



VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Online
Essex Junction, VT 05452
Tuesday, July 14, 2020
6:30 PM

E-mail: manager@essexjunction.org

www.essexjunction.org

Phone: (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](#). **For minutes, please provide your first and last name when entering the 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: 497 903 305#
- 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 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. Discussion about cleaning and greening up Essex Junction
- b. Approve tax stabilization agreement for property at 15 Park Street
- c. Discussion about July 6th joint meeting with Selectboard

6. **CONSENT ITEMS**

- a. Adopt the Resolution for Current Expense Borrowing for the Fire Truck Note Renewal
- b. Approve Sherwood Square reimbursement request
- c. Approve job structure revisions to General Rules and Personnel Regulations
- d. Approve minutes: June 17, 2020—Special; June 23, 2020
- e. Check Warrant #17205—06/26/2020; #17206—07/01/2020; #17207—07/10/2020

7. **READING FILE**

- a. Board Member Comments
- b. Monarch City USA brochure
- c. Email from Jeff Frolik re: Reappointment to Bike/Walk Advisory Committee
- d. Financial Report June 2020
- e. Memo from James Jutras re: PFAS Follow-up sampling results, Biosolids and Septage Land Application Sites
- f. Memo from Robin Pierce re: Village Center District Updates: Park, Connector Road, Open and Outside.
- g. Letter of appreciation from South Congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses
- h. Upcoming meeting schedule

8. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- a. An executive session is not anticipated

9. **ADJOURN**

This agenda is available in alternative formats upon request. Meetings of the Trustees, like all programs and activities of the Village of Essex Junction, are accessible to people with disabilities. For information on accessibility or this agenda, call the Unified Manager’s office at 878-6951.

Certification: 07/10/2020
Date Posted

Initials

1 **VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION TRUSTEES**
2 **MEETING MINUTES**
3 **July 14, 2020**
4

5 **TRUSTEES:** Andrew Brown, President; Raj Chawla; Dan Kerin; Amber Thibeault; George Tyler.
6

7 **ADMINISTRATION and STAFF:** Evan Teich, Unified Manager; Sarah Macy, Finance
8 Director/Assistant Manager; Tammy Getchell, Assistant to the Manager; Robin Pierce, Community
9 Development Director; Travis Sabataso, Human Resources Director.
10

11 **OTHERS PRESENT:** Diane Clemens; Annie Cooper; Helen Diplock; Russell Mills; Patrick Murray;
12 Roseanne Prestipino; Abby Russin; Margaret Smith; Sara Stultz; Liz Subin; Town Meeting TV; Lorraine
13 Zaloom; unknown guest.
14

15 **1. CALL TO ORDER**

16 Mr. Brown called the meeting of the Village of Essex Junction Board of Trustees to order at
17 6:30 PM.
18

19 **2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**

20 There were no additions or changes to the agenda.
21

22 **3. APPROVE AGENDA**

23 With no additions or changes to the agenda, approval was not required.
24

25 **4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**

26 **a. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda**

27 There were no comments from the public at this time.
28

29 **5. BUSINESS ITEMS**

30 **a. Discussion about cleaning and greening up Essex Junction**

31 Mr. Brown invited Essex Junction resident Saramichelle Stultz to speak on her concerns
32 regarding cleaning up Five Corners and the possibility of initiating an additional Green Up Day.
33 Due to technical difficulties, Business Item 5a was suspended temporarily.
34

35 **b. Approve tax stabilization agreement for property at 15 Park Street**

36 Ms. Macy presented the Trustees with the final step for the tax stabilization agreement for 15
37 Park Street owned by Handy's Hotels & Rentals. The letter of commitment was signed in 2018
38 and Mr. Handy has met all conditions. The agreement is for three years, beginning this year.
39 The property will be taxed at 30% of its assessed value in the first year, 50% in the second
40 year, 70% in the third year and 100% on the tax rolls thereafter. Village Attorney Claudine
41 Safar has reviewed the agreement and it has been communicated with Mr. Handy.
42

43 **DAN KERIN made a motion, seconded by GEORGE TYLER, that the Trustees approve and**
44 **sign the final tax stabilization agreement with Handy's Hotels & Rentals LLC for the**
45 **property at 15 Park Street, parcel 1028035000, effective for FY21 with the caveat that the**
46 **current taxes are up to date. The motion passed 5-0.**
47

48 **a. (continued) Discussion about cleaning and greening up Essex Junction**

49 Mr. Brown introduced Ms. Stultz to speak to the Trustees on her concerns regarding garbage that
50 shows up usually after the fair, particularly along Route 15. Ms. Stultz asked if businesses along

51 the route make any effort to clean trash, if anyone else has brought the issue up before, and if
52 there has ever been a campaign to educate the community about proper waste disposal. Mr.
53 Teich stated that in the past, some of the property owners along Route 15 have been asked to
54 clean up around their property frontage and garbage cans have been added.
55

56 Mr. Brown asked Mr. Teich what is done with large items left alongside of the road, such as
57 furniture. Mr. Teich and Mr. Pierce responded that there is no property maintenance ordinance in
58 place, but there have been times the property owner has been asked to remove items.
59

60 Mr. Tyler stated that a clean-up day was organized in the past to clean up Railroad Avenue and
61 with Green Up Day occurring during the pandemic this year, there seemed to be lower participation
62 levels. Mr. Chawla said that there could be a larger effort to remind businesses and apartments to
63 keep their areas clean, particularly with the fast food restaurants. Ms. Stultz said that she was
64 aware of some efforts made by businesses, but it could be enhanced by adopting a slogan,
65 pursuing a public education approach, or reaching out to the school district to promote keeping the
66 community clean and green. Diane Clemens stated that since the fairgrounds pulled their trash
67 and recycling cans and since passengers are not allowed to take open containers on the bus, there
68 is more trash. She stated that perhaps the bus company could work with the Village on the issue
69 and an additional Green Up Day is a good idea.
70

71 Mr. Teich said that the Village maintains many of the trash cans in and around Five Corners and
72 will work with Finance, the schools and Public Works to organize a September Green Up Day. Mr.
73 Brown asked for a follow up on this matter for the August 11th meeting.
74

75 **c. Discussion about July 6th joint meeting with Selectboard**
76

77 Mr. Brown referenced the memo written as a framework and starting point for discussion about the
78 July 6th joint meeting with the Selectboard and to address each question one at a time. The first
79 question to start the discussion is, "Should we formally request the Selectboard to reconsider their
80 decision to exclude us from the conversation?". Mr. Brown, Mr. Chawla and Ms. Thibeault were
81 not in favor of asking the Selectboard to reconsider. Mr. Tyler was not in favor and added
82 comments regarding a recent situation at the Brownell Library with an individual with behavioral
83 problems who took up residence at the library and became disruptive. The situation was handled
84 with Administration, the Trustees and the Essex Police Department and the Selectboard was not
85 involved. Mr. Kerin stated that he watched the video of the July 6th meeting and was not in favor.
86

87 Mr. Chawla referenced the vague mention of a document delineating an agreement between the
88 boards regarding the police department. He stated that it should be determined if the agreement
89 exists and if it does not, the terms and relationship should be clarified in writing for the future. Mr.
90 Brown said that other than a July 22nd 1980s motion from the Trustees to table a conversation
91 about a police agreement, nothing else has been found in the minutes. Mr. Teich stated that
92 several past managers, past attorneys and police chiefs have been asked and nothing has been
93 found, yet. Mr. Teich added that while there are a few leads to follow, anything found would be
94 forty years old and it would be time for the boards to revisit the terms of an agreement.
95

96 Mr. Brown pointed the discussion to the next question, "Should the Trustees pursue our own
97 listening session, separate from the Selectboard's?". None of the Trustees were in favor of
98 pursuing a separate listening session.

99

100 Mr. Brown referenced the next questions from the memo as, “What questions for the Selectboard
101 do we want to ask to help decide how to proceed?” and “How should we request these answers
102 and how would we like to receive the responses?”. Mr. Brown said that another option could be to
103 allow time at the next joint meeting for the board members to talk, instead of a formal question and
104 answer process. Mr. Kerin said that there is a lot of lengthy discussion that already happens
105 during joint meetings on many topics. Mr. Chawla said the Trustees could pause on joint meetings
106 for a while. Ms. Thibeault and Mr. Tyler said they would like to pass on this question to discuss the
107 next question on merger in order to know how to proceed and what questions they may have for
108 the Selectboard.

109

110 Mr. Brown started the next portion of the discussion, “What is our desire to continue with merger?”
111 with his own comments in support of continuing with merger and that the decision to continue rests
112 with the desire of the Selectboard to work toward merger as well. Mr. Kerin said that he prefers
113 merger and a decision must be made to either merge or separate. He said that anti-merger means
114 separation and that status quo is not an option. Mr. Chawla agreed with Mr. Kerin and mentioned
115 that the remaining time before a November vote should be spent on determining the financial
116 impact of separation and that it should not be assumed operations will continue as status quo or
117 shared if merger does not pass. Mr. Chawla said that he supports merger. Mr. Tyler believes that
118 putting merger on the November ballot is the best chance at getting it passed and communicating
119 with the widest number of people, but should be cognizant that staff will need help and is not able
120 to serve two boards for the next year. He added that the boards should be working with
121 management on alternatives to assist staff with the workload. He said that he doesn’t sense a lot
122 of enthusiasm for merger from some Selectboard members and that the pandemic cut short the
123 work started on a critical component of the charter. He said that the boards need to have further
124 conversations and all Selectboard members will have to be in full support of merger if it is going to
125 pass. Mr. Tyler said that he supports merger and agrees that status quo is not acceptable. Ms.
126 Thibeault said she agreed with the comments made by the other board members and that her
127 impression from the Selectboard’s last meeting was that they were not supportive of merger. She
128 said that she is in favor of having a break from joint meetings.

129

130 Mr. Brown asked the public for any comments on the topic. Annie Cooper said that it is important
131 to provide clearly stated facts on the impacts of separation to enhance the merger discussion.
132 Patrick Murray said that speaking as an individual, his general sense is that there is a strong sense
133 of regret for how the July 6th meeting ended. He said that the meeting chat during the last meeting
134 was being used as a weapon to hold side conversation and encourage aggressive discourse that
135 was not part of the generalized conversation. He added that the chat feature should be completely
136 shut down other than to ask to be heard. Mr. Brown responded that the boards should discuss the
137 chat feature at a future meeting.

138

139 Mr. Brown mentioned the deadline for placing an item on the November ballot is August 21st. He
140 then asked if anyone had any further comments. Mr. Tyler said that he would like to articulate his
141 thoughts in writing regarding community development in a merged environment and send out to
142 the board members. As the merger topics broadened, the board members decided to suspend the
143 discussion to review the consent agenda and reading file items and return to the discussion
144 afterward.

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146 **5. BUSINESS ITEMS**

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

- a. Adopt the Resolution for Current Expense Borrowing for the Fire Truck Note Renewal
- b. Approve Sherwood Square reimbursement request
- c. Approve job structure revisions to General Rules and Personnel Regulations
- d. Approve minutes: June 17, 2020—Special; June 23, 2020
- e. Check Warrant #17205—06/26/2020; #17206—07/01/2020; #17207—07/10/2020

The motion passed 5-0.

6. READING FILE

- a. Board Member Comments
 - Mr. Brown said that in August, Essex CHIPS would be celebrating the award for the Quality Youth Development community certification and to be watching for further details.
 - Mr. Brown stated that parks and playgrounds are opening up in other communities with hand sanitization stations and asked if it could be considered for Essex community parks. Mr. Teich said that he would mention it to the recreation directors.
 - Mr. Chawla thanked Jeff Frolik for his many years of serving on the Bike/Walk Advisory Committee.
 - Mr. Tyler asked for thoughts on the date for the Open and Outside event. Mr. Pierce said that the date is tight, but he continues to work with numerous individuals in planning the event.
- b. Monarch City USA brochure
- c. Email from Jeff Frolik re: Reappointment to Bike/Walk Advisory Committee
- d. Financial Report June 2020
- e. Memo from James Jutras re: PFAS Follow-up sampling results, Biosolids and Septage Land Application Sites
- f. Memo from Robin Pierce re: Village Center District Updates: Park, Connector Road, Open and Outside
- g. Letter of appreciation from South Congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses
- h. Upcoming meeting schedule

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

c. (continued) Discussion about July 6th joint meeting with Selectboard

Mr. Brown invited the Trustees to continue the conversation regarding merger and asked Mr. Tyler to begin the discussion on merger and community development. Mr. Tyler said that merger does not make the work of two community development offices go away and that the workload would remain close to the same. If Essex Village detaches from Essex Town, it would become the fourth largest municipality in Vermont. He said he is concerned that the Selectboard does not see the Village growth and urbanization as a positive asset in merger and is disappointed that the Town and the Village boards have not started to talk about what growth should look like. Mr. Chawla stated that he agreed and isn’t sure how the Town outside the Village sees the Village. He said he is not sure if the Town understands what the Village brings to the merger table. Mr. Kerin mentioned examples of other municipalities that have separated and are now looking to create a downtown district. He said that Essex has the advantage of already having a Village Center. Annie Cooper said that one of the things that has been missing at the merger table during joint

195 meetings is the energy and enthusiasm she witnessed from Mr. Tyler and others during the
196 discussion.
197

198 **8. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

199 d. **An executive session is not anticipated**

200 An executive session did not take place.
201

202 **9. ADJOURN**

203

204 **RAJ CHAWLA made a motion, seconded by AMBER THIBEAULT, to adjourn. The motion**
205 **passed 5-0 at 8:38 PM.**

206

207 Respectfully Submitted,

208 Tammy Getchell

209 Assistant to the Manager
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