

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
CAPITAL PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES OF MEETING
August 6, 2019**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Andrew Brown (Chairman), Kevin Collins, Tim Dall, Amber Thibeault
ADMINISTRATION: Evan Teich, Unified Manager; Rick Jones, Public Works Superintendent

1. CALL TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

2. AGENDA CHANGES/ ADDITIONS

No changes or additions to the agenda were suggested.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No community members were present so no public comments were heard.

4. DISCUSSION TOPICS

a. Local Option Tax memo

Mr. Brown introduced a revised draft of the Local Option Tax (LOT) memo, which explains the rationale for a LOT. He invited further edits, comments or a motion to approve the memo. He explained that, with approval, it will go before the Trustees for discussion, then to the joint Selectboard and Trustees meeting. Mr. Teich pointed out that if the LOT revenue is strategically split between the Village and Town it could support tax equity efforts during the merger. He cautioned that a timeline for rolling out the LOT should carefully take into consideration that a LOT vote may confuse residents trying to understand the merger. He said that Elaine Haney, the Selectboard Chair is researching if there are any legislative barriers to implementing a LOT around the time of a merger. Mr. Teich urged the committee to recommend that the LOT go directly toward the Capital Projects budget.

TIMOTHY DALL made a motion, seconded by KEVIN COLLINS, to approve the memo for discussion with the Trustees.

The committee members discussed with Mr. Jones and Mr. Teich, whether the LOT revenue should only be allocated to the Capital Projects Budget or if a portion should also go to the paving budget line of the General Fund. Mr. Jones explained that paving is often included in capital projects but paving outside of these planned projects is paid for through the general fund's paving line.

Mr. Brown recommended two changes to the memo, in the second to the last paragraph: remove the word "done" from the first line and add "and paving projects" in the last sentence after "capital".

ANDREW BROWN made a friendly amendment, approved by TIMOTHY DALL and KEVIN COLLINS, to revise the motion to read "to approve the memo, as amended, for discussion with the Trustees."

VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

b. Sidewalk fund

Mr. Brown asked if the committee would recommend a designated portion of the Capital Budget go to a Sidewalk Fund. Mr. Jones explained that, similar to paving, some sidewalk upgrades are embedded in capital projects but additional funds are used to fix sidewalks each year, outside of

planned capital projects. He said that about \$7,000 is used annually to replace two or three sidewalk segments, in response to resident concerns. The proposed Sidewalk Fund would be used to fix hazardous sections of sidewalk, graded as poor or fair, and expand sidewalks to 5 feet so snow blowing is more efficient. He proposed that \$185,253.47 be allocated, based on his estimate for 1,600 feet of sidewalk replacement on Village residential streets. The projects would be ranked based on urgency and prioritized for replacement.

Ms. Thibeault clarified with Mr. Jones that an updated sidewalk study has been completed, which includes newly identified portions of sidewalk of poor quality. She and Mr. Dall discussed sidewalk areas of concern that they are aware of and suggested that Mr. Jones also consult the Bike/Walk Advisory Committee to determine their needs.

The committee discussed whether transferring \$185,000 out of the Capital Budget (about half of the capital budget) into a sidewalks budget would further delay planned, ranked capital projects. Mr. Brown suggested, and the committee members agreed, that Ms. Macy should demonstrate spreadsheet scenarios that illustrate how this transfer would change capital project funding plans and what would happen if only half of the amount is transferred over two years. Mr. Collins expressed concern that this transfer would bypass the already established capital project ranking system. He suggested putting together a sidewalk replacement ranking system and timeline then consider funding these expenses by the LOT. Mr. Brown suggested that Mr. Jones consider if there are capital projects planned that could include preventative sidewalk maintenance, to avoid increased expenses.

The committee members did not agree to a Capital Budget transfer at this time but will review sidewalk funding scenarios in a future meeting.

5. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES

a. Approval of Minutes: June 4, 2019

Mr. Dall suggested replacing “TRUSTEES PRESENT” with “COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT”. Mr. Brown suggested moving Sarah Macy into the Administration line.

AMBER THIBEAULT made a motion, second by KEVIN COLLINS, to approve the minutes of June 4, 2019, with Committee Member changes. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

6. ADJOURN

AMBER THIBEAULT made a motion, second by TIMOTHY DALL, to adjourn the meeting. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried. The Meeting adjourned at 6:49 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Cathy Ainsworth
Recording Secretary

Approved this ____ day of _____, 2019