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**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
June 8, 2022**

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

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**ADMINISTRATION:** Wendy Hysko, Library Director/Interim Co-Manager; Brad Luck, Essex Junction Recreation & Parks Director/Interim Co-Manager; Jess Morris, Finance Director.

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**OTHERS PRESENT:** Annie Cooper, Carl Houghton, Alan Nye, Sarah Reeves, Bob.

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

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Andrew Brown called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

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2. **AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**

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None.

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3. **APPROVE AGENDA**

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No changes were made, so no further approval was needed.

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4. **PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**

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a. Comments from public on items not on the agenda

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Carl Houghton asked for a status update on the senior center. Mr. Brown replied that the status of the center has not changed and still has a program fund and staff. Mr. Houghton spoke about fund-raising, including monthly fees and bridge tournaments. He said that they spent the funding that was raised to redo the floor of the center and purchase more chairs. He asked if the center location will change. Mr. Brown replied that the center will be renovated over the next year and will temporarily need to be relocated. Mr. Houghton said that the center would prefer having a site coordinator who is also a senior. He also said that some seniors bequeathed their money to the center in their will and asked that the location of that funding be looked into.

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Mr. Luck noted that in 2016 there was an Essex Area Senior Center 501(c)3 nonprofit but it has since been dissolved and the municipalities have assumed responsibility for the operations of the center. He said that the funds that were raised through the 501(c)(3) are currently in an enterprise fund that is accessible for senior needs. He also noted that the Town of Essex employs the Senior Program Director, who will oversee the senior center until 12/31/2023, after which the Junction will take over staffing.

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5. **PUBLIC HEARING**

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a. FY23 Proposed Utility Rates

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Ms. Morris began by providing an overview of the water, wastewater, and sanitation rate-setting for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023. She noted that the Village combined utility rate is increasing 5.4% over FY22. She noted that the increase FY23 is mostly in line with rate increases over the last number of years, and that the total overall increase would be about \$41.78 per residential property per year.

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She then spoke about each separate utility rate in turn. She noted that the water rate is seeing the largest increase over FY22 (5.8%) due to increases in employee benefit costs. She noted that the water budget includes a 3.5% rate increase for the Champlain Water District wholesale rate. She spoke about the Village wastewater treatment user rate, noting that the 5.6% increase is largely due to an increase in wastewater treatment facility staffing, changing state regulation and unfunded mandates, and increased chemical costs. She noted that the Village sanitation user rates will increase by 1.5% due to a budgeted increase for debt payment, administrative fees, and pump station costs. She noted that the large water user rate increased to 11 cents per thousand gallons, and the wastewater treatment

wholesale rate is increasing by 9.7% due to an increase in the wastewater treatment facility budget, an increased cost for biosolids, chemicals and electricity, and a planned \$20,000 increase to the capital transfer.

There was no public comment.

She noted that there will be a second public hearing on June 22, 2022.

## 6. **BUSINESS ITEMS**

### a. Discussion on upcoming initiatives with Chittenden Solid Waste District (CSWD)

Ms. Reeves noted that there will be an increase in activity related to capital over the next several years for the Chittenden Solid Waste District. She said that the Board of Commissioners approved a bond request for a new materials recovery facility (MRF). She said that the current MRF is around 30 years old and needs replacement and is processing double what it was built to process. She noted that it is one of the few facilities that is sorted by hand. She said that they would like to construct a new facility in Williston, at a cost of \$22-\$24 million. She said that they would be asking the voters for \$22 million in general obligation bonds. She said that they need to receive approval from voters for bonding. She said that one of her current activities is seeking grant and other funding opportunities to decrease the amount of the bond. She said that if they receive voter approval in November, they will be able to get RFPs out for construction and hope to have the new MRF open in late 2024-early 2025.

Mr. Brown asked how consumers would be impacted by the new MRF. Ms. Reeves replied that the new MRF would have added flexibility in terms of the materials that it can sort and separate, such as polypropylene (yogurt cups, for example), and black plastic, which they would be able to sort into their own streams.

Mr. Kerin asked if the new MRF would relieve pressure at the drop-off centers. Ms. Reeves said that they are hoping to be able to install bigger containers at the drop-off centers and be able to accept a higher volume of material. She added that they will keep the current MRF facility in addition to the newly-constructed one, so they will still have that space available for consolidation activities.

Mr. Brown asked how voters won't be paying for the bond, even though they will need to approve it. Ms. Reeves replied that CSWD will be paying down the debt service, since they receive funding through a number of streams and will have multiple sources of cash on hand. She said that if they are not able to make the debt service, they would come to each of the municipalities and ask them to cover it.

Mr. Tyler said that this is a very forward-thinking activity and commended the project.

Ms. Reeves noted other CSWD activities, including a new compost facility, improvements in the Milton drop-off center, minor improvements in the Essex drop-off center, the construction of a new administrative building, and a new screener to pre-screen for plastics and metals in compost.

### b. Discuss real estate purchase or lease options

**This was discussed during executive session.**

## 7. **CONSENT ITEMS**

a. Approve check warrants: #17303 (5/20/22); #17304 (5/27/22); #17305 (6/3/2022)

b. Approve minutes: May 25, 2022

c. Approve Andrew Brown to sign agreements with the Town of Essex

d. Approve use of Economic Development funds use of up to \$35,000 for 1 Main Street improvements

- 104 e. Approve appointment of Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission Planning Advisory  
105 Committee reps  
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107 **GEORGE TYLER made a motion, seconded by DAN KERIN to approve the consent agenda as**  
108 **amended. The motion passed 4-0.**  
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110 **8. READING FILE**

111 a. Board member comments: Mr. Brown noted that Phase 1 of the Crescent Connector project is  
112 beginning next week, noting that the railroad crossings will be replaced throughout the Junction and  
113 there will be anticipated road closures. He noted that this will continue through mid-August. Mr. Luck  
114 provided an update on the City Manager hiring process. He noted that applications will be accepted  
115 through the 12<sup>th</sup> and that to date they have received 18 applications. He said he is confident that there  
116 is a qualified slate of candidates in those applications.  
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118 **9. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

119 a. An executive session was necessary to discuss securing or negotiating real estate purchase or lease  
120 options

121 **ANDREW BROWN made a motion, seconded by GEORGE TYLER, that the Trustees go into**  
122 **executive session to discuss negotiating or securing real estate purchase or lease options under**  
123 **the provisions of Title 1, Section 313(a)(2) of the Vermont Statutes, and include the interim co-**  
124 **managers. The motion passed 4-0 and the Trustees entered into executive session at 7:20 PM.**

125 **DAN KERIN made a motion, seconded by GEORGE TYLER, to exit executive session. The motion**  
126 **passed 4-0 and the Trustees exited executive session at 8:21 PM.**

127 **10. ADJOURN**  
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129 **DAN KERIN made a motion, seconded by GEORGE TYLER, to adjourn the meeting. The motion**  
130 **passed 4-0 at 8:21 PM.**  
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132 Respectfully Submitted,  
133 Amy Coonradt