

## 9/28 Trustee's Meeting re: Essex Junction Independence

On September 28, the Trustees held a Public Hearing on the Charter for the City of Essex Junction and had several business items on the agenda related to Essex Junction Independence. The following is what was discussed.

The Trustees held a Public Hearing on the proposed Charter for the City of Essex Junction. You can watch the presentation here: <https://youtu.be/wUFkfZ0pRz0?t=180> (starting at 3:00 and ending at 19:05) or find a copy of the presentation here: [https://www.essexjunction.org/fileadmin/files/Board\\_of\\_Trustees/Public\\_Hearing\\_Presentation.pdf](https://www.essexjunction.org/fileadmin/files/Board_of_Trustees/Public_Hearing_Presentation.pdf).

Key take-aways from the presentation:

- We are voting on whether or not to adopt a new municipal charter that would transform the Village into an independent city, and no longer be a part of the Town of Essex.
- The Charter is available at 81 Main Street or here: <https://www.essexjunction.org/proposed-charter>.
- Things that will stay the same with the new charter include Essex Junction maintaining its identity, continuing to enjoy high-quality government services, having a 5-member governing board elected at large (no mayor), an annual budget presented to voters, and maintaining quality of life.
- Things that will be different with the new charter include gaining full control of Essex Junction's future, tax dollars staying and only being invested in the City, and being an equal municipality like other Chittenden County cities and towns.
- The estimated financial impacts include a tax decrease of \$195 on a \$300,000 assessed home, the tax rate reducing by 7.25%, and General Fund spending on government to decrease by \$811,337.
- Cost savings come from no longer paying for mirror services in the Town, already having most of the departments in the Village for the City, and no longer paying towards Town Capital Fund.
- Cost increases come from paying for police per capita (48%) vs. grand list (42%), paying for indirect administrative police services, paying for 81% of current Green Mountain Transit hours that are in the Village, and creating new City finance, assessing, and senior services departments.
- Financial details can be found here: <http://www.essexjunction.org/citybudget>.
- Ballots will be mailed to all active registered voters and arriving by October 13.
- In-person voting is November 2, 7a.m.-7p.m., at Essex High School.

During the work session the Trustees debriefed their contract negotiations with the Town, reviewed conceptual plans for 2 Lincoln Street, and reviewed the City budget.

The Trustees removed two words from the previously approved Charter in section 102. They warned the vote on the Charter for November 2. They approved a mailer to go to all Village homes as soon as possible.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.essexjunction.org/independence>.

If you have feedback on anything related to independence, you are encouraged to share your thoughts here: <https://forms.gle/aYAn93rMeQnP9Cne7>.

If you missed the work session and Independence related business portion of the meeting, but would like to watch it, you can find it here (starting at minute 33:35 and ending at 58:35, and again from 1:38:20 to 2:37:50): <https://youtu.be/wUFkfZ0pRz0?t=2015>.

The next Public Hearing and Trustees meeting is on Tuesday, October 12, at 6:30p.m. at 2 Lincoln Street or online. The meeting agenda and link will be posted a few days before the meeting here: <https://www.essexjunction.org/boards/board-of-trustees>.

## Memo

To: Village Trustees

From: Brad Luck, Director, EJRP

Date: September 22, 2021

Re: September 28 Work Session: Essex Junction Independence

### Essex Junction Independence

#### Goal

To create an independent Essex Junction, ensuring that it: has a foundation that provides for economic and political stability, reflects the Village character, has opportunity for growth, and looks towards the future.

#### How we will get there

This will be a Village led process that is future-oriented. We will steer clear of distractions and act with civility, transparency, and deliberateness. The Trustees will work to develop consensus and speak with a consistent voice. We will engage with, bring together, seek input from, and work to inform our community. We will work with the Selectboard and maintain a healthy relationship with our neighbors in the Town.

Tonight, we will be discussing:

- A. Proposals/Contracts Debrief
- B. 2 Lincoln Plans
- C. FY22 City Budget

#### A. Proposals/Contracts Debrief

The Trustees have had joint meetings with the Town of Essex Selectboard on September 20 and 27. This is an opportunity to debrief those meetings as a board. The next joint meetings are scheduled for October 19 and 25.

#### B. 2 Lincoln Plans

Updated plans for 2 Lincoln, along with estimates on construction costs, have been provided for review and discussion by the Trustees. Note: these may not make it in the packet and come separately as soon as they are received.

#### C. FY22 City Budget

A draft FY22 city budget has been created for review and discussion by the Trustees. This document will be sent separately on Tuesday, September 28, after the joint meeting on Monday night – in case any of those discussions with the Selectboard have budgetary impacts. The budget document uses FY22 numbers to examine how if the city had been formed and fully organized in FY22, what the revenues and expenses could have looked like. As a reminder, the future city manager will prepare a budget, with input and direction from the City Council. The City Council will review and amend the budget before it goes to the voters for consideration by Australian ballot. While using FY22 numbers, the budget reflects the organization of the city after the conclusion of any shared/contracted relationships with the Town of Essex, other than police (i.e. city has its own finance and assessing departments).

#### Attachments

- 9/14 Work Session Feedback (1)
- 2 Lincoln Plans (note: may come separately after packet distribution)
- FY22 City Budget (note: will come separately on September 28)

# September 14 Work Session Feedback on Essex Junction Independence

This survey will be available from 9/16 through 9/27.

This survey is for Village of Essex Junction residents and must include your e-mail, name, and address. Incomplete responses will not be given consideration.

Please note: this information will be used to inform the work and discussions of the Trustees. We will not be directly responding to any comments or questions posted below. If you have specific matters you would like a response to, you should e-mail the Trustees directly (<https://www.essexjunction.org/boards/board-of-trustees>).

Please be aware that the information provided below will be made public, except for your email and address.

Email \*

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Your Name \*

Melissa Czaplicke

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Your Address \*

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On a scale of 0-10 (0=Very bad, 10=Excellent), how well do you think the process for creating an independent Essex Junction is going?

0    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

Very Bad                                                Excellent

What did you hear that you are excited about?

That the Junction is going to stop paying for everything outside of the Junction.

Did you hear anything that you are concerned about?

Yes, the police station is on Junction property. I think Essex town should move their police station to the town. Essex Junction should have it's own police and they should be at the police station in the Junction on River Road. .

Do you have any comments, feedback, or suggestions?

The HS is on Junction property. Land is valuable and it's a prime location. I think the town should be paying a property use tax for the HS. Additionally, I do not think the Junction should be paying for busing. The Junction can go back to not having busses.

Do you have any questions?

Can we vote on moving the fairgrounds out of the Junction? That is valuable land that could be converted to housing and providing the Junction a lot of property tax.

This form was created inside of Essex Junction Recreation & Parks.

