



VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
TRUSTEES
SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

Online
Essex Junction, VT 05452
Tuesday, May 5, 2020
6:30 PM

E-mail: manager@essexjunction.org

www.essexjunction.org

Phone: (802) 878-6951

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

- The meeting will be live-streamed on [Channel 17's YouTube channel](#).
- [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#). Depending on your browser, you may need to call in for audio (below).
- Join via conference call (*audio only*): (802) 377-3784 | Conference ID: 735 032 646#
- 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 Board President.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** [6:30 PM]
2. **AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**
3. **APPROVE AGENDA**
4. **PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**
 - a. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda
5. **BUSINESS ITEMS**
 - a. Discuss voting process for Annual Village Meeting
6. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**
 - a. An executive session is not anticipated
7. **ADJOURN**

This agenda is available in alternative formats upon request. Meetings of the Trustees, like all programs and activities of the Village of Essex Junction, are accessible to people with disabilities. For information on accessibility or this agenda, call the Unified Manager's office at 878-6951.

Certification: 05/01/2020
Date Posted

J Mitchell
Initials

Memorandum

To: Trustees; Evan Teich, Unified Manager
Cc: Martha Heath, EWSD Board Chair
From: Greg Duggan, Deputy Manager; Susan McNamara-Hill, Clerk
Re: Voting processes for Village Meeting
Date: May 1, 2020

Issue

The issue is for the Trustees to discuss how to handle voting for Village Meeting on June 2.

Discussion

The Trustees have warned Village Meeting for June 2, when polls will be open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. An informational meeting will be held the evening of Monday, June 1.

Decisions still need to be made about how to allow voting on and before June 2, in light of the covid-19 pandemic. The Essex Westford School District, as of the afternoon of Friday, May 1, wants to send ballots to all active voters.

The Village Clerk has concerns about the feasibility and cost of mailing ballots to all active voters, as detailed in the attached emails. Yet if EWSD moves ahead with mailing ballots, the Village may wish to do the same. Despite valid concerns from the Clerk's Office, voters may be confused if the Village and EWSD have separate processes, especially if the Village wants to put its ballot on the back of the school ballot.

However the Trustees, staff, and EWSD ultimately decide to handle the voting, the process needs to begin as soon as possible.

Cost

A minimum of \$17,250 for postage, not including the cost of envelopes and poll workers.

Recommendation

This memo is for discussion purposes, and for the Trustees to provide guidance to staff on how to handle voting on June 2.

Gregory Duggan

From: Susan McNamara-Hill
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2020 12:03 PM
To: Martha Heath
Cc: Sonnick; Evan Teich; Town Clerk; Andrew Brown; Gregory Duggan; Beth Cobb; Brian Donahue; Sarah Macy
Subject: RE: School budget vote
Importance: High

Martha:

I have been thinking about your board's decision to mail ballots to every voter for the upcoming budget vote and would like to respectfully request that the board reconsider for the following reasons:

1. Last year we had a total voter turnout (mail and in person) of 805. Total voters on the checklist are 16,694 (or 14,959 if you do not count "challenged" voters).
2. As of now we have requests for 466+ ballots to be mailed.
3. I have printed and prepared for mailing (pending ballots) 413 of those envelopes.
4. I have completed an inventory of my ballot envelopes. I currently have approximately 18,000 mailing and return envelopes. We will need 30,000 to 34,000 of these envelopes. There will be 65 cents postage going out and 50 cents postage on every return envelope (whether it gets returned, gets lost in the mail, or the voter returns the ballot in the drop box). I have approximately 4,000 certificate envelopes, we will need at least 16,000 of these (or 15,000 if only mailing to "active" voters).
5. Mailing ballots does not just consist of stuffing envelopes and mailing (this is not a mass mailing). The procedure is:
 - a. names are entered into the electronic checklist system (individually),
 - b. envelopes are printed addressed to the specific voter,
 - c. the envelope is stuffed with the ballot, certificate envelope, return envelope (with postage added). During this process we need to make sure the correct ballot is going to the correct voter (i.e., village vs town outside village).
 - d. Then the voters are again entered into the electronic checklist system by name, as the ballots having been issued.
 - e. Then they can be mailed.
 - f. When the completed ballot is returned, the names again have to be individually entered into the electronic checklist system as being returned.
 - g. The ballots cannot be put through the vote tabulator until the day before the election. This process consists of opening envelopes, double checking to make sure the voter is checked off on the checklist and then feeding the ballots through the tabulator.
6. The system is further complicated by the fact that we are mailing different ballots to different groups of voters.
7. Entering the names into the electronic checklist data base can only be done by the clerks.
8. If you mail a new budget postcard to every resident, you could also suggest in that mailing that voters request ballots by mail.

I hope the board will consider the request that I have made. If they still want to mail to every voter – please, please, consider specifying "active" voters only.

Thank you,
Susan

Susan McNamara-Hill, Clerk/Treasurer
Village of Essex Junction
Town of Essex

81 Main Street
Essex Junction, VT 05452
802-879-0413



From: Martha Heath <martha.heath@board.ewsd.org>
Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 3:50 PM
To: Susan McNamara-Hill <SMcnamarahill@ESSEX.ORG>
Cc: Sonnick <sonnick@gmail.com>; Evan Teich <eteich@essex.org>; Town Clerk <townclerk@westfordvt.us>
Subject: Re: School budget vote

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Thank you Susan. As I indicated before, please let us know if you need any "manpower" help. Martha

On Wed, Apr 29, 2020 at 2:26 PM Susan McNamara-Hill <SMcnamarahill@essex.org> wrote:

Martha:

Thank you for the email. I spoke with Will Senning at the Secretary of State's office today and he recommended that the if the board really wants to mail ballots out to all voters that they specify ballots will be mailed to "active" voters only. This means that voters who we have challenged because we don't believe they live here anymore would not receive the ballots. There are currently 1400 + challenged names on the voter list, out of a total of 16,000+

He also said we will not need to track down voters' addresses for any ballots that are returned. For information purposes – many college students changed their mailing addresses before the presidential primary election to have ballots mailed to them at their campus addresses. I don't know if ballots mailed for this election will get to those voters.

Every ballot mailed will have to include a postage paid return envelope. This means that we will have to run the return ballot envelopes through a postage meter to put postage on before we mail them out. We will also have to pay postage on the envelopes that are being mailed containing the ballot, instructions and return envelope. We do not have 32,000+ election envelopes but can probably obtain more from other municipalities that do not have local elections coming up.

We are required to have polls open on the election day and allow voters to walk in if they desire. We can set up drive up voting as well.

This is all very new and I am really not sure how it will be implemented. I am hoping for more guidance from the SOS office and will be in touch.

Susan

Susan McNamara-Hill, Clerk/Treasurer

Village of Essex Junction

Town of Essex

81 Main Street

Essex Junction, VT 05452

802-879-0413



From: Martha Heath <martha.heath@board.ewsd.org>

Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 7:12 AM

To: Sonnick <sonnick@gmail.com>

Cc: Evan Teich <eteich@essex.org>; Susan McNamara-Hill <SMcnamarahill@ESSEX.ORG>; Town Clerk <townclerk@westfordvt.us>

Subject: School budget vote

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Dear John,