



VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
TRUSTEES
SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

Online
Essex Junction, VT 05452
Tuesday, May 5, 2020
6:30 PM

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COVID-19 UPDATE: Due to the Covid-19/coronavirus pandemic, **this meeting will be remotely**. Available options to watch or join the meeting:

- The meeting will be live-streamed on [Channel 17's YouTube channel](#).
- [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#). Depending on your browser, you may need to call in for audio (below).
- Join via conference call (*audio only*): (802) 377-3784 | Conference ID: 735 032 646#
- For the purpose of recording minutes, you will be asked to provide your first and last name.
- When listening to the meeting, please keep your phone or computer on "mute" as to prevent interruptions during the meeting. For agenda items when it is appropriate for the public to speak, please unmute your phone or computer and introduce yourself before requesting the floor from the Board President.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** [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. **BUSINESS ITEMS**
 - a. Discuss voting process for Annual Village Meeting
6. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**
 - a. An executive session is not anticipated
7. **ADJOURN**

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Certification: 05/01/2020
Date Posted

J Mitchell
Initials

VILLAGE TRUSTEES

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION TRUSTEES
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday May 5, 2020**

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

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

ESSEX WESTFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT (EWSD) SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS: Martha Heath, Chair; Kim Gleason, Vice Chair; Patrick Murray, Clerk; Al Bombardier; Diane Clemens; Brendan Kinney; Tilly Krishna, Student Representative; Todd Odit; Laura Printon, Student Representative; Andre Roy; Keeley Schell; Liz Subin.

EWSD STAFF: Beth Cobb, Superintendent; Brian Donahue, Chief Operating Officer.

OTHERS PRESENT: Katie Ballard; Annie Cooper; Karen Dolan; Lorna Michaud; Nanette Rogers; Natasha Wheel

1. CALL TO ORDER

Andrew Brown called the special meeting of the Village of Essex Junction Board of Trustees to order at 6:36 PM.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

There were no changes or additions to the agenda.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was not required because no changes were made.

4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

a. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda

There were no comments from the public at this time.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

b. Discuss voting process for Annual Village Meeting

Mr. Brown welcomed the EWSD Board members and administrators to the meeting. He explained coordination efforts between the EWSD Board, Village and Town municipal staff, and the Board of Trustees to align the rescheduled Village Annual Meeting with the school vote. At their previous meeting, the Trustees warned the annual Village Meeting for June 2, with polls open on June 2 from 10 AM to 7 PM and an informational meeting to be held the evening of June 1.

Mr. Brown invited the Trustees and EWSD board to discuss how to align Village and School voting processes. Ms. Heath and the School Board members talked about their commitment to increasing voter participation on budget votes. They advocated for mailing ballots to all active voters. The Trustees discussed EWSD's proposal to determine whether they would move forward together with mailing ballots, despite concerns about feasibility and cost noted by the Village Clerk. Although the Trustees agreed to replicate the School Board process, a majority said they would prefer this ballot-mailing process not set a precedent for future years. They expressed preference for person-to-person engagement at the traditional Village Meeting. Alternately, the EWSD board members discussed their hope that this process be considered again in years ahead if it promotes democratic engagement.

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The Trustees and School Board members discussed and agreed to mail ballots to all active voters in the Village, with the school vote on one side and the Village vote on the other side.. This mailing would not include voters whose registration is being challenged. Ms. McNamara-Hill said that mailing the 15,000 ballots to active voters will be challenging and she will call on the Board of Civil Authority to help with this process. She appealed to the State of Vermont for envelopes and will pick up some from various other clerk’s offices around the state. She said that each return envelope must also have a stamp. Ms. McNamara-Hill agreed to check with the Secretary of State’s office to clarify how to proceed if a re-vote is required. The board members thanked her and Westford Town Clerk Nanette Rogers, for their efforts.

The boards opened public comment on the issue.

Ms. Dolan said she appreciated the discussion on this issue and acknowledged the size of the mailing’s undertaking. She echoed the interests of the EWSD board members, stating she approves of establishing a process to increase voter participation.

Ms. Cooper clarified that the special two-sided Village/EWSD ballot would only be sent to active voters in the Village, not to residents of Westford or the Town outside the Village. She agreed with the strategy, which she sees as a way to get as many people as possible to vote.

GEORGE TYLER made a motion, seconded by DAN KERIN, that the Trustees approve mailing out Annual Meeting ballots to all active voters in the Village for the 2020 Annual Meeting election. The motion passed 5-0.

The EWSD Board Members left the meeting to reconvene in their School Board Meeting.

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

7. ADJOURN

DAN KERIN made a motion, seconded by GEORGE TYLER, that the Trustees adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 5-0 at 7:20 PM.