



VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Online & 2 Lincoln St.  
Essex Junction, VT 05452  
Wednesday, June 22, 2022  
6:30 PM

E-mail: [manager@essexjunction.org](mailto:manager@essexjunction.org)

[www.essexjunction.org](http://www.essexjunction.org)

Phone: (802) 878-6951

This meeting will be in-person at 2 Lincoln Street and available remotely. Options to watch or join the meeting remotely:

- **WATCH:** the meeting will be live streamed on [Town Meeting TV](#)
- **JOIN ONLINE:** [Join Zoom Meeting](#)
- **JOIN CALLING:** (toll free audio only): (888) 788-0099 | Meeting ID: 944 6429 7825; Passcode: 635787

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**
  - a. FY23 proposed utility rates – second hearing
6. **BUSINESS ITEMS**
  - a. Consider approval of fiscal year 2023 proposed utility rates
  - b. Department Head Conversation: Colleen Dwyer, HR Director
  - c. Consider amendments to Housing Commission charter
  - d. \*Interviews and consider appointments to Housing Commission, Planning Commission, Development Review Board
7. **CONSENT ITEMS**
  - a. Approve check warrants: # 17306 (6/10/2022); #17307 (6/17/2022)
  - b. VTRANS municipal roads grants-in-aid program FY23
  - c. Approve minutes: 6/8/2022
  - d. Approve appointment of Health Officer
8. **READING FILE**
  - a. COVID-19 CDC surveillance sampling program data update
  - b. July 1 Celebration update
9. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**  
\*An executive session may be needed for the appointment of public officials.
10. **ADJOURN**

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Certification: 6/20/22 Brad Luck

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**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
June 22, 2022**

**TRUSTEES PRESENT:** Raj Chawla, Vice President; Dan Kerin; Amber Thibeault.

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Diane Clemens, Annie Cooper, Ned Daly, Cristin Gildea, Scott McCormack, Erhard Mahnke, Elijah Massey, Maggie Massey, Ta Tanisha Redditta, Gabrielle Smith, Kate Vanni, Dylan Zwicky.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Raj Chawla called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

2. **AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**

None at this time.

3. **APPROVE AGENDA**

No approval needed.

4. **PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**

a. Comments from public on items not on the agenda

None at this time.

5. **PUBLIC HEARING**

a. FY23 proposed utility rates – second hearing

Ms. Morris provided an overview of the FY23 proposed utility rates, noting that this is the second public hearing. She noted that the rates were calculated using the same calculation methodology as in past years. She noted that the combined rate is increasing by 7.7%, which is for water, sewer, and sanitation, and represents around a \$41.78 per residential property per year.

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.

6. **BUSINESS ITEMS**

a. Consider approval of fiscal year 2023 proposed utility rates.

**DAN KERIN made a motion, and AMBER THIBEAULT seconded, that the Trustees adopt the Fiscal Year 2023 Utility Rates as presented. The motion passed 3-0.**

54 b. Department Head conversation: Colleen Dwyer, HR Director  
55 Ms. Dwyer spoke first about the department's six month lookback, noting that she was a relatively  
56 recent hire and has been learning about how municipal human resources departments differ from  
57 those in the private sector. She also spoke about the department's interest on the topic of  
58 compensation. She also spoke about the City Manager hiring process. She said that since she has  
59 started there have been 10 new hires. She said that she will be shadowing every department to get a  
60 sense of what their work entails and make connections within each department.

61 Mr. Chawla asked about Ms. Dwyer's perceived differences between the private sector and municipal  
62 government. Ms. Dwyer replied that the pace of municipal government is more deliberate, thoughtful,  
63 and intentional. She said that the pace is more beneficial, but acknowledged that it can be frustrating  
64 internally at times.

65 c. Consider amendments to Housing Commission charter  
66 Ms. Smith, Vice-Chair of the Housing Commission, noted that the Housing Commission has been  
67 asked by both Boards for recommendations for transitioning from a joint Commission to two separate  
68 commissions. She said that both municipalities would like to have housing commissions, but would like  
69 them separate. She noted that the proposed changes to the charter for the Housing Commission were  
70 approved by the Selectboard last night. She said that the recommendations are geared toward  
71 ensuring as much continuity as possible. She said that specifically, the recommendations request  
72 having an interim period of a joint Commission until April 2023 and expand the number of members on  
73 the Commission to 10. She said that all terms of appointments would remain unchanged. She said that  
74 another recommendation is to have a quorum of 5, acknowledging current vacancies. She said that  
75 once the Commissions are separated, they would each have 7 members and a quorum of 4.

76 **DAN KERIN made a motion, seconded by AMBER THIBEAULT, that the Trustees endorse its**  
77 **separation proposal and approve the revised joint Housing Commission charter, anticipating**  
78 **that final resolutions to separate the Housing Commission and proposed new charters, will be**  
79 **provided by June 1, 2023. The motion passed 3-0.**

80 d. \*Interviews and consider appointments too Housing Commission, Planning Commission,  
81 Development Review Board.  
82 The Trustees interviewed Gabrielle Smith for a seat on the Housing Commission. Ms. Smith said that  
83 she is interested in continuing her role on the Housing Commission and that she has been in this role  
84 for 2 years. She said that the learning curve for her was steep and that she has learned a lot from her  
85 colleagues.

86  
87 The Trustees interviewed Ta Tanish Redditta for a seat on the Housing Commission. Ms. Redditta  
88 spoke about her interest in and motivation for being on the Housing Commission. She spoke about her  
89 experience with homelessness and said that housing issues are extremely important to her. She said  
90 that she has watched several Housing Commission meetings. She noted other volunteer positions she  
91 has held and community involvement she has had in the past, including on the Economic  
92 Development Commission and the Community Justice Center.

93  
94 The Trustees interviewed Ned Daly for a seat on the Housing Commission. Mr. Daly spoke about his  
95 experience with the Town's Planning Commission and with activities related to construction, design,

96 and development. He said that his strength is as a convener and facilitator in order to complete  
97 collaborative projects. Mr. Kerin asked about the differences between the Town and Junction's  
98 development needs. Mr. Daly said that Essex has struggled to get the Essex Town Center off the  
99 ground. He said that the Village is more complete in terms of having infrastructure support to  
100 accomplish its goals, though it is more limited in terms of space.

101  
102 The Trustees interviewed Diane Clemens for a seat on the Planning Commission. Ms. Clemens spoke  
103 about her current experience serving on the Planning Commission. Mr. Chawla asked what Ms.  
104 Clemens is most proud of and what she's still hoping to accomplish. Ms. Clemens replied that she  
105 helped the Junction draft the Municipal Plan as well as its Comprehensive Plan, as well as solicited  
106 public input on the plans. She said that she is proud that the Junction is guided by these plans as well  
107 as by its Land Development Code.

108  
109 The Trustees interviewed Scott McCormack for a seat on the Planning Commission. He spoke about  
110 his work experiences, which has entailed working with regional, state, and national governments,  
111 mostly overseas. He noted his experience working with groups to implement strategic and work plans.  
112 He expressed interest in helping engage the public on the Junction's Comprehensive Plan. Mr.  
113 Chawla noted that public engagement will be essential over the next three to four years as the  
114 Comprehensive Plan is updated.

115  
116 The Trustees interviewed Elijah Massey for a seat on the Planning Commission. He spoke about his  
117 experience working in rural development and expressed interest in municipal development in his  
118 community. He spoke about his experience on the Junction's Bike/Walk Committee, though he had to  
119 step down from that role due to family obligations. He said he is interested in returning to more active  
120 civic engagement.

121  
122 The Trustees interviewed Christin Gildea for a seat on the Development Review Board. She spoke  
123 about her experience with recruiting volunteers through her work with alumni relations at the University  
124 of Vermont Larner College of Medicine, and relished the prospect of becoming a volunteer herself.  
125 She spoke about her family's engagement with local government in New Jersey when she was  
126 growing up. Mr. Chawla asked for her perspective on where the Junction is headed in terms of in-fill,  
127 development, and affordable housing. Ms. Gildea replied that these issues are intricately intertwined  
128 and also spoke positively of mixed-use zoning as a way of achieving some of these goals.

129  
130 The Trustees interviewed Maggie Massey for a seat on the Development Review Board. Ms. Massey  
131 said that she is interested in becoming more involved with the community. She noted her participation  
132 in the City Manager recruitment team as a good way for her to get a sense of what civic engagement  
133 in the Junction would entail. She noted her experiences in community development in Paraguay as  
134 well as her recruitment and mentoring experiences. Mr. Chawla asked for her perspective on how the  
135 Junction's development progress. Ms. Massey said that she has agreed with the Junction's  
136 development strategy so far, which attempts to minimize sprawl. She said that she is excited about  
137 changes such as 5 Corners and the intentional development that comes with it.

138

The Trustees interviewed Dylan Zwicky for a seat on the Development Review Board. Mr. Zwicky spoke about his experiences as a recent home-buyer in Essex Junction, specifically around the scarcity of housing in the area. He spoke about his experience at the Vermont legislature and his background in political science and economics. He expressed support for the direction in which the Junction is headed, in terms of walkability, livability, and promotion of in-fill development as an appropriate land use strategy.

**DAN KERIN made a motion, seconded by AMBER THIBEAULT, that the Trustees appoint Gabrielle Smith for a three-year term, Ta Tanisha Redditta for a three-year term, Ned Daly for a two-year term, Katie Ballard for a one-year term, and Mia Watson for a one-year term to the Housing Commission; Diane Clemens for a three-year term, Elijah Massey for a three-year term, and Scott McCormack for a two-year term to the Planning Commission; and John Alden for a one-year term, Cristin Gildea for a two-year term, Maggie Massey for a three-year term, Robert Mount for a three-year term, and Dylan Zwicky for a three-year term to the Development Review Board. The motion passed 3-0.**

**7. CONSENT ITEMS**

- a. Approve check warrants: #17306 (6/10/2022): #17307 (6/17/2022)
- b. VTRANS municipal roads grants-in-aid program FY23
- c. Approve minutes: 6/8/2022
- d. Approve appointment of Health Officer

**AMBER THIBEAULT made a motion, seconded by DAN KERIN to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion passed 3-0.**

**8. READING FILE**

- a. COVID-19 CDC surveillance sampling program data update
- b. July 1 Celebration update

**9. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- \* An executive session may be needed for the appointment of public officials.  
An executive session was not needed.

**10. ADJOURN**

**DAN KERIN made a motion, seconded by AMBER THIBEAULT, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 3-0 at 8:08PM.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Amy Coonradt