

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF MEETING
November 12, 2013**

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: George Tyler (Village President); Dan Kerin, Elaine Sopchak, Andrew Brown, Lori Houghton.

ADMINISTRATION: Pat Scheidel, Village Manager; Lauren Morrisseau Co-Assistant Manager & Finance Director; Susan McNamara-Hill, Co-Assistant Manager & Village Clerk/Treasurer; Jim Jutras, Waste Water Treatment Plant Water Quality Superintendent; Robin Pierce, Village Development Director.

OTHERS PRESENT: Wayne Elliott, Meredith Birkett, Marty Powers, Paul Hansen, Kris Surette, Nick Meyer, Lisa Ritter.

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 Guests, Presentations, & Public Hearings:

- Essex-Williston-Waterbury-Montpelier transit service as circ alternative project

Add to Old Business:

- Memo from Dave Barra, dated 11/8/13, re: Rec Dept. Agreement

Add to New Business:

- Revised policy on providing references for former employees

Add to Reading File:

- Original planning commission member description

Add to Consent Agenda:

- Check Register, dated November 12, 2013, with checks #10048123 through check#10048233 totaling \$798,223.89.

3. GUESTS, PRESENTATIONS, & PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda

There were no comments from the public.

b. Update on Circ Alternatives Projects

Meredith Birkett, RPC, and Marty Powers, Essex representative on the CCTA Board, presented a proposed link bus service from Essex Junction to Montpelier as part of the circ alternative projects to be presented to the circ alternative task force. The proposed service would be five to 10 years out because CCTA does not have the vehicles at this time and the CCTA Board has not committed to the route. The link service would offer three roundtrip morning and three roundtrip afternoon trips. Funding would be 80/20 (federal/local) split. The state may help with the local match in the first year. Local match if the service is implemented FY19 is \$81,500. Local match if the service is implemented

FY24 is \$94,500. Discussion with the communities at both ends of the link service will be held at the appropriate time regarding sharing the local match. The proposal includes “pocket parking lots” for users of the service. The park-and-ride facility at Exit 12 in Williston will also be available for parking.

George Tyler mentioned there may be available parking area along the planned crescent connector road in the village. Mr. Tyler also mentioned possibly coordinating with the bus stop at the train station. Meredith Birkett agreed there could be some coordination with people transferring from the local service to the link service or at some other coordination point. Having parking for commuters at the service location makes the most sense.

c. Update on New Website Design

Paul Hansen with Ecopixel reported:

- The final design of the webpage has been approved and coding is underway.
- There are links to senior citizen information and the Trustees page. Future links will be to the Five Corners Farmers Market and Essex Town website.
- The Planning Department and Planning Commission have a page that includes a list of approved projects in the village.
- Next steps after the templates are done include the structure of initial pages and importing information from the existing website.
- Three staff members will be trained on maintaining the website.
- The updated webpage is on target to launch December 16, 2013.

d. Update on the Bio-Gas Cogen System Upgrade Equipment

Wayne Elliott with Aldrich & Elliot Engineering and Jim Jutras, Water Quality Superintendent, reviewed the upgrade to the cogen system at the waste water treatment plant which was not included in the bond to upgrade the treatment plant. The following was noted:

- As part of the upgrade construction the micro-turbine system was removed. The manufacturer has discontinued production of the equipment and the cost to bring the equipment up to code exceeds the value. Replacement is necessary. The village has recovered the original investment in the equipment.
- After research of equipment and site visits to view equipment in operation staff is recommending implementation of 150 kW methane generating equipment and installation by 2C Cenergy at a cost of \$391,820.70. Total cost of equipment, engineering, permitting, and installation is \$665,000.
- Funding sources include funds from the construction contract for the treatment plant upgrade, contingency funds, money in the capital budget, an incentive from Efficiency Vermont, and any other sources that are uncovered.

Andrew Brown asked about going through the state procurement process for the equipment. Jim Jutras explained the ability to design-build the micro-turbine for the best fit for the village and to anticipate future growth would not be available through the state process.

4. OLD BUSINESS

a. Bid Award for Bio-Gas Cogen System Upgrade Equipment

MOTION by Lori Houghton, SECOND by Andrew Brown, to award the bid for a 150 kW methane generating unit to the lowest qualified bidder, 2C Cenergy, for \$391,820.70. VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

b. Adopt Village Tree Policy and Comprehensive Tree Plan

Nick Meyer reported he worked with staff and the UVM Urban Forestry Program on the tree policy revisions. The policy plan allows flexibility and is a start to managing the urban landscape. The suggested budget of \$10,000 will be used mainly for trees and shrubs (maintenance and pruning). Pat Scheidel noted the Finance Manager recommends funds to manage the plantings in the village be rolled into the Public Works budget. Not much will be done before spring so the Board could approve a budget amount not to be exceeded and then fold the funds into the Public Works budget.

MOTION by Lori Houghton, SECOND by Andrew Brown, to adopt the tree policy for the Village of Essex Junction and set up a preliminary budget not to exceed \$10,000. VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

c. Approve Description for Tree Advisory Committee Member

MOTION by Lori Houghton, SECOND by Elaine Sopchak, to approve the Tree Advisory Committee member description as presented and establish a Tree Advisory Committee. VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

d. Tax Stabilization Agreement for 8 Railroad Avenue

Pat Scheidel stated the time period for tax stabilization on the property at 8 Railroad Ave. is three years rather than five years because the historic asset is gone (building burned down and was rebuilt). The newly constructed facility is the best looking and best constructed building in the area which meets one criterion for tax stabilization (changing a blighted building to a functional and useful property with a higher assessed value).

MOTION by Dan Kerin, SECOND by Elaine Sopchak, to sign the agreement with Michael Meier for tax stabilization for the property at 8 Railroad Avenue for a term of three years. VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

e. Update on Draft Amendment of School District Agreement

Pat Scheidel reported per the memo from Dave Barra, dated 11/8/13, the school district's attorney is reviewing the Rec Dept. agreement for the school board's signature and then the document will be forwarded to the Trustees for signature.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. Adopt Policy re: Providing References for Former Employees

Pat Scheidel advised to avoid any potential litigation the policy on references for former employees will provide only a former employee's name, position title(s), and dates of employment. The policy will also require that requests for information be directed to the Village Manager, if subpoenaed for information state law will be followed, and personnel

files will not be provided to a third party (the employee can make a copy of their records and provide that information to a third party).

Dan Kerin observed state and federal law must be followed with subpoenas.

Elaine Sopchak asked if a letter of recommendation can be written by village staff for an employee. Pat Scheidel said as a measure of caution the letter should be a personal letter of reference rather than a reference as a co-worker.

**MOTION by Elaine Sopchak, SECOND by Dan Kerin, to adopt the Village policy on providing references for village employees with the addition to the policy that all state and federal regulations will be followed if subpoenaed for information.
VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.**

b. Adopt Updated Mission and Values Statement

Pat Scheidel reviewed the mission and goals statements as well as the organizational values which include the following principles:

- Practice open, honest, and accessible communication (following discussion text was amended to stated “encourage and seek participation by the people affected by the decisions made”)
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity
- Exercise fiscal responsibility and accountability
- Provide friendly and courteous service to all customers (following discussion text was amended to delete the word “customers” and replace “our business is serving...” to “our mission is serving...”)
- Welcome diversity and promote equal opportunity
- Treat others with respect, sensitivity and dignity
- Work together as a team
- Emphasize initiative and creativity
- Support a human environment
- Pursue excellence and professionalism

MOTION by Dan Kerin, SECOND by Andrew Brown, to approve the establishment of the Mission Statement, Goal Statement, and Organizational Values for the Village of Essex Junction as amended, including:

- **In the principle beginning “Practice open, honest, and accessible communication” - insert the word “seek” before “participation in the descriptive text;**
- **In the principle beginning “Provide friendly and courteous service to all customers” - delete the word “customers” and in the descriptive text replace “our business is serving...” with “our mission is serving...”.**

DISCUSSION: George Tyler observed the document is a statement to reassure the public and fellow employees there is a code and values in place. There was discussion of incorporating the six values from Heart & Soul in the personnel manual.

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

c. Catering for Annual Meeting Community Supper

MOTION by Lori Houghton, SECOND by Elaine Sopchak, to accept the staff recommendation that CCSU Child Nutrition Program cater the village annual meeting supper on April 2, 2014 for a cost of \$1,200 including dessert. VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

d. Discuss Municipal Manager Recruitment and Selection Process

Pat Scheidel will provide the following:

- Policy for recruitment and selection of a shared manager. Issues and goals need to be identified as well as the skills and abilities that are needed for the shared position. How citizens play an active role in the recruitment and selection process must be outlined.
- Plan of action, goals, details of the partnership, evaluation of the manager and the partnership between the administrative leader and the policy making leaders.
- Recommendations and analysis of other administrative services in the village and town that could be shared as the manager position is shared.

George Tyler suggested when the documents are available a subcommittee of two Trustees and two Selectboard members review/rework them as needed to produce a plan of action. There will be maximum transparency through the process. George Tyler and Lori Houghton volunteered to serve on the subcommittee.

6. VILLAGE MANAGER'S REPORT

a. Meeting Schedule

- December 10 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- January 14, 2014 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- January 28, 2014 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- February 11, 2014 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- February 25, 2014 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting

Special Meetings/Events:

- December 4th Tree Lighting and Train Hop, 5:30 – 8:00 PM
- December 9th – Budget Day

b. Circ Alternative Projects

Circ alternative project ideas will be presented to the legislature in January. Funding is not yet available for the projects.

c. CHIPS lease

The meeting with CHIPS covered the lease space in Lincoln Hall and grant applications.

d. Seniors

The senior groups in Essex and Essex Junction would like to combine to form one senior group with the meeting place as the senior center at Lincoln Hall. The group wants to rename the senior center “Senior Activity Center” and do minor renovations to the space

to allow for more activities. Pat Scheidel is investigating the cost of a part-time director for the center. There is potential for staff hours in the rec program to be dedicated to the senior program.

e. **FEMA Community Development Block Grants**

Paul Luciano with CCRPC indicated there is federal community development block grant money available to address infrastructure damage due to flooding. The work on Main Street (ditches, culverts, curbs from the bridge to Crestview Road) was identified as a potential project. Paul Luciano will write a grant for this project. The deadline is 11/18/13. The grant is an 80/20 split.

7. TRUSTEES COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. Board Member Comments

None.

b. Reading File

- Minutes from boards/committees
 - Planning Commission 9/19/13 & 10/3/13
 - Capital Program Review Committee 10/1/13
 - Zoning Board of Adjustment 10/15/13
- Thank you note for the Purple Light Vigil on Lincoln Hall lawn
- CCRPC FY13 Annual Report
- Original planning commission member description (following discussion the Trustees agreed to add the mission/purpose as drafted by the Planning Commission)

8. CONSENT AGENDA & READING FILE

MOTION by Elaine Sopchak, SECOND by Lori Houghton, to approve the consent agenda as follows:

- 1. Approve Minutes of Previous Meetings (10/8/13 & 10/22/13)**
- 2. Approve Warrants including checks #10048123 through #10048233 totaling \$798,223.89.**

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

9. ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

RScty: M.E.Riordan