

**Village of Essex Junction Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
December 4, 2019**

TRUSTEES: Andrew Brown, President; George Tyler, Vice President; Raj Chawla; Dan Kerin; Amber Thibeault.

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF: Evan Teich, Unified Manager; Sarah Macy, Finance Director/Assistant Manager; Greg Duggan, Deputy Manager; Courtney Bushey, Assistant Finance Director; Chris Gaboriault, Fire Chief; Robin Pierce, Community Development Director; Brad Luck, Essex Junction Recreation and Parks Director; Allyson Vile, Essex Parks and Recreation Director; Wendy Hysko, Brownell Library Director; Hannah Tracy, Brownell Library Assistant Director; Megan Allison, Brownell Librarian; Susan Pierce, Brownell Librarian; Jim Jutras, Water Quality Superintendent; Ricky Jones, Village Public Works Superintendent; Dennis Lutz, Public Works Director

OTHERS PRESENT: Irene Wrenner

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO FLAG

Mr. Brown called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

No changes were made to the agenda.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

With no changes to the agenda, a motion to approve was not needed.

4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

No inquiries were made.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. FY21 Budget Work Session

Sarah Macy provided the Village Trustees with a brief overview and highlights of the proposed budget. The proposed FY21 Village General Fund budget is \$5,344,193, a 3.47% or \$179,280 increase over the FY20 approved budget of \$5,164,913. This increase would be funded by a slight increase in funding from the enterprise funds (\$10,009), an increase in funding from the Town of Essex (\$82,435) and a 2.44% increase in the tax levy (\$86,835).

8:40 AM, Fire: Chris Gaboriault, Fire Chief presented a budget that is down approximately 1.5 percent. Chief Gaboriault explained that in order to maintain a paid call department, there is a need to plan for a new fire building with dorm space, or to add dorm space to the already existing building. Mr. Chawla asked Chief Gaboriault about a desired timeframe for completion of dorm space. Chief Gaboriault responded that within a 5-year time frame, hiring a consultant to take a look at the community as a whole would be the next step. Mr. Teich expanded on the discussion to inform the board that the recent space study covered building space only, where a fire study would be more specific to the work performed, staffing and the needs to maintain systems. Ms. Thibeault liked the idea for inclusion of a gym membership reimbursement for firefighters in the budget.

48 9:10 AM, Administration, Finance, Debt: Sarah Macy began with a presentation on the Village debt and
49 capital projects. The Village Pool Debt has been retired in FY20, driving the large decrease in the debt
50 segment. The funds from the Pool Debt of \$107,843 have been moved to the Transfers & Miscellaneous
51 segment to help fund the proposed capital transfer increases for FY21.

52
53 For Administration, staffing and services levels are projected to remain stable with a 1.8% overall
54 increase. To assist human resources with properly filing and archiving staff documents, changes and
55 adjustments, the Administration department budget includes a new cost for a Human Resources
56 Information System (HRIS) at \$3,075. This system is charged on a monthly, per employee basis and
57 would be shared between the Town and Village based on the number of employees. FY21 has a
58 reduction of approximately \$10,000 for the Pay & Classification Study, which is required every other
59 year by the Essex Junction Employees Association Contract with the Village of Essex Junction. Finance is
60 working internally to brainstorm ways in which to stabilize the budget impact of moderate cost items
61 that recur on a timeline greater than annually.

62
63 For the Finance Department, Ms. Macy emphasized the need for proper budgeting software that will
64 serve as a research and archiving database with a decreased opportunity for human error. Currently,
65 the Finance Department uses Excel to budget. Ms. Macy asked for an authorization to pursue options.
66 Several of the board members encouraged Ms. Macy to continue exploring options to replace the
67 current system.

68
69 10:15 AM, Break: Mr. Brown excused the members to take a short break.

70
71 10:30 AM, Economic and Community Development: Robin Pierce, Community Development Director
72 stated that as the work on the Crescent Connector continues, there will eventually be more room to
73 host and plan events. Due to the loss of events such as steAmfest and the Five Corners Farmer's
74 Market, Mr. Brown brought up a request by a couple of residents for the Town and the Village to put
75 money together to host a winter community supper event. Mr. Brown suggested that a better idea
76 might be to create a community advisory committee to bring in events such as art festivals and
77 community gatherings. Mr. Kerin mentioned that there is a difference between events created for local
78 residents and events that attract people from outside communities. The Trustees agreed to discuss the
79 idea of an advisory committee further at a later time. Mr. Brown suggested that the topic could be
80 discussed when Brad Luck, Recreation Director, presents later in the day. Mr. Pierce continued with his
81 budget presentation and updated the Trustees on current projects.

82
83 11:00 AM, Recreation, Senior Center: Allyson Vile provided the Trustees with an overview of how the
84 Senior Center operates with funding. Mr. Luck emphasized that as an enterprise fund, the funds are
85 managed by the municipality. There was a brief discussion regarding how trips with the seniors impact
86 the budget.

87
88 Mr. Luck moved on to present the Recreation budget. The new communications position in the
89 department has made a marked difference in planning and promoting activities. Mr. Brown brought up
90 the concept of an advisory community events committee with Mr. Luck and asked if he thought that this
91 would be a worthwhile idea. Mr. Teich, Mr. Chawla and Mr. Brown shared ideas regarding activities for
92 the committee to undertake such as fundraising for events and handling event logistics. Mr. Brown said
93 that he would like to see Mr. Luck come back to the next Trustees meeting to discuss further.

94

95 Mr. Luck continued to present the proposed budget for recreation, including funds set aside for an
96 electronic sign and updating the playground and pool chairs. The board members discussed the need
97 for signage not only at the recreation facility, but at the Town Offices at 81 Main Street and at Five
98 Corners. Mr. Brown suggested a decision on signs should not be made at this time in order for further
99 discussion to take place on a plan for the three locations that is cohesive and meets the needs for each
100 location. Mr. Luck requested that the funds for the sign remain in the budget for capital use, whether
101 for a sign or for other capital needs of the department. The board discussed the capital needs of
102 recreation as well as the capital needs of other departments and budgeting transparency. Mr. Luck
103 stated that reinvestment in capital needs according to the capital plan is necessary to prevent having to
104 turn to bonding for upkeep projects. Moving on to the program budget, Mr. Luck reminded the board
105 that all events such as Pumpkin Palooza, the Easter Egg Hunt and the Train Hop are all funded from
106 recreation overhead and are not funded from taxpayer municipal program dollars.

107
108 12:15 PM, Break: Mr. Brown excused the members to take a lunch break.

109
110 12:45 PM, Library: Wendy Hysko, Brownell Library Director, and Hannah Tracy, Brownell Brownell
111 Library Assistant Director, presented the Brownell Library budget. Ms. Macy added a few points about
112 building needs. Ms. Hysko stated that structural work on the building has been addressed and now
113 concentration can be more on building efficiencies. Mr. Tyler asked about future expansion needs. Ms.
114 Hysko responded that she does not foresee the need to consider building renovations for expansion at
115 this time.

116
117 1:20 PM, Revenues: Ms. Macy presented a draft revenues budget to the Trustees and stated that all but
118 three of the revenue lines remain unchanged. The Trustees discussed capital projects at length.

119
120 2:10 PM, Waste Water Treatment Facility: Jim Jutras, Water Quality Superintendent, presented the
121 Wastewater Treatment Facility's proposed budget and provided some updates from the department.
122 Mr. Jutras explained that the Tri-town Joint Review Committee has not reviewed the draft budget and
123 that there may be some adjustments.

124
125 2:30 PM, Sanitation: Ricky Jones, Public Works Superintendent, joined Mr. Jutras at the table to present
126 the Sanitation budget. Ms. Macy explained several key points and changes. Mr. Jones updated the
127 board on the use of the new Super Sucker 5000 truck.

128
129 2:45 PM, Water: Mr. Jones, Public Works Superintendent, continued presenting with the proposed
130 budget for Water and provided updates from the department.

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132 2:50 PM, Highway: Ms. Macy and Mr. Jones presented the proposed Highway budget and the most
133 prominent changes and adjustments. Mr. Jones pointed out the increase to the Traffic Control line item
134 is due to the additional time involved for needed line striping.

135
136 3:10 PM, Buildings: Ms. Macy began the presentation of the Buildings budget. Mr. Lutz provided a list
137 of assessments the new Buildings Manager, Tom Yandow, has been working on for buildings in both the
138 Town and the Village.

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140 3:30 PM, Wrap-up: Mr. Tyler mentioned the importance of dealing with Lamoille Street. Ms. Macy and
141 Mr. Teich thanked the Trustees for participating in the budget day process.

142

143 **6. CONSENT ITEMS**

144 **Amber Thibeault made a motion, seconded by George Tyler, to approve the Consent Agenda.**

145 **a. Check Warrant #17175—11/27/19**

146 **Motion passed 5-0.**

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148 **7. READING FILE**

149 **a. Board Member Comments**

150 Mr. Tyler confirmed the Finding of Local Necessity Hearing date and time was set for December 17th
151 at 3:00 PM.

152

153 Mr. Teich and the Trustees thanked Ms. Macy and Ms. Getchell for their efforts and work on the
154 budget work session.

155

156 **b. Letter from James Jutras and Dennis Lutz re: 3 Ac rule comments**

157 **c. Upcoming meeting schedule**

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159 **8. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

160 An executive session was not necessary.

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162 **9. ADJOURN**

163 **Raj Chawla made a motion, seconded by Amber Thibeault, to adjourn. Motion passed 5-0 at 3:40 PM.**

164

165 Respectfully Submitted,

166 Tammy Getchell, Assistant to the Manager

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