

VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Remote Meeting Only
Essex Junction, VT 05452
Tuesday, February 22, 2022
6:30 PM

E-mail: manager@essexjunction.org

www.essexjunction.org

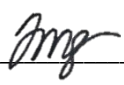
Phone: (802) 878-6951

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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. **PUBLIC HEARING** [6:35 PM]
 - a. Public hearing on Fiscal Year 2023 Proposed Budget and Capital Program
6. **BUSINESS ITEMS**
 - a. Consider adoption of FY23 Budget and Capital Program Budget
 - b. Discuss annual meeting ballot initiatives – local option tax, cannabis, fund balance threshold increase to 15%
 - c. Discuss 2 Lincoln renovations
 - d. Update on mask purchase initiative
 - e. *Discuss contracts with the Town of Essex
 - f. **Consider appointments to City Manager Recruitment & Hiring Planning Committee
7. **CONSENT ITEMS**
 - a. Approve minutes: February 8, 2022
 - b. Approve Check Warrants: # 17288—02/07/2022; #17289—02/11/2022
8. **READING FILE**
 - a. Board member comments
 - b. Monthly report from Brownell Library Trustees
 - c. Upcoming meeting schedule
9. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**
 - a. *An executive session may be necessary to discuss potential contracts
 - b. **An executive session may be necessary to discuss the appointment of a public official
10. **ADJOURN**

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Certification: 02/18/2022 

VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
February 22, 2022

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

ADMINISTRATION and STAFF: Evan Teich, Unified Manager; Maureen Gillard, School Age Childcare Director; Brad Luck, Essex Junction Recreation and Parks (EJRP) Director

OTHERS PRESENT: Diane Clemens; Kevin Collins; Annie Cooper; Christopher Kline; Paul Hansen; Sarah Macy; Jess Morris; Roseanne Prestipino; Laura Taylor; Irene Wrenner; Teri

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Brown called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

2. **AGENDA ADDITIONS/ CHANGES**

Mr. Brown requested that item 6e Discuss Contracts with the Town of Essex, and item 6f Consider appointments to City Manager Recruitment & Hiring Planning Committee, be reversed on the agenda.

Mr. Tyler added a document of his notes on proposed building renovations to the 2 Lincoln building, for item 6c.

3. **APPROVE AGENDA**

RAJ CHAWLA made a motion, seconded by AMBER THIBEAULT, to amend the agenda as discussed. The motion passed 4-0.

4. **PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**

a. **Comments from public on items not on the agenda.**

There were no comments from the public at this time.

5. **PUBLIC HEARING**

a. **Public hearing on Fiscal Year 2023 Proposed Budget and Capital Program**

Mr. Brown called the public hearing to order at 6:35 PM. Ms. Macy shared slides and provided an overview of the general fund, capital funds, enterprise funds, and estimated utility rate changes. General Fund highlights and contributing factors included new staff positions; a planned increase in capital transfer; legal services; paving/ traffic control; elections and grant matching funds. The estimated tax increase to a \$280,000 Village property is \$32.20. She also noted that \$375K in ARPA funds are being used to offset a higher tax increase. Ms. Macy discussed proposed spending from the Village's six capital funds for: road work, playground equipment, public works equipment, roofing, landscaping, vehicles, debt, waterline, wastewater pump station, and manhole rehab. Ms. Macy described impacts and strategies regarding the Village's enterprise funds. She said utility rates, to be set later in the year, are estimated to increase 6%.

There were no comments or questions from the public and the public hearing closed a 6:47 PM.

6. **BUSINESS ITEMS**

a. **Consider adoption of FY23 Budget and Capital Program Budget**

Ms. Macy and the Trustees explained that the budget process began in the fall and there had been many meetings and three public hearings prior to this vote to adopt.

55 **GEORGE TYLER made a motion, seconded by RAJ CHAWLA that the Trustees adopt the**
56 **various items on the FY23 budget in the amounts listed above [in the memo]. The motion**
57 **passed 4-0.**
58

59 **b. Discuss annual meeting ballot initiatives – local option tax, cannabis, fund balance**
60 **threshold increase to 15%**

61 Mr. Luck introduced the issue and asked if the Trustees had anything to add to the ballot other
62 than the three items listed. The Trustees did not add anything to the ballot at this time. They
63 pointed out that cannabis legislation prohibits retail marijuana stores within 500 feet walking
64 distance from a school. Mr. Luck spoke with the Trustees about his legal counsel request to help
65 determine whether the Village can include the Local Options Tax (LOT) on the ballot and said they
66 may want to consider voting on this question in November instead of this Spring if a charter change
67 is necessary instead. Mr. Teich and Mr. Tyler recalled from past research that, because the Village
68 is designated as a “Gold Town” by Act 68, due to above average student spending, which could
69 allow the LOT to be on the ballot. The Trustees requested that the ballot only have one question
70 about LOT, inclusive of all types being proposed instead of separating them out.
71

72 **c. Discuss 2 Lincoln renovations**

73 Mr. Luck introduced the summary of options for renovations at 2 Lincoln Street and requested
74 feedback from the Trustees. Mr. Brown said that the Senior Center and Essex CHIPS should not
75 be disrupted more than necessary and requested that as much space as is needed be preserved
76 for these users of the facility. Mr. Chawla agreed that renovations should take place in one
77 timeframe. Mr. Tyler suggested that less space be used for the public to review files outside of the
78 vault. He suggested a clear separation of workspaces from public spaces with, perhaps, two
79 separate doors. He requested that the basement not be used for offices and that they remove all
80 carpeting, for health reasons. He said, with an elevator, the second floor could include offices and
81 the basement could be used for storage or a breakroom. The Trustees agreed that an elevator be
82 included in the renovations. Mr. Chawla agreed that there should be separate staff/ public spaces
83 and a repurposed basement. Mr. Brown and Mr. Tyler talked about not wanting the conference
84 room to be smaller than it currently is. Ms. Thibeault supported this and pointed out that options
85 three and four made the conference room smaller but a large conference room could be on the
86 third floor. She agreed that the basement is not a good workspace and wondered how that would
87 change the cost estimates. Mr. Tyler requested more information about what the Building Needs
88 Assessment meant by “substandard conditions”. Ms. Thibeault requested that some funds be left
89 over to address public works facilities needs assessment. Trustees suggested that other funds
90 may be available for the public works renovations. Mr. Luck said he would reconnect with staff,
91 stakeholders, and the engineer to get designs for final approval.
92

93 **d. Update on mask purchase initiative**

94 Mr. Luck said that, so far, the bulk N95 masks sourcing through Project N95 has been
95 unsuccessful. Sources identified have not had enough inventory. He said 4000 single-use blue
96 masks have been secured and are on-site. He requested direction on how to proceed with
97 sourcing N95s and distributing blue masks. The Trustees said the effort to source the N95 masks
98 should continue and the blue masks should be available at the Senior Center, senior housing
99 facilities, and to Village employees. Mr. Brown suggested masks be distributed to the community
100 like the Out And About vouchers had been. Ms. Cooper said that she could connect with three
101 masking sources she knows of to see if they could provide 10,000 N95s, and would forward this
102 information to Mr. Luck and Mr. Chawla.
103

104 **e. **Consider appointments to City Manager Recruitment & Hiring Planning Committee**

105 Mr. Luck said that Mr. Chawla and Ms. Thibeault interviewed eleven applicants for the committee
106 and the Trustees would discuss this in executive session.

107 **RAJ CHAWLA** made a motion, seconded by **GEORGE TYLER**, that the Trustees go into
108 executive session to discuss the appointment of public officers under the provisions of Title 1,
109 Section 313(a)(3) of the Vermont Statutes, and include the Recreation Director. The motion
110 passed 4-0 at 7:31 PM.

111
112 **RAJ CHAWLA** made a motion, seconded by **AMBER THIBEAULT** that the Trustees exit
113 executive session. The motion passed 4-0 at 7:31 PM.

114
115 Mr. Brown said that, during the executive session discussion, they found all 11 candidates
116 appropriate for a committee and next steps would be to split the committee into two, a Manager
117 Recruitment Committee and a Manager Hiring Committee, with a Trustee to serve on each.

118
119 **RAJ CHAWLA** made a motion, seconded by **GEORGE TYLER**, to empower Trustees Chawla
120 and Thibeault to select which of the eleven community volunteers would be appointed to the
121 Recruitment Committee and to the separate Hiring/Planning Committee.
122 The motion passed 4-0

123
124 f. *** Discuss contracts with the Town of Essex**
125 This agenda item took place as 9a.

126
127 **7. CONSENT ITEMS**

128
129 **RAJ CHAWLA** made a motion, seconded by **GEORGE TYLER**, to approve the consent agenda:

130 a. **Approve minutes: February 8, 2022**

131 b. **Approve Check Warrants: # 17288—02/07/2022; #17289—02/11/2022**

132 The motion passed 4-0.

133
134 **8. READING FILE**

135 a. **Board member comments**

- 136 • Mr. Brown gave the update that the City Charter, legislation H0491, passed in the VT House of
137 Representatives. He thanked representatives Houghton and Dolan for their support. Next steps
138 will take place in the VT Senate.
- 139 • Mr. Brown requested that the approved resolution for Evan Teich be provided for the Trustees
140 to sign prior to Mr. Teich's last day with the Village.
- 141 • Mr. Brown said this was the last Trustees meeting that Mr. Teich would attend as Unified
142 Manager. The Trustees shared resounding appreciation with Mr. Teich for his work since he
143 began in the position. They noted his patience, guidance, and extensive work done for the
144 community.

145 b. **Approval Monthly report from Brownell Library Trustees**

146 c. **Upcoming meeting schedule**

147
148 **9. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

149 a. ***An executive session may be necessary to discuss potential contracts**

150
151 **RAJ CHAWLA** made a motion, seconded by **GEORGE TYLER**, that the Trustees find that
152 premature general public knowledge regarding the Village's contracts with the Town of Essex
153 would clearly place the Village at a substantial disadvantage, because the Trustees risk
154 disclosing its negotiation strategy if it discusses the proposed contract terms in public. The
155 motion passed 4-0.

156
157 **RAJ CHAWLA** made a motion, seconded by **GEORGE TYLER**, that the Trustees go into
158 executive session to discuss potential contracts with the Town of Essex under the provisions
159 of Title 1, Section 313(a)(1) of the Vermont Statutes, and include the recreation director. The
160 motion passed 4-0 at 8:07 PM.

161

162 **RAJ CHAWLA** made a motion, seconded by **GEORGE TYLER** to exit executive session. The
163 motion passed 4-0 at 8:45 PM.

164

165 b. ****An executive session may be necessary to discuss the appointment of a public official**

166 This executive session took place earlier in the meeting as item 6e.

167

168 10. **ADJOURN**

169

170 **RAJ CHAWLA** made a motion, and **AMBER THIBEAULT** seconded, that the Trustees adjourn
171 the meeting. The motion passed 4-0 at 8:46 PM.

172

173

174 Respectfully Submitted,

175 Cathy Ainsworth