

**VILLAGE TRUSTEES**

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION TRUSTEES  
MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday May 12, 2020**

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

**ADMINISTRATION and STAFF:** Evan Teich, Unified Manager; Greg Duggan, Deputy Manager; Sarah Macy, Assistant Manager/Finance Director; Rick Garey, Chief of Police; Tammy Getchell, Assistant to the Manager; Rick Jones, Public Works Superintendent; Dennis Lutz, Public Works Director; Robin Pierce, Community Development Director.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Annie Cooper; Kara Janaro; Stephanie Meunier; Ken Signorello; Margaret Smith; Irene Wrenner.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Andrew Brown called the meeting of the Village of Essex Junction Board of Trustees to order at 6:30 PM.

**2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**

Mr. Duggan added a new agenda item 5b, to discuss how to help local businesses during the pandemic. Mr. Duggan also added three handouts to accompany this item:

- Ideas for assisting Village Businesses 5.10.20
- Location of Bars and Restaurants in Essex and Essex Junction
- VTDigger Chambers of Commerce urge State to allow outdoor restaurants

**3. APPROVE AGENDA**

**GEORGE TYLER made a motion, seconded by DAN KERIN, to approve the agenda, as amended. The motion passed 5-0.**

**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**

- a. **Consider request to recognize graduating Essex High School seniors near 5 Corners**

Mr. Brown introduced Essex High School’s request to use municipal green space for congratulations posters that recognize graduating seniors. Ms. Janaro clarified that there would be 269 signs with a student’s yearbook photo and others without, for students who do not have yearbook photos. She said the signs would be up for two weeks in early June and would be taken down overnight to avoid vandalism. Mr. Teich offered that they could use Lincoln Hall and the Town Offices at 81 Main Street to store the signs overnight. The Trustees supported this effort and provided guidance: to coordinate the effort with the library directors to use their lawns, and to use the lawn space at 81 Main and the Auxiliary lot around Lincoln Hall to the fire station. Mr. Brown requested that Mr. Teich and Mr. Duggan coordinate the logistics of this effort.

Ms. Meunier introduced herself as a parent of a 2020 graduating senior and thanked the Trustees for their support.

51 **RAJ CHAWLA made a motion, seconded by GEORGE TYLER, to waive ordinances related**  
52 **to signs for a period of two weeks to honor Essex graduating seniors by using signs as**  
53 **recommended. The motion passed 5-0.**  
54

55 **b. Discuss how to help local businesses during the pandemic**

56 Mr. Tyler introduced the discussion of how to support local businesses during the pandemic,  
57 clarifying that any decisions would need to prioritize state guidelines. He said restaurants and  
58 bars would be hit hard, with estimated 60% loss in seating capacity. Mr. Chawla and Mr. Tyler  
59 discussed strategies other parts of the state are using to encourage outdoor seating. The  
60 Trustees talked about the possibility of establishing small grants for Essex businesses to use  
61 for street seating, seating on village sidewalks, and in private lots. They pointed out that most  
62 businesses in the Village do not have outdoor space available. To resolve this, the Trustees  
63 considered putting together a plan for public-owned spaces to be used by businesses for  
64 outdoor service. This might include temporarily removing some parking from Railroad Avenue,  
65 Veterans Park and Lower Park Street, possibly closing some streets, and fixing up the newly  
66 purchased lot next to Firebird Café sooner. They discussed the need to partner with businesses  
67 and property owners to share responsibility for cleaning and anti-vandalism. Mr. Kerin added  
68 that they should consider how security would be established if the venues include alcohol. Mr.  
69 Chawla said the survey to businesses should help guide more formative planning and Ms.  
70 Thibeault said she would look forward to more guidance from the state. Mr. Teich encouraged  
71 the Trustees to be flexible with ordinances and the speed of turnaround on requests.  
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73 **6. CONSENT ITEMS**

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75 **GEORGE TYLER made a motion, seconded by DAN KERIN, that the Trustees approve the**  
76 **Consent Agenda:**  
77

- 78 a. Approve FY21 Lincoln Hall lease for Essex CHIPS  
79 **Approval of the FY21 lease of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Lincoln Hall to Essex C.H.I.P.S. to**  
80 **commence July 1, 2020 and end June 30, 2020**
- 81 b. Approve Manager’s Annual Appointments  
82 **Approval of the Unified Manager’s appointments for the period July 1, 2020- June 30,**  
83 **2020: Susan McNamara-Hill as Village Treasurer/ Tax Collector and Village Clerk;**  
84 **Claudine Safar as Village Attorney; Chris Gaboriault as Village Fire Chief; and Hamlin**  
85 **Consulting Engineers as Village Engineering Consultant**
- 86 c. Approve minutes: April 28, 2020
- 87 d. Check Warrant #17197—05/01/2020; #17198—05/08/2020  
88

89 **The motion passed 5-0.**  
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91 **7. READING FILE**

92 **a. Board Member Comments**

- 93 ○ Mr. Brown commended Essex Junction Recreation and Parks for early re-opening of  
94 childcare services. He expressed concern that EJRP has a 5% cancellation fee and  
95 encouraged them to issue full refunds. Mr. Teich agreed to discuss this with Mr. Luck but  
96 noted EJRP’s significant loss of revenue from the past two months.

- 97 b. Memo from Robin Pierce re: Village Center Development
- 98 c. Letter from James Jutras re: Grant Match Vermont Phosphorus Innovation Challenge Stage 3  
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100 **8. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

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

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105 **9. ADJOURN**

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107 **Mr. Brown called a brief recess to enter into the Joint Meeting of the Essex Junction**  
108 **Trustees and the Essex Selectboard.**

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110 **AMBER THIBEAULT made a motion, seconded by ANDREW BROWN to adjourn the**  
111 **meeting at 9:35 PM.**