

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
April 2, 2020**

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

**ADMINISTRATION and STAFF:** Evan Teich, Unified Manager; Greg Duggan, Deputy Manager; Susan McNamara-Hill, Clerk.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Brown called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and explained how the meeting would proceed, with changes instituted to adhere to COVID-19 social distancing restrictions. He said board members would participate remotely via Microsoft Teams and invited the public to participate remotely using conference call-in information.

2. **AGENDA ADDITIONS/ CHANGES**

Mr. Duggan suggested the addition of agenda item 5b, to authorize a bid award for Wastewater facility digester and flow equalization concrete repairs; and item 5c, to discuss COVID-19 update and possible action upon additional safety precautions.

Mr. Duggan added additional handouts to item 5a, a memo and attachments from Greg Duggan and Susan McNamara-Hill re: Scheduling a date for 2020 Village Meeting; item 5b, a memo and attachments from Jim Jutras re: Bid Award Wastewater Facility Digester and Flow Equalization concrete repairs and 5c, a memo from Evan Teich re: COVID-19 Response and a memo from Brad Luck re: COVID-19 and Village Public Park.

3. **APPROVE AGENDA**

**RAJ CHAWLA made a motion, and GEORGE TYLER seconded, that the Trustees accept the amendments to the agenda. VOTING: 5-0; motion carried.**

4. **PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**

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

There were no comments from the public at this time.

5. **BUSINESS ITEMS**

a. **Approve Warning to reschedule Village Annual Meeting to May 11 & ballot voting to May 19**

Mr. Duggan referenced Vermont's COVID-19 restrictions to municipal meeting requirements. Based on these, the Village Trustees and staff cancelled the Village Annual meeting on April 1 and called this special meeting to approve a warning to reschedule. Mr. Duggan explained the Secretary of State's most recent guidance, which allows a rescheduling delay. He said staff now recommends holding off the warning to reschedule until a later date. Ms. McNamara-Hill discussed the timeline parameters for warning an election and talked with the Trustees about technicalities related to preparing ballots. Mr. Brown suggested pushing the warning date out as far as possible, considering the projected COVID-19 peak timeframe. Mr. Teich cautioned possible repercussions if a budget does not pass by June 30 and agreed to report back to the Trustees with specific details on this. The Trustees discussed the possibility of coordinating the Annual Meeting and ballot voting with the School vote. Ms. McNamara-Hill suggested sending a postcard to residents to say that voters may request early ballots, instead of

trying to send every voter a ballot in the mail. Mr. Brown tabled the warning to reschedule the Annual Meeting until the Trustees' next meeting.

- b. **Authorize bid award for Wastewater facility digester and flow equalization concrete repair**  
Mr. Duggan introduced the bid recommendation for the Wastewater facility anaerobic digester and flow equalization tank repairs. The Trustees approved the project in November 2019 and two bids were received. Mr. Duggan said the engineer reviewed the bids and recommends the lower bid, N.A. Manosh Corporation's \$135,713, for approval. He explained this bid was in line with the engineer's expectations and estimate.

**DAN KERIN made a motion, and GEORGE TYLER seconded, that the Trustees award the contract for the Wastewater facility anaerobic digester wall refacing and the Flow Equalization basin concrete repairs to N.A. Manosh Company of Morrisville, Vermont. VOTING: 5-0; motion carried.**

- c. **Discuss COVID-19 update and possible action upon additional safety precautions**  
Mr. Teich referenced the memo included with this item to provide an overview of the municipal response to COVID-19. He said Police Chief Garey is the designated Operations Coordinator and was tasked with implementing a plan. The boards formally declared an emergency and the Village and Town acted with one voice as much as possible regarding buildings and grounds; employment/staffing; purchasing and sharing supplies; and responding to issues as they arose. Mr. Duggan and Ms. Getchell were appointed Public Information Officer and Assistant Public Information Officer, respectively. Mr. Teich said early decisions and actions included closing the Senior Center; cancelling all board/commission/committee meetings except for Trustees and Selectboard; identifying essential personnel; preparing for key personnel to work remotely; limiting access to specific buildings and services and increased cleaning efforts. He talked about the closure of the recreation departments, except for childcare open for first responders and the school food program's food pick up service. He discussed the Clerk Office's scaled back services, the suspension of late water payment shutoffs and maintaining the tax payment due date. Mr. Teich described the role Champlain Valley Fairgrounds is working with the UVM Medical Center for drive-through COVID-19 testing and hosting 400 non-COVID beds for patients starting Monday April 6. Mr. Teich discussed unfortunate loss of life in Essex to date and how emergencies are all being handled as hazardous at this time. He talked about the closure of park amenities, such as recreation courts, playgrounds and dog parks, with violation fines for trespassing. Mr. Teich also said local hotels are housing recovering patients and Essex staff are working with residents on food security and how to avoid scams. He said Essex is keeping track of all money expenditures on the emergency in preparation for possible FEMA reimbursement.

The Trustees expressed appreciation for Essex staff's communication and flexibility, with special thanks to the recreation departments, the Clerk's office, the Police department, the State of Vermont, and the Champlain Valley Expo.

- 6. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**
  - a. **An executive is not anticipated**  
An executive session did not take place.

7. **ADJOURN**

**DAN KERIN made a motion, and RAJ CHAWLA seconded, that the Trustees adjourn. VOTING: 5-0; motion carried at 7:20 PM.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Cathy Ainsworth