

LIST OF AGENDA AMENDMENTS AND HANDOUTS
VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION TRUSTEES
TOWN OF ESSEX SELECTBOARD
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING AGENDA
JUNE 23, 2020

AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

-

ADDITIONAL HANDOUTS

- 5b. Email from Josh Simon date 6/21/2020

From: Josh Simon [<mailto:jSimon@fccej.org>]
Sent: Sunday, June 21, 2020 11:34 PM
To: Elaine Haney
Subject: Tuesday Meeting

Dear Elaine,

I am writing to you because I know for sure that your heart is the right place and you will do everything within your power to ensure all citizens of Essex and those who pass through our town are safe. You of course can share this email with whoever you want. I feel it is important to start with share purpose.

I am glad that this Tuesday the joint boards will be discussing policing. Chief of Police Garey emailed me personally to say that he would be meeting with you the joint boards this Tuesday. I have been meeting with some folks from my church and community members. We had a fruitful discussion on policing reforms and other ways we can create public safety. We are in the research phase of our advocacy to end racist policies, as Ibram Kendi focuses on in his book "How to Be an Anti-Racist." He writes that institutional and systematic racism are redundant and that the more specific term is "racist policies." My understanding is that recommends looking at how the policies that exist produce or sustain racial equity or inequity. I highly recommend reading at least the introduction and first three chapters from his book. I am glad to see that Essex is also at beginning of its research phase to determine what policies could be implemented to produce or sustain racial equity. At this stage, we are focused on policing. I hope future discussions will move beyond Police Departments to creating Public Safety Departments.

In terms of policing, many questions come to mind:

- How many of Essex police officers have a BA in Criminal Justice?
- What is the process for allegations made against a police officer? How does an officer report misconduct made by another officer? How does a non-police officer citizen report misconduct. As a note, I'm trying to move away from using officer vs civilian instead using police officer citizen and non-police officer citizen. I think it's important to move away from militaristic language.
- What trainings does Officer Garey think our police officers need to have beyond what is offered through the Vermont Police Academy?
- What is the data break down for the different types of calls officers respond to? Especially, how often are officers called to respond to domestic abuse situations or publicly rowdy individuals or groups or mental health crises or to reports that a person is homeless?
- As we have seen in video footage around the USA white people calling the police on a black person or a person of color does happen, have we found this to be the case in Essex? If this does occur, what happens to the person who makes the phone call?
- Beyond the cost associated with this, what would it look like to have every police officer accompanied with a professional mental health expert, like a social worker? I use the word professional intentionally. I think "trained" could imply having a certificate rather than years and perhaps even decades worth of experiencing addressing mental health crises.
- How could we
- What is done in the Essex Police Department to ensure and help officers develop a "we" rather than an "us vs them" mentality? Is there a requirement for officers to live in Essex?
- In the screening process, the Vermont Police Academy includes a psychological test, how often does that test reject applicants? Does Essex Police Department require ongoing psychological

testing or other mental health checks to examine if officers develop troubling psychological issues.

- Not necessarily related, it would be good to know if our officers develop PTSD while in the line of duty. This does not imply that someone who has PTSD should be disqualified from policing, but would be good to know so our officers can receive treatment. Related, does the health insurance our officers receive include fully covered mental health benefits? What is done within the department to encourage officers to seek help?

Please feel free to use any or none of these questions. I offer them as suggestions.

I will be away on vacation on Tuesday; however, I hope to be able to listen via phone or listen to the discussion when it is posted online.

I also want to say how happy I am to see Essex Housing Commission is now in the interview stage. If wasn't so busy with other evening meetings, I would have applied, but I'm glad to see that there are people interested in the Housing Commission. I had feared that there wouldn't be that many, I'm glad to see my fears were wrong.

Blessings,

Josh

--

Rev. Joshua Simon

*Associate Pastor

First Congregational Church of Essex Junction



VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION TRUSTEES
TOWN OF ESSEX SELECTBOARD
MEETING AGENDA

Online
Essex Junction, VT 05452
Tuesday, June 23, 2020
7:15 PM

E-mail: manager@essex.org

www.essexjunction.org
www.essexvt.org

Phone: (802) 878-1341
(802) 878-6951

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this meeting will be held remotely. Available options to watch or join the meeting:

- The meeting will be live-streamed on Town Meeting TV.
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: 317 917 324#
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 Chair/President.

The Selectboard and Trustees meet together to discuss and act on joint business. Each board votes separately on action items.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER [7:15 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. *Interviews and appointments for Essex Housing Commission
b. Discussion of policing in Essex
6. CONSENT ITEMS
a. Approve minutes: June 8, 2020 (Trustees only); June 9, 2020 (Trustees only)
7. READING FILE
a. Board Member Comments
b. Major Public Works Initiatives in the Town and the Village
c. Email from Ewing Fox re: Statement for Board Meeting Monday
d. Letter from Maura Carroll re Nomination to the VLCT Board of Directors
8. EXECUTIVE SESSION
a. *An executive session is expected for appointment of public officials
9. ADJOURN

Members of the public are encouraged to speak during the Public to Be Heard agenda item, during a Public Hearing, or, when recognized by the Chair or President, during consideration of a specific agenda item. The public will not be permitted to participate when a motion is being discussed except when specifically requested by the Chair or President. This agenda is available in alternative formats upon request. Meetings, like all programs and activities of the Village of Essex Junction and the Town of Essex, are accessible to people with disabilities. For information on accessibility or this agenda, call the Unified Manager's office at 878-1341 TTY: 7-1-1 or (800) 253-0191.

Certification: 06/19/2020

[Signature]

SELECTBOARD & TRUSTEES

**TOWN OF ESSEX SELECTBOARD
VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION TRUSTEES
JOINT MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday June 23, 2020**

SELECTBOARD: Elaine Haney, Chair; Vince Franco; Dawn Hill-Fleury; Patrick Murray; Andy Watts.

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

ADMINISTRATION and STAFF: Evan Teich, Unified Manager; Charles Cole, Fire Chief; Greg Duggan, Deputy Manager; Jill Evans, Community Justice Center Director; Rick Garey, Chief of Police; Ron Hoague, Police Captain; Sarah Macy, Assistant Manager/Finance Director; Travis Sabatano, Human Resources Director; Darren Schibler, Town Planner; Susanna Weller, Essex Restorative Justice Panel Coordinator.

OTHERS PRESENT: Kelly Adams; Doug Babcock; Rev. Richard Baker; Robert Bates; Tony Barr; Sonya Buglion-Gluck; Stephan Cluett; Ned Daly; Tracey Delphia; Helen Diplock; Brian Donahue; Paula Duke; Myles Einhorn; Joe Engelken; Rep. Dylan Giambatista; Tracy Harrington; Brad Kennison; Raghavendra Krishna; Brandi Littlefield; Erin Maguire; Susan McCormack; Kelly McCutcheon Adams; Donald Messier; Donald Miller; Russ Mills; Will Moran; Candace Morgan; Roseanne Prestipino; Tom Proctor; Rep. Marybeth Redmond; Abby Russin; Patrick Scheld; Brian Shelden; Liz Subin; Joe Teegarden; Steve Trenholm; Andrea Van Liew; Tanya Vyhovsky; Renzo White; Sue Wilson; Diana Wood; Irene Wrenner; Lorraine Zaloom; Andrea ____; Carolyn____; Karen____; Natalee____; Patty____; Richard_____.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Elaine Haney called the meeting of the Town of Essex Selectboard to order to enter into joint business with the Village of Essex Junction Board of Trustees at 7:24 PM.

Andrew Brown called the meeting of the Village of Essex Junction board of Trustees to order to enter into joint business with the Essex Selectboard at 7:24 PM.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

Mr. Duggan requested the addition of an email from Josh Simon to the reading file.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

AMBER THIBEAULT made a motion, seconded by **DAN KERIN**, that the Trustees approve the Agenda as amended. The motion passed 5-0.

PATRICK MURRAY made a motion, seconded by **ANDY WATTS**, that the Selectboard approve the agenda as proposed. The motion passed 5-0.

4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

There were no comments from the public at this time.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. *Interviews and appointments for Essex Housing Commission

For this business item, Ms. Haney recused herself due to a professional relationship with one of the candidates, and Mr. Brown recused himself for a conflict of interest with his employer.

The Trustees and Selectboard members interviewed Mr. Scheld. He said his interest in the appointment is due to his work with the VT Department of Housing and Community

54 Development, administering Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) grants. He said he
55 would look forward to being on the other side, working on housing from within the community. He
56 talked about wanting to help develop opportunities for affordable housing by rehabilitating units
57 and developing additional units. He said development should include building projects with a mix
58 of community living opportunities. He said downsizing and aging populations could be served by
59 developing existing housing units inside their properties and working with zoning boards to make
60 these options available. He said it would also benefit the community to work with non-profit
61 developers to offer senior housing that is affordable and convenient to downtown. He discussed
62 how he got started in the work he is in, through third world international opportunities, managing
63 AmeriCorps and working in disaster recovery with funding community housing. He said his
64 international experience will help shape efforts to overcome barriers to achieve goals.
65

66 The Trustees and Selectboard members interviewed Mr. Miller. He said he would look forward to
67 serving with the people being interviewed. He said he has been involved with and interested in
68 housing for his whole career, including remodeling old houses and doing carpentry work. He said
69 he also worked in social services and has interest in what can happen with housing in Essex to
70 reflect the needs of diverse populations. He said housing development in Essex should consider
71 each unit's full package of energy efficiency, community affordability and proximity to services.
72 He discussed remodeling projects to improve energy efficiencies. He said he is interested in this
73 position because of his background and would not be interested in serving on a different
74 committee.
75

76 The Trustees and Selectboard members interviewed Mr. Engelken. He said, with a BS in Finance
77 and Master's degree in real estate, he has worked on credit ratings for real estate trusts,
78 students, builders, etc. Working for Redstone, he conducts acquisition, underwriting and market
79 research for housing projects. The Housing Commission position interests him professionally and
80 personally. He said he's lived in Essex for four years, starting his family, and he wants to do
81 something for the community. He talked about the overarching issue of the short supply of
82 housing in the community, which, he explained, contributes to lack of affordability. He said more
83 development of housing could impact affordability and preserving older homes could contribute to
84 livability. He said renovating older homes for senior living may be a good idea. He discussed the
85 high cost of living in Vermont and said he would like to address how to help young professionals
86 who have to live with roommates to be able to afford housing.
87

88 The Trustees and Selectboard members interviewed Mr. Daly. He said he has been a resident of
89 Essex for 8 years. Throughout his background in engineering and construction he explained that
90 he focused on team building with owners, designers, and others on shared efforts. He said this is
91 important when working on housing issues because anything developed needs multiple
92 stakeholders to find agreements. Mr. Daly described his work on the Essex Planning
93 Commission as a position of reacting to issues that come up, while this position on the Housing
94 Commission would allow him to be proactive. He said retrofitting old housing and engaging large-
95 scale project opportunities both need to be considered to address the current demand for
96 housing. He said by creatively packaging projects they could better serve local housing needs.
97 Mr. Daly talked about how COVID and global warming may impact housing to be more affordable
98 and energy efficient and that these issues may be easier to address through incentives. He said,
99 in order to address the needs of young families and low income wage earners, a mix of
100 community development strategies are required. Mr. Daly explained he would continue to serve
101 on the Planning Commission for one more year if he is appointed to this position.
102

103 At the conclusion of these interviews, Mr. Brown and Ms. Haney returned to the meeting from
104 their recusals.
105

106 **b. Discussion of policing in Essex**

107 Ms. Haney made introductory comments about current events in the United States prompting
108 communities to examine their practices to ensure residents are safe, especially people of color,
109 and residents are not being discriminated against or experiencing racial bias. She said the first
110 step of this conversation in Essex is a presentation from Chief Garey and Captain Hoague,
111 followed by multiple meetings thereafter to hear from community members. Chief Garey
112 expressed outrage and sadness for the death of George Floyd and condemned the misuse of
113 force from the officers involved. He introduced the importance of fair and impartial policing, de-
114 escalation, and reasonable use of force in the Essex Police Department (PD).
115

116 Chief Garey described the Essex PD's efforts in alignment with Vermont Legislation on policing.
117 He provided an overview of the department, discussed staff vacancies and described new officer
118 recruitment and screening practices. Captain Hoague detailed standards and expectations the
119 Essex PD holds for new officers.
120

121 Chief Garey talked about officer trainings: police academy trainings; Essex field probationary
122 trainings and mandatory ongoing training. He and Captain Hoague discussed specialized
123 trainings in de-escalation; use of force; diversity; fair and impartial policing and anti-bias. They
124 said Essex does more trainings in these areas than what is required in the state of Vermont.
125

126 Chief Garey discussed Essex officer promotions and transfer policies; codes of conduct; police
127 discipline recommendations related to violations and how complaints of officer inappropriateness
128 are filed, reviewed, and internally investigated. He said criminal misconduct investigations are
129 referred to Vermont State Police or other police departments and shootings are reviewed by the
130 State of Vermont Attorney General's office. He discussed the officer de-certification process
131 through Act 56.
132

133 Chief Garey discussed data collection, including the need for improvements in this area. He
134 talked about historical records; car and traffic stop data and crime reports accessible through the
135 Essex PD website. He discussed the longevity of Essex's car camera efforts and the plan to
136 implement body cameras.
137

138 Chief Garey described community collaborations with the School Resource Officers (SRO) for
139 school security; the Community Justice Center for restorative justice; and the Community
140 Outreach partnership with the HowardCenter embedding mental health workers and counselors
141 with officer dispatches, when needed. He said the department is open to community oversight
142 and feedback. Representatives from CJC and Howard Mental Health provided more information
143 about Essex activities within their partnerships with the Essex PD.
144

145 Chief Garey said rules and regulation policy reviews and revisions are ongoing within the
146 department. He pointed out fair and impartial policing and response to resistance strategies in
147 these policies. Captain Hoague discussed recent policy updates. Chief Garey explained that the
148 PD does not use military equipment.
149

150 Captain Hoague shared his list of what he would like to do as the new Chief of Police, including
151 increased reporting to the Selectboard; increased transparency with the public; community
152 collaboration; body cam implementation; SRO program review; and establishing a fair and
153 impartial policing advisory committee.
154

155 *Ms. Haney opened community comments, limited to two minutes each:*
156

157 Rev. Baker asked Captain Hoague if he would be willing to fly the Black Lives Matter flag over
158 the PD and requested more information about the PD De-escalation Training. Captain Hoague

159 said he believes the PD needs to be an impartial organization that is seen as objective so he
 160 would not fly the flag over the PD because he would not want to, later, be encouraged to fly
 161 potentially contrary flags. He said he would provide more information on De-escalation trainings.
 162

163 Ms. Adams said she hopes this conversation is the first of many. She discussed her experience
 164 as a white parent, realizing her privilege as she raises her children to see police officers as
 165 helpers. She said she would like this to be something all people can do and thinks there is a lot of
 166 work to be done to make this happen. She wants there to be a deep discussion about implicit
 167 bias and racism.
 168

169 Ms. Vyhovsky spoke about being a social worker in a relationship with a person of color. She
 170 said conversations like these are essential and encouraged a community oversight committee to
 171 monitor and review all complaints related to the PD to ensure greater transparency. She also
 172 encouraged the PD to look to ACLU research suggesting that SRO's are a direct link to the
 173 prison pipeline, targeting children with disabilities and children of color. She said these jobs
 174 should be held by counselors and social workers.
 175

176 Ms. Buglion-Gluck stressed the need for more opportunities for public comment and discussion
 177 on these issues. She does not believe the SROs are a good strategy because of the school-to-
 178 prison pipeline link. She shared her opinion that the current hours of implicit bias training required
 179 of police officers will not change the fundamental flaw that U.S. policing is focused on protecting
 180 white lives. She said it is crucial that the PD hears from people of color from the community. She
 181 said the meeting was not widely advertised and more opportunities are needed.
 182

183 Ms. McCormack expressed her frustration that half of the number of people who were present at
 184 the beginning of the meeting left before public comments began, because they started so late.
 185 She stressed the importance of fair and impartial community engagement to share the trauma
 186 and pain that residents feel over policing. She said making people wait two and a half hours
 187 perpetuates a system of privilege versus people who cannot wait that long so late at night. She
 188 encouraged opportunities that are more equitable and inclusive.
 189

190 Ms. Wilson said she heard that the PD would like the state to increase mandated trainings. She
 191 wondered if it would be helpful for residents to advocate to the legislature for this.
 192

193 The Trustees and Selectboard expressed appreciation for Chief Garey and Captain Hoague for
 194 their informative presentation and agreed more community comment opportunities are needed.
 195 Mr. Brown suggested also establishing a process to ensure residents feel comfortable and safe
 196 to honestly share their points of view, and stories. Ms. Haney apologized to those in the
 197 community who may have wanted to speak but did not due to the length of the meeting. Mr.
 198 Brown thanked Captain Hoague and Chief Garey for attending the vigil on these issues, in
 199 uniform, where they took a knee. Mr. Franco requested information from Chief Garey about their
 200 opinions on how to establish a community oversight board. Mr. Murray said he has a list of
 201 questions he would like clarification on in a future meeting. He also requested information from
 202 the HowardCenter about if they have the resources needed for their work with the PD and
 203 COVID response.
 204

205 **6. CONSENT ITEMS**

- 206 a. Approve Minutes: June 8, 2020 (Trustees only); June 9, 2020 (Trustees only)
 207

208 **AMBER THIBEALT made a motion, seconded by RAJ CHAWLA, that the Trustees approve the**
 209 **Consent Agenda. The motion passed 5-0.**
 210

211 **7. READING FILE**

- 212 a. Board Member Comments
- 213 o There were no comments from the board members at this time
- 214 b. Major Public Works Initiatives in the Town and the Village
- 215 c. Email from Ewing Fox re: Statement for Board Meeting Monday
- 216 d. Letter from Maura Carroll re Nomination to the VLCT Board of Directors
- 217 e. Email from Josh Simon
- 218

219 **8. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- 220 a. *An executive session is expected for appointment of public officials.
- 221 Ms. Haney and Mr. Brown recused themselves from this agenda item due to conflicts of interest.
- 222

223 **ANDY WATTS made a motion, seconded by PATRICK MURRAY, that the Selectboard enter**
224 **into executive session to discuss the proposed public official appointment(s) in accordance**
225 **with 1 V.S.A. Section 313(a)(3) and to include the Unified Manager and the Deputy Manager.**
226 **The motion passed 4-0 at 10:23.**

227
228 **GEORGE TYLER made a motion, seconded by DAN KERIN, that the Trustees enter into**
229 **executive session to discuss the proposed public official appointment(s) in accordance with**
230 **1 V.S.A. Section 313(a)(3) and to include the Unified Manager and the Deputy Manager. The**
231 **motion passed 4-0 at 10:23.**
232

233 **VINCE FRANCO made a motion, seconded by ANDY WATTS, that the Selectboard continue**
234 **the meeting past 11 p.m. The motion passed 4-0 at 11:04 p.m.**

235
236 **DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by VINCE FRANCO, that the Selectboard exit**
237 **executive session. The motion passed 4-0 at 11:15 p.m.**

238
239 **GEORGE TYLER made a motion, seconded by DAN KERIN, that the Trustees exit executive**
240 **session. The motion passed 4-0 at 11:15 p.m.**
241

242 Mr. Tyler said the boards were not going to decide candidate appointments to the Housing
243 Commission that night. Mr. Murray thanked all applicants and explained that the boards wanted
244 to take another month to put out the call for more candidates with a more diverse skill set. Any
245 new candidates would be interviewed at a joint meeting in approximately a month. Mr. Tyler
246 thanked the current candidates and asked them to not draw any conclusions about the board’s
247 actions, just that they face a difficult decision, and need more time to work on appointments.
248

249 **9. ADJOURN**

250
251 **DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by VINCE FRANCO, to adjourn. The motion**
252 **passed 5-0 at 11:20 p.m.**
253

254 **GEORGE TYLER made a motion, seconded by AMBER THIBEAULT, to adjourn. The motion**
255 **passed 4-0 at 11:20 p.m.**

256
257
258 Respectfully Submitted,
259 Cathy Ainsworth
260 Recording Secretary