



VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Online
Essex Junction, VT 05452
Tuesday, August 11, 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:

- WATCH: the meeting will be live-streamed on Town Meeting TV.
JOIN ONLINE: Join Microsoft Teams Meeting. Depending on your browser, you may need to call in for audio (below).
JOIN CALLING: Join via conference call (audio only): (802) 377-3784 | Conference ID: 322 248 2#
PROVIDE FULL NAME: For minutes, please provide your full name whenever prompted.
CHAT DURING MEETING: Please use "Chat" to request to speak, only. Please do not use for comments.
RAISE YOUR HAND: Click on the hand in Teams to speak or use the "Chat" feature to request to speak.
MUTE YOUR MIC: When not speaking, please mute your microphone on your computer/phone.

- CALL TO ORDER [6:30 PM]
AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES
APPROVE AGENDA
PUBLIC TO BE HEARD
a. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda
BUSINESS ITEMS
a. Approve study of closing portion of Park Terrace
b. Approve temporary closure of Memorial Way for Open and Outside event (Aug. 14-16)
c. Update on Crescent Connector—Evan Teich
d. Discussion and potential action on merger, charter and separation
e. Discussion and potential action for moving to Australian ballot voting for budget approval
CONSENT ITEMS
a. Approve two vouchers per household for Open and Outside
b. Approve use of Village Conference Room for 1 Main Street park design charrette
c. Approve minutes: July 28, 2020
d. Check Warrant #17210—07/31/2020
READING FILE
a. Board Member Comments
b. Memo from Greg Duggan re: Update on Essex clean-up day
c. Memo from Robin Pierce re: Village Center Development: 3 Maple Street
d. Email from Lillie Bleau re: Essex policing needs to change
e. Racial justice work plan from Creative Discourse
f. Upcoming meeting schedule
EXECUTIVE SESSION
a. An executive session is not anticipated
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: 08/07/2020
Date Posted Initials

VILLAGE TRUSTEES

VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION TRUSTEES  
MEETING MINUTES  
August 11, 2020

**TRUSTEES:** Andrew Brown, President; Raj Chawla; Dan Kerin; George Tyler. (Amber Thibeault not in attendance)

**ADMINISTRATION and STAFF:** Evan Teich, Unified Manager; Sarah Macy, Assistant Manager/Finance Director; Robin Pierce, Community Development Director

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Annie Cooper; Helen Diplock; Ann Duaney Whyte; Terry Hess; Brian Hsiang; Timothy Miller; Russell Mills; Frank Naef; Judy Naef; Rosanne Prestipino; Brian Shiang; Ken Signorello; Sarah Stultz; Irene Wrenner.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**

Mr. Teich requested the addition of letters from residents regarding Park Terrace.

**3. APPROVE AGENDA**

**GEORGE TYLER made a motion, seconded by RAJ CHAWLA, to add the recently emailed letters regarding Park Terrace. The motion passed 4-0.**

**4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**

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

Brian Schnell said that, in his opinion, the selection process to engage a contractor to support the community discussion about policing should have included a Request for Proposals (RFP). He suggested that the boards apply an equity lens to their selection process, in the future so as to not exclude multiracial organizations from opportunities.

Ms. Naef requested clarification on how to engage in the meeting through Microsoft Teams.

Ms. Duaney Whyte requested the Trustees consider putting a guided tutorial on the website for how to navigate meetings using technology.

**5. BUSINESS ITEMS**

**a. Approve study of closing portion of Park Terrace**

Mr. Pierce introduced the issue that some drivers on Park Terrace, which is two way for a short distance from Park Street and then one-way going to School Street, have caused a perennial problem by driving the wrong way down Park Terrace and parking illegally on the road. He said monitoring and policing this street has not been practicable. He proposed a study to determine whether a closure of a portion of the street would solve this problem. He described the location of the proposed closure and its impact on properties on this street. Mr. Peirce said the proposed study would include interviewing residents of the street while collecting traffic data.

The Trustees discussed the current construction activities on Park Terrace to build a garage and living units, noting complaints they have heard about construction vehicles blocking driveways. They wondered how this would also be addressed through proposal. The Trustees discussed whether the timing for this study should after the garage is built and the road is widened. They considered current, near term and longer term impacts the construction may have on traffic. They

54 discussed whether other neighborhoods also impacted by “cut through” traffic should be studied  
55 and whether other options, like speed tables or bump outs should be considered instead of closing  
56 off the road.  
57

58 Ms. Duaney Whyte introduced herself as a homeowner on the road for 37 years. She described the  
59 struggle residents have had with traffic issues over time and said blocking the street is a bad idea.  
60 She described drivers who illegally travel the wrong way on the road but stressed that the biggest  
61 problem she recently sees is parked trucks taking up too much space and blocking the road and  
62 driveways. She said a loading dock application from McGillicuddy’s to the Planning Commission  
63 was denied and, as a result, delivery trucks stop in the middle of the road every day. She said, in  
64 her opinion, using the road with these trucks and the construction trucks, is one of the biggest  
65 issues at this time. She suggested that a bump out or consistent enforcement of the current,  
66 unclosed road could solve the traffic “cut through” and speeding problems better than road closure.  
67 She also suggested that any planned traffic study should be paid for by the developer building on  
68 the street. She described potential challenges with back up of traffic if the road were to be closed,  
69 as people turn around to exit and then wait to turn left off the road. She described multiple ways the  
70 proposal would cause problems, in her opinion. She also said that the agenda item, as it was  
71 written, was problematic because it seemed to suggest that the study would be approved not that  
72 there would be a discussion of a proposal under consideration.  
73

74 Mr. and Ms. Naef said they have been living on Park Terrace for 40 years. Ms. Naef described  
75 driving on the street as a “nightmare”. She talked about trucks left in the middle of the street, people  
76 cutting through McGillicuddy’s, and drivers speeding on the road going the wrong way. She talked  
77 about near misses she has had to serious injury and said Police do not give drivers on the street  
78 tickets. She also gave an example of what she perceived as lack of enforcement when someone  
79 was trying to break into cars. She said she worries about ambulances and firetrucks not being able  
80 to get in or out. Mr. Naef agreed with his wife’s description and also agreed that the wording of this  
81 agenda item was problematic. He gave measurements of the current width of the street, 19 feet,  
82 and explained how much room delivery trucks take up. He said he was told that signals and  
83 cameras would be too expensive for the street, but he suggested that this could be an effective  
84 solution for enforcement. He requested that residents be invited to participate in the traffic study.  
85

86 Annie Cooper acknowledged that the residents on Park Terrace would, on her opinion, be  
87 responsible for changing the culture of traffic so they should be involved with the study.  
88

89 The Trustees discussed the comments made from the members of the public and said they want to  
90 read the suggestions outlined in the letters presented to them. Mr. Kerin suggested that the traffic  
91 study be conducted once the new building is complete but, in the meantime, implement paint,  
92 signage, or bump outs and increased enforcement to see if these strategies may work. Mr. Brown  
93 suggested \$2000 be used to try out some of the solutions in the short term. Mr. Chawla said the  
94 problem of no loading dock also needs a solution urgently.  
95

96 Ms. Duaney Whyte and Mr. and Mrs. Naef said that they love their neighborhood, want to be part of  
97 the solution, and requested being part of the study and next steps.  
98

99 **ANDREW BROWN made a motion, seconded by GEORGE TYLER, that the Trustees request staff**  
100 **work with the residents of School Street and Park Terrace on low cost solutions with a budget**  
101 **not to exceed \$2000 and tabling the study. The motion passed 4-0.**  
102

103 **b. Approve temporary closure of Memorial Way for Open and Outside event (Aug. 14-16)**

104 Mr. Tyler described the proposal to temporary close Memorial Way for the Open and Outside  
105 event. Mr. Pierce said that they would accept volunteers from the Trustees to help with the  
106 event and talked about the activities and businesses involved.  
107

108 **DAN KERIN made a motion, seconded by GEORGE TYLER, that the Trustees give Staff**  
109 **approval to close off the slip road in front of TD Bank for the Open and Outside event.**  
110 **The motion passed 4-0.**  
111

112 **c. Update on Crescent Connector—Evan Teich**

113 d. Mr. Teich provided the Trustees and public an update on the Crescent Connector. He talked  
114 about the project team moving forward with documents that propose a breakup of phases. This  
115 would accommodate the impact of COVID and provide time for easement discussions, while  
116 allowing continued progress on the project.  
117

118 **e. Discussion and potential action on merger, charter, and separation**

119 Mr. Brown introduced, and the Trustees discussed, five points regarding potential action on  
120 merger, charter, and separation. They talked about the collaborative process, to date, with the  
121 Selectboard and the work still needed to take place prior to August 21 if a question were to be  
122 placed on the November ballot regarding merger. The Trustees agreed to formally ask the  
123 Selectboard to work on the Charter with them over the week in an attempt to meet the deadline.  
124 They discussed frustrations with what they perceived indecisiveness in the process but pointed  
125 out many decisions were made jointly and collectively over the past year. They talked about the  
126 contention from subsets of the public and messaging from the Essex Retorter. They discussed  
127 the House Government Operations Committee’s role in the process. Mr. Chawla suggested that  
128 the Village Trustees finish a version of the merged Charter, have the Selectboard finish a  
129 version then have a newly formed Governance Subcommittee work on negotiations. Mr. Teich  
130 suggested that, if they do not get a question on the November ballot, the March vote could  
131 include the question with a deadline of January. He suggested that if an Australian ballot is  
132 approved in November the March vote should see a large turnout.  
133

134 Ms. Cooper said the current momentum in the community should signify that the vote should  
135 take place in November. She suggested that once the question is on the ballot, the time from  
136 now to the vote could be used to educate the community on the proposed merger plan.  
137

138 Ms. Stultz said she is torn about the possibility of a November vote because she would like  
139 more information about the advantages and disadvantages of dissolution. She suggested the  
140 momentum on the issue will not stop and that tax equity is an issue that needs a solution.  
141

142 Ms. Macy showed a portion of the first draft she is working on to demonstrate concrete  
143 numbers about how departments are funded between the Village and the Town outside the  
144 Village. She showed how she plans to illustrate this with merger, separation and status quo.  
145

146 The Trustees talked about a proposed timeline for working toward something for the ballot over  
147 the next week. They decided to finish a Trustees version of the Charter on a special meeting to  
148 be warned for Monday August 17<sup>th</sup>. They said they would provide it to the Selectboard for their  
149 Tuesday August 18<sup>th</sup> meeting in preparation for a possible special Joint meeting to be warned  
150 for Thursday August 20<sup>th</sup>. The Trustees agreed that there would be no need to formulate a  
151 response to the Selectboard’s proposal to modify the Town Charter to 3-3, as this could be  
152 discussed through this timeline.  
153

154 The Trustees discussed what to do about the 3-3 proposal currently with the House  
155 Government Ops Committee. They agreed that the Trustees should write a letter to table the  
156 proposal until there is a decision by both the Trustees and the Selectboard on the merger.  
157

158 The Trustees agreed that Mr. Brown and Mr. Tyler should write a summary of the evening’s  
159 decisions to be provided to the Selectboard.  
160

- 161 f. **Discussion and potential action for moving to Australian ballot voting for budget**
- 162 **approval**
- 163 The Trustees discussed agreed that a question should be placed on the November ballot of
- 164 whether the voters would like to move to Australian ballot of budget voting.
- 165

166 **RAJ CHAWLA made a motion, seconded by DAN KERIN, that the Trustees direct staff to**

167 **work with the Village Attorney to include the necessary language on the November 2020**

168 **ballot to ask voters whether or not to move to Australian ballot voting for the Village**

169 **municipal budget. The motion passed 4-0.**

170

171 **6. CONSENT ITEMS**

172

173 **GEORGE TYLER made a motion, seconded by RAJ CHAWLA, that the Trustees approve the**

174 **Consent Agenda:**

- 175 a. Approve two vouchers per household for Open and Outside
  - 176 • Increase the \$10 vouchers available to two per Village household and that the tickets can be
  - 177 picked up from the Village offices on the dates and times previously mentioned in the memo
  - 178 from Robin Pierce dated August 11, 2020.
- 179 b. Approve use of Village Conference Room for 1 Main Street park design charrette
  - 180 • Approve the use of the meeting room at 2 Lincoln for a Charrette for the 1 Main Street Park
  - 181 on August14th from10-noon.
- 182 c. Approve minutes: July 28, 2020
- 183 d. Check Warrant #17210—07/31/2020

184 **The motion passed 5-0.**

185

186 **7. READING FILE**

- 187 a. Board Member Comments
  - 188 • Mr. Brown talked about the youth development celebration scheduled for Saturday to
  - 189 recognize Essex’s new recognition as a Quality Youth Development Community where youth
  - 190 are valued and engaged.
  - 191 • Mr. Brown commented on a concern he heard about Champlain Valley Exposition(CVE)’s
  - 192 approval of a Grace Potter concert. He explained that CVE is a nonprofit, private business
  - 193 who can make these types of decisions, but if a someone has a suggestion for them, they can
  - 194 reach out to Tim Shea at CVE directly. He also suggested that if any members of the public
  - 195 see things happening that are illegal they should call the police department.
  - 196 • Mr. Tyler extended thanks to Ms. Cooper for her work on the Open and Outside event, and to
  - 197 Ms. Macy and Mr. Teich for pulling through with all of the recent work.
- 198 b. Memo from Greg Duggan re: Update on Essex clean-up day
  - 199 • Mr. Brown expressed thanks to Ms. Stultz for her work on the Clean Up day, to make up for
  - 200 Green Up Day, on September 26.
- 201 c. Memo from Robin Pierce re: Village Center Development: 3 Maple Street
  - 202 • Mr. Brown explained that the Maple Street project will continue and is paid for completely by
  - 203 private development funds.
- 204 d. Email from Lillie Bleau re: Essex policing needs to change
- 205 e. Racial justice work plan from Creative Discourse
- 206 f. Upcoming meeting schedule
- 207

208 **8. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- 209 a. **\*An executive session is not anticipated**
- 210 No executive session took place.
- 211

212 **9. ADJOURN**

**VILLAGE TRUSTEES**

**August 11, 2020**

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**DAN KERIN made a motion, seconded by RAJ CHAWLA, to adjourn. The motion passed 4-0 at 9:45 PM.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Cathy Ainsworth  
Recording Secretary