



VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION TRUSTEES
TOWN OF ESSEX SELECTBOARD
SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

Online
Essex Junction, VT 05452
Monday, April 6, 2020
7:45 PM (or immediately following
Town Selectboard Meeting)

E-mail: manager@essex.org

www.essexjunction.org
www.essexvt.org

Phone: (802) 878-1341

The Selectboard and Trustees meet together to discuss and act on joint business. Each board votes separately on action items.

COVID-19 UPDATE: Due to the Covid-19/coronavirus pandemic, this meeting will be held remotely. Available options to watch or join the meeting:

- The meeting will be live-streamed on Channel 17's YouTube channel.
Join via Microsoft Teams https://tinyurl.com/Selectboard-Trustees040620 . Depending on your browser, you may need to call in for audio (below).
Join via conference call (audio only): (802) 377-3784 | Conference ID: 996 290 979#
For the purpose of recording minutes, you will be asked to provide your first and last name.
When listening to the meeting, please keep your phone or computer on "mute" as to prevent interruptions during the meeting. For agenda items when it is appropriate for the public to speak, please unmute your phone or computer and introduce yourself before requesting the floor from the Chair/President.

- CALL TO ORDER [7:45 PM]
AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES
APPROVE AGENDA
PUBLIC TO BE HEARD
a. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda
BUSINESS ITEMS
a. Update on COVID-19 impacts
b. Discuss how to assist residents and businesses during COVID-19 pandemic
c. Discuss and approve upcoming meeting schedule
CONSENT ITEMS
a. Approve minutes: March 24, 2020 – (Trustees and Selectboard)
READING FILE
a. Board Member Comments
EXECUTIVE SESSION
a. An executive session is not anticipated
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 or President, 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 or President. This agenda is available in alternative formats upon request. Meetings, like all programs and activities of the Village of Essex Junction and the Town of Essex, are accessible to people with disabilities. For information on accessibility or this agenda, call the Unified Manager's office at 878-1341.

Certification: 04/03/2020 [Signature]

Memorandum

To: Board of Trustees; Selectboard

Cc: Chief Rick Garey, Police; Greg Duggan, Deputy Manager/Public Information Officer; Tammy Getchell, Assistant to the Manager/Assistant Public Information Officer

From: Evan Teich, Unified Manager

Re: Covid-19 Response

Date: April 01, 2020

Issue

The issue is to update the boards on the municipal response to covid-19.

Discussion

First, we are sad to report the loss of life. In Essex we have had several confirmed cases and sadly the loss of a few lives as of April 1, 2020. This virus is devastating to those with compromised health factors including but not limited to asthma, respiratory ailments, immune deficiencies and more. It certainly seems to hit the elderly harder and that is why the CDC and Vermont Health have sought to keep children away from the elderly, instituted social distancing, and have implored people to wash their hands regularly. We hope our residents, businesses, and staff are following recommendations from CDC and Vermont Health, yet we would be foolish to believe that more cases will not come our way.

Several weeks ago when we saw what was headed our way, we accelerated the planning process and started putting plans in place. Decisions we felt were key in being prepared are the following:

1. Per our established Emergency Operations Plan, Police Chief Rick Garey is our designated Emergency Operations Coordinator. He was tasked with implementing our plan.
2. Chief Garey and Unified Manager Evan Teich decided that the best way to address this emergency was to unify command in order to take swift action where necessary. Therefore, we asked the boards to declare an Emergency.
3. The Village and the Town would act with one voice and would act as one as much as possible. This included many areas of attention:
 - Buildings and grounds
 - Employment/staffing
 - Purchasing and sharing of supplies
 - Responding to issues as they arose
4. We wanted clear and consistent messaging, so we instituted Deputy Manager Greg Duggan as Public Information Officer and Assistant to the Manager Tammy Getchell as Assistant Public Information Officer. They are in charge of disseminating our information for the Village and the Town.

5. The Emergency Operations Center is operational in case it needs to be activated.
6. Early decisions and actions included developing and reviewing departmental Continuity of Operation Plans, closing the Senior Center, cancelling all board/commission/committee meetings except for Trustees and Selectboard, prohibiting public use of our meeting spaces, identifying essential personnel and functions, and preparing for extended capacity of key personnel to work remotely.
7. As events progressed we had measured reactions: We closed buildings to public access and made them available by appointment only for essential business that could not be conducted remotely; we decided to pay our employees, have them work from home when possible and remain on-call; we implemented staggered shifts for employees; we worked with other communities to be consistent; we started the disinfectant process of our office spaces; and we looked to enhance our capability for working remotely by purchasing additional laptops and by extending our network by adding Microsoft Teams and VPN usage.
8. We worked directly with the staffs that have the most public contact: Our libraries, Senior Center, Clerk's Office, community development departments, and recreation departments. We began by limiting access to their buildings and programs, then closed the buildings but still provided services. Our libraries are offering programming online. Recreation is using their offices at 75 Maple St. as an emergency responder daycare facility, and the parking lot is being used as a school food pick-up spot. As of April 1 the Clerk's Office is allowing limited access so economic activities can continue; public access to the Clerk's Office may be further scaled back in coming days in compliance with the governor's order.
9. We have worked over the past year to upgrade the Town's website and pushed for its changeover. As of the past couple of days the new site is live at www.essexvt.org. The new site allows us to better communicate with the public and them to us.
10. Two weeks ago, Champlain Valley Expo let us know that UVM Medical Center was seeking a drive-thru Covid-19 test site. We agreed to allow them to host it, working with CVE and UVM on its location and access.
11. Financially, we made the decision to stop changing out water meters and suspended any water shut-offs. Deadlines for dog licensing have been extended and the state has authorized other actions. Property tax payments were still due as of March 16 but that was a question of statute and equity. Accounts have been set up to track expenses related to Covid-19, in case we are able to seek reimbursement from FEMA.

Now, what is new to report:

1. Fire department. Based on the virus, our call response protocol now requires responders to go to the fire station first to obtain proper personal protective equipment (PPE) before going to the call, basically treating all calls as going to a high hazard call.
2. We are closing access to all park amenities, including playground structures, skate parks, tennis/pickleball courts, pavilions, basketball courts, baseball fields and the designated dog park. For the time being the parks and our paths are not closed, but we do implore our citizens to continue to social distance themselves as they walk or bike through them.
3. The state's Human Services department has identified Champlain Valley Expo as the proper location for an over surge hospital facility for non-Covid-19 patients. They are preparing a 400 bed facility to be run by the National Guard.
4. Local hotels are being sought to house recovering patients. Police are checking hotels and motels weekly to ensure they are complying with state regulations.
5. Staff is reviewing options for helping our most vulnerable citizens in the areas of food security, communicating with our senior population, restocking supplies and contingencies for staffing should the virus require the quarantining of staff members
6. The Trustees postponed the Village's annual meeting and community dinner. We are looking into the new state law allowing for Australian ballot versus in-person/on-the-floor voting for this year only.
7. Board meetings will be all electronic, including phone in access.

Cost

TBD

Recommendation

This memo is for informational purposes.

Memo

To: Essex Junction Trustees

From: Brad Luck, Director, EJP

Date: April 1, 2020

Re: COVID-19 and Village Public Parks

We posted the message below in social media on Wednesday, April 1, and closed the park amenities as outlined. Temporary signage went up and will be updated on Friday, April 3, with larger signs.

We continue to believe that keeping the parks open is important. The reasons why are outlined below and in the communication by the National Recreation and Parks Association. "Exercise" is an essential reason, as outlined by the Governor, that Vermonters are able to leave their homes for. We should continue to provide this outlet for our community members, along with reminders of how to be in the parks safely.

Message:

Effective immediately, all EJP and EJP park amenities will be closed until further notice. Using the park amenities while closed is considered trespassing and will be referred to the Essex Police Department. Park amenities include, but are not limited to, playground structures, skate parks, tennis/pickleball courts, pavilions, basketball courts, baseball fields and the designated dog park. This closure of park amenities comes recommended by the National Recreation & Parks Association and aligns with the safety of all park users, while keeping social distancing a priority in our parks, on our trails, and in open spaces.

Parks, trails, and open spaces currently remain open as an important resource for health and wellness, as long as they are used in a safe manner. We encourage users to only be in groups with members of their household and to keep a six-foot physical distance from other individuals at all times. If you are exhibiting symptoms, please refrain from visiting. While on trails, warn other users if you need to pass, and only pass when you can maintain a six-foot physical distance away.

Signage:



Joint Statement on Using Parks and Open Space While Maintaining Physical Distancing

(March 18, 2020)

More than 1,000* groups nationwide support safe use of parks during COVID-19 outbreak



The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) prepared the following statement in support of the safe use of parks and open spaces during the COVID-19 outbreak. As of March 27, 2020, more than 1,000 organizations have signed on to voice support.*

Concerns about the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak continue to grip our nation. As organizations that support the power of parks and open spaces as essential resources for health and wellness, we understand that people may have questions and concerns about visiting their local parks, trails or open spaces at this time.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has flagged mental health as a top concern associated with the COVID-19 outbreak. We recognize that physical distancing may take a toll on our mental health, especially during high-stress and anxiety-producing global public health emergencies. We also know that parks provide a connection to the outdoors and green space as well as opportunities for physical activity which studies demonstrate reduces stress and improves mental health.

We believe that many parks, trails and open spaces can continue to be used in a safe manner that allows people to enjoy the mental and physical health benefits these spaces provide. In all instances, we recommend people follow local, state and national ordinances and guidelines regarding the use of these spaces and recognize that these vary from community to community.

In places where there are no restrictions on the use of local parks, trails and open spaces, we encourage all users to follow these recommendations:

- Refrain from using parks or trails if they are exhibiting symptoms.

- Follow CDC's guidance on personal hygiene prior to and during use of parks or trails.
- Prepare for limited access to public restrooms or water fountains.
- While on trails, warn other users of their presence and as they pass, and step aside to let others pass.
- Follow CDC guidance on the recommended size of social gatherings including outdoor picnicking, pick-up sports and other group hangouts, and maintain proper physical distance at all times.
- Observe CDC's minimum recommended physical distancing of 6 feet from other individuals at all times. If this is not possible, users should find an alternate location or depart that space.
- Consult their local and state ordinances and guidelines for the most up to date recommendations on park and trail use.

We encourage local jurisdictions to keep parks, trails and open spaces accessible as long as it is safe to do so.

Our local parks, trails and open spaces have always served as places where people can find respite and seek peace and restoration. During this time of uncertainty, these places are needed now more than ever. Our nation's park and recreation professionals are working hard to maintain these spaces and keep them safe, accessible and benefiting our communities during these challenging times. Let us all do our part to use them in a way that respects each other and public health guidance.

For more information about NRPA's response to COVID-19 and available resources for park and recreation professionals, as well as download options for the infographic above, please see our [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) webpage](#).

Following are the park and recreation agencies, partners and like-minded organizations who have responded to support continued use of our parks and open spaces during the COVID-19 outbreak:

**This number was updated on March 27, 2020, to reflect the current number of organizations that support the safe use of parks and open spaces during the COVID-19 outbreak.*

Note, we've updated our language to say "physical distancing" instead of "social distancing" as it is a more accurate description and is the term recommended by the World Health Organization. Keeping physical distance is essential for mitigating the spread of COVID-19, but that doesn't mean we have to socially disconnect from one another.

About the National Recreation and Park Association

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that all people have access to parks and recreation for health, conservation and social equity. Through its network of 60,000 recreation and park professionals and advocates, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For more information, visit www.nrpa.org. For digital access to NRPA's flagship publication, Parks & Recreation, visit www.parksandrecreation.org.

Memorandum**To:** Trustees; Selectboard**From:** Evan Teich, Unified Manager; Sarah Macy, Finance Director/Assistant Manager; Greg Duggan, Deputy Manager *GSD***Re:** Assistance to residents and businesses during covid-19 pandemic**Date:** April 3, 2020

Issue

The issue is for the Trustees, Selectboard, and staff to discuss how to assist residents and businesses during covid-19 pandemic.

Discussion

As the effects of the covid-19 pandemic become more apparent and drawn out, staff has been considering ways the Town and Village can support and provide relief to our community. We would like to share and expand upon those ideas and others with the Trustees and Selectboard. Some thoughts so far include the following:

- Human Services Funding: Expedite the review and approval process to provide human services funding as soon as possible.
- Seniors: Senior Center staff is reaching out to all members and van riders to check in on their well-being.
- Food drive: Organize a food drive with staff to collect food and/or financial donations for residents and/or local food shelves. This may take more thought around safety of employees.
- Essex Takes Out: Organize a community-wide night to order take-out and support local restaurants.
- Utilities: Avoiding water shut-offs.
- Taxes: The charter requires penalties and interest for delinquent taxpayers. Delinquent taxpayers are receiving notices with updated balances that also acknowledge the challenging and stressful times brought on by Covid-19, and informing them of their right to apply for abatement through the Board of Civil Authority.

Note: We have no control over what the BCA does with these abatement requests. They may decide to just blanket waive interest and penalty. They may decide to deny all of them and tell people to set up payment plans (which is what they normally do). There is no guarantee that anything will actually get abated.

Cost

To be determined.

Recommendation

This memo is for discussion purposes.

Memorandum

To: Trustees; Selectboard; Evan Teich, Unified Manager
Cc: Sarah Macy, Finance Director/Assistant Manager; Tammy Getchell, Assistant to the Manager
From: Greg Duggan, Deputy Manager *GSD*
Re: Approval of upcoming meeting schedule
Date: April 3, 2020

Issue

The issue is for the Selectboard to approve its 2020-2021 meeting schedule, and for the Selectboard and Trustees to approve a meeting schedule for the next few months.

Discussion

At its annual reorganization meeting, the Selectboard approves its schedule for the coming year. That process is potentially complicated this year due to the covid-19 pandemic and the importance of continuing to hold joint meetings with the Trustees.

The Selectboard typically meets the first and third Mondays of each month, with single meetings in July and September. Meetings begin at 7 p.m. The first and third Monday schedule is occasionally modified to accommodate holidays and budget workshops. Staff is proposing another all-day budget workshop for 2021.

In addition to regular Selectboard meetings, the Selectboard and Essex Junction Board of Trustees have held joint meetings on the first Monday of each month following a normal Selectboard meeting, and the fourth Tuesday of each month following a normal Trustee meeting. Preparation for joint meetings requires significant work from staff, in that staff needs to put out two packets for nights with two meetings.

To reduce workload for meeting preparations during the covid-19 pandemic, staff is proposing an alternate meeting schedule to both boards through the end of June. If the boards accept the proposal, the schedule could be adjusted accordingly depending on what happens with covid-19 in coming weeks and months. During the revised schedule, staff would attempt to limit business to important items, and/or ask the boards to process more approvals through consent agenda.

Proposed Selectboard & Trustee meeting schedule for April 7 – June 30, 2020:

*** All meetings would start at 6:30 p.m.**

Tuesday, April 14 (Trustees, joint business, Selectboard)

Tuesday, April 28 (Selectboard, joint business, Trustees)

Tuesday, May 12 (Trustees, joint business, Selectboard)

Tuesday, May 19 (Selectboard, joint business, Trustees)

Tuesday, June 9 (Trustees, joint business, Selectboard)

Tuesday, June 23 (Selectboard, joint business, Trustees)

Proposed Selectboard meeting schedule for 2020 – 2021 (Option A)

April 7 – June 30: see above

Monday, July 13
Tuesday, July 28 (joint meeting, 7:15 p.m.)

Monday, August 3 (followed by joint meeting, 7:45 p.m.)
Tuesday, August 18 (to accommodate August 17 observance of Bennington Battle Day)
Tuesday, August 25 (joint meeting, 7:15 p.m.)

Monday, September 14
Tuesday, September 29 (joint meeting, 7:15 p.m.)

Monday, October 5 (followed by joint meeting, 7:45 p.m.)
Monday, October 19
Tuesday, October 27 (joint meeting, 7:15 p.m.)

Monday, November 2 (followed by joint meeting, 7:45 p.m.)
Monday, November 16
Tuesday, November 24 (joint meeting, 7:15 p.m.)

Monday, December 7 (followed by joint meeting, 7:45 p.m.)
Monday, December 21
Tuesday, December 29 (joint meeting, 7:15 p.m.)

Monday, January 4, 2021 (all-day budget workshop, 8 a.m.)
Monday, January 11
Monday, January 18
Tuesday, January 26 (joint meeting, 7:15 p.m.)

Monday, February 1 (followed by joint meeting, 7:45 p.m.)
Tuesday, February 16 (to accommodate President's Day on February 15)
Tuesday, February 23 (joint meeting, 7:15 p.m.)

Monday, March 1 (Town Meeting, 7:30 p.m.)
Monday, March 15
Tuesday, March 23 (joint meeting, 7:15 p.m.)

Monday, April 5 (followed by joint meeting, 7:45 p.m.)

Proposed Selectboard meeting schedule for 2020 – 2021 (Option B)

Monday, April 20
Tuesday, April 28 (joint meeting, 7:15 p.m.)

Monday, May 4 (followed by joint meeting, 7:45 p.m.)
Monday, May 18
Tuesday, May 26 (joint meeting, 7:15 p.m.)

Monday, June 1 (followed by joint meeting, 7:45 p.m.)
Monday, June 15
Tuesday, June 23 (joint meeting, 7:15 p.m.)

July 2020 – April 5, 2021 (see Option A)

Cost

None.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Trustees and Selectboard approve the revised meeting schedule through June 30, 2020.

Staff also recommends the Selectboard approve the Option A meeting schedule for 2020-2021.

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**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION TRUSTEES
TOWN OF ESSEX SELECTBOARD
DRAFT SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday March 24, 2020**

SELECTBOARD: Elaine Haney, Chair; Annie Cooper; Max Levy; Andrew Watts; Patrick Murray.

TRUSTEES: Andrew Brown, President; Amber Thibeault; Raj Chawla; Dan Kerin; George Tyler.

ADMINISTRATION and STAFF: Evan Teich, Unified Manager; Greg Duggan, Deputy Manager; Sarah Macy, Finance Director/ Assistant Manager; Dennis Lutz, Public Works Director; Rick Jones, Public Works Superintendent; Jim Jutras, Water Quality Superintendent.

OTHERS PRESENT: Ken Signorello.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Andrew Brown called the Village of Essex Junction Trustees back to order from recess, and Elaine Haney called the Essex Selectboard to order, to enter into the Special Joint Meeting of the Village of Essex Junction Trustees and the Town of Essex Selectboard at 7:09 PM.

2. STATEMENT ABOUT COVID-19 AND PUBLIC MEETINGS

Ms. Haney made a statement explaining how the meeting would proceed, with changes instituted to adhere to COVID-19/ coronavirus social distancing mandates. She said, even though the meeting location was in the Town of Essex Offices, 81 Main St., Essex Jct., board members would participate remotely via Microsoft Teams. She invited the public to participate remotely using conference call-in information.

3. AGENDA ADDITIONS/ CHANGES

Ms. Haney proposed to change the agenda by addressing item 6e as the first business item.

4. AGENDA APPROVAL

MAX LEVY made a motion, seconded by PATRICK MURRAY, that the Selectboard approve the agenda as amended. The motion passed 5-0.

DAN KERIN made a motion, and RAJ CHAWLA seconded, that the Trustees approve the agenda as amended. The motion passed 5-0.

5. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

a. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda

There were no comments from the public at this time.

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

e. COVID 19 Update and discussion of community and local business impact

Mr. Teich provided an update on department planning for COVID-19. This included strategies to keep staff separated from each other when working in the same departments or buildings. He also said only essential personnel are on-site and the business offices are closed to the public, except by appointment for business that cannot be conducted remotely; most business office employees are working from home. Since Mr. Teich's closures and cancellations update at the last Selectboard meeting on March 16, the community's Senior Van has also been suspended. The Selectboard members encouraged Mr. Teich to consider Town Clerk tasks,

52 such as title searches, as non-essential. Mr. Teich clarified that dog licenses registered after
53 the April 1 deadline will not have penalties. He encouraged the public to process dog licenses
54 by mail. Ms. Haney noted that the State House is considering legislation to allow public
55 meetings to be held completely online.

56
57 Mr. Teich said he would like Town and Village staff to host a community support event to help
58 in some way during the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Levy suggested he consider a blood drive,
59 as the Red Cross is in serious need. The board members praised municipal staff for excellent
60 communications, flexibility and adaptability.

61
62 a. **Discuss recommendations from Governance Subcommittee memo and draft transition**
63 **provisions**

64 Mr. Tyler asked the Trustees and the Selectboard members to decide what to do with the
65 Governance Subcommittee's recommendations for the following provisions of a Town and
66 Village merger plan: Representation, Tax Rate Integration and Transition. Ms. Cooper
67 encouraged them to also consider that living through the current pandemic may influence the
68 governance discussion moving forward.

69
70 The board members discussed what representation model should be included in the charter.
71 The majority of the Selectboard members and Trustees said that the 3-3 model recently
72 passed by voters should be included, instead of the Governance Committee's suggested 2-2-
73 3 model. They discussed some of the challenges inherent with the 3-3 model and their
74 concerns about tie votes. They agreed that changing a recently passed governance structure
75 could be confusing for voters. The board members said that submitting a governance
76 structure for legislature consideration that is similar to the one recently passed by voters, may
77 make the process smoother. Mr. Watts suggested the representation section not be included
78 in the merger charter, instead letting the 3-3 model passed by voters remain in place if
79 passed by the state legislature. Mr. Brown said if a municipal charter does not specify the
80 make-up of the legislative body, the State of Vermont requires that it default to a three-
81 member Selectboard. Mr. Tyler stressed, and Ms. Haney strongly agreed, that the new
82 charter should require the new board to establish a commission to research whether to
83 implement and move forward with a ward structure in Essex. They discussed whether this
84 commission's recommendations should be ready in two or five years.

85
86 The board members discussed the Tax Rate Integration models suggested by the
87 Governance Subcommittee. The majority of the board members agreed with the concept of
88 implementing tax integration models. Most were in favor of a sidewalk district for the Village
89 but discussed whether the district could be expanded in future years. Most were also in favor
90 of the Debt Assessment District and Mr. Levy suggested it be connected to actual dates of
91 when debt is paid off. Board members expressed concerns with the idea of keeping a tax just
92 on businesses in a downtown district, but Ms. Haney suggested they consider a penny on the
93 tax rate kept for businesses as well as residents. Mr. Watts said the Capital Investment
94 District should be a shorter timeline based on the Village's five-year capital plan. While Mr.
95 Brown and Mr. Chawla agreed with the models, they acknowledged their struggle to make a
96 decision without having actual numbers included. Ms. Cooper stressed that without seeing a
97 picture of costs associated with a complete separation of the Village from and the Town

98 outside the Village, she was not comfortable supporting any of the proposed Tax Rate
99 Integration plans. She said voters would not have enough information to make an informed
100 decision without this visual. Staff talked about the challenge of having to make a large number
101 of assumptions in order to present separation costs. Mr. Watts said he has received many
102 comments from residents in the Town outside the Village that the Village should “give
103 something up” to decrease the tax burden of merger. The board members discussed the that
104 there are misunderstandings and unsubstantiated perceptions about the Town and Village tax
105 structures; for instance, childcare offered by Essex Junction Recreation and Parks is paid for
106 entirely by users, not taxpayers. Ms. Macy said she would create new excel workbooks to
107 illustrate the topics discussed. Mr. Kerin suggested a visual be created that illustrates what is
108 paid for together and separately between the Village and the Town outside the Village.
109

110 The board members suggested the following regarding the proposed transition provisions for
111 a merged charter:

- 112 • Section 105a: provide flexibility to allow for occasional slow times when meetings may not
113 take place, like in some summer months.
- 114 • Section 114: confirm with legal counsel, and make explicit, who needs to vote for what in
115 order to dissolve the Town and Village charters and approve a new one.
- 116 • Section 109e: Ms. Haney clarified with Mr. Teich that separate labor unions for the current
117 municipalities cannot be dissolved with a charter change, but the employees would be
118 able to choose one or the other.
119

120 **b. Discuss Q&A for water/sewer district recommendations and public works**
121 **infrastructure**

122 Mr. Jones, Mr. Lutz and Mr. Jutras talked about the draft Q&A document about how water and
123 sewer districts would be handled in a merged community. Pointing to the Infrastructure
124 Comparison Document, Ms. Haney requested that the last line of the Sewer Utility and the
125 Water Utility sections be revised to say that residents not using municipal sewer and water
126 have their own costs for septic systems and wells. The board members also discussed
127 whether the document should note that connection costs to the municipal systems are the
128 responsibility of the property owners. Mr. Brown suggested the Q&A have an explicit sentence
129 about how the sewer system may expand in the future. Mr. Lutz said the sewer area
130 expansion process is very complicated and hard to explain briefly, but that he would try to
131 craft a sentence. Mr. Watts suggested the document include more about rates and why the
132 Village and Town outside the Village have different rates. Mr. Teich said the cost differences
133 are due largely to salaries so having to make assumptions about how departments would be
134 structured after a merger is challenge.
135

136 Mr. Signorello said that he pays for septic and water hookups to his septic system and his
137 well.
138

139 **c. Discuss future meeting schedule of Governance Subcommittee**

140 The Trustees and Selectboard members acknowledged the extensive research and hard work
141 of the Governance Subcommittee. They noted that the basic framework for a merger is almost
142 complete. They discussed whether or not to disband the subcommittee. The board members
143 decided to allow the subcommittee to remain intact for possible questions, but they will not

144 assign new tasks at this time. Mr. Tyler and Mr. Watts agreed to work with staff to finalize
145 details of the merger plan.
146

147 d. **Discuss Strategic Advance and potential new date**

148 Mr. Teich explained that the date planned for this year’s Strategic Advance should be
149 rescheduled to avoid any COVID-19 restrictions on gatherings. He said he would send out a
150 doodle to settle on a new date sometime between late May and June. He briefly reviewed the
151 proposed agenda for the day, which will set goals for the upcoming year, and suggested the
152 board members send him suggestions.
153

154 **7. CONSENT AGENDA**

155
156 a. **Approve minutes February 3, 2020 – (Trustees only; Selectboard approved 2/18)**

157
158 **GEORGE TYLER made a motion, seconded by DAN KERIN, to that the Trustees approve**
159 **the consent agenda. The motion passed 5-0.**
160

161 **8. READING FILE**

162 a. **Board Member Comments**

- 163 • Mr. Tyler suggested that an upcoming meeting should include an agenda item of planning an
164 exit poll for the merger vote so the reasons behind the vote results are clear.
- 165 • Mr. Levy expressed interest in the Strategic Advance agenda item 5 about creating a
166 nonbinding resolution to continue the merger vote effort. He also suggested the boards
167 choose a date at which point they need to decide whether to put a merger vote on the
168 November 2020 ballot.
- 169 • This was Mr. Levy’s last municipal meeting as a Selectboard member. He thanked everyone
170 for the support, camaraderie, and friendship he experienced. He said this was a great
171 opportunity to do great work together with the staff and leaders of Essex.
172

173 **9. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

174 a. **An executive session is not anticipated**

175 An executive session did not take place.
176

177 **10. ADJOURN**

178
179 **MAX LEVY made a motion, seconded by PATRICK MURRAY, for the Selectboard to**
180 **adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 5-0 at 10:14 PM.**

181
182 **DAN KERIN made a motion, seconded by RAJ CHAWLA, for the Trustees to adjourn the**
183 **meeting. The motion passed 5-0 at 10:14 PM.**
184

185
186 Respectfully Submitted,
187 Cathy Ainsworth
188 Recording Secretary