



BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
Tuesday, March 12, 2019 at 6:30 PM
2 Lincoln St., Essex Junction, VT 05452

1. **CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO FLAG** [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. **PUBLIC HEARING** [6:35 PM]
 - a. Public Hearing on VT Housing Data Community Profile Report—Leslie Black-Plumeau
6. **BUSINESS ITEMS**
 - a. Presentation of FYE18 Audit—Casey Scandore
 - b. Presentation on Parking Study—Rick Bryant from Stantec
 - c. Presentation about potential Green Mountain Transit route changes—Jon Moore
 - d. Update on school resource officer and program—Evan Teich
 - e. Annual Meeting Preparation
7. **CONSENT ITEMS**
 - a. Approval of minutes: February 26, 2019
 - b. Check Warrants #17137—03/01/19;
8. **READING FILE**
 - a. Board Member Comments
 - b. Agency of Transportation Proposed FY20 Budget
 - c. Memo re: Information about Communications Team and Website Questionnaire
 - d. Chittenden Regional Planning Commission Newsletter
 - e. Upcoming Meeting Schedule
9. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**
 - a. An executive session not anticipated
10. **ADJOURN**

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**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF MEETING
March 12, 2019**

TRUSTEES PRESENT: George Tyler (Village President), Andrew Brown, Elaine Haney; Dan Kerin
ADMINISTRATION: Evan Teich, Unified Manager; Sarah Macy, Finance Director/ Assistant Village Manager ; Rick Garey, Chief of Police; Robin Pierce, Community Development Director
OTHERS PRESENT: Leslie Black-Plumeau; Rick Bryant; Diane Clemens; Peter Keating; Jon Moore; Patrick Murray; Marti Powers; Casey Scandore; Amber Thibeault; Mia Watson; 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**

Mr. Tyler suggested to change the agenda so the presentation of the FYE18 audit (item 6a) would take place prior to the Public Hearing on the VT Housing Data Community Profile Report (item 5a).

3. **APPROVE AGENDA**

MOTION by George Tyler, SECOND by Andrew Brown, to move item 6a to before item 5a on the agenda. Voting: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

4. **PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**

a. Comments from public on items not on the agenda.

There were no comments from the public

5. **PUBLIC HEARING**

a. Public Hearing on VT Housing Data Community Profile Report—Leslie Black-Plumeau
Mia Watson and Leslie Black-Plumeau from Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA) introduced the redesigned Community Profiles website, www.HousingData.org, funded by a VT Community Development Program Planning Grant that included Essex Junction as the municipal conduit. Ms. Black-Plumeau explained that the goal was for the public to better utilize the site's housing data to understand Vermont's housing trends and needs. She said the website is proving useful in Essex's Housing Needs assessment, as the Planning Commission works to determine actions on local housing issues.

Ms. Watson explained that housing data is now organized on the website by area of interest/ subject matter. She demonstrated how the site's new visuals can be used to see and filter data. She pulled up charts that compare Housing Cost Burden data, one of many subjects that can be analyzed on the site. This showed that one in five Village of Essex Junction households is paying over 50% of their income on housing. The information was compared to rates in other municipalities. Ms. Watson also pulled up information on rental housing costs that demonstrated median rent costs for different sized apartments, as compared to other area municipalities.

Mr. Kerin wondered if the site's data will remain current, and Ms. Watson explained that VHFA can easily import new data into the website's back-end Tableau software. Ms. Black- Plumeau praised Ms. Watson for being an expert in managing this software. She said VHFA is available to support the municipality as they navigate and start including information from this website in their planning.

6. **BUSINESS ITEMS**

a. Presentation of FYE18 Audit—Casey Scandore

Casey Scandore, a Manager of Kittell, Branagan & Sargent, discussed the independent audit of the Village of Essex Junction for FYE2018. She said that their opinion is an unmodified opinion, noting that this is the cleanest opinion that can be received. She said an additional single audit found no material deficiencies or weaknesses. Ms. Scandore pointed out the financials were mostly consistent to the year before, with only the addition of the Essex Junction Recreation and Parks Department acquisition and a required disclosure of tax abatements.

Mr. Tyler asked for clarification of the term “High Risk Auditee,” which is used in the audit to describe Essex Junction. Ms. Scandore explained that this is a technical term used in the single audit because the Village has not had a single audit for two consecutive years yet. Mr. Brown asked if there were any concerns with how the accounting for consolidation efforts were being handled and she pointed out that there are no concerns with this. Mr. Teich asked Ms. Scandore to discuss Essex Junction's financial controls, policies and procedures established to prevent fund comingling and fraud. She said, based on the audit's substantive testing, they found no inconsistencies with the financial controls and there are enough staff to implement them. Ms. Scandore and Mr. Teich praised staff for being very prepared for this audit.

b. Presentation on Parking Study—Rick Bryant from Stantec

Mr. Bryant presented Stantec's parking study findings for the Village of Essex Junction. He explained that the study's goal was to identify overall parking supply and suggest potential remedies for parking “hot spots”. Stantec collected and analyzed data on private and public parking around the 5 corners, within 5 parking zone “wedges”. He showed maps of these areas, with all public and private parking labeled, noting the number of spaces available and percentage used in each lot. The study focused on midweek/midday parking, midweek/ Farmer's Market time parking, and Friday evening parking. They determined that the overall parking supply is adequate, with a few “hot spots” where remedies are available. At mid-day, public spaces are more heavily used, peaking at 57% occupancy; farmers market day peaks at 40%. Parking next to the library and municipal buildings are often full during the day, but he suggested this challenge could be solved if staff used other local lots in close proximity. The Farmer's Market lot is only 5% utilized. Other neighboring lots that are underutilized but would need to be discussed with the school or a private lot owner to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), as is the practice in other municipalities. Similarly, there are “hot spots” on Friday evenings in the lots by the Lincoln Inn. The study suggests that lots down the road could be used. Mr. Bryant discussed future parking, considering future projects such as building the Crescent Connector, closing a road at Five Corners, and constructing buildings. He said that added vs. lost parking with these projects appear to balance out.

Mr. Tyler mentioned that, even with objective data, people's perceptions about parking availability may differ. Mr. Bryant said that education and communication efforts can change perceptions. Some options are to use wayfinding signs and website information about where people can park. Mr. Kerin said that McGillicuddy's already hands out a map that communicates where to park.

Patrick Murray wondered if Stantec had considered reviewing more dates to establish a bigger parking data set to analyze. Mr. Bryant said they are confident with the data accuracy because the study was conducted during busy months of the year and they cross-checked their results with anecdotal information from local residents. Mr. Teich clarified with Mr. Bryant that the high percentage of evening parking near McGuillicuddy's is only an overflow number of about 15 spaces. Mr. Kerin and Mr. Bryant discussed the likelihood of pedestrian, bike, and autonomous vehicles in the future and its potential implications on parking trends.

c. Presentation about Potential Green Mountain Transit Route Changes—Jon Moore

Mr. Moore and Marty Powers provided background on a multi-year, comprehensive service analysis conducted by Nelson Nygaard, with Green Mountain Transit (GMT), to look at ridership and services in order to maximize GMT transportation efforts in their 5-county service area. GMT hoped to increase ridership, decrease congestion and decrease greenhouse gasses. Mr. Moore discussed current ridership rates and suggested changes to the three routes serving Essex Junction, including:

- Increased the frequency of the Essex Junction route bus to every 20 minutes.
- Improved and extended evening services, with the last #2 Downtown Burlington bus leaving for Essex at 11pm.
- Decreased wait time to 45 minutes for busses on Sundays, which currently run every 75 minutes.
- Seamless routes to Shelburne on the #6 bus and to Taft Corners on the #10 bus.
- Eliminate the Global Foundries route and include this stop in the #4 and #10 busses, which would become an hourly route and include a walk and/or a transfer for Global Foundries riders
- The #2 bus will not run in the side neighborhoods but, instead, go directly to Amtrak.
- Possibly combining the Essex Center route with the #10 route as a direct line from the outlets and Taft Corners. This would terminate the Sandhill Rd. section but is still being discussed with the schools, where ridership of students to Sandhill Rd and River Rd. is up 60% this year.
- Increase base cash fare to \$1.50 per trip, up from \$1.25.

Mr. Moore said there will be a public meeting at the Village offices about the changes on April 8th from 7:00pm-8:00pm. Then, a presentation with a motion to approve the plan will be brought to the April 16th board meeting, and the schedules will be implemented and begin June 17th.

Mr. Brown and Mr. Moore discussed the possibility of, in the future, if GMT may consider free routes or express busses in relation to park and ride locations. Mr. Moore explained that if free routes were to be implemented GMT would need a strategy to make up more than \$2 million dollars in revenue, to keep current service levels. Ms. Powers asked for information about the scheduled Amtrak platform improvements and plans to improve traffic flow and the bus lane.

Ms. Haney requested that a route be established from the Amtrak station to the Richmond Park & Ride, to serve the high volume of commuters to Montpelier. Mr. Moore said this conversation was included in their analysis and it is likely to happen in the long run, but not yet.

Mr. Teich wondered how the elimination of the Sandhill Rd and River Rd sections will affect their school collaboration with the #4 bus, considering the increased school ridership and Mr. Kerin expressed concern about GMT's bussing of schoolchildren without school bus lighting for safety.

d. Update on School Resource Officer and Program—Evan Teich

Police Chief Rick Garey described the Department's strategy to station a new officer, recently hired, to serve as a School Resource Officer to Essex High School. He explained that the department has

been evaluating services and staffing for the past year, while researching and strategizing the implementation of best practices for school safety. Chief Garey said that current national and regional events have made high school security and safety a priority. Historically, in Essex, the School Resource Officer was stationed at the grade schools, delivering classroom lessons like community safety, avoiding drugs and alcohol, etc., and was solely paid for by the Police Department. The position will no longer be serving in this role. Chief Garey discussed collaborating with the school district for more than one School Resource Officer and having a portion of the additional officer's salary paid for by the schools. At the high school, the officer will be focused on positive relationship-building with the students as well as school security and safety. Chief Garey explained that the 5 year goal is to have one Resource Officer at each of the schools.

Mr. Kerin and Chief Garey talked about the current security staffing at the high school, which will continue to be a Security Guard and a Police Officer. This new position will be an additional safety precaution. Chief Gary explained that the community partnership with the Howard Street Outreach team could still be called on for support, when necessary. There will be a MOU between the Department and the schools to define privacy parameters and training requirements for the School Resource Officer. Mr. Brown clarified, with Chief Garey, that this new, full-time position is necessary.

The Trustees complemented the Police Department for their support at traffic stops and their use of the Facebook page to build community trust and engagement. Chief Garey explained how the use of social media can help solve crimes.

e. Annual Meeting Preparation

The Trustees discussed the upcoming Annual Meeting. Mr. Tyler pointed out that the schedule will be similar to previous years and he will work with Ms. Macy to create a brief presentation of the budget. The Trustees discussed how to present merger details, deciding to focus on cost savings associated with the consolidation to date. Ms. Haney requested that the Annual Report have a glossary of terms in the back. Mr. Teich asked for any revisions to the materials for the Report to be submitted to staff by Thursday 3/14/19. Mr. Brown wondered why no bake sales run on the meeting day, as is done in many other municipalities. Mr. Teich pointed out that, with so many groups in the Village of Essex Junction, narrowing down to just one to do a bake sale would be a challenge. For future years, Mr. Tyler suggested that the Trustees may want to consider making the report be a combination of Town, Village and the schools' reports and Ms. Haney suggested utilizing dyslexic-friendly font.

Diane Clemens requested that the "Vote Today" signs be out on Annual Meeting day so there is no oversight on behalf of residents. She pointed out that she does not believe this was done in the day of most recent voting.

7. CONSENT ITEMS

MOTION by Andrew Brown, SECOND by Elaine Haney, to approve the consent agenda:

- a. Approval of minutes: February 26, 2019
- b. Check Warrants #17137—03/01/19;

Voting: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

8. READING FILE

- a. Board Member Comments
- b. Agency of Transportation Proposed FY20 Budget

c. Memo re: Information about Communications Team and Website Questionnaire

Ms. Haney expressed her gratitude to the Information and Communications team for this memo. She noted the Essex Governance Group had made a recommendation a few years ago to create and implement a communications plan. She proposed that the Trustees consider developing a public engagement protocol in support of the Information and Communications team's work. She plans to share a public involvement toolkit, created by the City of Portland, with the Trustees in order to help guide the conversation.

d. Chittenden Regional Planning Commission Newsletter

e. Upcoming Meeting Schedule

Mr. Tyler pointed out that the Joint Meeting Schedule was updated to be 7pm on April 9th at 2 Lincoln St. and the Trustees' April regular meeting – Organizational Meeting schedule was updated to be on April 23rd at 6:30pm.

9. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

No Executive Session took place

10. **ADJOURN**

MOTION by Andrew Brown, SECOND by Dan Kerin, to adjourn the meeting. Voting: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

The meeting Adjourned at 8:28 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Cathy Ainsworth