



**CITY OF ESSEX JUNCTION
CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

Online & 2 Lincoln St.
Essex Junction, VT 05452
Wednesday, July 13, 2022
6:30 PM

E-mail: manager@essexjunction.org

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. **BUSINESS ITEMS**
 - a. Discuss and consider next steps with 1 Main Street Park
6. **CONSENT ITEMS**
 - a. Approve Minutes: May 19, 2022; June 22, 2022; July 6, 2022
 - b. Approve Check Warrants: #17308 (6/24/2022); #17309 (6/30/2022); 17310 (7/8/2022)
 - c. Approve Banner Application: Gem, Mineral and Fossil Show
 - d. Approve Liquor License Application for Central Beverage pending approval by the Chief of Police
 - e. Approve City Liquor Licenses
 - f. Approve Recommendation of Sharon Kelley as Deputy Health Officer
 - g. Approve of Susan McNamara-Hill as City Clerk
7. **ADJOURN**

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Certification: 7/9/22 Brad Luck

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**CITY OF ESSEX JUNCTION
CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES OF MEETING
July 13, 2022**

COUNCILORS PRESENT: Andrew Brown, President; Raj Chawla, Vice President; Dan Kerin; Amber Thibeault, George Tyler.

ADMINISTRATION: Wendy Hysko, Library Director/Interim Co-Manager; Brad Luck, Essex Junction Recreation & Parks Director/Interim Co-Manager; Rick Hamlin, City Engineer; Robin Pierce, Community Development Director.

OTHERS PRESENT: Rich Boyers; David Burton; Annie Cooper; Nathan Doudera; Christopher Kline; Bridget Meyer; Nick Meyer; Wendy Shellito; Miles Waite.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

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

2. **AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**

Ms. Thibeault asked that the July 6, 2022 minutes be moved from the Consent Agenda and placed on the agenda as Business Item 5c.

Mr. Brown noted that they received information from the Police Department about the liquor licenses and requested that that be added to Consent Agenda item 6c.

3. **APPROVE AGENDA**

GEORGE TYLER made a motion, seconded by DAN KERIN, to approve the agenda as amended. The motion passed 5-0.

4. **PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**

a. Comments from public on items not on the agenda

None at this time.

5. **BUSINESS ITEMS**

a. *Interviews and consider appointments to Capital Planning Review Committee, Tree Advisory Committee, BikeWalk Advisory Committee

Nathan Doudera spoke about his interest in serving on the Capital Planning Review Committee. He noted a strong financial background as well as prior volunteer experience. He said he is excited about the energy of becoming a City and would like to be involved in keeping that momentum.

Rich Boyers spoke about his interest in serving on the Tree Advisory Committee. He spoke about his background as a landscape architecture, urban regional planning, and schoolteacher. He said that he had previously served on the Tree Advisory Committee in 2014 and that it tapped into his interests both in landscape architecture and teaching. He said that partnerships between the City and businesses and property-owners with regards to plantings is crucial, given that the City's public rights-of-way are narrow.

RAJ CHAWLA made a motion, seconded by DAN KERIN, to approve of appointing Nathan Doudera to the Capital Planning Review Committee (3-year term) and Rich Boyers to the Tree Advisory Committee (3-year term). The motion passed 5-0.

b. Discuss and consider next steps with 1 Main Street Park

53 Mr. Luck provided an overview of the item, noting that the Councilors (then Trustees) had previously
54 allocated \$35,000 at its May 25 meeting for short-term improvements. Those included filling in the curb
55 cut and obtaining planters and picnic tables for the site. He said that tonight's discussion will focus on
56 longer-term improvements, such as an opportunity for community input and ultimately an approved
57 design. He said that once those occur, the City can apply for grant funding to remove the contaminated
58 soils and construct the park. He outlined a potential timeline, with community input opportunities and
59 preliminary design occurring in late summer/early fall, an approved design by City Council in late fall,
60 grant-writing for soil remediation in the winter, and breaking ground on the park in the spring of 2023.
61 He said that tonight's goals will include providing the designer (Mr. Burton) with goals, constraints, and
62 a budget.

63
64 Mr. Waite outlined the contaminated soil, remediation, and obtaining grant funding for remediation
65 activities. He said that having grass areas in the park could entail the removal of more soil. He said that
66 there is funding available in the Petroleum Cleanup Fund, in addition to the \$12,000 they are seeking in
67 funding from the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission to conduct additional testing. He
68 said that additional testing will entail more soil boring to better characterize the soil. He said that this will
69 help determine the price of remediation. He said that the worst-case scenario for remediation costs is
70 around \$100,000 for removal per foot of soil. He said that grant funding is available from the state for
71 remediation activities. He said that once they have a better sense of the soil composition as well as a
72 final design for the park, they will be able to better determine how much soil needs to be removed. Mr.
73 Kerin asked if soil removal would need to be deeper if shrubs or other vegetation are planted. Mr. Waite
74 replied that they could remove more feet of soil where plantings will occur, if needed.

75
76 Councilors began by discussing constraints for the project. Mr. Brown said that this should be a
77 community-designed area, rather than an area designed for the community based on assumptions. Mr.
78 Tyler said that he would encourage community input but would want to engage professional services to
79 create the park. He also said that they have already made the decision to cap the site, but are still
80 deliberating about how many and which trees and other types of vegetation to put on top of it. He also
81 suggested erring on the side of caution and proposed a budget of \$200,000. Mr. Luck said that if there
82 is a clear constraint that hardscape is a preference, as it is less expensive for remediation than installing
83 grass, this would be helpful for the designer to know. Mr. Chawla pointed out that the design will likely
84 be dictated by what the public wants, but it will be important to make the constraints (such as budget)
85 clear to the public when seeking their input. He said that he would be comfortable with a budget of
86 \$200,000 (to include both remediation and construction). Ms. Thibeault and Mr. Kerin agreed with Mr.
87 Chawla and Mr. Tyler about a budget. They acknowledged that it is difficult to determine costs both
88 without a final design and without further soil analysis.

89
90 Mr. Hamlin pointed out that the topography of the site has changed from the initial proposal to now. He
91 said that if they were to design the park to have multiple grades, then the hard surface could be built on
92 the existing surface and excavation could be limited to where the trees and posts for shaders would be
93 installed. He said that soil testing is the next step, as it will determine where the trees can go (if the soils
94 are more contaminated in certain areas than others).

95
96 Mr. Burton asked for more detail about several of the constraints mentioned. He asked how many trees
97 are being contemplated for the space, and Mr. Brown replied that they want 5 trees in the space. Mr.
98 Burton asked whether the suggested budget of \$200,000 is a hard limit, or whether an extra percentage
99 of contingency funding could be contemplated. Mr. Brown replied that extra funding wouldn't be an issue
100 unless it impacts the soil mitigation plan. Mr. Burton asked for confirmation that the surface would be
101 capped, and Mr. Brown confirmed that the plan is to cap it. Mr. Waite noted that one constraint could be
102 stormwater runoff. Mr. Luck said that one of the goals of the park is to have places for people to sit and

103 enjoy meals. Mr. Burton said that it will also be important to think about the longevity of the space, when
104 thinking about the materials and style for it.

105
106 Bridget Meyer suggested appointing a short-term committee comprised of a member of the Tree
107 Committee, the City Engineer, the head of grounds and facilities, staff from public works, and Mr. Burton
108 to develop a proposal and return to the City Council with its recommendations.

109
110 Annie Cooper said that in terms of public input, she has felt that her input has not necessarily been
111 heard in the past. She said that Mr. Burton is an exceptional designer and that she is confident that he
112 will help get the project completed. She advised that \$100,000 be allocated toward remediation and
113 \$200,000 be allocated for the park (for a total of \$300,000). City Councilors discussed costs and decided
114 to stick with \$200,000.

115
116 Mr. Brown asked whether Mr. Burton would find a steering committee useful. Mr. Burton replied that if
117 the City has a good feel for the elements that are the most important and are supported by the
118 community, then there may not be the need to reach out to the community further. He said he wants to
119 avoid having community members feel like there are elements that are missing. Mr. Brown said that if a
120 formal committee is appointed, then it is required to follow Open Meeting Law and could slow down the
121 process further. He said that in terms of community input, an informal survey could be acceptable (rather
122 than another full design charrette).

123
124 **DAN KERIN made a motion, seconded by GEORGE TYLER, that the City Council approve of the**
125 **1 Main Street process as outlined in the memo with a budget of up to \$200,000 for the**
126 **construction of the park. The working group, comprised of members as determined by staff, will**
127 **also be involved in the long-term improvement process. The motion passed 5-0.**

128
129 c. Consider July 6, 2022 minutes

130 Ms. Thibeault requested the following amendments to the July 6 meeting:

- 131 • Note that it was a special, rather than regular, meeting
- 132 • Remove George Tyler from attendee list
- 133 • Replace any reference to "Trustees" with "Councilors" on Line 7

134
135 **GEORGE TYLER made a motion, seconded by DAN KERIN, to amend the minutes of July 6, 2022**
136 **as recommended by Councilor Thibeault. The motion passed 5-0.**

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138 **6. CONSENT ITEMS**

- 139 a. Approve Minutes: May 19, 2022; June 22, 2022;
- 140 b. Approve Check Warrants: #17308 (6/24/2022); #17309 (6/30/2022); #17310 (7/8/2022)
- 141 c. Approve Banner Application: Gem, Mineral and Fossil Show
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- 144 f. Approve Recommendation of Sharon Kelley as Deputy Health Officer
- 145 g. Approve of Susan McNamara-Hill As City Clerk

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147 **RAJ CHAWLA made a motion, seconded by AMBER THIBEAULT to approve the consent agenda**
148 **as presented. The motion passed 5-0.**

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150 Mr. Tyler asked if there have been any retail cannabis applications received. Mr. Chawla replied that
151 any applications are first conditionally approved by the State's Cannabis Control Board, after which they
152 will come before the Local Cannabis Control Commission for approval.

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Mr. Luck noted that the City has conducted 3 City Manager interviews so far and has 3 more to conduct by the end of the week.

7. **ADJOURN**

DAN KERIN made a motion, seconded by RAJ CHAWLA, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 5-0 at 8:08PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amy Coonradt