



**TOWN OF ESSEX
VERMONT**

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**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION TRUSTEES
TOWN OF ESSEX SELECTBOARD
SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA
Saturday, March 24, 2018
Essex Community Educational Center - Cafeteria
Two Educational Drive
Essex Junction, VT 05452
10:00 AM**

Note: Refreshments will be available at 9:45 a.m. The public is welcome to enjoy breakfast and lunch.

1. **CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** [10:00 AM]
2. **JOINT MEETING**
 - a. Introduction (George Tyler & Jennifer Knauer) [10:05 AM]
 - b. Presentation: "Governance: What does it mean ... to an outsider" (Evan Teich) [10:10 AM]
 - c. Discussion: "As the Consolidation Effort progresses, what do you wish to preserve or protect?" (Opportunity for Public Input) (Jennifer Knauer) [10:30 AM]
 - Lunch** [12:00 PM]
 - d. Presentation: Consolidation Efforts to Date (Greg Duggan) [12:30 PM]
 - e. Discussion: "What have you learned from past mergers and consolidation efforts that might impact this next phase?" (Opportunity for Public Input) (Jennifer Knauer) [12:35 PM]
 - f. Discussion: Next Steps (Jennifer Knauer) [1:30 PM]

**All times are approximate*

3. **ADJOURN**

Members of the public are encouraged to speak during the Public to Be Heard agenda item, during a Public Hearing, or, when recognized by the Chair, during consideration of a specific agenda item. The public will not be permitted to participate when a motion is being discussed except when specifically requested by the Chair.

This agenda is available in alternative formats upon request. Meetings of the Selectboard, like all programs and activities of the Town of Essex, are accessible to people with disabilities. For information on accessibility or this agenda, call the Town Manager's office at 878-1341.

Certification: 3/21/18 JL

TOWN MANAGER	PARKS AND RECREATION	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	PUBLIC WORKS	ASSESSOR	FINANCE	TOWN CLERK	LIBRARY	POLICE
878-1341	878-1342	878-1343	878-1344	878-1345	878-1359	879-0413	879-0313	878-8331

Governance

What does it mean to an outsider?

In The Middle Of Difficulty Lies
Opportunity

Evan-Isms

If it was easy, it would be done by now
I do not have all the answers but I am willing to find them

We Succeed And Fail As A Team

Strategic Direction

- The elected Board & Selectboard, is tasked with setting the strategic direction of the community
- To accomplish complicated tasks you must have the following:
 - Leadership and a shared vision of the outcome desired (does not have to be unanimous)
 - Established and accepted collective goals
 - Cohesive teamwork that includes Respect, Communication, Accepted Rules and Shared purpose
 - A division of labor including: roles and responsibilities, priorities, achievable tasks and reasonable timeframes
 - A process to evaluate where we are and to make any necessary corrections

Form of Government

- The first Strategic Direction is whether you will continue to practice the Council/Manager Form of Government
 - Appoint a “unified” Village/Town/City Manager responsible for the day to day operations of the organization
 - If yes, this person is responsible for the hiring, discipline, and work product of all employees. All communications and directions from the individual elected member goes through the Manager
 - The Manager is responsible to the “Board” and if the “Board” or member wishes to communicate something they should do so through the Manager
 - The “Board” establishes Goals and Objectives of the Manager and reviews these annually or as needed

Respect

- What do I mean?
 - You are all elected and by law are equal-however individually you have no authority- this seems odd but it then makes sense as you work towards collective/shared goals. When you collaborate you establish a policy/direction by obtaining a majority of the “Board”
 - In my world, that means 3 votes equals policy. Less than 3 votes/verbal consent remains an individual opinion. Once a majority of the “Board” votes, I and the employees must implement that policy/direction.

Respect Goes Deeper

We respect:

- The vote/direction of the Board (yours or other)
- The opinions, viewpoints, concerns, and motivations of others; understand and accept that people come to a decision on their own terms and for their own reasons- its personal to them
- Be willing and open to compromise
- Each Board should strive to understand and respect the goals and challenges of the other Board
- The time, effort, and expertise of others
- The process and the outcome incl: committees, commissions, ad hoc groups, etc.
 - example: a Village Board agreed that if they were to amend or deny a recommendation from another entity there had to be “something significant” that was either missed, misinterpreted, or expressly went against another policy or stated goal

Governance Through Policies, Procedures And Protocols

Every successful organization has its own policies, procedures, and protocols

Some Examples (there are dozens and they can change over time):

- How you handle the approval of Liquor Licenses
 - How an item gets on the agenda
 - Review and approval of the budget
 - Use of the consent agenda
- Many policies and procedures can be the same due to state or federal laws
 - Most will differ, however slightly

Action: Boards review of all policies both small and significant-seeking to align them by selecting the best practices

Governance Through Policies, Procedures And Protocols

To Be Efficient

- We must all be playing from the same playbook
- Policies and Procedures should be aligned both internally and Town to Village
- If not aligned- no consistency, confusion, and frustration for all parties
- Q: should the Boards invest in a major staff effort to align practices ?

Culture And Philosophy

Governance is also about executing your culture and philosophy

What is your organizational culture? Better yet, what do you want it to be?

Do you want your culture to be friendly, positive, safe, inclusive, collaborative, spirited (debate incl.) of mutual respect, respectful of staff, transparent, willing to take educated chances...

Action: Spend some time thinking and discussing this, it will then help guide other decisions

What Philosophies will you adopt:

- Do you agree on a pay as you go model with borrowing for:
 - Special large capital projects / Purchase of property
- Alignment, Collaboration, Consolidation, etc.
- Reduction of staff by attrition
- Unified pay and compensation policies
- Use of consultants; attorneys, engineers, moderators, lobbyists, etc.
- Citizen participation

Philosophy Continued

Taxes, Fees, And Equalization

Governance Is Always About Who Pays And Why

- You will need to address these 3 key factors (this will take time!)
- BUT, it will help to explain and provide examples for the what, the why, the how, and the who
- Knowing this will help guide you in the decisions that will need to be made and which will undoubtedly take several steps and more than one or two budget cycles to achieve
- **RECOMMENDATION:** Hire an expert to review complicated situations!
 - Someone impartial, knowledgeable about the subject and who is credible

The Expert's Report

- With a Expert's Report it will help set up your "request" to the public
- Organized
- Comprehensive
- Transparent
- Based on agreed upon facts
- Widely distributed
- Includes timelines, maps, charts, examples, etc.

Legal Composition

- No Offense, But If You Cannot Answer The 3 Key Questions, Apply A Strategic Direction, Agree To A Form Of Government, Respect Each Other, Align Your Procedures, Policies And Protocols And Agree To A Culture And Philosophy, Than Debating The Composition Of The Elected Board Is Wasted Effort, At This Time.
- In The Near Term Future, If You Are Willing To Do All Of The Above:
 - Consider Following The Example Of Other Recent Consolidation Efforts
 - School Districts

Governance Is Up To You

- These tasks should be taken up by you
- Through these discussions you will come to know what you need to know about where you are, how far you want to go and when
- You should however place a lot of effort into keeping the public informed of your progress and the next steps as well as in letting them provide input all along the way

Thank You

Consolidation efforts to date



Town of Essex
Village of Essex Junction



Recent merger & consolidation history

- 1999-2000
 - Village votes to separate from Town
 - Town (in entirety) votes to combine Town and Village governments
 - Legislature declines to decide between two conflicting proposed charter changes
- 2006-2007
 - Town and Village convene merger committee
 - Merger vote passes in 2006
 - Upon re-vote in 2007, merger fails
- 2013 to present
 - Began with consolidation of Town & Village Manager
 - Followed by consolidation of various departments and services
 - Ongoing

Departments consolidated to date

- Police
- Senior Bus
- Manager
- Tax Billing
- Tax Collecting
- Finance & Administrative Services
- Stormwater Services
- Highway
- Information Technology
- Public Works Administration & Paving
- Clerk
- Human Resources (approved in FYE 2019 Town budget)
- Fire Department Alignment (approved in FYE 2019 Town budget)

Departments not consolidated

- Police
- Senior Bus
- Manager
- Tax Billing
- Tax Collecting
- Finance & Administrative Services
- Stormwater Services
- Highway
- Information Technology
- Public Works Administration & Paving
- Clerk
- Human Resources (approved in FYE 2019 Town budget)
- Fire Department Alignment (approved in FYE 2019 Town budget)
- Community Development (Planning and Zoning)
- Fire Department
- Libraries
- Recreation

Other potential areas for consolidation

- Capital plan and budget
- Debt service
- Assets (e.g., parks, buildings, equipment, etc.)
- Policies
- Etc.

Memorandum

To: Essex Selectboard; Essex Junction Board of Trustees; Evan Teich, Unified Manager

From: Greg Duggan, Deputy Town Manager *GD*

Re: Next steps in consolidation and governance

Date: March 21, 2018

Issue

The issue is providing the Selectboard and Trustees with scheduling information to better inform the discussion about next steps in governance and consolidation efforts.

Discussion

The boards have scheduled joint meetings through the remainder of 2018, with the intention of using those meetings to discuss governance and to evaluate the unified manager.

The joint meetings will be held on the following dates:

April 25, 2018

June 14, 2018

August 22, 2018

October 11, 2018

December 5, 2018

Cost

None at this time.

Recommendation

This memo is for informational purposes.