with assistance of Heart & Soul of Essex and urban designer Julie Campoli, are carrying out “Design Five Corners,” a strategic planning effort to enhance the physical quality and economic vitality of Essex Junction’s Village Core.
- **Heart & Soul:** The Essex Heart & Soul process recently wrapped up its two-year visioning process. Essex has an immediate opportunity to build on this work, as well as take advantage of the citizen-facilitators trained through Heart & Soul. The Heart & Soul Board and participants are working to maintain momentum, and determine how best to implement the vision that Essex residents communicated.

- **Community Calendar:** One of the newest projects of Heart & Soul is an online centralized calendar of all community events. Ideally this will help all sectors plan and communicate more effectively. www.essexcalendar.org

It is in this complex environment that the Essex Governance Group launched its work.

4) Essex Governance Group: Purpose and Process

Essex Governance Group participants determined the following priorities:

EGG Purpose

Engage people in a conversation about ways Essex can continue to improve civic engagement and governance.

EGG Goals

1. LEARN what motivates and/or prevents people from participating
2. INFORM people about Essex's current governance system
3. GATHER ideas from people about potential improvements
3. CREATE a set of recommendations to help the community improve governance and increase civic participation

EGG Scope / Focus

- Form of town meeting & village meeting (e.g. traditional floor meeting, representative town meeting, hybrid, etc.)
- Voting options for town and village budgets and other issues (e.g. floor vote, Australian ballot)
- Ways to increase informed civic engagement in town

Note: The group agreed that while the following topics may arise in our discussions and we must understand the relationship between these and our work, the group would *not* focus on:

- Town-Village merger
- School governance and funding structure
- Forms of governance outside of town/village structure (city, etc.)

EGG Timeline

1. Convene organizing committee - August 2014
2. Planning - June through early September 2014
3. Outreach - August thru October 2014
4. Conversation - late October 2014
5. Synthesis - November 2014
6. Report due - end of year 2014

EGG Proposed Outcomes

1. Deepen citizen engagement and understanding around governance
2. Activate citizens to participate in the civic life of Essex
3. Identify top priorities for improvements in governance and/or civic participation
4. Report back to the community (elected officials and the public) with a set of recommendations for improving governance and/or civic participation in Essex

EGG Research

In order to help the community have an informed discussion, and for use by the Town/Village on their websites and other citizen education, EGG participants researched the following:

1. Voting statistics
 - Essex voting rates for national elections vs. other VT communities
 - Percentage of voters who vote in local ballot-box elections in Essex vs. comparable places
 - Essex voting on national issues vs. local Australian ballot voting
2. Essex Voting schedule
3. Structure of municipal bodies in town/village/school systems
4. Budget overview
5. Citizen opportunities to participate in decision-making
6. A Brief History of Essex's Government (why it's set up with Village, Town)
7. Discussion materials on Town Meeting, Australian Ballot, Representative Town Meeting, NH hybrid system

Outreach Tools

1. Community-Wide Survey

EGG issued an online survey during October. Over 450 residents of Essex Town and Village participated in the survey, and provided a great deal of information about current voting and civic engagement.

Survey Goals:

- Learn what motivates and prevents people from participating
- Assess people's level of interest in governance issues
- Identify community values/priorities regarding governance and civic participation

2. Community Forum

On Saturday, November 8 EGG hosted an interactive "Essex Governance and You" community forum (noon-4:00). It was attended by about 60 leaders and residents from both the Town and Village.

Forum Goals:

- Share and discuss the results of the community survey

- Identify key priorities and generate suggestions to strengthen civic participation/community voice
- Inform people about Essex's current governance model and share stories about other governance models
- Gather feedback about potential governance changes

Forum Process: Led by facilitators Susan Clark and Susan McCormack, the Forum was a chance for EGG members to share and discuss the results of the survey with the community. Forum participants also learned about current governance in the Town and the Village, and then spent time weighing the benefits and challenges of four different voting methods: Town Meeting and Australian Ballot, which are currently in use in Essex; Representative Town Meeting, which is used in Brattleboro, VT and in Massachusetts; and a Meeting-Ballot Hybrid approach used in New Hampshire ("SB2"). (See Appendix "Four Approaches" document.) After working in small groups, the participants came together and shared their favorite ideas for encouraging more citizen participation in local voting. Based on the survey results, they also brainstormed ways to build on Essex's high level of community mindedness, and ways to increase transparency in municipal government.

5) Essex Democracy: Data and Infographics

The Essex Governance Group asked itself, “What do people need to know in order to have a productive conversation about Essex governance?” Below are highlights from the Nov. 8 “Essex Democracy and You” forum presentation answering this question.

“If you want to understand today, you have to search yesterday.” Pearl Buck

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ESSEX TOWN AND ESSEX JUNCTION....

HOW WE CAME TO BE.



June 7, 1763—Town of Essex, a 36 square mile area, was chartered by Gov. Wentworth of NH Province by power granted to him by King George III.



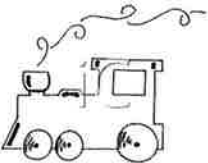
1783—Permanent settlement in Essex began.



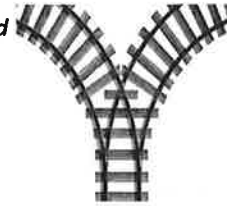
1786—First Town Meeting with a population of 772 (26 families). Citizens voted to create a tax to repair the roads.



1801—School districts formed; Village area named School District #1 (aka “Hubbells Falls School District”)



1850—Railroad arrived, known as Painesville (named in honor of Gov. Paine), which subsequently created greater population density.



1853—Vermont Central Railroad and Vermont/Canada Railroad “junctioned” its lines.

1862—Railroad station officially re-named Essex Junction



1893 - School District #1 (area of 4.6 sq. miles around the train station) added another layer of government, in addition to the Town government, by legislative approval known as the Village of Essex Junction for “voluntary taxation with added necessary services of a densely populated area” (Frank Bent, 1963). Owners of less developed farmland did not have to pay for the services they didn’t need. This taxation structure has been in place ever since.

(Fig. 1)

History and Demographics

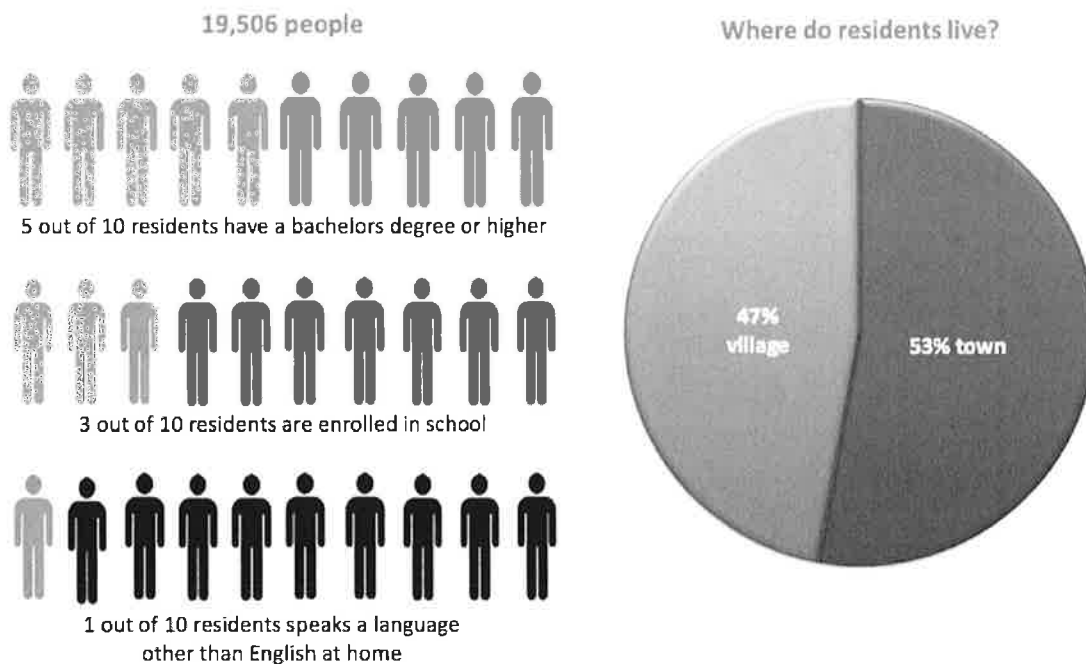
We began with the basics, offering a brief history of the Town/Village relationship (Fig. 1, above). We also included a map of Essex that indicated the boundaries of the Village and Town, reminding participants that people who are residents of the Village are also residents of the Town.

Essex's population is now close to 20,000, with a well-educated and increasingly diverse citizenry split almost evenly between Village and Town (Fig. 2, below).

WE ARE ESSEX



ESSEX IS THE STATE'S 2nd LARGEST TOWN AND IS MORE EDUCATED AND DIVERSE THAN VT AS A WHOLE.



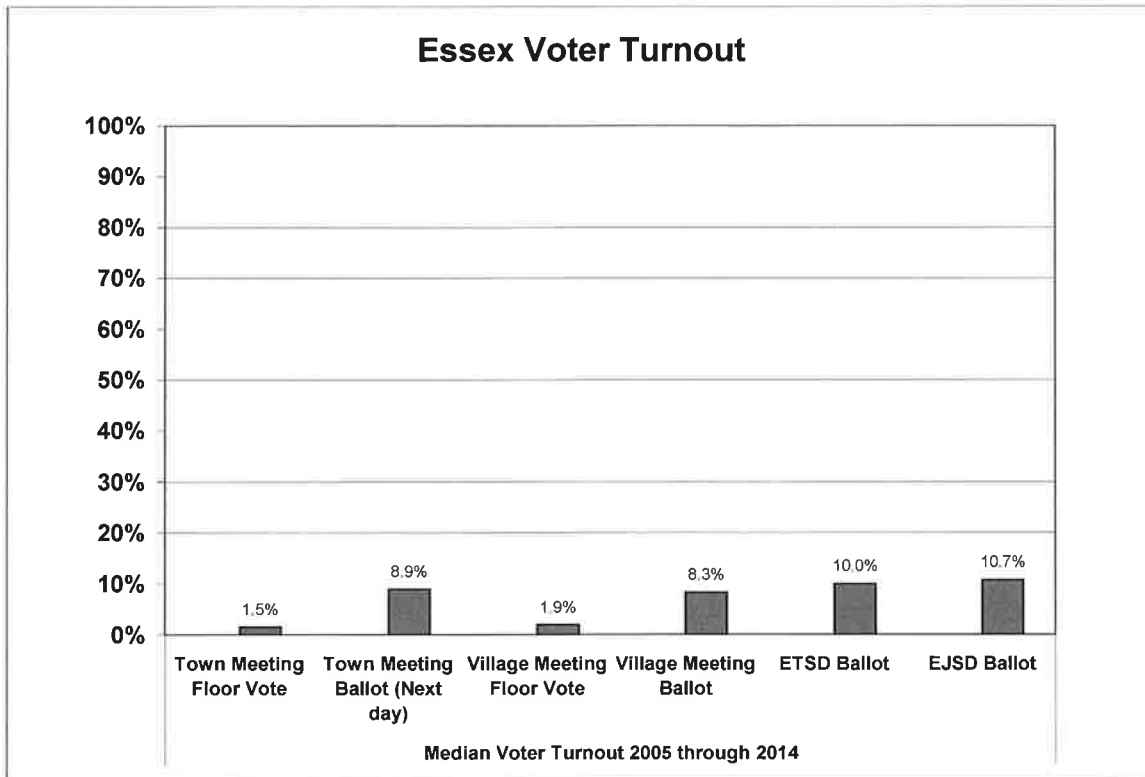
(Fig. 2).

Town Meeting and Ballot-Box Voting

Figure 3 (below) shows the range of Essex voter turn-out on local issues.

- Essex's votes on the Town and Village budgets occur at town meeting, face-to-face deliberative gatherings. The median voter turnout for the Town Meeting between 2006-2014 was 1.5%. At the Village Meeting, the median turnout was 1.9%.

- Essex also votes on some Town and Village issues by Australian ballot. The median voter turnout between 2006-2014 for these ballot-box votes was 8.9% (Town) and 8.3% (Village).
- Essex votes on school budgets by Australian ballot. The median voter turnout between 2006-2014 for these ballot-box votes was 10% (Essex Town School District) and 10.7% (Essex Junction School District).



(Fig. 3)

Essex's Numbers in Perspective

It is important to look at Essex's voting data in perspective.

- Even in the important and exhaustively publicized U.S. presidential elections, across the country voter turnout hovers at about 55% of eligible voters. Meanwhile, turnout is even lower on local issues: in elections for city council, mayors, and local bond issues across the country, participation seldom exceeds 25%, and is often dramatically lower—in the single digits.
- Research on Vermont's traditional, face-to-face town meetings (see *Real Democracy* by Frank Bryan) reveals two key facts about town meeting attendance, both of which are relevant to Essex:

Size matters. Vermont is the second most rural state in the nation, with well over half of its population living in towns of under 2,500. In small towns, town meeting attendance often reaches 30% or higher. However, across Vermont, town meeting consistently achieves higher per capita turnout in small towns than large ones. Recent data from meetings held between 1999–2011 shows town meeting attendance statewide averaged 13.1 percent, and analysis shows that increasing town size accounts for over half of the decline in town meeting attendance since 1970.

Essex is the largest town in Vermont still to govern through a traditional floor meeting.

Issues matter. The “Essex Voter Turnout” chart shows median attendance, which means that half the meetings have above this attendance, half below. Median (rather than mean) attendance is helpful because it doesn’t skew the number by averaging in unusual highs or lows in attendance. However, it is important to note that like every other town, Essex does see spikes in attendance.

For instance, in 2010 in the Village, attendance more than doubled with 4.2% coming out for that meeting. In 2005, the Essex Town School District ballot box voting spiked to 16.5% and the Essex Jct. School District had over a 24% turnout. In 2008, almost 53% of the Towns’ registered voters turned out to vote on the Town Meeting ballot. If Essex follows the patterns of other Vermont towns, then it was a controversial or especially interesting or compelling issue that drew the larger number of voters to participate. This is useful information when considering how to improve public engagement.

How does Essex’s turnout compare with other towns?

Fig. 4 (below) shows that Essex voter turnout for *national elections* in November compares favorably with that of other cities and towns in the area.

In contrast, Fig 5 shows Essex’s ballot-box voting on *local issues* compared with other Vermont towns. Knowing that population can affect participation, EGG chose the largest communities in Vermont for comparative data. The Chittenden County town of Shelburne (18th largest) is also included for comparison.

As this chart shows, Essex’s ballot box voting on local issues is comparatively low. This seems to indicate that Essex’s town meeting attendance is not the only issue. Even when voting by ballot, Essex has room for improvement in engaging citizens in local issues.

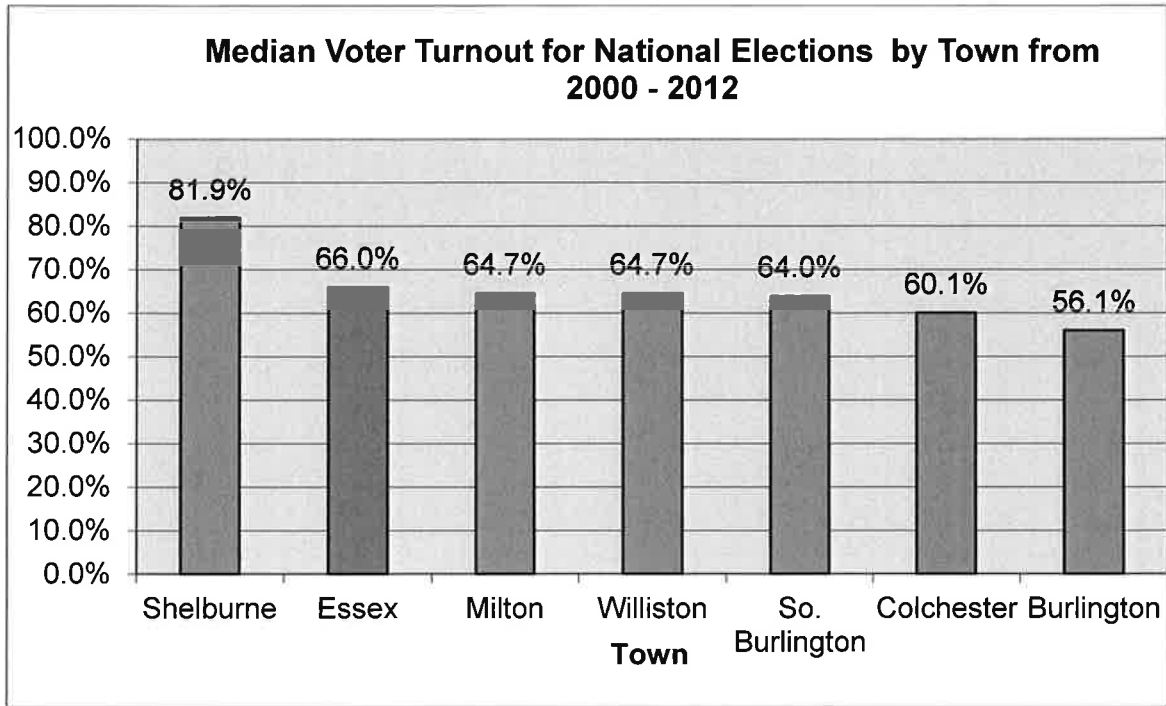


Fig. 4

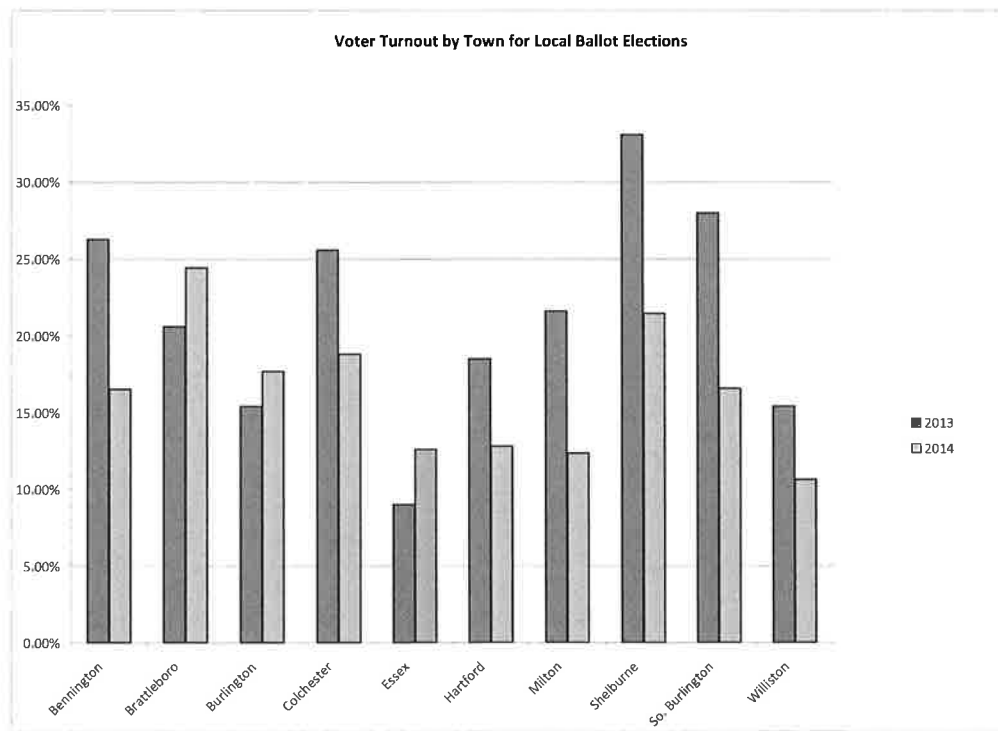


Fig. 5

The Role of the Essex Voter in Local Budget Decisions

Figure 6 (below) shows the two key roles for Essex voters in local budget decision:

- Electing the Selectboard and Village Trustees, who, in their executive branch roles, work with the staff to propose a budget; and
- Deliberating on, potentially amending, and voting on the budget at Town or Village Meeting. In this role citizens are, on issues of governance and finance, the legislative branch of local government.

In addition, citizens can participate in a range of ways including serving on committees, attending public meetings, and contacting local officials.

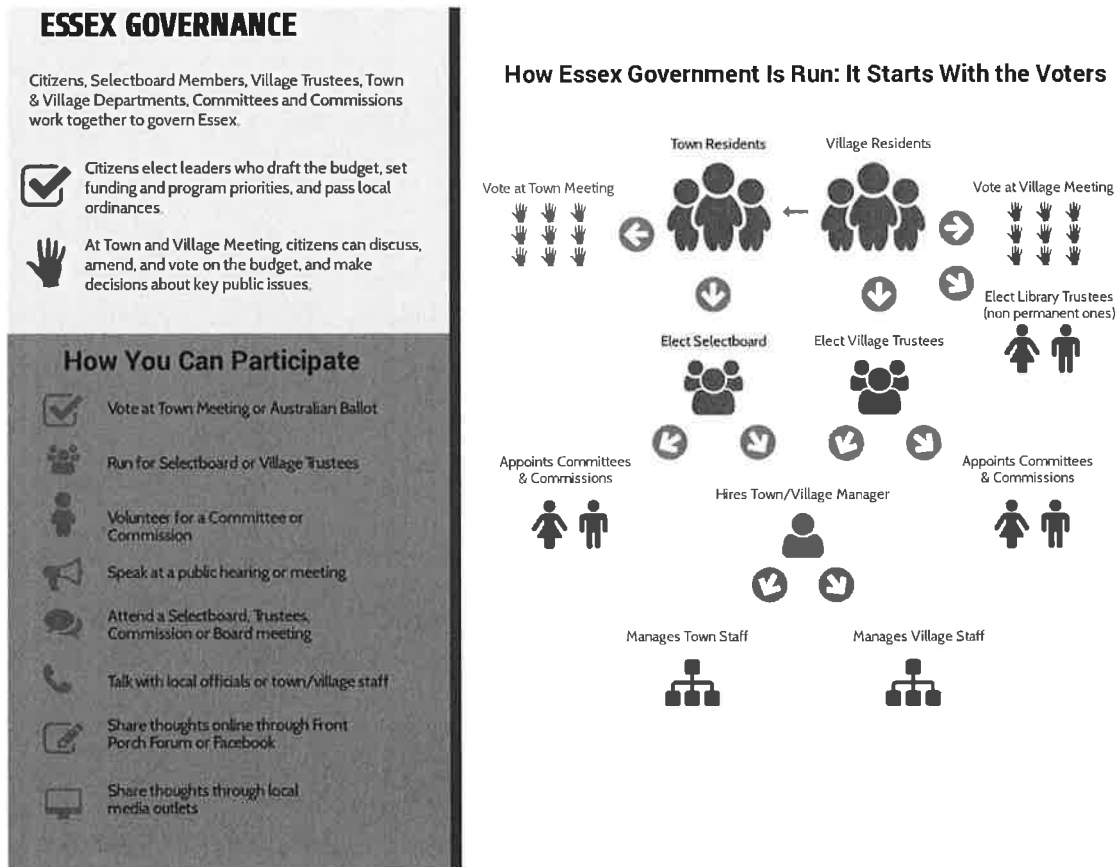


Fig. 6

Figure 7 (below) offers additional information on Essex voting. Of particular note, Essex has an unusually high number of local votes each spring. Including Town Meeting and Village Meeting, Essex residents currently vote on five separate budgets: Town Municipal; Village Municipal; Village Schools (K-8); Town Schools (K-8); and Essex High School and Center for Technology–Essex (9-12)—a total of three votes for Town residents, five for Village residents.

Essex votes on over 80% of local spending by ballot.

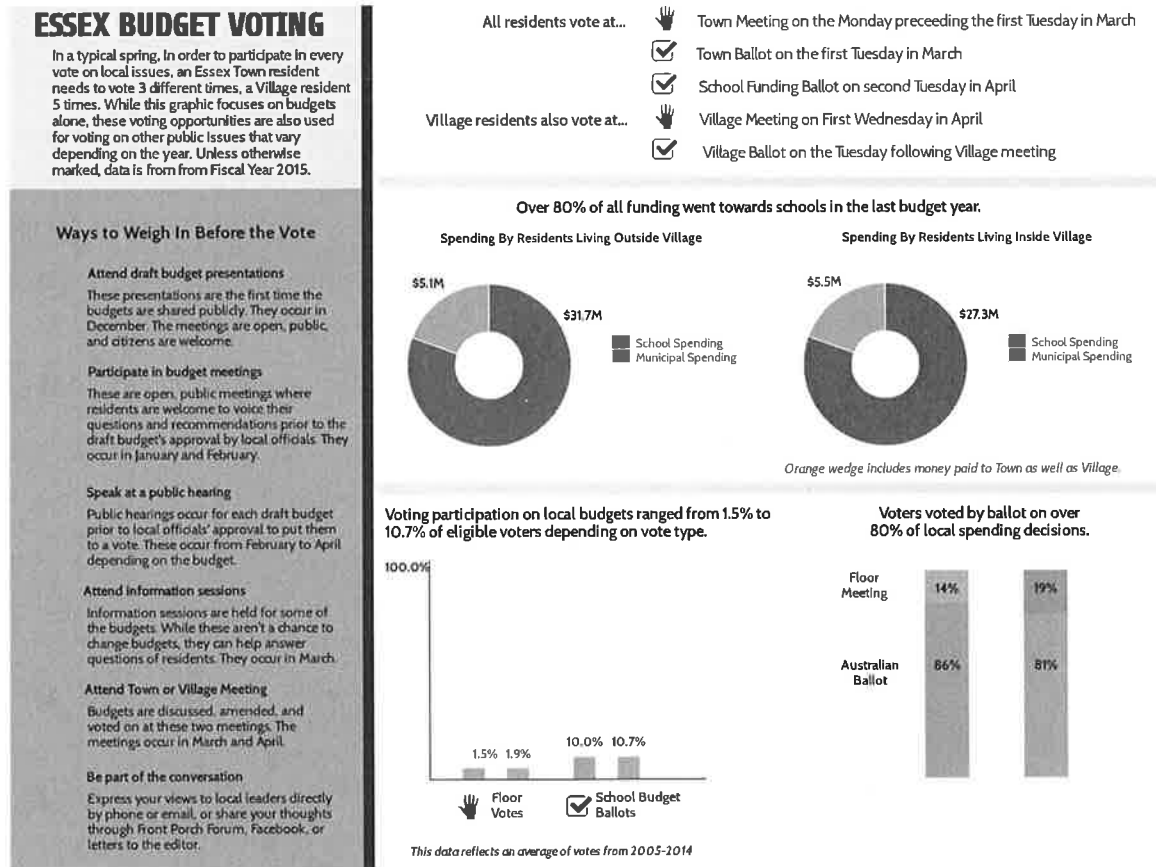


Fig. 7

Does Essex’s system present any barriers to voting and participation? To learn what motivates and prevents people from participating, assess people’s level of interest in governance issues, and to identify community priorities regarding governance and civic participation, EGG launched a community-wide survey about local democracy.

6) EGG Survey

Survey Highlights

1. Over 450 Essex residents answered the survey.
2. Results indicate that respondents participate in our community and feel local decisions are important.
3. Even among this engaged group, many don't attend town meeting or vote in local elections.
4. Respondents identified several barriers to participating.
5. Several strong themes emerged, including the desire for more collaboration, transparency and inclusion.

Figure 8 depicts key findings from the EGG Survey.

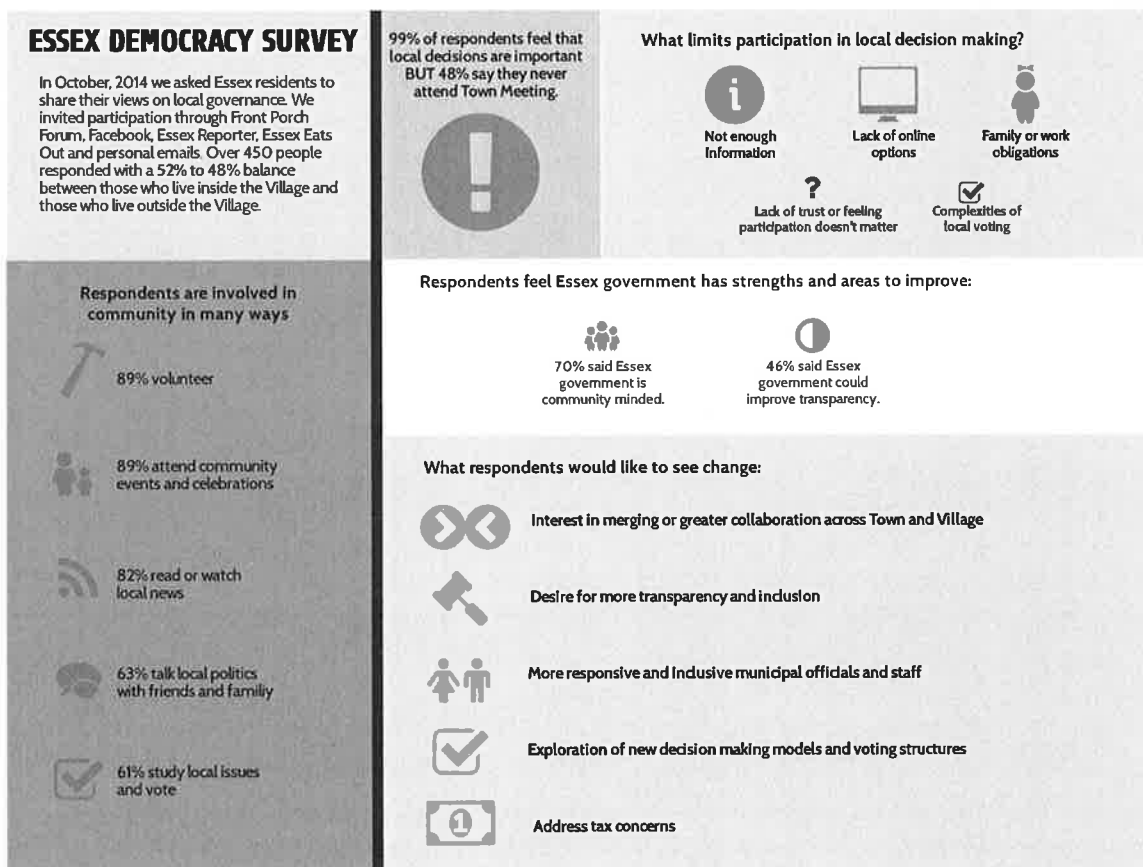


Fig. 8

Detailed Survey Findings

1. Over 450 Essex residents answered the survey.

- This online survey was fielded between October 6-26, 2014.
- It was publicized through Front Porch Forum, Facebook, personal e-mails from EGG committee and their networks, posters, and the *Essex Reporter*. Volunteers also attended Essex Eats Out and provided paper copies.
- 456 people filled out the survey.
- Respondents were self-selected, providing a non-scientific “snapshot” of community.
- Participation was representative across Town and Village (47% and 51%)
- Most respondents were between the ages of 35-64 (over 70 %). There were 48 respondents under age 35 (12%), and 61 over age 65 (15%).
- More women than men filled out survey (59% women, 39 % men).
- 92% identified as white - 4% people of color.
- Most people who filled out the survey had an income between \$50,000 and \$125,000 (56%). 16% had income under \$50,000.
- 6% of survey respondents reported that they had graduated from high school, 34% graduated from college, 41% graduated from graduate school.

2. Respondents do participate in our community, and feel local decisions are important.

- A strong majority of respondents are engaged with local issues (not surprising since this was a self-selected group). 89% volunteer, 82% read or watch local news. A majority of people (over 60%) talk local politics and study local issues
 - Respondents said they want to be informed and shape community decisions. They feel a sense of responsibility to the community.
 - Respondents are more likely to participate in informal ways (volunteering, celebrations, community meetings) rather than formal ways (serving on a board, attending town meeting, voting).
 - 99% of respondents feel that local decisions are somewhat or very important.
 - Respondents seem more motivated by their caring about the community (83%) and feeling of responsibility towards the community (68%), than by a desire to restrain spending (22%) or keep tabs on local officials (37%).
 - 40% say there are no barriers to participation (which indicates that 60% perceive some barriers).

3. Even among this engaged group, many don't attend town meeting or vote in local elections.

- 48% say they never attend town meeting.
 - People who never go to town meeting cite similar barriers to people who sometimes or always go to town meeting.
 - The majority of people who never go to town meeting do volunteer (70%) but at a lower rate than people who attend town meeting (89%)
- Respondents who never go to town meeting vote **somewhat less** in national elections than those who attend town meeting (85% sometimes or always vs. 96% sometimes or always).
- Respondents who never go to town meeting vote **a lot less** in local elections (57% sometimes or always vote vs. 94% sometimes or always vote).
- Respondents who never go to town meeting feel much less sense of responsibility for community than those who do attend (55% vs. 80%).
- This is especially true for young people (ages 18 - 34). Young people participating in the survey express similar motivations and barriers to participation as all ages, with a few differences:
 - The opportunity to shape the future is a stronger motivator for young people than for all ages (77% vs. 58%).
 - Lack of information and online opportunities is a bigger barrier for young people (info. 54% vs. 32%).
 - Two places where there are big gaps in participation between young people and everyone else is voting and going to town meeting.
 - 28% of young people say they study issues and vote vs. 60% of all respondents.
 - 78% young people never attend town meeting vs. 48% of all respondents.

4. Respondents identified several barriers to participating.

(Respondents could choose as many as applied, so percentages do not add up to 100%)

- No barriers (40%)
- Lack of information (32%)
- Lack of online opportunities to participate (23%)
- Some people express lack of trust and feeling that participation won't make a difference (11% and 13%)

- Multiple votes and confusion about voting was a barrier for some but not many (10% or under)

5. Several strong themes emerged, including the desire for more collaboration, transparency and inclusion.

- Two values stood out well above the others when respondents were asked what local government does well, and where there is most need for improvement:
 - 70% of respondents say “Community minded” is a strong value of local government
 - 46% say “Transparency” is the area most in need of improvement
- When asked in an open-ended question what change people would most like to see, five key ideas show up in the data
 - **A) Interest in merger and/or more collaboration (96 mentions)**
 - merge town and village
 - increase collaboration
 - improve planning processes
 - **B) Desire for more transparency and inclusion (48 mentions)**
 - Communication & Engagement
 - More proactive and innovative ways to share information, including the use of technology and online platforms
 - More opportunities for shared decision-making
 - More opportunities to leverage the skills and expertise of community members
 - **C) More responsive and inclusive leadership (23 mentions)**
 - Concerns that elected, appointed officials and/or staff may have priorities that are not aligned with the community
 - Sense that leaders are not listening or responsive to the diversity of opinions and voices in the community
 - **D) Exploration of new decision making models and voting structures (34 mentions)**
 - suggestions for different models of governance
 - interest in moving voting to Australian ballot along with comments about streamlining voting processes
 - **E) Address tax concerns (24 mentions)**
 - Interest in lowering taxes
 - Streamline and unify town and village as a way to lower taxes

While all of these results are worthy of attention, only the middle three were within EGG's defined scope of work. The November 8th forum provided an opportunity to discuss these key priorities:

- Desire for more transparency, inclusion and responsive leadership
- Interest in new models of decision making & voting structures (i.e. the four approaches to town meeting voting; see Appendix).

7. EGG Findings

The following is a summary of EGG's combined findings from the October Survey and November 8 Forum.

1. More Effective Communication is Needed

Communication is the most prominent strand running through the Essex Governance Group's findings.

When identifying barriers to participation in Essex, survey respondents named "lack of information" most often (32%), and "lack of online opportunities to participate" second most often (23%). Even though 82% of survey respondents said they read or watch local news, many did not feel they were getting the information they wanted in order to participate.

When respondents were asked about how government most needs to improve, "Transparency" was named most often (46%).

At the Nov. 8 EGG Forum, small-table discussions were asked to shed more light on the meaning of "Transparency" in Essex. A number of important themes emerged, as discussed below. The theme of communication re-emerged repeatedly under other topics throughout Forum discussions.

Participants identified several key aspects of communication needs:

A. Explicit Communication

Participants asked for more accurate, clear, and open communication. This area was identified separately by all six small groups. Examples included timely and clear explanation on government minutes and agendas so that a person who did not attend the meeting would understand what happened; clearer numbers around total impact of tax bills; and clarity around how citizens can access information.

B. Proactive Communication

Participants at all six tables used terms like "intentional outreach," "finding ways to connect with citizens," and "being forthright with significant changes in advance." At the end of the Forum, the small groups were asked for their "top ideas," and three fell into this category, asking leaders to *go out to the people* with new, innovative outreach.

C. Online Communication, Open Data

It is no surprise that Essex, long-time home of IBM, is also home to many tech-savvy citizens with high expectations for online communication. All six tables named this as a priority. Four of the groups' "top ideas" called for a stronger web presence. Participants indicated interest in all of Essex's data being open to the public, with two "top ideas" naming Burlington's Open Data Initiative as a model. Of the two Forum

participants who offered ideas of “what I’d like to do now,” one volunteered to host a conversation about how to strengthen Essex’s online communications.

D. And Beyond Online

Participants expressed concern that government reach out in other ways (not all residents use the internet). Strengthening collaboration with the media was mentioned. Some noted that local press coverage needs improvement.

E. Direct Communication with Leaders, Accountability

Participants value responsiveness: the ability to communicate one-on one with their leaders, and for town officials and staff to provide information directly to citizens. This was named as an advantage of traditional town meeting, the hybrid model, and representative town meeting, and a disadvantage of ballot-box voting. They also called for accountability measures, such as tracking of suggestions and complaints to ensure that communication is honored.

F. Active Listening: Responsive, Respectful, Engaged Communication

Both leaders and citizens value productive two-way engagement. Participating leaders described the value of “knowing our constituents”; meanwhile, citizens asked for “open-minded listening,” and for leaders to be “receptive to ideas and input from community.”

2. Inclusion is Critical

The majority of survey respondents (almost 60%) indicated that they felt barriers to participation in local elections and decision making.

As stated above, the most often-cited barriers related to communication. Many survey respondents also cited family or work obligations as limiting their participation. Respondents indicated a mix of other reasons, including not feeling their participation matters, not trusting the system, and confusion about voting.

Those who participated in the Forum expressed strong concerns about the **inclusiveness** of Essex’s system. All six tables listed multiple issues regarding inclusion, with a heavy emphasis on the drawbacks of town meeting and the relative merits of Australian ballot voting, including parallel advantages of the hybrid option since it includes Australian ballot. Participants expressed concerns about intimidation at town meeting due to complicated rules/procedures, TV cameras, and loud or impolite people. They cited a variety of advantages offered by Australian ballot including absentee ballot, voting by mail, and 12-hour voting.

Participants voiced worries about **low numbers** in both voter turnout and meeting participation. Some expressed concern that the hybrid method (SB2) would depress town meeting turnout even further.

Participants also called for more **demographic diversity** in participation, including socio-economic, cultural, geographic, and age diversity. Youth was of particular concern. The EGG Survey revealed that young respondents (ages 18-34) were significantly less likely to vote and attend town meeting than older residents. One Forum group's "top idea" was to help youth become more involved, engaged and informed.

3. High-Quality, Informed Decision Making is Greatly Valued

In addition to ensuring that all citizens have the opportunity to participate and vote, Forum participants emphasized that decision-making processes must be of high quality.

The advantages of **deliberative decision making** were raised at all six tables. Traditional town meeting was especially named as offering the opportunity to exchange ideas, hear new opinions, and correct misinformation. However, town meeting was also criticized as potentially causing hasty decision making. Participants expressed some frustration with town meeting management.

Another key element identified at all Forum tables, in keeping with earlier concerns about communication, is the need for **informed and engaged voters** and citizen education. Informed participation was cited as an advantage of town meeting and representative town meeting, while participants bemoaned the lack of participation at informational meetings before Australian ballot voting. They cited the lag-time between discussion and voting as a potential advantage of the hybrid method.

High-quality decision making also means balanced participation, and all tables mentioned uneasiness with the possibility that **special interest groups** could hijack a process.

In another commentary on the importance of methodology, participants saw the choice of decision-making models as a potential element in **building community** (cited as an advantage of town meeting not seen with Australian ballot), or in dividing it (representative town meeting's need for new districts was seen as potentially fractious).

Most tables indicated that a key element of community-minded governance is **balance**: weighing the desires of the few with the needs of the whole, and making decisions based on the greatest long-term good.

Efficiency was also a concern, with most tables naming **costly re-votes** as a down-side to Australian ballot.

4. Essex Could Create its Own Model

A significant number of Forum comments centered on alternative models for democratic engagement.

Of particular interest was the idea of representing citizens at the neighborhood level. Most tables named creating stronger neighborhoods, grassroots efforts or “hyper-local” emphasis as an advantage of the representative town meeting model. Two of the six tables named **Neighborhood Assemblies** such as those used in Burlington as one of their “Top Ideas.”

Most tables suggested **creative improvements** in the existing system. One group wondered whether instead of focusing on dramatic changes in voting, Essex should improve the existing system through technology and other participatory techniques. Another noted that the town selectboard is already making improvements but it will take time to see changes.

Other suggestions included:

- Reducing re-votes (for instance, by having a “no” vote automatically revert to the current budget).
- Improving town meeting participation by changing the time of town meeting, issuing specific invitations, and otherwise reducing barriers.
- One “Top Idea” was using technology (e.g. Skype) to allow remote meeting attendance/participation.
- Providing a way for voters to give specific feedback to leaders after ballot-box voting. One group’s “Top Idea” was to allow citizens to give budget feedback by incorporating a survey into the ballot.

All six tables named two-way communication between municipal leaders/staff and residents as an important **alternative to formal hearings/meetings**. “Build bridges, not walls” was one comment; another was “lots of avenues for two-way communication in a user-friendly form.” Several groups called for more topical community forums such as those hosted by Heart and Soul. (In Forum evaluations, when asked “How helpful would it be to have more of these kinds of community conversations in Essex?” 81% of respondents said that it would be “helpful” or “extremely helpful.”)

Non-formal participation is an important element not only of community, but what local government means to citizens. When asked “how do you participate in our community,” survey respondents were more likely to participate in informal ways (volunteering, celebrations) than in formal ways (e.g. serving on boards).

However, when Forum participants were asked “What does government being community minded mean to you?” almost all groups named support of non-formal activities such as grassroots organizations, block parties, Farmer’s Market, and concerts. For many citizens, the border between informal “community” and formal “government” is fuzzy; these comments indicate that each side of the line can benefit from the energy of the other.

Four comments wondered whether Essex should consider a **city form of government**, with one group naming neighborhood assemblies reporting to a Mayor as a “top idea.”

5. Residents Value the Power and Immediacy of Direct Democracy

All six tables named **citizens' direct democratic power** as an advantage of traditional town meeting, such as the ability to amend. "Direct democracy: we are the legislators" was a repeated sentiment, and the lack of amendment power was cited as a downside of Australian ballot. "Adding a layer" between voters and their decision making was seen as a negative element of representative town meeting, with a fear of centralizing power to an elite few. Several named Vermont's long local tradition as a positive element of town meeting. At the same time, some complained that citizen power is actually *not strong enough* at town meeting; it's "hard to make real changes," and "amendment power is limited."

Most tables appreciated the **immediacy** of town meeting. "The work is done when the meeting is done" was a common sentiment. In contrast, the hybrid model creates a two-step process, and with Australian ballot, "a no-vote means a revote."

6. Same Day Voting, and a Call for Simplicity

In a typical spring in order to participate in every local vote, Town resident need to vote three different times, and Village residents, five times. Survey results indicated that while it wasn't the top concern, the complexities of voting were a barrier to participation. At the Forum, four tables offered comments indicating their interest in **same-day voting**. Two groups named same-day voting as one of their "Top Ideas."

Simplicity and clarity was a common thread in other areas, seen especially as an advantage of ballot-box voting. One group's "Top Idea" was "Simplify: Governance, communication, education (of municipal issues, budgets)."

All six tables expressed some trepidation about the **implementation** of one or more of the new decision-making models discussed. The hybrid (SB2) model raised the most apprehension about implementation, with representative town meeting a close second. Clearly, any changes should be made with caution, and with confusion and upheaval kept to a minimum.

8. EGG Recommendations

The Essex Governance Group recommends the following actions. They are intended as a “package.” In particular in the case of the first three recommendations, the success of each will be enhanced by the others. For those recommendations that cannot be acted on immediately, EGG recommends that Essex leaders commit to a timeline to move forward.

- A. Launch Proactive Communication Program**
- B. Empower Neighborhoods**
- C. Switch to Enhanced Town Meeting/Australian Ballot Hybrid**
- D. Institute Same-Day Voting**

A. Launch Proactive Communication Program

Essex residents value their government’s “community minded” nature, and have expressed a strong desire for more two-way communication with leaders and staff. Ideally proactive communication does not need to add to the overall workload of officials and staff, but instead can enable leaders to succeed at existing tasks more effectively with the understanding and active support of the public.

Action steps:

1. Public Engagement Protocol

Create, adopt and implement an Essex Public Engagement Protocol for use by all departments (see sample protocol from Portland, Oregon in Appendix). The protocol allows staff and community members to implement appropriate public engagement for each municipal project.

2. Training

Train current municipal leaders and staff in best public engagement practices, to ensure that proactive citizen participation is a meaningful part of everyone’s job.

3. Hiring and Performance Expectations

Incorporate public engagement skills and expectations into all municipal job descriptions, hiring expectations, and performance reviews.

4. Website

Revamp websites and link Town/Village online presence, based on citizen and staff input

5. Informal Meetings

Convene quarterly, informal get-togethers for residents to meet with elected municipal officials and staff. Bring the meetings to places where people may already be gathered (e.g. a bar, a school play, a community event).

B. Empower Neighborhoods

While Essex residents want to improve inclusivity, many also value face-to-face, deliberative decision making and direct democracy. The immediacy of local decision making is inspiring to youth, and local issues like parks interest young families. Devolving power on specific planning and budgeting decisions to the neighborhood level would build on Essex's "small town feel" and community engagement while bringing in new participation. (Burlington's Neighborhood Planning Assemblies may be a useful model.)

Action step:

1. Create Neighborhood Assemblies

Create Neighborhood Assemblies to make recommendations on neighborhood and municipal issues (such as planning, development, lighting and safety). The Assemblies would serve as official advisors to the municipality (in alignment with the recommended public engagement protocol—see recommendation A-1 above). Invite leaders to attend Neighborhood Assemblies.

C. Switch to Enhanced Town Meeting/Australian Ballot Hybrid

After considering a variety of options for deliberating and voting on budgets, EGG recommends changes that incorporate participants' strong interest in inclusivity while building on Essex's robust community-mindedness. The proposed hybrid model is purposefully paired with a powerfully enhanced town meeting, with the goal of protecting it from the reduced participation often experienced in New Hampshire's larger hybrid (SB2) towns. A minimum attendance requirement ensures that amendments can not be made by a tiny minority. Changes (especially to the charter) should be carefully coordinated to create the least confusion for Essex citizens.

Action steps:

1. Upgrade the current Town Meeting to an "Essex Democracy Day"

Essex Democracy Day would have the elements of the current Town Meeting, but with improved participation options (e.g. could include remote town meeting participation), and also could include a congress of Neighborhood Assemblies, a facilitated community forum on a key issue, and a dinner and celebration.

2. Amendment Requirement

If attendance at Town Meeting is high enough (equal to or greater than the median town meeting attendance during the past 10 years from 2005 through 2014), citizens attending that Town Meeting will continue to have the power to amend the budget. This meeting determines the final budget number to be sent to the voters of Essex for

approval by Australian ballot. (Note: if attendance is below this percentage, then that particular year's Town Meeting would be informational only, with no power to amend.)

3. Amended budget voted on by Australian ballot

Final budget is sent to voters of Essex for approval by Australian ballot vote, to be held 45 days after Town Meeting.

4. Survey included with ballot

A survey should be included with the ballot, to allow residents the opportunity to offer comment.

5. Town meeting date

Change the date of town meeting so it doesn't happen right after school break.

D. Institute Same-Day Voting

In a typical spring in order to participate in every vote on local issues, Town residents must vote three different times, and Village residents five times. Complexities of local voting were named as a barrier to participation. Forum participants also expressed concern that each individual vote does not convey the overall impact of their property tax. Because Essex's voting involves five separate municipal units and separate municipal clerks, this change must be made with careful, coordinated planning. It will increase work for local clerks' office, and so will require additional staffing to ensure that they can maintain their traditionally high standards and low incidence of voter problems.

Action step:

1. Create a staged plan to combine voting dates and Town/Village Meeting dates.

Over a specified time, institute same-day voting with all budgets voted on the same day. (This is not a proposal for a single ballot; voters would receive multiple ballots.) This process would also include combining Town and Village Meeting dates.

9. Conclusion

By inviting residents to reflect on concerns about voting and decision-making around the municipal budget through this EGG process, the Town, Village and Heart & Soul of Essex have collaborated with community residents to uncover multiple pathways for building the capacity of our community to engage residents in meaningful ways and incorporate their voices in important decisions about our future.

When Essex embarked on the Heart & Soul process several years ago, the goal was to identify a set of shared values. Six core values emerged, and during this process, it was also discovered that the Heart & Soul of Essex was filling an important gap as a convener (of public conversations), a connector (connecting citizens with local government, building relationships among Town and Village staff and other community organizations), and a champion (ensuring community values are incorporated into decision making). The recommendations from the EGG report actually offer a road map for building these roles into the fabric of our community's public life. This alignment is an unexpected but promising outcome of the work of the Essex Governance group.

The Essex Governance Group respectfully offers EGG's Findings and Recommendations to the Essex Selectboard and the Essex community as a whole. We hope the community's voice is heard through the Findings, and that the EGG Recommendations will serve as a useful guide for action.

Essex leaders are in a position to strengthen the civic life of the community, and hundreds of residents have expressed their interest and support for improvements. The time is right. The Essex residents who contributed to EGG's work stand ready to help.

10. Appendices

Appendix A: Portland, Oregon Participation protocol

Appendix B: Survey results, coded (link)

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1bMuzDpTcC-3ntXqXuAYbU6AxiGv2c8DNuNRSjuJfPOg/edit?usp=sharing>

Appendix C: Forum agenda and "Four Approaches"

Appendix D: Forum small-table results, coded

Appendix E: List of EGG Participants, Facilitator/Author Bios

Public Involvement Toolkit



November 2006

**Submitted by:
The Mayor's Bureau Innovation Project #9:
Public Involvement**

Eileen Argentina and Jo Ann Bowman, Co-Chairs

Guidelines for Using this Toolkit

Introduction

The Bureau Innovation Project #9 team, an initiative of Mayor Potter that began in June 2005, developed this toolkit. A team made up of both city staff and public members developed the tools based on research and discussion of models from around the world. It was important to the team to develop a model that would be easy to apply to all city bureaus and create consistent expectations for the public, yet not limit the creativity or flexibility of public involvement staff.

Before the Toolkit:

Before a public involvement staff person starts using the toolkit, there are activities that should normally occur in the overall public involvement project. The Process Overview demonstrates a typical public involvement process¹. More about general steps and guidance for performing public involvement is available in the City of Portland's Outreach and Involvement Handbook, the third edition of which will incorporate the Toolkit.

First, project managers – be they public involvement staff, general project managers, or consultants – should perform, at the very least, an assessment of the project or initiative that includes the following:

- An environmental scan for related mandates, plans and other directives that may have bearing on the project,
- An initial stakeholder assessment, including considering whether this project may disproportionately affect a particular community or traditionally underrepresented community.
- A review of the goals and purposes of public involvement for the project, and
- An evaluation of resources available for the public engagement component of the project.

Once this preliminary review is complete, the toolkit can be drawn upon to further define the public involvement approach most suited to the particular project. The toolkit can also be used multiple times throughout the span of a project to assess options in a project's phases or to reassess in the event that circumstances change or modifications are needed.

How to use the Toolkit:

This toolkit is designed to be used, ideally with participation from a representative stakeholder group, to assess the optimal approaches and methods for engaging the public in a project or initiative. It is applicable to development and planning projects as well as policy explorations and general public education.

¹ Appendix A, page 4 of Toolkit

Consisting of a series of questions intended to clarify public interests and needs in the engagement process followed by a spectrum of approaches matched with tools and methods, this toolkit can help with identification of prospective options. Used with a stakeholder group, it can also help develop early public commitment to project success as public members participate in the development of the public process. The suggested steps for using the toolkit are as follows.

The Facilitated Stakeholder Meeting:

Step 1: Asking the Questions

Once an environmental assessment (see above) has been completed, convene a stakeholder meeting. Bringing together stakeholders with diverse perspectives and interests helps insure that the resulting involvement will respond more readily to community needs and values.

Referring to the list of questions², pose each question and allow all participants to answer the question in turn. If the group is very large, dividing into multiple small groups of 6-10 is recommended. As participants answer the question, the facilitator should place a check mark in the appropriate box. When all participants have answered, the facilitator moves on to the next question and each subsequent question in turn.

The facilitator should take care to ensure all voices are heard and that no answers are discussed or judged during this process. It is a free-flowing question and answer period, and all answers are equally valid.

Step 2: Assessing the Answers

Once all the questions have been answered in this manner, after thanking participants for their input, the facilitator should get agreement that the next step is to assess the group's general majority view on each question. The facilitator assessing the answer patterns, averaging them to determine a probable midpoint, and then affirming this with the group can informally accomplish this. Another option is to assign a number value to each answer and then average the answers for a mathematical average.

Step 3: Overall Scoring or Scale Assessment

After each question has been assessed and the average answer plotted, the facilitator should work with the group to come up with an overall score or location on the scale for the project. Some answers may seem to have opposing scales for this purpose. It is better not to focus on this, but to work with the group to determine a general rating or characterization of the project that will help point to the type of engagement and tools of engagement are warranted.

The questioning exercise can result in multiple positive outcomes. The facilitator, who is likely the public involvement manager for the project, will have a much better sense

² Appendix B, page 5 of Toolkit

of stakeholder views and issues. If the outcomes of the questions conflict with the limitations of mandates driving the project, this early warning system will help daylight potential sources of conflict so they can be dealt with early on. In addition, engaging stakeholders in discussing the community interest and positions regarding the project can result in early education as well as participation.

Step 4: Using the Spectrum

Once the project assessment using the questions is complete, the group can turn to the spectrum³ to discuss levels and methods of engagement. Usually, the facilitator will suggest a “landing place” for the project on the spectrum based on the question discussion, the question-by-question scores, and the overall score or outcome.

The group should discuss and come to agreement on the level of public involvement dictated for the project by the assessment. The ultimate choice need not conform directly with the “score” from the questioning exercise. It is important that the level of involvement take account of the answers to the questions but also other associated factors of the project – mandates, timelines, resources, geographic scope, etc.

Step 5: Determining the Appropriate Tools and Methods

Once the group has agreed where the project falls on the spectrum and understands the purposes and roles associated with the result, the facilitator can lead a discussion of likely tools and methods⁴ for ensuring public engagement at the determined level. This is the point in the exercise where stakeholder participation can be particularly effective in providing insights of which project staff may be unaware and in matching tools and methods to the community in which the engagement is to take place.

What Follows:

Putting the toolkit to use early in a project is an important step in developing a public involvement plan. Following these initial planning steps, staff should develop a public involvement plan that includes timelines, goals, benchmarks, and a detailed budget for the project’s involvement components. Common steps following the toolkit exercise are:

- Complete and gain approval for the public involvement plan
- Share the plan with your initial stakeholder group and incorporate feedback
- Launch and implement the plan
- Evaluate and revisit the plan as warranted
- Ensure evaluation of the plan’s success, especially with the initial stakeholder group
- Assess and report on successes and lessons learned

³ Appendix C, page 6 of Toolkit

⁴ Appendix D, page 7 of Toolkit

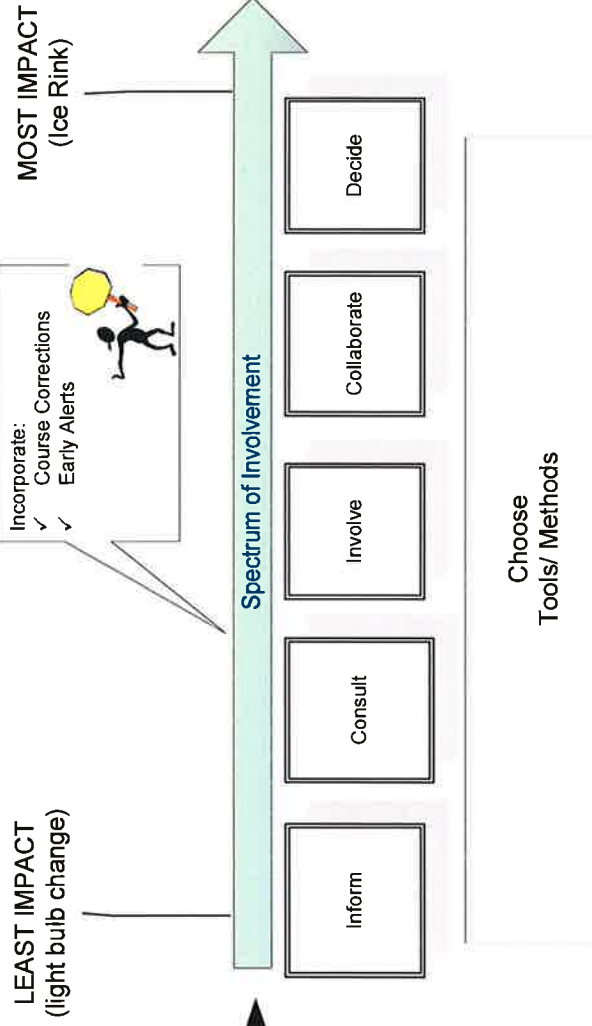
Additional Resources

1. Outreach and Involvement Handbook
(<http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=98500>)
2. IAP2 website (www.iap2.org)

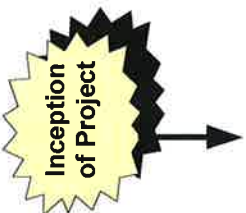
APPENDIX A PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT TOOLKIT, PROCESS OVERVIEW

NOTES:

- ✓ This model should apply to any project, no matter where it comes from
- ✓ Assumption: process should be able to deal with 90% of the issues that come up



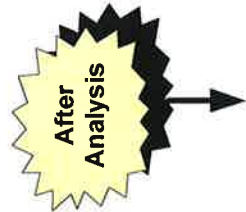
Questions Exercise & Project Assessment with Stakeholders, see Guidelines



Characteristics:

- ✓ Origin of the project (its history & prior decisions)
- ✓ Timeline
- ✓ Cost/Budget
- ✓ Scope
- ✓ Policy background
- ✓ Precedent/Mandate
- ✓ Urgency *
- ✓ Level of community interest

* perhaps hardest to identify due to limiting factors



- PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN:**
- Audience/ Stakeholder(s)
 - Tool(s)
 - Timing
 - Goals
 - Evaluation

Levels of Impact

Assessment Questions	Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
1. What is the anticipated level of conflict, opportunity, controversy, or concern on this or related issues?					
2. How significant are the potential impacts to the public?					
3. How much do the major stakeholders care about this issue, project, or program?					
4. What degree of involvement does the public appear to desire or expect?					
5. What is the potential for public impact on the proposed decision or project?					
6. How significant are the possible benefits of involving the public?					
7. How serious are the potential ramifications of NOT involving the public?					
8. What level of public participation does Council and/or bureau directors desire or expect?					
9. What is the possibility of broad public interest?					
10. What is the probable level of difficulty in solving the problem or advancing the project?					

DRAFT Public Participation Spectrum

Level:	Public Participation Goal:	The City will:	Tools* to Consider:	The Community:
Decide	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.	<i>Implement what the public decides.</i>	#5 Committees #6 Feedback Mechanisms #8 Community Driven & Organized #9 Techniques & Methods	<i>Decides</i>
Collaborative	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	<i>Partner with public in each aspect of decision.</i>	#6 Feedback Mechanisms #8 Community Driven & Organized #9 Techniques & Methods	<i>Partners</i>
Involve	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	<i>Work with the public to ensure that their concerns are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.</i>	#5 Committees #6 Feedback Mechanisms #7 Formal Hearings/Forums #8 Community Driven & Organized	<i>Participates</i>
Consult	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions.	<i>Keep the public informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.</i>	#3 Events/ Meetings #5 Committees #6 Feedback Mechanisms #7 Formal Hearings/Forums	<i>Contributes</i>
Inform	To provide the public with balanced & objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions.	<i>Keep the public informed.</i>	#1 Information/ Notification #2 Publications #3 Events/ Meetings #4 Community Education	<i>Learns</i>

*Refer to “Public Involvement Tools, by Category” on the next page for the full list of techniques.

Adapted from IAP2’s Public Participation Spectrum (www.iap2.org)

DRAFT – October 2006 – Bureau Innovation Project # 9, City of Portland

Increasing Level of Public Involvement

Public Involvement Tools, By Category – BIP #9

#1 Information/ Notification	#2 Publications	#3 Events/ Meetings	#4 Community Education	#5 Committees	#6 Feedback Mechanisms	#7 Formal Hearings/ Forums	#8 Community Driven & Organized	#9 Techniques & Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertisements • Advertisements, Newspaper Inserts • Advertisements, Transit Ads • Bill Stuffer • Clerical Information Contact • Email • Info Centers & Field Offices • Information Hot Line • Information Repositories • Media: Comics, Community Media/Cable Access, Feature Stories, Podcasting, Radio, TV • News Conferences • Postcards • Press Releases • Soap Box • Staffed Displays • Tabling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brochures • Fact Sheets • Issues Papers • Mailings • Newsletters • Reports • Review Drafts • Websites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Fairs • Community Forums • Design Charrettes • Door to Door/Canvass • Field Trip • Groundbreaking Ceremonies • Meetings with Existing Groups • Meetings, Virtual • Neighborhood Walks/Strolls • Open Houses • Roadshow • Summits • Tours • Open Houses • Virtual Open Houses • Web-based Meetings • Workshop, Computer-Facilitated • Workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefings to Neighborhood & Community Organizations • Brown Bags • Door to Door/Canvass • Panels • FAQ's • Field Trip • Media: Feature Stories & Editorials • Speakers Bureau • Staffed Displays • Tabling • Trainings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory Committees • Citizen Juries • Commissions & Boards • Established Groups & Committees • Expert Panels • Task Forces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment Cards • Community Feedback Board • Door to Door/Canvass • Fishbowls • Focus Groups • Handheld Voting • Interviews • Large Group Study • Media, Blogs • Online Testimony • Polling: Computer-Based, Deliberative • Response Sheets • Surveys: Exit/Follow-up, In Person, Intercept, Internet, Mailed, Telephone • Tabling • Virtual Room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Forums • Online Testimony • Public Hearings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee Klatches/House Parties • Community Facilitators • Form New Community Group • Meetings, Community Initiated • Small Grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus Building Techniques • Deliberative Dialogue • Design Charette • Future Search Conference • Network with Leadership (esp. cultural groups) • Open Space Technology • Outside Consultant/Facilitator • Popular Education • Role-playing • Samoan Circle • Study Circles • Technical Information Contact

Dine & Discuss: Essex Democracy & You

Essex High School • Saturday, November 8, 2014

Welcome to today's conversation! Essex residents agree: Community connections are important to us. We like to get together with our neighbors, volunteer, and stay informed. We also want to have a say in public decisions. But what is the best way to engage Essex citizens in decisions that affect them?

Currently, citizens decide and vote on the municipal budget during the town and village annual meetings. Today's forum provides an opportunity to explore this and other approaches to decision making and voting. We'll also share the results of our recent survey. You'll see what motivates our participation in Essex democracy -- or what prevents it. Recent survey respondents also named important governance values. What do you think? Can we do better? And if so, how? We welcome your ideas! Thanks for coming and for being a part of this important discussion.

Your neighbors on the Essex Governance Group

Forum Agenda

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| Noon | Welcome & Introductions |
| 12:25 | Lunch |
| 12:45 | Setting the Context <ul style="list-style-type: none">· How it Works: Overview of Essex's Local Government Structures· Community Voices: Overview of <i>Essex Democracy and You</i> Survey Results |
| 1:30 | Table Conversations <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Exploring Four Approaches to Local Decision-Making and Voting· Sharing Ideas to Strengthen Civic Participation |
| 3:30 | Celebration <ul style="list-style-type: none">· "Greatest Hits" from Table Conversations· Door Prizes! |
| 4:00 | Adjourn |

Supported by Town of Essex Selectboard • Heart and Soul of Essex • The Orton Family Foundation. Visit www.heartandsoulofessex.org following the forum for additional information.

Approach One:

Traditional Town / Village Meeting

Overview: Since before the state's founding, Vermont's townspeople have governed themselves by town meeting—face-to-face deliberative decision making. Essex residents value community, and want institutions that help increase trust, connection, and volunteerism—and town meeting, proponents say, is one of them. Town meeting is an important training ground for citizen leadership. It helps residents understand government, hear the complexity of viewpoints, and weigh trade-

offs. Here, citizens can discuss and make amendments to the budget. Elected leaders and staff can explain their work, hear our concerns, and citizens can hold them accountable. Town meeting isn't a ballot box. For decisions regarding governance and finance, it is the town's legislature, and every participant is a legislator. When controversial issues arise, people value having this system where they can come together, deliberate, and make real changes on issues they care about.

Necessary steps? No action needed, since this is Essex's current system. However, supporters say improvements could strengthen this model. The Village has recently reinstated a community dinner and offers childcare, and is considering moving to a Saturday meeting. Other possibilities include: improving privacy by allowing written comments and using in-meeting paper ballots; making meeting information more accessible; and increasing outreach and civic education.

Trade-offs

- Because citizens have the power to change (amend) items at town meeting, the wording and dollar amounts are not finalized until the vote of the people at the meeting. For this reason, absentee ballots cannot be printed ahead of time. This leaves out anyone who cannot attend the meeting.
- Participating in town meeting is a challenge for anyone who fears public speaking, or is intimidated to express new or unpopular views in public. Diverse cultural, educational, or socioeconomic backgrounds can make speaking up even more difficult.
- Essex is the largest town in Vermont to govern through a traditional town meeting. Large towns generally get lower per capita meeting turnout, and Essex's median attendance hovers below 2%. Even though town meeting is open to all, the final result could be affected by an unrepresentative minority of voters. This can cause dispute about meeting outcomes or create cynicism about government.

Approach Two:

Australian Ballot

O*verview:* Many Vermont towns have switched to ballot box or “Australian ballot” voting for their budget or for all town issues. Some believe Essex should do the same. Essex has gotten too big for town meeting, they say, pointing to the small percentage of voters participating in town and village meetings. Weeknight meetings are challenging for working people, and evening or weekend meetings are difficult for elderly people and

families with young children. Essex should remove all obstacles to participation, and do everything possible to allow citizens from every walk of life to vote. This means giving people the privacy of a voting booth and offering all-day voting. Australian ballot also means Essex could offer absentee voting to people who are ill, or out of town due to work, school, or serving in the military.

Necessary steps? Change the Town and/or Village charter to adopt Australian ballot.

Trade-offs

- Through deliberation, citizens have the opportunity to change other people’s minds, and they might hear new arguments and change their own minds. However, ballot-box voting lacks the educational benefit of public give-and-take. Very few people attend the informational meetings that precede Australian ballot voting.
- With Australian ballot, voters give up the power to amend the budget. Instead of deliberation and amendment, citizens are limited to saying “yes” or “no” to proposals handed down to them by leaders.
- Voters may defeat the budget while giving leaders no clear directions on what changes they want. This means one or many costly re-votes. Often turn-out is lower for each successive re-vote, which is less democratic.

Approach Three:

Meeting-Ballot Hybrid (NH/SB2)

Overview: In New Hampshire, over 60 towns have adopted “SB2” (named after Senate Bill #2 that created it). Under this system, each spring towns hold a “deliberative session” where voters can discuss and amend the budget. About a month later, this budget is voted on by citizens at the ballot box (absentee ballots are available). Supporters say SB2 is the

best of both worlds, allowing for a face-to-face deliberative town meeting, but also the fairness of a ballot-box budget vote for everyone. SB2 was adopted in many NH towns when it was put in place in 1995, primarily in the larger towns in southern NH, although in recent years the number of towns adopting it has leveled off. It has never been used in Vermont.

Necessary steps? Change the Town and/or Village charter to adopt this system.

Trade-offs:

- Its detractors argue that SB2 is actually the worst of both worlds—all the problems associated with town meeting, combined with the disadvantages of Australian ballot.
- Knowing that they will be able to vote on the budget by ballot, even fewer voters may attend the town meeting. A 2012 study of 27 sample New Hampshire SB2 towns showed that half of them had voter attendance of below 2% at their deliberative session, with large towns (over 2,000 voters) having attendance as low as 0.4%.
- Lower attendance can leave the budget even more vulnerable to manipulation by fringe interest groups. Instead of the budget crafted over time by town leaders and staff, the final budget sent on for public approval can include changes made by a tiny number of voters. This can create frustration for both local officials and ballot-box voters.

Approach Four:

Representative Town Meeting

(Brattleboro model)

Overview: Every Town Meeting Day in Brattleboro, voters go to the polls and elect 155 neighbors to represent them at Brattleboro's annual town meeting, which is held three weeks later. Representative Town Meeting (RTM) features the fairness of the ballot box—voters elect representatives to speak for them (absentee ballots are available). RTM also features the benefits of a deliberative floor meeting. Empowered citizens give the issues direct public scrutiny, and local officials hear from, and respond directly to,

community members. As towns grow, many voters may find the details of governance less relevant. With RTM, neighbors with the most interest in local issues can be elected by voters to speak for them. Representatives are elected from districts within the town (Brattleboro is divided into three districts), and during the year, town meeting representatives can hold district meetings to discuss issues with citizens. Used in Brattleboro since 1960, RTM is also widely used in Massachusetts.

Necessary steps? Change the Town and/or Village charter to adopt Representative Town Meeting.

Trade-offs

- With Representative Town Meeting, citizens can still attend town meeting and speak, but they no longer have a direct vote on the issues. They elect people to represent their views. However, if citizens do not agree with an RTM decision, there is a five-day window in which they can petition for a town-wide vote.
- RTM may create more work for local staff. Staff has to prepare detailed packets of information before the meeting, and staff has to keep track of which seats are up for election and who is running.
- Essex would need to create new Representative Town Meeting districts, which could confuse voters.

Essex Governance & You Forum, 11/8/14 Small Group Work, Coded by Topic

COLOR KEY: Table number: Facilitator/Recorder

*Asterisks = all colors/tables represented in this category

“Group’s Top Idea” = every group was asked at the end of the forum to name its 1-2 top ideas. These are identified and sorted here by category.

RED: Table 1 (Gabrielle)

BLUE: Table 2: Tina Logan (incl. Kimberly Gleason’s notes)

PURPLE: Table 3: Annie Davis

GREEN: Table 4 (Stephanie Ratte, Elaine Sopchak)

BROWN: Table 5 (Brad Luck)

ORANGE: Table 6 (Sam)

BLACK: “Top Idea” Group source unclear

1) COMMUNICATION (110)

***EXPLICIT COMMUNICATION – ACCURATE, CLEAR, HONEST (25)**

(CM) Explicit - share accurate information, clear, honest

(CM) More explanation of agendas and minutes

(CM) Clear numbers around our total tax bills

(CM) Communication improved to be more clear and given in context

(TR) Improve meeting minutes and agendas to be more informative and reader-friendly to those not a part of that committee or commission

(TR) Residents would know who to ask

(TR) Residents would understand what they have the right to know (vs. privacy, legal restrictions, etc.)

(CM) Communication is better

(CM) Making local government information more complete, timely, and explanatory

(TR) More access to information

(TR) Fewer back room deals being cut

(TR) Executive sessions limited to lawful purposes

(TR) We might have less cynicism

(TR) Stop inside and back-room deals.

(CM) Have comprehensive meeting minutes timely published

(CM) Have all town meetings recorded and available in various mediums

(TR) Clear statement of total impact of the taxes on the ballot

(TR) Restructure our selectboard meetings [minutes?] so there was more discussion of what is discussed – after each agenda item

(TR) True meeting means decisions not made in advance, people’s voices are heard

(TR) Gov’t elected officials consistent in message

(TR) Joint meeting minutes – more detailed

(TR) Allowed to look at everything government does

(And more Transparency...)

(CM) transparent

(CM) More thorough and transparent communication

(CM) Transparent to community

GROUP'S TOP IDEA: Reducing perception of pre-meeting deals/agreements

***PROACTIVE COMMUNICATION (17)**

(-AB) People not always aware of how to find information or become more educated. It's complicated in Essex.

(CM) More access to public meetings that are well publicized

(CM) Proactive explanation of current or upcoming issues, concerns (cited emails from Irene Wrenner as helpful)

(CM) More timely communication outreach

(TR) Increased awareness, engagement and finding ways to connect with citizens

(CM) Government should push information to residents rather than a pull for information from residents.

(TR) Better pre-event coverage.

(-TM) People don't know about it

(CM) Intentional outreach and communication

(TR) Any changes proposed to Planning Commission is mailed to the neighborhood affected—general notice is not enough

(Pking lot): TM NOT the only place for people to provide opinion. Gov't needs to offer more opportunities to do so.

(CM) Village weekly e-newsletter

(TR) Gov't officials being forthright with significant changes in advance

(CM) Accessibility and ease of consuming information

(CM) Outreach: More innovative ways, more outreach

(CM) Grassroots efforts – go to where people are

(TR) Sending press releases / "civic book"

GROUP'S TOP IDEA: Tell people about government events/issues ahead of time, using many means, so citizens can provide input before decisions are made. Example, Saxon Hill

GROUP'S TOP IDEA: Civic "Cliff Notes"

GROUP'S TOP IDEA: Leaders going to the people – new, innovative outreach

***ONLINE COMMUNICATION (16)**

(CM) Improve website/s

(TR) More available data (open data)

(TR) Improve and increase IT capacity

(TR) Merge services and websites

(CM) Posting documents / information

(CM) Modernizing to [have] more online access to increase civic participation

(TR) Online profiles

(CM) Using social media like Front Porch Forum and Facebook to communicate within the and across neighborhoods.

(CM) Information on Facebook, website, and Front Porch Forum

(TR) Open data website like Burlington 2.0

(TR) Drill-down details website

(TR) Web links to minutes, agendas, background info, posted on front page of municipal and school sites

(TR) Online meeting participation – dialogue – two-way communication

(CM) One website and/or link to each other (Village/Town)

(CM) Increase technology access to links better

(CM) Village weekly news – make links work! Social media

GROUP'S TOP IDEA: Open Data Initiative (like Burlington's) – on website, good reporting in town papers, transparency

GROUP'S TOP IDEA: Web site improvement, links between Town/Village sites, Internet total presence

I'LL DO IT NOW: Help improve web presence (Ron)

GROUP'S BEST IDEA: Open data. Data driven, tracking, FAQ, better agendas/minutes clearly understood by residents. Burlington model—look at their website

GROUP'S TOP IDEA: Prominent display on homepage of minutes, agendas, videos, and background info for schools and municipality. Greater detail than just minutes and agendas.

***DIRECT COMMUNICATION WITH LEADERS (11)**

(-AB) Don't always know "why" if a budget is defeated.

(-AB) No feedback for why it failed

(-AB) When a budget fails, it doesn't tell the board why

(-AB) It doesn't provide a means for the community to guide the board or provide public recommendations.

(+TM) Elected officials can understand why people are unhappy/want change

(+TM) Hear from elected and municipal officials

(-AB) No feedback to elected officials

(+SB2) Town officials chance to provide info before ballot voting

(+RTM) More like to talk with rep informally, who can then act formally

(+TM) Residents and leaders [can get] clarification

(-AB) Reps don't get feedback

RESPONSIVE REPS, REPRESENTATIVENESS (7)

(+RTM) Have a rep to call directly.

(+RTM) Potentially easier and more responsive than current representation.

(+RTM) Lets people feel confident someone who's really interested represents them

(+RTM) We can't all be everywhere and be well informed – good to have some who can represent

(+RTM) Meetings with representatives

(+RTM) Can choose someone with same agenda

(+RTM) Increase diversity of opinions—better representation across the town

OUTREACH, MEDIA (BEYOND "ONLINE") (8)

(-AB) Local press is problematic. Can't be relied upon for complete and "objective" information

(CM) Don't miss connecting with and providing information to those who are off-line. Capture these residents through other means, for example, Essex Eats Out. Remember that not everyone has access to technology.

(TR) Old and new means of communication done better.

(TR) A more robust relationship with Channel 17 for resident subscription

(TR) YouTube channel

(TR) Vibrant local newspaper that would cover local issues of importance with thoroughness and accuracy

(TR) Have citizens tell elected officials how else to communicate to them beyond what is happening now

(CM) Flyers

GROUP'S TOP IDEA: open data on website, also good reporting in town papers, transparency

GOV'T ACCOUNTABILITY, RESPONSIVENESS, AVAILABILITY (10)

(CM) Being accountable and owning the response

(CM) Responsive

(CM) Available and "findable" by residents. This can be hard with volunteer leaders.

(CM) Known process for resident calls, emails – how are responses handled? Better tracking and accountability

(TR) More tracking (complaints, concerns, ideas from residents)

(TR) Add a section to the five year plan that would specifically tie an outcome to this Forum - the Town would develop a plan to improve transparency based on the priorities from this forum.

(TR) residents would have answers to all of their questions

(CM) Honoring what the community means and what they say

(CM) When people voice their opinions, the elected officials follow through

(CM) Try to put residents first

LEADERS ENGAGED WITH COMMUNITY (6)

(CM) Being engaged with the community

(CM) informed

(CM) observant, paying attention

(CM) Knowing our constituents

(CM) Officials / leaders are accessible

(TR) In France neighborhood meeting with mayor there on street corner. Use that as a model

LISTENING, RESPECT, WELCOMING (10)

(CM) willing to listen to diverse points of view and to all constituents.

(CM) Listening

(CM) Showing respect to the "little people" by treating them as equals or better.

(CM) A culture of acceptance, mutual respect and openness

(CM) Community engagement in the form of mutual respect between community members and municipal staff (Good staff management within local government makes a difference)

- (CM) Being open-minded
- (CM) Receptive to ideas and input from community
- (TR) Gov't officials listening to constituents
- (CM) Feeling welcome to go to public meetings
- (CM) Better spaces and environment at public meetings
- GROUP'S TOP IDEA:** Show respect to all citizens/residents when they come to a meeting so that they are/feel heard.

2) INCLUSION, NUMBER/DIVERSITY OF VOTERS/PARTICIPANTS (70)

***INCLUSION (32)**

- (-TM) Some do not have tolerance to listen to group-specific agendas.
- (+AB) Most available
- (+SB2) Input more possible than Town Mtg
- (-TM) Freezes people out; impractical, not inclusive
- (-TM) Only informative to those who attend
- (-TM) Inaccessible – no absentee ballot
- (+AB) Convenient, accessible to all
- (+AB) Multiple modes/ways to place vote (early by mail, visit clerk, ballot box)
- (+AB) Privacy
- (+SB) Allows absentee ballot
- (-RTM) Possibility of alienation of those interested in participating if their representative is their only vote
- (-TM) there are barriers to attending such as time, other job and family commitments
- (-TM) It doesn't capture all voters' viewpoints.
- (+AB) Allows accessibility to voting through absentee, 12-hour voting
- (-TM) Not democratic (if you can't be there)
- (-TM) Barriers: time, format, public speaking
- (+AB) Include everyone who wants to vote
- (+SB2) Includes everyone who wants to vote
- (+SB2) Opportunity for more community participation
- (CM) All voices heard, not just the usual suspects
- (-TM) Essex population becoming more transient—is town meeting best format for them?
- (-TM) Must be present to win
- (-TM) Those who don't feel comfortable don't go
- (+AB) Absentee (example, those in Army)
- (+AB) 12 hours to vote
- (+SB2) Win-win – best of TM and AB –[Still opportunity for input but] everyone can go to polls
- (+SB2) More inclusive
- (-TM) Limits access to voting for many people
- (-TM) Negativity to final vote if they weren't able to participate
- (-TM) Doesn't encourage all types of people to speak
- (+AB) More inclusive for residents

(+AB) Increases opportunity

***NUMBER OF VOTERS/PARTICIPANTS (20)**

(-TM) Very small participation (many prefer not to be involved for a variety of reasons), but Essex has changed re: population

(+AB) Everybody can vote

(-TM) Low turn-out

(+AB) Potential to increase public participation

(-SB2) Towns with larger population— participation was lower in the meeting

(+RTM) Participation is higher

(+RTM) Australian ballot can still be permitted

(+AB) In theory, this method increases participation.

(+AB) Allows for consistent, habitual voting

(+SB2) Could give us the best of both worlds if we could get more voters to come?

(-SB2) Sounds like a good idea but does it bring out any more voters?

(+AB) Leads to increase in participation

(+AB) AB after TM for officers would bring more voters out for officials too

(-SB2) Statistics re: lower turnout at TM

(+RTM) More participation

(-RTM) Total number might end up less than current participation

(TR) Higher participation at gov't meetings

(+AB) Increases number of votes

(+SB2) Increases voter opportunity, Australian ballot

(-SB2) Fewer people go to deliberative session

DIVERSITY, DEMOGRAPHIC AND GEOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION, NEW RESIDENTS (12)

(CM) Have boards, committees, and commissions reflect the local demographic (more diversity)

(CM) Aware of socio-economic, cultural, diversity, age, etc.

(+RTM) Better geographic representation of population

(CM) Increase demographic participation

(CM) Getting our youth involved more, for their input on issues

(-TM) attendance is not a good representation of our town and village demographics.

(+AB) As our demographics change, minorities might feel more included and have the opportunity to be involved.

(-RTM) Would minorities be fairly represented?

(-TM) Hard for non-English speakers

(-TM) Lack of diversity

(CM) Welcoming new groups to our community

(CM) Explaining process of government when moving to community (Welcome Packet, civic “cliff notes”)

GROUP'S TOP IDEA: Getting our youth more involved, engaged, informed

INTIMIDATION (6)

- (-TM) interest groups can ... harass groups or individual attendees
- (-TM) Complicated rules / procedures
- (-TM) Intimidating
- (-TM) TV cameras—intimidating
- (-TM) People not always polite
- (-TM) Loud and passionate people are intimidating

3) QUALITY OF DECISION MAKING (76)

***DELIBERATION (20)**

- (+TM) Opportunity to correct misinformation
- (+TM) Dynamic with those present
- (+SB2) Better than Australian ballot because of interaction face to face (+TM) Face to face
- (+TM) Advantages of deliberative process among voters.
- (+TM) Hear other people's opinions
- (-AB) Not time deliberative
- (-AB) No conversation
- (+SB) Balance—deliberative (yet protects from small interest groups)
- (+RTM) May be more robust deliberative process
- (+TM) Lively debate
- (+TM) Coming together
- (+TM) Face-to-face with neighbors
- (-AB) No face-to-face (if only AB)
- (+TM) education occurs at the meetings-people come in, speak and learn, viewpoints are shared and new ideas are gained.
- (+TM) It is an exchange of ideas.
- (+TM) Your ideas are heard if you talk
- (+TM) Hear other opinions
- (+TM) Ability to discuss
- (+TM) Allows open dialogue between residents on particular line item
- (+SB2) Still have deliberative session

HIGH-QUALITY, RESPONSIVE DECISION MAKING (9)

- (-TM) Potential hasty decision making
- (-TM) Decision making becomes arbitrary
- (+AB) No arbitrary amendments in the moment
- (-SB2) More preparation involved with a shorter preparation period
- (+RTM) Potentially can handle more on the agenda
- (-TM) Need "Any Other Business" (AOB) agenda item
- (-TM) More than just budget
- (-TM) Success can depend on moderator managing civility
- (-TM) Last-minute snap decision for some

***CITIZEN EDUCATION / INFORMED & ENGAGED VOTERS (17)**

- (CM) More awareness for open discussions
- (TR) More education on public issues and around opportunities for public participation
- (-AB) Votes might not be educated even if more of the public votes.
- (TR) People feel engaged
- (-AB) Not enough attendance at info meetings
- (+SB2) Voice at meeting/people can learn more and vote later
- (+SB2) Delay gives time to give feedback
- (+RTM) More knowledgeable participants e.g. FPF
- (CM) Education, education, education
- (Prking lot): Frustration with school budget AB informational meetings – not enough turnout, not feeling effective
- (+TM) Educated participants
- (+TM) Watching
- (-AB) Voters wait until in the booth to consider question (uninformed)
- (CM) Increasing awareness
- (-AB) Doesn't solve problem of informed voters
- (Gen'l): Keep town meeting, but increase information to voters
- (Q): How to increase informed voters? How to get info out to voters?

***INTEREST GROUP/MINORITY RULE (12)**

- (-SB2) Fringe group can amend budget beforehand
- (-TM) Vocal minorities, “government by wisecrack”
- (+AB) Can't be captured by a fringe group
- (+SB) Balance—(deliberative) yet protects from small interest groups
- (-TM) interest groups can dominate the meeting
- (General question): How often do special interest groups influence the budget in a meaningful way?
- (-TM) Small minority can make changes
- (-RTM) Still potential for local minorities
- (-TM) Small/special interest groups amending
- (-SB2) Opportunity for manipulation by small group to get something on budget or to rally against ballot vote
- (+RTM) Equal voice—no small group take-over
- (CM) Not beholden to special interests

COMMUNITY-BUILDING vs. DIVISIVENESS (6)

- (+TM) Community building
- (CM) Act as common wheel
- (+TM) Opportunity to bring people together – not just about budget
- (-AB) Doesn't bring community together in a small-town way
- (-RTM) The need to create districts could be fractious.
- (-RTM) Could possibly cause more division and confusion in community

GOVERNMENT LONG VIEW, BALANCING NEEDS, FAIRNESS (7)

(CM) Proactive on issues related to the community

(CM) Putting long term interests of community ahead of short term interests (i.e. infrastructure, business competition, zoning/planning developments)

(CM) Balancing the desires of the few with the needs of the whole

(CM) Taking the long view

(TR) Fair and equitable distribution of resources and power

(CM) Makes decision on greatest long-term good

(CM) Embraces Heart & Soul values

COST OF RE-VOTES (5)

(-AB) A defeat at the polls could be very costly, back to the table

(-AB) Expense of re-votes

(-AB) 2nd and 3rd votes are expensive

(-SB2) Cost of additional votes

(-AB) Could drive up re-votes

4) NEIGHBORHOOD, DIY/LEGO AND OTHER MODELS (55)

NEIGHBORHOOD-LEVEL ENGAGEMENT/STRENGTH (11)

(+RTM) District meetings with representatives

(CM) Taking advantage of neighborhood planning councils / assemblies

(+RTM) This might draw people together in neighborhoods.

(+RTM) People would gather to discuss, meet, vote for representatives, and gather input from people.

(+RTM) Create stronger, more connected neighborhoods.

(+RTM) Representation from neighborhoods

(+RTM) Hyper-local issues get attention

(CM) Honoring neighborhoods

(TR) Neighborhood Assemblies

(+RTM) Representative of area/neighbors

(+RTM) Grassroots effort

GROUP'S TOP IDEA: Neighborhood Assemblies

GROUP'S TOP IDEA: Expanding and institutionalizing grassroots public participation. Burlington Neighborhood Planning Assemblies model, Neighborhood watch

DIY / LEGO, CREATIVE IMPROVEMENTS (16)

(+AB) Other vehicles exist for education or to convince others of issues

(+AB) Attendance perhaps [could be] increase[d] at informational meetings

(+SB2) Interaction can happen without this informally

(+AB) Means of providing feedback can be designed

(General question): What are some different hybrid models we could consider? Could we develop our own model/approach?

(General themes): We discussed the possibility of not making dramatic changes to our voting structure but instead making changes to our existing system through: Use of technology to include all residents by reducing barriers and expanding opportunities.

(-TM) Currently scheduled on the best day?

(TM General): Lots of opportunities to IMPROVE town meeting

(-AB) Assumption that an "no" = re-vote

(-AB) Y, N or keep current

(+SB2) There are examples in other states to observe

(Parking lot): Suggestion box during AB for why people voted no

(Pking): Skype informational meetings

(TM General): More personal invites to Town Meeting could help Get people there, like today's Forum

(TM General): Town Meeting – Australian system for revote so limit number of re-votes

(TR) Town SB is making improvements, but will take a while to see those changes

GROUP'S TOP IDEA: Remote meeting attendance/participation (Skype)

GROUP'S TOP IDEA: Budget feedback on the budget ballot: Cast vote and have space for a survey question

***2-WAY COMMUNICATION, CREATIVE FORUMS (12)**

(CM) multiple, diverse channels of two-way communication between municipal leaders and staff and residents

(CM) Forums (topical)

(CM) Public meetings/participation

(CM) Heart and Soul

(+SB2) Could there be multiple meeting times and venues in community to reach more voters?

(TR) Informal, regular means of 2-way communication

(CM) Maximize feedback from the community

(CM) Build bridges, not walls

(TR) Two-way communication vs. formal meetings

(TR) More community forum opportunities

(CM) Lots of avenues for two-way communication in a user-friendly form

(TR) Two-way communication

VOLUNTEERISM, COMMUNITY GROUPS, NON-FORMAL PARTICIPATION (12)

(TR) Volunteer opportunities would be easy to find

(CM) Grassroots organizations

(CM) Institutionalize events

(CM) Block parties

- (CM) Essex Independence Day / Charter Day
- (CM) Fewer vacancies on our committees
- (CM) Street party
- (CM) Farmers Market
- (CM) Parks & Rec
- (CM) Concerts
- (CM) Community calendar
- (CM) Grassroots effort, i.e. bike groups, Farmer's Market

OTHER MODELS (4)

Other models: Burlington (5th model?) - districts would need to be designated. How to become a city.

- (CM) Someone elected to have a vision, like a mayor
- (TR) Could an elected official, like a Mayor, improve accountability and transparency?
- (CM) Have a mayor and wards / districts for better governance
- GROUP'S TOP IDEA:** [Neighborhood Assemblies, break up communities into 100-120 homes as in Front Porch Forum.] These groups elect a representative to go to the Mayor and act as a board

5) DIRECT DEMOCRACY: POWER, IMMEDIACY (40)

*** CITIZEN POWER, DIRECT INDIVIDUAL AUTHORITY (23)**

- (+TM) Town Mtg as a vehicle to cut budget by general, with concerted effort
- (-TM) Hard to make real changes at Town Meeting
- (-RTM) Want to speak for oneself and not spoken for by rep
- (-RTM) Does not provide for individual engagement and participation
- (+TM) Close as you can get to democracy
- (-TM) Amendment power is limited
- (-AB) Can't amend the budget
- (-RTM) Removing one more step with individual authority
- (+TM) You can vote at the meeting
- (-SB2) It doesn't give voters a reason to come to town meeting because voting doesn't happen there.
- (-RTM) Constituents might strongly disagree with representative's viewpoints and voting.
- (+TM) Direct democracy: We are the legislators
- (+SB2) Keeps teeth in Town Meeting for amendments
- (-RTM) A level removed from voting
- (+TM) Ability to amend
- (-AB) Opportunities to question/challenge—no formal way
- (+SB2) Win-win – best of TM and AB --Still opportunity for input [but everyone can go to polls]
- (+RTM) Voice at table
- (-RTM) Additional layer of bureaucracy
- (-RTM) Defeats one person, one vote concept (on budget)
- (-TM) Feel like can't change much, can't say particularly where money goes
- (-AB) No opportunity for amendments

(-RTM) Adding a layer

CLIQUE ELITE (2)

(-RTM) Centralization of power to a certain few

(-RTM) Could result in a “Super Board” or clique-like environment.

IMMEDIATE RESULTS (10)

(+TM) Spontaneous problem solving that works.

(+TM) Immediate

(-SB2) Two-step process-more time consuming

(+TM) The work is done when the meeting is done

(-AB) The process has a non-finality to it. A no-vote means a revote.

(+TM) Meeting ends with a budget

(-AB) Process of info meetings very long timeline

(+TM) Budget done at end of night

(+TM) Impact a decision at last minute

(+TM) Approve budget that night

TRADITION (5)

(+TM) Huge VT tradition

(TM: unclear if this is a +, - or neutral) We are the largest “town” in Vermont.

(+TM) 250 year tradition unlike any other

(-AB) Ends town meeting possibly

(+TM) Tradition

6) SAME-DAY VOTING, SIMPLICITY, IMPLEMENTATION (35)

SAME DAY VOTING (8)

(CM) Have one day of voting for everything.

(+AB) Timing—could fit into school vote

(+SB) Timing could line up with school vote

(+AB) Tie in with school vote

(TR) Having all budget votes on same day

(-RTM) Doesn't change number of times to vote

(CM) Voting: Same-day voting – make it a more simple process

(Q): How to change number of votes!

GROUP'S TOP IDEA: Same day voting

GROUP'S TOP IDEA: One vote on one day for everything

SIMPLICITY/CLARITY, CONVENIENCE (10)

(CM) Simplify the structures for governance and communications

(-RTM) Confusion could lead to apathy

(+AB) Simplicity of Y/N

(+AB) Convenience

(+RTM) Less confusion

- (+AB) People are comfortable with it
- (+AB) Black and white results (clarity)
- (+SB2) Hear and discuss once, not at series of budget meetings
- (+AB) Simple and straightforward
- (-SB2) Voting a month later

GROUP'S TOP IDEA: Simplify: Governance, communication, education (of municipal issues, budgets)

IMPLEMENTATION CONCERNS & QUESTIONS (17)

- (+AB) Charter change not scary
- (-SB2) Look at Colchester model. Take care on number of charter changes.
- (-RTM) Hard pressed to find enough representative. How would that "look like" in Essex?
- (-RTM) Implementation more difficult and time consuming
- (-RTM) Drawing the districts could be a major issue? What criteria are used to draw the districts?
- (?RTM) How do/would districts get determined in a Representative Town Meeting approach?
- (-SB2) Implementation
- (-SB2) Does this need state law?
- (-SB2) What happens if budget fails? Another 2-meeting cycle? Just AB?
- (-SB2) Clarifications about implementation details very important for this group
- (-TM) If more people went, how long would meeting go?
- (Q): More info about Brattleboro model
- (Q): SB2 – Timeframe look like
- (-SB2) Sounds great but doesn't work
- (-RTM) Increase costs
- (-RTM) Unanswered questions to this approach
- (Q): How did Brattleboro come up with 155 reps in Approach 4?

7) ADDITIONAL TOPICS

VILLAGE-TOWN CONNECTEDNESS (7)

- (CM) Connecting different sections of our governance
- (CM) Town / Village collaborations
- (CM) Websites: similar look and feel for both communities (Village & Town)
- (CM) Town have same communications as Village

MORE WORK FOR MUNI STAFF (2)

- (-RTM) More work for municipal staff
- (-RTM) Extra staff work? (questionable for some)

SATISFACTION (1)

(P'king): Why people aren't voting: Representative is doing their job (i.e. people aren't participating because they are satisfied)

FOUR DECISION-MAKING APPROACHES: DOT VOTING RESULTS

After the small-group discussions regarding the four decision-making approaches, Forum participants were asked to indicate their preferences about the decision-making methods by dot voting. Participants were asked to rank each method, “movie review”-style, from a low ranking of one star to a high ranking of four stars.

DOT RESULTS:	1 STAR	2 STARS	3 STARS	4 STARS
Town Meeting	22	10	12	9
Australian Ballot	11	18	15	9
Hybrid (SB2)	12	12	13	16
Representative TM	16	12	12	13

Although this is a relatively small number of votes (53) from a self-selected group of participants, a few patterns are suggested:

- Traditional Town Meeting had the most 1s (“very unfavorable”)
- Town Meeting and Australian ballot tied for the fewest 4s (“very favorable”)
- Hybrid had the most “very favorable”
- Representative TM had a relatively high number of 1s (“very unfavorable”), but also a relatively high number of 4s (“very favorable”)

Take-aways:

-- Many Forum participants are dissatisfied with Town Meeting. However, not many participants see Australian ballot as the most appealing alternative. Many Forum participants seem interested in exploring other alternatives. The hybrid model garnered the most interest, and representative town meeting the second most.

MEMORANDUM

To: Selectboard
Patrick C. Scheidel, Municipal Manager

From: Brendan S. Keleher, Assistant Town Manager

Date: May 28, 2015

Re: Handbook for the Evaluation of Municipal Manager

Issue

The issue is whether or not the Selectboard will adopt a Handbook for the Evaluation of Municipal Manager, for the purposes of establishing a methodology for the annual evaluation of the Municipal Manager.

Discussion

An annual examination of the performance of the Municipal Manager is important and healthy for an effective Selectboard- Manager relationship. Selectboard members, coming from different walks of life, will vary in their experience with performance evaluations; thus, it is helpful to have a resource from which to develop an evaluation approach comfortable for all members of the Selectboard. The Handbook for the Evaluation of Municipal Manager has been prepared for this purpose.

The Handbook includes discussions of the purpose for completing an evaluation, defines the context within which the evaluation takes place, outlines of a series of steps for an effective evaluation, and includes a sample evaluation form suitable for a municipal manager.

The resources included in the Handbook have been assembled from readily available on line sources. These are examples intended to provide guidance to the Selectboard in establishing an ongoing evaluation process. For example, the evaluation form included as an illustration is one of many such forms that can be utilized. The Handbook is intended to be a starting point from which the current and future Selectboard members can organize the annual evaluation process.

Cost

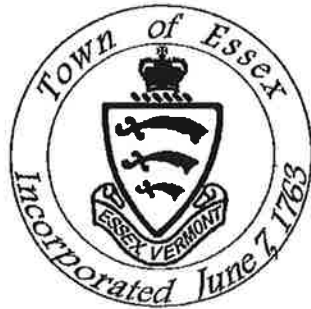
There is no additional cost to the Selectboard in adopting the Handbook. The time spent in using the Handbook will be part of the customary annual administrative time of the Selectboard.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Selectboard adopt the Handbook for the Evaluation of Municipal Manager as a resource for the annual evaluation of the Municipal manager.

Attachment: Handbook for the Evaluation of Municipal Manager, April 2015

TOWN OF ESSEX



Handbook for the Evaluation of Municipal Manager

April 2015

TOWN OF ESSEX

HANDBOOK FOR THE EVALUATION OF MUNICIPAL MANAGER

CONTENTS

Introduction.....	3
Purpose.....	3
Context for Performance Evaluation	
Selectboard and Manager Roles and Responsibilities	4
Selectboard Goals and Priorities	4
Open Meeting Law	4
The Performance Evaluation Process	
Step 1: Define clearly why you want to evaluate the performance of your employee	5
Step 2: Develop a time line and assigning responsibilities.....	5
Step 3: Develop criteria	6
Step 4: Refine criteria	6
Step 5: Select procedures to evaluate performance.....	7
Step 6: Perform the evaluation	7
Step 7: Discuss results with your employee and allowing for feedback.....	8
Step 8: Agree on follow-up steps	9
Step 9: Evaluating the process	9
Your Next Steps	10

Appendices

ICMA Recognized Practices for Effective Local Government Management	Appendix A
Article - "How Are We Doing" – Evaluating the Performance of the Chief Administrator	Appendix B
Sample Evaluation Form.....	Appendix C

Introduction

This Handbook has been developed for use by The Town of Essex Selectboard to help establish and conduct an evaluation process for the Town's chief executive officer and the Selectboard's sole employee, the Municipal Manager.

An annual examination of the Municipal Manager's performance is important and healthy for an effective Selectboard-Manager relationship. Ultimately, the Municipal Manager's performance evaluation is an essential tool for promoting more effective decision-making throughout the Town organization.

This Handbook first discusses the purpose for completing an evaluation of the Manager's performance, and defines the context within which a performance evaluation takes place. It then outlines a series of steps for an effective performance evaluation process and concludes with other reference materials and a generic evaluation form.

The information presented has been adapted from materials developed by the City of Dover, New Hampshire which, in turn, were developed by the Oregon League of Cities and includes related resource materials assembled from various publications.

Purpose

Performance evaluation need not be painful for either the Selectboard or its important and only employee, the Municipal Manager. It should be constructive, providing not only an examination of past performance but guidance for future efforts by the Manager.

The needs of any Town often change over time and priorities are likely to shift with each Selectboard election. As with any employer/employee relationship, an employer has a responsibility to clearly communicate to its employee exactly what it expects and wants. As the employer, each new Selectboard member has an obligation to relate to their employee, the Manager, their desire for him or her to focus on particular community needs, projects or priorities.

If conducted properly, a performance evaluation process will be positive and useful for both the Selectboard and Manager. It will:

- Allow Selectboard members to become better acquainted with each other and the Manager; Improve communication between the Selectboard and Manager;
- Provide important feedback to the Manager;
- Acknowledge strengths and point out weaknesses of the Manager;
- Bring problems into focus and reduce future misunderstanding and conflict; and
- Help clarify roles and responsibilities of both the Selectboard and Manager.

There is another purpose for completing the Manager's performance evaluation process. An effective evaluation process can help the Selectboard examine and improve upon its own performance. A Selectboard's success in achieving its goals is tied to the performance of its Manager. The Manager can provide useful feedback and observations to the Selectboard about such things as:

- Is the Selectboard providing clear direction about its needs, goals, and priorities?
- Is the Selectboard fulfilling its role as a policy-making body?
- Is the Selectboard becoming too involved in day-to-day administration?

There are numerous methods and techniques that a Town Selectboard may choose to follow in evaluating their Manager. The process outlined in this Handbook is general in nature and can be adapted to accommodate various needs or circumstances that may arise from time to time. Although there is no "right" way to conduct an evaluation, there is a right way to approach performance evaluations. The Selectboard evaluation of the Manager must be approached as part of an on-going process which strives to allow for a more thoughtful and effective decision-making body and more effective Town management.

Context for Performance Evaluation

Selectboard and Manager Roles and Responsibilities. A Selectboard and its Manager depend on each other. . . the Selectboard depends on its Manager for a considerable amount of Information, and the Manager depends on the Selectboard to make the best decisions it can after receiving and evaluating that information. Given this dependency, the importance of respect, forthrightness and confidence in the Selectboard-Manager relationship cannot be overemphasized.

The original concept behind the Selectboard-Manager form of government was to separate the policy-making functions, the domain of the elected Selectboard, from the administrative functions to be directed by the Manager. In reality, the separation of administrative and policy-making functions is not so clear cut. Defining the difference between policy and administration may be the greatest source of confusion and conflict between Selectboard and a Manager.

Before any performance evaluation takes place, a Selectboard and its Manager should understand their respective roles and reach agreement about them. Without a clear understanding of functions and roles, performance evaluation is of little value. The areas of responsibility of the Selectboard and Manager are outlined only generally in the Town's Charter. They may also be described in the Selectboard's Rules and Regulation for the Orderly Conduct of Business.

Selectboard Goals and Priorities. Goals are a necessary ingredient for success in an organization. To be effective, any organization must have a clear picture of its purpose and what it hopes to achieve, an understanding of what it must do to achieve its purpose, specific goals and objectives, and a valid method for evaluating its effectiveness in reaching them. Setting goals has a direct relationship to the Manager's performance. Goals set clear direction and let the Manager know what issues are important to pursue. The Selectboard goals, themselves, should not be a part of appraising the Manager's performance. However, the Manager's professional capacity to take policy direction from the Selectboard and implement the goals is an important ingredient of evaluating the Manager's performance.

Open Meeting Law. In Vermont, an evaluation completed by the Selectboard must occur within the guidelines of the State's Open Meeting Laws. The Selectboard and Manager should review the law and decide whether or not to conduct the process in a public or a nonpublic session.

The general intent of the Open Meeting Law is to provide a statutory right of public access to meetings conducted by a public decision-making body and records maintained by public agencies. There are some

specific exceptions when the public may be excluded from attending a meeting involving the body or having access to certain records. One of the specific exemptions relates to personnel related matters involving a public employee. It is the practice in the Town of Essex to discuss personnel evaluations in executive session.

Regardless of whether the evaluation is conducted in a non-public or open session, the Open Meeting Law will dictate certain procedures for meeting notification, recording of minutes and disclosure of decisions made. These procedures should be reviewed by the Selectboard and Manager and followed throughout the evaluation process.

The Performance Evaluation Process

STEP 1: DEFINE CLEARLY WHY YOU WANT TO EVALUATE THE PERFORMANCE OF YOUR EMPLOYEE

There are many reasons for a Selectboard to evaluate the performance of its Manager. Frequently, the Selectboard wants to measure performance and determine salary, or define or improve, the working relationship between the Manager and the Selectboard. Whatever the particular reasons, they should be honest, clear, and understood by the Selectboard, the employee, and the public before launching a performance evaluation process.

Following are examples of objectives that can be established prior to completing the appraisal process:

- To establish and maintain effective Selectboard and Manager relationships;
- To allow the Manager and Selectboard to identify and understand their respective roles, relationships, expectations of, and responsibilities, to each other; and
- To allow the discussion of the Manager's strengths and weaknesses as demonstrated by past performance, away from the decision-making table, and the methods where performance may be improved and crisis confrontations avoided.

STEP 2: DEVELOP A TIME LINE AND ASSIGN RESPONSIBILITIES

A Selectboard which is committed to a good evaluation process will also commit the time necessary to perform each task involved in the process. The entire Selectboard should be involved in every step. The Selectboard as a body employs the Manager and is needed to provide guidance to the Manager.

A Selectboard may decide to use the services of an outside facilitator to assist in some, or all, phases of the process. Using an outside facilitator has advantages. For example, the facilitator has not been involved in the Selectboard-Manager relationship or the individual personalities which would likely influence the process. It is also easier for an outside person to keep the process moving along during periods when the Selectboard can otherwise get bogged down.

If you choose not to use an outside facilitator, you should select a leader who will take responsibility for facilitating the evaluation process. This leader could be the Selectboard Chair or a designated Selectboard member.

STEP 3: DEVELOP CRITERIA

Once the Selectboard and Manager are comfortable with your respective roles and responsibilities, have adopted goals which are supported by the Selectboard, and are clear about why you're conducting an evaluation, you're ready to move to the next step — selecting the criteria to measure against. Criteria are like yard sticks — they establish standard dimensions by which we can measure progress. Without these yardsticks, evaluations can turn into unfair, unproductive free-for-alls.

Nowadays, employers of all types commonly identify the specific professional competencies and skills employee's need to succeed in any given position. These competencies and skills are used as the criteria for employment related evaluations beginning with an employee's initial recruitment, ongoing training, and subsequent performance evaluations.

Examples of competencies that can be incorporated into an evaluation of the Manager may be found in the 18 practice areas recognized by the International City/County Management Association as essential for every local government Manager. The professional competencies for effective local government management are listed in Appendix A.

Aside from selecting criteria based on professional competencies, do not overlook the Manager's ability to achieve Selectboard goals. If a goal is purely a Selectboard goal, such as Selectboard members being more visible in the community, it would not be fair to add that to the list since it is not something the Manager can implement. However, the Selectboard can look at whether or not the Manager has the professional capacity to help the Selectboard implement its goals.

In developing the criteria to be used for evaluating the Manager's performance, both the Selectboard and Manager should discuss and agree upon the competencies, skills and expected outcomes necessary for being an effective Manager. The evaluation process will be enhanced if both the entire Selectboard and the Manager are involved from the start in developing the criteria and agreeing on them. This area is an important area in which a facilitator may add value to the evaluation process. A facilitator should be able to assist with identifying and developing evaluation criteria that are specific to the circumstances found in this community.

STEP 4: REFINE CRITERIA

You are now ready to refine the criteria and develop specific questions you want to ask and have answered during the evaluation. It is important to be specific about what you really mean in each category. Again, it is best to refine the criteria with the entire Selectboard and the Manager to ensure categories are not misinterpreted or new performance goals inadvertently added which were not previously defined.

After developing evaluation criteria, refining and expanding upon each is one of the most critical steps in an effective performance appraisal system, and one of the most involved. For each competency and/or responsibility you list, you must be able to answer two questions:

- First, "What is the purpose, effect, or desired outcome of this competency/responsibility?"
- Second, "How will I know, if and when, this purpose, effect, or desired outcome is being achieved?"

Answers to these questions achieve two important goals: (1) a clear statement of purpose helps assure that individual Selectboard members understand one another's values, ideas, and concerns about the role and functions of the Manager in city government; and (2) knowing the data and performances that tell you that responsibility is, in fact, being achieved requires that you look for tangible criteria to use in judging Managerial performance.

Ultimately, performance appraisal addresses the actions taken by the Manager to meet the expectations of the Selectboard and the requirements of the position. Performance is action. Appraisal focuses on the effects of that action.

Focusing each criterion by addressing the two questions above will help you in objectively identifying the actions and effects of the Manager's performance while avoiding the traps of trying to assess subjective characteristics that may not truly be bona fide job requirements.

STEP 5: SELECT PROCEDURES TO EVALUATE PERFORMANCE

After you have specific criteria by which you will evaluate your employee, review them until both the Selectboard and Manager are satisfied with the results.

The next step is deciding how you're going to perform the evaluation. The criteria you've developed may help determine the best way to do it. There are three general approaches to consider: written evaluations, oral evaluations, or a combination of both.

Whatever technique chosen, it is important to stick to the developed criteria. You are evaluating the performance of an individual in a position. The evaluation is not a free-for-all gripe session, nor is it an awards ceremony; it is important to express legitimate concerns and recognize good performance as well as communicate future expectations.

STEP 6: PERFORM THE EVALUATION

The system for performing the evaluation you have just designed is now in place and ready to use. Make sure you have a definitive schedule set up and a target date for completing the evaluation.

If you have chosen to use a written evaluation technique, the forms should be distributed to individual Selectboard members, requesting that the forms be completed and returned according to the established schedule.

Collecting accurate information according to the criteria you have developed is more difficult for a Selectboard than in an ordinary supervisor-subordinate situation because Selectboard members are not always in a position to observe the employee on a day-to-day basis.

It is certainly not appropriate for Selectboard members to follow the Manager around for a week with a pencil and pad in their hands. But there are several things Selectboard members can and should do to help ensure that they have accurate information to perform a meaningful evaluation.

- The most important thing is to allow enough time to collect information about the Manager's performance. An extended information-collection period will make the entire process a little longer; however, it is well worth spending the additional time to have an

effective and productive evaluation. Selectboard members cannot base their judgments on the employee's performance in only two or three months. Allowing six months after you have developed the criteria may be more appropriate.

- Looking over minutes of past meetings may bring to mind projects that the Manager has been responsible for and the outcome of those projects.
- Individual Selectboard members may want to make appointments with the Manager to discuss his or her performance. This meeting is not intended to make judgments about his or her performance. Its purpose is to seek information.

Remember, the primary responsibility for Selectboard members during this phase of the evaluation cycle is to be alert and responsive to data about the Manager's performance. One of the most common errors found in formal employee evaluation systems is that they often reflect only the performance just prior to the evaluation session. To avoid this, it is important for Selectboard members to document incidents and information throughout the performance cycle that reflect the performances of the Manager.

Note: It is as important to document outstanding performances as it is to document performances that don't meet with your expectations.

It will be extremely helpful to both the Manager and the Selectboard to use specific examples of performance in the evaluation. Vague generalizations will not help the Manager understand how he or she can improve performance. Specific examples help to illustrate positive and negative comments and put everyone on the same wavelength.

In preparing for discussion of the evaluation results with the Manager, the facilitator of the review session should compile the information from each Selectboard member into one document which reflects all the input. The facilitator should then share the results with the entire Selectboard before it is presented to the Manager. The purpose of sharing the results of the evaluation with the Selectboard is to provide each member with an understanding of the total results. The Selectboard should strive to reach consensus on the report so that each person can feel a part of the result and be comfortable with it. This does not mean that any individual should try to push others into changing their minds about how they filled out the evaluation. But this group discussion will allow each Selectboard member to understand how the others feel and what differences need to be resolved. There may be differences in the perceptions of individuals which need further discussion and clarification.

Having one document from the whole Selectboard is very important. The entire performance evaluation process has been a group process. It is not appropriate for each Selectboard member to independently pass judgment on the Manager without consensus of the entire Selectboard. The Selectboard has authority and the Manager receives direction only when the Selectboard acts as a body.

STEP 7: DISCUSS RESULTS WITH EMPLOYEE AND ALLOW FOR FEEDBACK

Before you make a final decision about any action as a result of the evaluation, or make any final statement as a Selectboard about the Manager's performance, it is important to discuss the results of the evaluation with the Manager first.

Several things should happen during this discussion. First, you may wish to let the Manager evaluate him or herself. You can give the same rating form or set of questions to the Manager and ask him or her to fill it out according to their own perception of how he or she has performed in the position.

Discuss the areas where there are differences between the Manager and the Selectboard about strengths and weaknesses. There may be misunderstanding among Selectboard members about the Manager's actual performance. Likewise, the Manager may not have understood or may have misinterpreted the Selectboard directives. Try to reach agreement on the areas that need improvement and what types of changes the Selectboard would find acceptable.

A Selectboard that is serious about evaluation should understand that its performance often affects the Manager's performance. The Selectboard should ask the Manager about how the Selectboard's performance has enhanced or hindered the Manager's performance.

STEP 8: AGREE ON FOLLOW-UP STEPS

One of the most important reasons for evaluating the performance of an employee is to acknowledge the employee's strengths and point out areas that need to be improved. Any recommendations or actions the Selectboard takes should be tied to this reason and any others the Selectboard listed in Step 1 of this process.

Nobody is perfect — even the best evaluation will likely show a few things that need improvement and attention. Also, change may be necessary on the part of the Selectboard as well as the Manager.

Remember that the evaluation process is intended to bring out positive change. Focus on future improvement, not on past performance. Agree on the areas that need improvement and the best course of action.

Effective performance should be acknowledged. Everyone needs positive reinforcement for good work. The Selectboard should decide how they would like to acknowledge strong performance. But, at the very least, a public statement by the Selectboard should be made supporting and acknowledging the Manager's performance.

STEP 9: EVALUATING YOUR PROCESS

No process is ever complete without an evaluation of what it is you have done. Whether you develop a questionnaire to evaluate the process or have a debriefing session, every individual involved in the process should participate and make recommendations for future use. Here are some questions to get you started:

- What were the positive outcomes?
- What were the negative outcomes?
- Could negative outcomes have been avoided?
- How could you improve the process next time?
- What areas of the process do you and the Manager need to work on?
- Were the criteria fair and objective?
- What have you learned about yourself as an elected or appointed official?

- How did the general public react?

Involve the Manager in this review. He or she may have some valuable insights for the next time.

As a group, try to develop a list of ways you could improve what you have done.

Your Next Steps

Once you have completed this process, you will have done more than evaluate the performance of your employee. You will have defined your roles and responsibilities, set goals, opened up lines of communication, and made significant strides toward increasing your own effectiveness as an elected body.

But don't stop here! Go back and refine your roles; you may have accomplished some of your goals and need to set new ones. If you haven't accomplished them, set deadlines for their accomplishment. It may be time to put another appraisal process together. There may be some Selectboard training and team development sessions needed as a result of reviewing the Selectboard's and Manager's accomplishments. Don't be discouraged if you felt a little uncomfortable or if the process wasn't perfect the first time. This process takes practice and refinement, but it is worth it!

Continue the good work that you have started and watch how positive change can happen.

Appendices

ICMA Recognized Practices for Effective Local Government Management

1. Staff Effectiveness: Promoting the development and performance of staff and employees throughout the organization (requires knowledge of interpersonal relations; skill in motivation techniques; ability to identify others' strengths and weaknesses). Practices that contribute to this core content area are:
 - COACHING/MENTORING providing direction, support, and feedback to enable others to meet their full potential (requires knowledge of feedback techniques; ability to assess performance and identify others' developmental needs);
 - TEAM LEADERSHIP facilitating teamwork (requires knowledge of team relations; ability to direct and coordinate group efforts; skill in leadership techniques); and
 - EMPOWERMENT Creating a work environment that encourages responsibility and decision making at all organizational levels (requires skill in sharing authority and removing barriers to creativity) DELEGATING Assigning responsibility to others (requires skill in defining expectations, providing direction and support, and evaluating results).
2. Policy Facilitation: Helping elected officials and other community actors identify, work toward, and achieve common goals and objectives (requires knowledge of group dynamics and political behavior; skill in communication, facilitation, and consensus-building techniques; ability to engage others in identifying issues and outcomes). Practices that contribute to this core content area are:
 - FACILITATIVE LEADERSHIP Building cooperation and consensus among and within diverse groups, helping them identify common goals and act effectively to achieve them; recognizing interdependent relationships and multiple causes of community issues and anticipating the consequences of policy decisions (requires knowledge of community actors and their interrelationships);
 - FACILITATING SELECTBOARD EFFECTIVENESS helping elected officials develop a policy agenda that can be implemented effectively and that serves the best interests of the community (requires knowledge of role/authority relationships between elected and appointed officials; skill in responsibly following the lead of others when appropriate; ability to communicate sound information and recommendations);
 - MEDIATION/NEGOTIATION Acting as a neutral party in the resolution of policy disputes (requires knowledge of mediation/negotiation principles; skill in mediation/negotiation techniques).
3. Functional and Operational Expertise and Planning (a component of Service Delivery Management): Practices that contribute to this core content area are:
 - FUNCTIONAL/OPERATIONAL EXPERTISE Understanding the basic principles of service delivery in functional areas--e.g., public safety, community and economic development,

human and social services, administrative services, public works (requires knowledge of service areas and delivery options);

- OPERATIONAL PLANNING Anticipating future needs, organizing work operations, and establishing timetables for work units or projects (requires knowledge of technological advances and changing standards; skill in identifying and understanding trends; skill in predicting the impact of service delivery decisions).

4. Citizen Service (a component of Service Delivery Management):

Determining citizen needs and providing responsive, equitable services to the community (requires skill in assessing community needs and allocating resources; knowledge of information gathering techniques).

5. Quality Assurance (a component of Service Delivery Management): Maintaining a consistently high level of quality in staff work, operational procedures, and service delivery (requires knowledge of organizational processes; ability to facilitate organizational improvements; ability to set performance/ productivity standards and objectives and measure results).

6. Initiative, Risk Taking, Vision, Creativity, and Innovation (a component of Strategic Leadership): Setting an example that urges the organization and the community toward experimentation, change, creative problem solving, and prompt action (requires knowledge of personal leadership style; skill in visioning, shifting perspectives, and identifying options; ability to create an environment that encourages initiative and innovation). Practices that contribute to this core content area are:

- INITIATIVE AND RISK TAKING Demonstrating a personal orientation toward action and accepting responsibility for the results; resisting the status quo and removing stumbling blocks that delay progress toward goals and objectives;
- VISION conceptualizing an ideal future state and communicating it to the organization and the community;
- CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION Developing new ideas or practices; applying existing ideas and practices to new situations.

7. Technological Literacy (a component of Strategic Leadership): Demonstrating an understanding of information technology and ensuring that it is incorporated appropriately in plans to improve service delivery, information sharing, organizational communication, and citizen access (requires knowledge of technological options and their application).

8. Democratic Advocacy and Citizen Participation: Demonstrating a commitment to democratic principles by respecting elected officials, community interest groups, and the decision making process; educating citizens about local government; and acquiring knowledge of the social, economic, and political history of the community (requires knowledge of democratic principles, political processes, and local government law; skill in group dynamics, communication, and facilitation; ability to appreciate and work with diverse individuals and groups and to follow the community's lead in the democratic process). Practices that contribute to this core content area are:

- DEMOCRATIC ADVOCACY Fostering the values and integrity of representative government and local democracy through action and example; ensuring the effective participation of local government in the intergovernmental system (requires knowledge and skill in intergovernmental relations);
 - CITIZEN PARTICIPATION Recognizing the right of citizens to influence local decisions and promoting active citizen involvement in local governance.
9. Diversity: Understanding and valuing the differences among individuals and fostering these values throughout the organization and the community.
 10. Budgeting: Preparing and administering the budget (requires knowledge of budgeting principles and practices, revenue sources, projection techniques, and financial control systems; skill in communicating financial information).
 11. Financial Analysis: Interpreting financial information to assess the short-term and long-term fiscal condition of the community, determine the cost-effectiveness of programs, and compare alternative strategies (requires knowledge of analytical techniques and skill in applying them).
 12. Human Resources Management: Ensuring that the policies and procedures for employee hiring, promotion, performance appraisal, and discipline are equitable, legal, and current; ensuring that human resources are adequate to accomplish programmatic objectives (requires knowledge of personnel practices and employee relations law; ability to project workforce needs).
 13. Strategic Planning: Positioning the organization and the community for events and circumstances that are anticipated in the future (requires knowledge of long-range and strategic planning techniques; skill in identifying trends that will affect the community; ability to analyze and facilitate policy choices that will benefit the community in the long run).
 14. Advocacy and Interpersonal Communication: Facilitating the flow of ideas, information, and understanding between and among individuals; advocating effectively in the community interest (requires knowledge of interpersonal and group communication principles; skill in listening, speaking, and writing; ability to persuade without diminishing the views of others). Practices that contribute to this core content area are:
 - ADVOCACY communicating personal support for policies, programs, or ideals that serve the best interests of the community;
 - INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION exchanging verbal and nonverbal messages with others in a way that demonstrates respect for the individual and furthers organizational and community objectives (requires ability to receive verbal and nonverbal cues; skill in selecting the most effective communication method for each interchange).
 15. Presentation Skills: Conveying ideas or information effectively to others (requires knowledge of presentation techniques and options; ability to match presentation to audience).

16. Media Relations: Communicating information to the media in a way that increases public understanding of local government issues and activities and builds a positive relationship with the press (requires knowledge of media operations and objectives).
17. Integrity: Demonstrating fairness, honesty, and ethical and legal awareness in personal and professional relationships and activities (requires knowledge of business and personal ethics; ability to understand issues of ethics and integrity in specific situations). Practices that contribute to this core content area are:
- **PERSONAL INTEGRITY** Demonstrating accountability for personal actions; conducting personal relationships and activities fairly and honestly;
 - **PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY** Conducting professional relationships and activities fairly, honestly, legally, and in conformance with the ICMA Code of Ethics (requires knowledge of administrative ethics and specifically the ICMA Code of Ethics);
 - **ORGANIZATIONAL INTEGRITY** fostering ethical behavior throughout the organization through personal example, management practices, and training (requires knowledge of administrative ethics; ability to instill accountability into operations; and ability to communicate ethical standards and guidelines to others).
18. Personal Development: Demonstrating a commitment to a balanced life through ongoing self-renewal and development in order to increase personal capacity (includes maintaining personal health, living by core values; continuous learning and improvement; and creating interdependent relationships and respect for differences).

"How Are We Doing?"

Evaluating the Performance of the Chief Administrator

Margaret S. Carlson

Picture a governing board meeting at a hectic time of year. Perhaps it is budget season and difficult funding decisions loom. Or the members are still recovering from stinging criticism over a hot community issue. Suddenly, someone says, "Hey, didn't we say last year that we were going to evaluate the manager around this time?" Other members groan inwardly as they envision yet another series of meetings and potential conflict with other board members. One member says, "Everything seems to be going OK. Let's just go ahead and decide on a salary increase now. Is an evaluation really that important?"

Yes.

Evaluating the performance of the chief administrative officer—whether the title is local government manager or health director or school superintendent or social services director—is critically important.

In recent years, jurisdictions increasingly have recognized the importance of a useful performance evaluation system to the overall effectiveness of their organizations. They have taken steps to improve their methods of evaluating line workers, supervi-

**Avoid the
Pitfalls by
Using a
Systematic
Evaluation
Process**

sors, and department heads. But one important individual is frequently overlooked at performance evaluation time: the person who reports to the governing board. Governing boards have a responsibility to get on with that job. This article is designed to show how to evaluate a chief administrative officer who reports to a governing board, for simplicity called here the "manager."

Ironically, the reasons that a manager may not receive a regular performance evaluation are the very reasons that an evaluation can be helpful:

- This individual is in a unique position in the organization.
- He or she serves at the pleasure of the board.
- He or she may frequently receive conflicting messages about priorities and direction from board members.

It is vital for managers to get regular, accurate feedback about whether they are meeting the expectations of the board, but it is unlikely that the organization will have a useful process in place for administrators to get that information in the absence of a well-conceived performance evaluation system.

Conducting an effective evaluation is hard work, but it doesn't have to be a bad experience for the board or the manager. With planning and a commitment to open lines of communication, chances are good that the experience will result in a new level of cooperation and understanding between manager and board and, ultimately, a more effective working relationship.

Common Pitfalls

Both the board and the manager may approach an evaluation with reluctance. Board members will be required to talk openly and honestly about the positive and negative aspects of a person's performance—a difficult task for many people. The manager must be able to receive this feedback in a nondefensive manner, even when it appears that the board is articu-

lating specific performance expectations for the first time, or that the board is focused on the manager's conduct in the most recent crisis, rather than his or her overall performance.

Here are some common problems that boards and managers encounter when they plan for and conduct performance evaluations:

- The board evaluates the manager only when there are serious performance problems, or when all or some of the board members already have decided that they want to fire the manager.
- The board realizes it is time to determine the manager's salary for the upcoming year, and it schedules a performance evaluation for the next meeting without discussing the format or process of the evaluation.
- The discussion during the evaluation is unfocused, with board members disagreeing about *what* the manager was expected to accomplish as well as *whether* the manager met expectations.
- The board excludes the manager from the evaluation discussion.

- The board evaluates only the manager's interactions with and behavior toward *the board*, even though members recognize that this may represent a relatively small portion of the manager's responsibilities.
- The board borrows an evaluation form from another jurisdiction or from a consultant without assuring that the form matches the needs of its own board and manager.

Most of these pitfalls can be avoided by planning and conducting a systematic process for evaluating the manager's performance. A thorough evaluation process, like the one suggested below, contains several essential components (see Figure 1).

A Suggested Evaluation Process

Planning the Evaluation.

1. Agree on the purpose(s) of the evaluation. Typically, boards identify one or more of the following goals when describing the purpose of an evaluation:

- To give the manager feedback on his

Figure 1. Steps in Planning and Conducting an Evaluation Process

Planning the Evaluation.

1. Agree on the purpose(s) of the evaluation.
2. Agree on what the board expects of the manager.
3. Agree on the frequency and timing of the evaluation.
4. Agree on who will be involved.
5. Agree on an evaluation form to be used.

Conducting the Evaluation.

1. Have individual board members complete the evaluation form before the evaluation session.
2. Have the manager do a self-assessment.
3. Agree on a setting for the evaluation discussion.
4. Have the manager present during the evaluation.
5. Consider using a facilitator.
6. Allow sufficient time.
7. Include a portion during which the board evaluates its own performance.
8. Decide on the next steps, and critique the process.

or her performance and to identify areas in which improvement may be needed.

- To clarify and strengthen the relationship between the manager and the board.
- To make a decision about the manager's salary for the upcoming year.

These goals are not incompatible, and it is possible to accomplish all of these tasks at once. However, it is essential that board members and the manager discuss and reach agreement on the purpose of the evaluation before deciding what the rest of the process will be. For example, a board member who thinks the main reason for doing an evaluation is to make a decision about compensation may think that a brief consultation among board members—minus the manager—is sufficient to ensure that no members have any major concerns about the manager's performance. This member also may ask for input from a personnel specialist who can provide information about managers' salaries in comparable jurisdictions. By contrast, a board member whose main interest is improving communication between the board and the manager may suggest a process that includes a conversation between the board and the manager, with the manager present throughout the evaluation.

A board might question whether the manager should be involved in planning the evaluation process, as the evaluation may be seen as the board's responsibility, with the manager as the recipient of the evaluation. Yet most boards want to conduct an evaluation that is helpful to the manager and provides guidance for his or her future actions. Because it can be difficult for the board to anticipate fully what the manager would—or would not—find useful in an evaluation, it is wise to consult with the manager early in the planning process.

For instance, the board may feel that the manager would be uncomfortable hearing board members talk about his or her performance at first hand and so

may design a process that "protects" the manager from hearing any negative feedback. Although the board's motives may be good, such a design may not meet the manager's needs if the manager actually wants to be part of the discussion, negative comments and all. Spending some time talking about the purpose of an evaluation at the beginning of the process will reduce the possibility of misunderstandings and conflicting priorities later on.

2. Agree on what the board expects of the manager. A job is essentially a set of expectations. It is possible to assess whether or not an individual holding that job has met expectations. But an evaluation can be useful only if an earlier discussion has taken place in which the board and manager have outlined expectations for the manager's performance. A board and manager may discuss expectations in conjunction with setting organizational goals for the upcoming year, perhaps as part of an annual retreat.

After setting goals, the board may specify objectives for the manager that define his or her role in meeting these goals. These objectives, then, are the board's expectations concerning the manager. For example, a city council may set a goal of working with agencies and community groups to reduce drug-related crimes in the city. The council may list one or more objectives for the manager related to this goal: identifying groups and agencies that already are working to reduce drug-related crime, forming a partnership that includes members of all relevant groups, or explaining new programs to the local media. If the manager needs clarification of the objectives or has some concerns about his or her ability to meet the board's expectations, these issues are best discussed at the time these objectives are set, rather than a year later, when the board wants to know why its expectations have not been met.

In addition to identifying *what* the board wants the manager to achieve, a board typically has an interest in *how*

the manager achieves these objectives; it expects the manager to have certain knowledge and to exhibit certain skills while performing his or her duties. Expectations about the manager's knowledge and skills also should be articulated by the board. The board may expect the manager, for example, to have oral and written presentation skills that enable him or her to present ideas clearly and concisely to diverse groups. It also may expect the manager to be able to allocate resources in a way that ensures equitable service delivery to citizens and to be able to delegate work effectively and evaluate the performance of his or her staff.

A board's expectations for the manager often represent a mix of general areas of knowledge and skills every manager should possess, as well as specific expectations based on the board's composition, the organization's history, or special features of the city or region. Therefore, it may be helpful for the board to use an existing list of managerial expectations as input for its discussion, then to customize these expectations to fit the needs of the jurisdiction. Many professional organizations—like ICMA—can supply such a list; or the board and manager may contact other communities in their area. Remember that a list of expectations for the manager that comes from a source outside the board is intended to *begin* a discussion of the board's expectations for the manager, not to *replace* this discussion.

3. Agree on the frequency and timing of the evaluation. The board and manager should agree on how often evaluations should be conducted (perhaps once a year) and adhere to that schedule. The timing of the evaluation also should be considered. For instance, the board may wish to have the evaluation cycle and budget cycle coincide and to make decisions about the manager's compensation at such a time. Or, it may choose to conduct the evaluation before the budget process gets under way if it feels that it would not be able to give its full attention to the evaluation during the

months leading up to the adoption of the budget.

The board should avoid scheduling the evaluation just before or after an election. If the evaluation is held too soon after an election, new members may not have had the time they need to gather information about and form a judgment of the manager's performance. Likewise, it is not a good idea to schedule an evaluation just before an election if a change in the composition of the board is expected.

4. *Agree on who will be involved.* All members of the board and the manager should participate in the evaluation (more about the manager's presence at the evaluation, below). The full board's participation is necessary because all members have relevant information about the manager's performance. In addition, during the planning process, the board and manager should consider whether there are other parties who have an important perspective on the manager's performance. A common problem is for the board to focus entirely on the manager's interactions with the board, even though the manager spends only a fraction of his or her time in direct contact with the board.

Although both the board and manager may feel that the perceptions of staff, citizens, and others are important, they may be concerned about how these perceptions will be collected and shared. It is not a good idea for board members to go directly to staff and to poll employees on their views of the managers' strengths and weaknesses. Such actions would put board members in an inappropriate administrative role and may put staff members—including the manager—in an uncomfortable position. Instead, the manager might hold "upward review sessions" with his or her staff in order to receive feedback from subordinates and to report general themes that came out of these sessions as part of his or her self-assessment.

The goal is not to make the manager feel under attack; rather, it is to acknowl-

edge that many people may have relevant information about the manager's performance and that the board should not be expected to know everything about the manager's work. If the board and manager choose not to incorporate other sources of information in the evaluation, the board may want to consider omitting performance criteria that it feels unable to judge (such as the coaching and mentoring of subordinates).

5. *Agree on an evaluation form to be used.* Frequently, this is the first step that boards consider when planning an evaluation, and they find it to be a difficult task. However, if the board already has discussed and agreed on what it expects of the manager (see Step 2), agreeing on an evaluation form becomes much easier. It is simply a matter of translating expectations into performance criteria, making sure that the criteria are clear and measurable. For example, three expectations in the area of "knowledge and skills necessary for local government

management" may look like Figure 2.

Following each criterion on the evaluation form is a scale ranging from "does not meet expectations" to "exceeds expectations," with an option of marking "unable to rate." A board may choose to assign numbers to this scale (say, 1 through 5, with 1 corresponding to "does not meet expectations" and 5 corresponding to "exceeds expectations"). But a numerical rating system is less useful in an evaluation of the manager than it is in an organization-wide evaluation of all employees, where standardized comparisons may have some value. In fact, a potential problem with using a numerical rating system is that it is easy to focus on the number as the end in itself, rather than simply a shorthand way to express the evaluation. Thus, a board may discuss at length whether a manager's performance on a given dimension is a 3 or a 4, and perhaps conclude that it is a 3.5, without fully exploring what these numbers represent.

Samples of evaluation forms may be

Figure 2. Portion of Sample Evaluation Form

Presentation Skills. The ability to understand an audience and to present an idea clearly and concisely, in an engaging way, to a group whose interests, education, culture, ethnicity, age, etc., represent a broad spectrum of community interests and needs.

1	2	3	4	5
.....				
Does Not		Meets		Exceeds
Meet Expectations		Expectations		Expectations
				Unable to Rate

Citizen Service. The ability to determine citizen needs, provide equitable service, allocate resources, deliver services or products, and evaluate results.

1	2	3	4	5
.....				
Does Not		Meets		Exceeds
Meet Expectations		Expectations		Expectations
				Unable to Rate

Delegating. The ability to assign work, clarify expectations, and define how individual performance will be measured.

1	2	3	4	5
.....				
Does Not		Meets		Exceeds
Meet Expectations		Expectations		Expectations
				Unable to Rate

obtained from ICMA (contact Anthony Crowell by fax, 202/962-9500) and other professional organizations. Again, it is essential for boards and managers to tailor forms to meet their needs.

Conducting the Evaluation.

1. *Have individual board members complete the evaluation form prior to the evaluation session.* Setting aside some time for individual reflection is important preparation for the evaluation session. It reinforces the message that this is an important task, worthy of the board members' attention. Making individual assessments before beginning a group discussion also increases the likelihood that each member will form his or her own opinion without being influenced by the judgments or experiences of other members.

This is not meant to imply that board members cannot change their minds as a result of group discussion; on the contrary, members frequently change their views of a manager's performance as they hear the perspectives of other members and learn information that was not available to them when making their individual assessments.

2. *Have the manager do a self-assessment.* Inviting the manager to assess his or her own performance can add a helpful—and unique—perspective to the evaluation process. In most cases, the manager can simply complete the same evaluation form being used by the board. For the manager, the comparison of the self-assessment with the assessments of others provides an opportunity for insight into his or her own overestimation or underestimation of performance level as compared with the expectations of the board. For the board, hearing how the manager rates his or her own performance (and, more important, how he or she arrived at that rating) can help members gain some insight into whether the board and manager are communicating effectively.

As an example, board members might

rate the manager as not meeting expectations in a given area because a land use study has not been completed. Upon discussion with the manager, however, the board might learn that the study has been completed but not yet been presented to the board. This distinction would be important because it would suggest different areas for improvement. If the manager has not completed the study, the discussion might have focused on the importance of meeting deadlines. Instead, the group could develop strategies for improving communication so that board members will receive information in a timely manner.

3. *Agree on a setting for the evaluation discussion.* The evaluation should be conducted in a setting that is private and comfortable, free from interruptions, and considered neutral by all parties. These are the same characteristics a board may look for in a retreat setting when it meets to develop a long-range plan, discuss roles and responsibilities of new board members, and the like. The idea is to set aside a time and place to address a single topic, away from the pressure of a loaded agenda.

Boards frequently ask whether the manager's evaluation is defined as an open meeting. Because the board is considering the performance of the manager—a public employee—during an evaluation, such a meeting may be held in executive session. According to the North Carolina open-meetings statute, for instance, a public body may hold an executive session to “consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of a public officer or employee.”

4. *Have the manager present during the evaluation.* The above example, in which the board learns important information from the manager during the evaluation, illustrates the benefit of having the manager in the room, playing an active role in the evaluation. A manager present during the discussion can respond

to questions from the board, ask questions, and provide relevant information.

Frequently, a board's first impulse is to exclude the manager from the evaluation session. Some members may be reluctant to share negative feedback in the manager's presence. Other members may fear that the evaluation will turn into an analysis of the manager's handling of a single incident, with the manager defending his or her actions. Still others may want to shield the manager from what they perceive to be unduly harsh criticism from a few board members. These are valid concerns.

However, many of the problems anticipated by the board stem from a lack of planning rather than from the manager's presence at the evaluation; consequently, many of these issues can be addressed in earlier phases of the planning process. For example, a good evaluation form will help ensure that the discussion focuses on job-related behaviors rather than personal traits and will look at the previous year's performance rather than that of the previous week.

Some boards choose to exclude the manager from the evaluation session and select one member to summarize the board's discussion for the manager after the evaluation has been completed. Appointing a “designated spokesperson” to communicate the board's evaluation to the manager is often frustrating for both parties. It is difficult for one person to summarize a complex discussion in an accurate and balanced way, and the spokesperson may end up overemphasizing some points and underemphasizing or eliminating others. To a manager who is seeking feedback and guidance, this one-way communication usually does not give a full picture of the board's perceptions; consequently, the manager may make future decisions that are not consistent with the board's expectations.

Even with a careful planning process, board members still may have concerns about sharing negative feedback with the manager. As described in the next section, a skilled facilitator frequently can diminish these concerns by helping

the group discuss these issues in a constructive way.

After the board has concluded its discussion of the manager's performance, it may wish to excuse the manager while it makes a decision about the manager's compensation. The manager presumably will receive any feedback and guidance from the board before the salary discussion, so his or her presence is not necessary at this point. However, the board should keep in mind that the actual setting of the manager's salary may not be covered under a personnel exception to an open-meetings law, and for this reason this determination should take place in an open session.

5. *Consider using a facilitator.* A performance evaluation is a complex task, particularly when an entire group is participating in the evaluation. Members may have different views of the manager's past performance or different expectations for the future. Board members also may be reluctant to share negative feedback, or they may be concerned that their feedback will be misinterpreted.

For all of these reasons, it often is helpful to use a facilitator when conducting the evaluation. A facilitator can help the group by monitoring the group's process, while leaving all members free to focus on the task of the evaluation. Facilitators often suggest that groups use a set of ground rules to help them accomplish their work more effectively.

The board might look to local business, civic, and academic leaders for recommendations for qualified facilitators; or it might contact the Institute of Government at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, or the state's association of county commissioners, league of municipalities, school board association, or similar organizations for help in this area.

6. *Allow sufficient time.* A useful technique for the actual evaluation is a "round robin" format. Each member in turn expresses his or her judgment of the manager's performance on a given

criterion, and the entire group then discusses any differences among individuals' ratings, with the goal of reaching group consensus on the manager's performance in this area before progressing to the next performance criterion. Even with a small board that is in general agreement about the manager's performance, this is a time-consuming process. Therefore, setting aside a full day for the evaluation session is a good idea.

Although this may seem like a lot of time to devote to one issue, the consequences of failing to reach agreement on what the board expects of the manager can ultimately require far more time and energy. The group may wish to divide the evaluation session into two half-days, if that is more manageable (both in terms of scheduling and energy levels).

7. *Include a portion in which the board evaluates its own performance.* In theory, it is possible for a board to specify expectations for the manager and then to evaluate the degree to which a manager has met these expectations. In practice, however, meeting expectations is usually a two-way street, and it is helpful for a board to examine its own functioning and how it contributes to—or hinders—the manager's effectiveness. In one case, a board set a number of high-priority objectives for the manager to meet, after which individual board members brought new "high-priority" projects to the manager throughout the year. In this case, the board was partly responsible for the manager's failure to meet the expectations initially set by the board.

8. *Decide on the next steps, and critique the process.* The actual evaluation of the manager's (and the board's) performance may seem like the last step in the evaluation process, but there still are a number of decisions to be made before the next evaluation cycle can begin. The board may wish to have a separate session to make a decision about the manager's compensation. This is also a logical time to talk about expectations and goals for the coming year, and the board

may wish to set a date in the near future when it will set expectations and performance measures in preparation for the next evaluation.

An important final step: Before the evaluation is concluded, all members should assess the evaluation process itself. This self-critique helps the group look at its own process and learn from its experiences in working together. By reflecting on the task just completed, the group frequently identifies components of the process that worked well and aspects that could have been more effective. For example, it may decide that it did not clearly define the manager's role in reaching board goals before the evaluation and resolve to address this lack by a specified date.

A Process, Not an Event

As the steps described here illustrate, the evaluation of a chief administrative officer is a process, not an event. Careful planning and a commitment to communication between the board and the manager throughout the year will greatly facilitate the actual evaluation and increase the likelihood that it will be a valuable experience for all involved.

One last word: Don't let the fear that your board has not laid the proper groundwork prevent you from getting on with the job. You will probably see some things that you would like to change after the first evaluation (and the second, and the third . . .). That is what the self-critique is for. The important thing is to begin the process. Making the evaluation a regular part of the board's work is the best way to ensure its success. ■

Margaret S. Carlson is a faculty member of the Institute of Government, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, N.C.

Reprinted by permission from Popular Government published by the Institute of Government, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Municipal Manager's Performance Evaluation

Monitoring the performance of the organization and the Municipal Manager are a continual process for the Selectboard. This is punctuated by the annual performance appraisal.

The following instrument allows each member of the Selectboard an opportunity to evaluate the Municipal Manager based on the following Job Dimensions:

- ✓ Staff Effectiveness
- ✓ Policy Facilitation
- ✓ Service Delivery Management
- ✓ Strategic Leadership
- ✓ Democratic Responsiveness
- ✓ Organizational Planning and Management
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Integrity
- ✓ Interpersonal Characteristics and Skills
- ✓ Organizational Values
- ✓ Personal Development
- ✓ Leadership

On each job dimension, you are provided the opportunity to rate the relative importance of the dimension from your individual perspective, as well as the performance of the Municipal Manager. Narrative comments are welcomed to provide specific examples or additional feedback to the Municipal Manager.

The combined feedback from this multi-rater form and the Municipal Manager's self-evaluation will provide a framework for discussion during the annual performance evaluation meeting.

Job Dimension: Staff Effectiveness:

Level of Importance: High Medium Low

Rater	Staff Effectiveness
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Staff is professional and high quality performers; providing reports and services that are timely and complete and contain sound recommendations.
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Demonstrates a commitment to deal with non-performers and hold the organization accountable for results.

Comments:

Job Dimension: Policy Facilitation

Level of Importance: High Medium Low

Rater	Policy Facilitation
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Presents policy-related information completely and accurately.
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Respects the role of elected officials in making policy decisions.
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Ensures that policy decisions and initiatives are implemented.

Comments:

Job Dimension: Service Delivery Management

Level of Importance: High Medium Low

Rater	Service Delivery Management
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Ensures prompt, courteous and accurate responses to requests from citizens either directly or through the governing body.

Comments:

Job Dimension: Strategic Leadership

Level of Importance: High Medium Low

Rater	Strategic Leadership
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Anticipates and positions the organization to address and respond to anticipated events and circumstances.
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Accepts responsibility for undesirable results.

Comments:

Job Dimension: Democratic Responsiveness

Level of Importance: High Medium Low

Rater	Democratic Responsiveness
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Demonstrates an appreciation for the unique culture of the community.
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Respects and promotes active citizen participation in local governance.

Comments:

Job Dimension: Organizational Planning and Management

Level of Importance: High Medium Low

Rater	Organizational Planning and Management
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Prepares clear, effective, understandable budget.
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Manages the allocation of financial resources.
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Provides accurate assessment of the fiscal condition of the community.

Comments:

Job Dimension: Communication

Level of Importance: High Medium Low

Rater	Communication
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Demonstrates a capacity for effective written and oral communication.
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Conveys information effectively and matches presentation styles to different audiences.

Comments:

Job Dimension: Integrity

Level of Importance: High Medium Low

Rater	Integrity
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Fosters ethical behaviors.
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Demonstrates integrity in professional relationships.
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Demonstrates accountability for personal actions.

Comments:

Job Dimension: Interpersonal Characteristics and Skills

Level of Importance: High Medium Low

Rater	Interpersonal Characteristics and Skills
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Demonstrates the ability to work in harmony with others, minimizing conflict, fostering good will within the organization, in external relationships, with the public and other governmental representatives and interest groups.

Comments:

Job Dimension: Organizational Values

Level of Importance: High Medium Low

Rater	Organizational Values
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Demonstrates and models the organizations values, mission statement, goals and objectives.
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	S/he "Walks the Talk!"

Comments:

Job Dimension: Personal Development

Level of Importance: High Medium Low

Rater	Personal Development
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Demonstrates a commitment to ongoing personal professional development through continued education and training.

Comments:

Job Dimension: Self-Mastery

Level of Importance: High Medium Low

Rater	Self-Mastery
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Demonstrates adaptability and a capability for coping with stress.
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Respects the views of others and accepts feedback.
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Is able to control and manage emotions in conflicts and interactions.

Comments:

Job Dimension: Leadership

Level of Importance: High Medium Low

Rater	Leadership
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Motivates and guides staff on the organization's goals.
<input type="checkbox"/> No Basis for Rating <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Always Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Expectations	Responsive to the needs of staff and citizens.

Comments: