

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF MEETING
August 13, 2013**

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: George Tyler (Village President); Dan Kerin, Lori Houghton, Elaine Sopchak, Andrew Brown.
ADMINISTRATION: Pat Scheidel, Village Manager; Jim Jutras, Waste Water Treatment Facility Director; Darby Brazoski, Economic Development/Community Relations Assistant.
OTHERS PRESENT: Chelsea Mandigo, Dennis Lutz, Wayne Elliott, Leslie Cobler, Brad LaRose, Irene Wrenner.

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

Add to agenda:

- Under Reading File – Letter to Waste Water Management Program, Vermont DEC, dated 8/12/13
- Under Manager’s Report – Police Facility Project Timeline

3. GUESTS, PRESENTATIONS, & PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda

Leslie Cobler, 13 Sugartree Lane, G-4

Leslie Cobler, Sugartree Lane, asked about the amount of the water fee that is being charged and who is being charged. George Tyler explained the fees are set so the budget can be established and to support the required upgrades at the waste water treatment plant. The fees are charged quarterly. Wayne Elliott with Aldrich + Elliott, Water Resource Engineers, added every residential unit will be charged the fee. The village is upgrading meters for remote reading. Meters are read every six months to determine actual usage. Fees are charged quarterly based on estimated usage. Ms. Cobler stated her water meter has not yet been changed. Staff will investigate the matter. Ms. Cobler asked about the car washes at the fire station and the irrigation system at the village office which was operating during the rain. Jim Jutras stated the municipality is billed for water use. Staff will check the rain sensor on the irrigation system.

b. Discussion with Essex Police Chief, Brad LaRose

Police Chief LaRose updated the Trustees on police activity in the village and town, noting the following:

- The department is fully staffed which will allow implementation of programs and services.
- The department is preparing for the Champlain Valley Fair. Traffic, noise, parking are concerns. Meetings with CVE personnel are being held to discuss these matters and avoid problems. People should report any issues they see.

- There is an illicit drug problem in the state that is driving most of the criminal activity. Drugs are the number one priority for the police force. The village and town do not suffer from as great a battle with drugs as other communities. The police are remaining diligent.
- The neighborhood group in the Railroad Avenue area is doing a great job in stemming loitering and hanging out which can lead to criminal activities. Beautification of the area helps as well.
- Crime statistics are available online for the village and town.
- The bike patrol travels through the parks in the village and town as the “eyes and ears” of the police. The bike riders are not police officers.
- Having an active neighborhood watch in every neighborhood would be very beneficial to the community and the police. There is a meeting in October for captains of the watch groups. A good turnout is encouraged.
- There are increasing challenges in crime enforcement in the form of alternative justice and options on the enforcement end. For example the recently passed state law relative to marijuana possession conflicts with local ordinances and that is a problem.

Lori Houghton mentioned having a police presence at the farmers market is very helpful. Ms. Houghton also thanked the police for pulling over a driver at Five Corners who proceeded when there was a pedestrian waiting to cross the road.

Chief LaRose thanked the community for supporting the new police facility, noting much work has been done on the plans, the facility will be money well spent, and it is important the project remain on schedule so money and time are not lost.

4. OLD BUSINESS

a. Discuss/Approve Descriptions of Boards, Commissions, Committees

The following comments/suggestions were made on the descriptions:

- For library trustee remove the language about preferred skills to avoid potential volunteers from eliminating themselves.
- Add language in the library trustee description saying “interest in literacy, education, childhood development”.
- Add language in the description of the capital review committee members to say financial background or accounting.
- Add a general statement for all positions saying that the village welcomes volunteers from all walks of life. For example, have language saying: “The Village would like all citizens to consider serving on the committee. Skills or interests that might be helpful to you...”
- For the planning commission position there should be language saying “take a proactive role” (i.e. proactively monitor the comprehensive plan).
- Make it clear that members must be village residents by having language saying “elected board members must be residents of the village”.

Staff will amend the descriptions as suggested.

George Tyler suggested further discussion be held regarding restricting residents in the town outside the village from serving on village committees. Dan Kerin pointed out residents in the town outside the village do not have a vested interest like a village resident. Elaine Sopchak mentioned the upcoming discussions of combining planning and zoning codes so it may make sense to allow shared services. Lori Houghton stated when the town and village are sharing services then committee membership can be reviewed.

MOTION by George Tyler, SECOND by Dan Kerin, to adopt the board, committee, commission descriptions for the following as amended on 8/13/13 by the Trustees:

- **Library Trustees**
- **Planning Commission**
- **Zoning Board of Adjustment**
- **Capital Program Review Committee**
- **Bike/Walk Advisory Committee**

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

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. **Discuss/Approve Joint Storm Water Policy Coordination Committee**

Jim Jutras, Waste Water Treatment Facility Director, briefed the Trustees on the recent incident at the treatment plant where treated waste water was inadvertently released prior to the end of the process. Regarding the Joint Storm Water Policy Coordination Committee, the purpose is to work in the current storm water permit realm in a smart and efficient way. The village and town must address storm water rules, requirements for implementation under development regulations, the flow restoration plan, unpermitted areas, technical assistance outreach on low impact development, and funding improvements long term. Dennis Lutz echoed the logic of the town and village coordinating efforts to address storm water. George Tyler noted the Essex Selectboard approved going forward with a joint committee.

Dan Kerin asked about controlling runoff with retention ponds and addressing expired permits, perhaps when a property owner comes before the Planning Commission with a development plan. Jim Jutras explained there are other approaches to controlling runoff than retention ponds that are low cost alternatives especially with larger parcels such as retrofitting natural drainage structures. Dennis Lutz briefly explained underground storage systems for water as another option to ponds. Regarding expired permits, there will be lots of partnering because the state bundled the permits and told the communities to deal with them.

MOTION by Lori Houghton, SECOND by Andrew Brown, to create a Joint Storm Water Policy Coordination Committee with the Town of Essex for the primary purpose of providing recommendations and guidance to the Selectboard and Trustees on issues relating to meeting the requirements of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) MS4 Phase 2 General Permits (3-9014) recently issued to the Town of Essex and the Village of Essex Junction, and further, that the joint committee include:

- **Town/Village Manager – ex officio member – Patrick Scheidel**

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- **Selectboard member appointed by the Selectboard – Mike Plageman**
 - **Trustee member appointed by the Trustees**
 - **Village Storm Water Staff – Jim Jutras with staff support, Chelsea Mandigo**
 - **Town Public Works Staff – Dennis Lutz with staff support, Annie Constandi**
 - **Town representative appointed by Selectboard who represents one of the current, expired discharge permit holders**
 - **Village representative appointed by the Trustees who represents one of the current, expired discharged permit holders**

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

MOTION by Elaine Sopchak, SECOND by Dan Kerin, to appoint George Tyler as the Trustee appointed to the Joint Storm Water Policy Coordination Committee.

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

b. Discussion/Action on Proposals for New Website

Darby Brazoski explained the recommendation to award the redesign of the website to Ecopixel of Essex Junction. Following discussion the Trustees requested further information on the following:

- Reduction in fee if calendar or email applications are not used? If something else is used will the vendor install? Cost?
- Extra cost to install credit card app?
- Does vendor take a cut of the credit card usage fee?
- Can SeeClickFix be incorporated? Cost?
- Is there a mobile version of website? Cost?
- Is there a forum to monitor online discussions? Cost?
- What does village get for the annual fee which is higher than the other bids?
- Drop dead date for decision on the website is what?
- Since town mentions village on website and village mentions town on website what is potential of partnering with town rather than building new village website?

Action was tabled until the next meeting pending further information. The Trustees want to view the new webpage before activation.

c. Appointments to Capital Program Review Committee

Lori Houghton stated there is no need to have two members of the Board of Trustees serve on the capital committee. The policy should be changed to reflect one member of the Board of Trustees.

MOTION by Dan Kerin, SECOND by Lori Houghton, to amend the policy for the Capital Program Review Committee to decrease the membership by requiring one member from the Board of Trustees. VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

MOTION by Lori Houghton, SECOND by Elaine Sopchak, to (re)appoint David Nistico to the Capital Program Review Committee. VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

6. VILLAGE MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Meeting Schedule

- August 27 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- September 10 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- September 24 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- October 8 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- October 22 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- November 12 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- November 26 2 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- December 10 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting

Special Meetings/Events:

- October 3 – VLCT 2013 Town Fair at Killington

2. Meetings with Staff and Committees

Meetings continue with department heads and committees:

- Discussion with Heart & Soul covered values, shared manager concept, and the public engagement process of the two plans up for re-adoption. Heart & Soul appears to support one common plan.
- Discussion with Finance covered having one tax bill for the general fund. August 2014 is the target date. One tax bill will be sent to the taxpayer with taxes for both the town and village due on the same date. Collection for the school districts needs to be worked out.
- Discussion with the Employee Association covered negotiations with the new management.
- Discussion with the Library involved recruitment for the Library Director position and involvement of the village manager. The Library Board wants the village manager to be involved.
- Discussion with Public Works covered storm water issues.

3. Police Facility Timeline

The Agency of Natural Resources advised that it would be easier to secure a permit if the property is subdivided which was done. The Planning Commission is meeting August 29, 2013 to review the site plan for the project.

7. TRUSTEES COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. Board Member Comments

None.

b. Reading File

- Minutes

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- Planning Commission 7/18/13 (Dan Kerin corrected the minutes to reflect the maximum building height in the village at 58' rather than 85')
 - Block Party Committee 7/31/13
 - VLCT Memo re: Municipal and Legislative Service Awards
 - Memo on FY14 Tax Rates
 - Letter to Residents re: Flooding Mitigation Action
 - Notice of Hearing from PSB re: Whitcomb Farm Solar Project 8/27/13
 - VLCT Vermont Public Records Act Workshop 9/26/13
 - Letter from Resident on Sugartree Lane re: Water Bill

8. CONSENT AGENDA & READING FILE

MOTION by Andrew Brown, SECOND by Lori Houghton, to approve the consent agenda as follows:

1. **Approve Minutes of Previous Meetings (7/23/13).**
2. **Approve Warrants including Checks #10047555 through #10047660 totaling \$284,309.69.**

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

9. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Dan Kerin, SECOND by Andrew Brown, to adjourn the meeting.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

RSety: M.E.Riordan

