



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

Online & 2 Lincoln St.  
Essex Junction, VT 05452  
Friday, January 19, 2024  
**5:00 PM**

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

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

Phone: (802) 878-6944

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

- **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** [5:00 PM]
2. **AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**
3. **APPROVE AGENDA**
4. **PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**
  - a. Comments from Public
5. **VICIOUS DOG HEARING - CONTINUED**
6. **ADJOURN**

*Members of the public are encouraged to speak during the Public to Be Heard agenda item, during a Public Hearing, or, when recognized by the President, during consideration of a specific agenda item. The public will not be permitted to participate when a motion is being discussed except when specifically requested by the President. Regarding zoom participants, if individuals interrupt, they will be muted; and if they interrupt a second time they will be removed. This agenda is available in alternative formats upon request. Meetings of the City Council, like all programs and activities of the City of Essex Junction, are accessible to people with disabilities. For information on accessibility or this agenda, call the City Manager's office at 802-878-6944 TTY: 7-1-1 or (800) 253-0191.*

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**CITY OF ESSEX JUNCTION  
CITY COUNCIL  
SPECIAL MEETING  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
January 19, 2024**

**COUNCILORS PRESENT:** Raj Chawla, President; Amber Thibeault; Vice President; Marcus Certa, Clerk;

**ADMINISTRATION:** Regina Mahony, City Manager; Robert Kissinger, Essex Police Lieutenant; Joanne Nichols, Animal Control Officer.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Jamie Blake, Alise Certa, Jessica Gamelin, Chris LeCoz, David Macomber, Dan Maxon, Amanda Sayles, Joshua Sayles, Marcus Wilson, Bob, Dan Maxon

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Councilor Chawla called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

2. **AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**

None.

3. **APPROVE AGENDA**

None needed.

4. **PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**

a. Comments from public on items not on the agenda

None.

5. **VICIOUS DOG HEARING - CONTINUED**

Jamie Blake, the new owner of the dog Dozer, explained how she came into ownership of the dog. She said that Dozer had previously been owned by a family that recently had a newborn and decided they couldn't keep the dog, so the dog was given to Jessica Ploof. She noted that Ms. Ploof was staying with her for several days, but is currently unhoused and cannot provide for herself, so Ms. Ploof has given ownership of Dozer to Ms. Blake. Ms. Blake emphasized that Dozer is a good dog and is good with people and children, though he does have issues with other dogs sometimes. She said it is unfortunate that someone was bitten by Dozer and that another dog was also hurt by Dozer. She said apologized that Ms. Ploof let the dog get out without supervision. She said that she is going to give Dozer stability and a home and ensure that he is in a fenced-in area when he is outside and on a leash when he is not. She said that she registered Dozer today and ensured that he is up-to-date on his vaccines.

Councilor Thibeault asked whether Ms. Blake received a copy of the complaint and pictures of the dog bites. Ms. Blake confirmed that she did. Councilor Thibeault asked whether Ms. Blake was present for the dog attack, and Ms. Blake replied that she arrived home after the attack occurred and the police were on the scene, which was when she and Ms. Ploof (who was staying with her at the time) realized that Dozer had gotten outside. Councilor Thibeault asked whether Ms. Blake would be open to training Dozer, and Ms. Blake replied that she would be amenable to training him.

Councilor Certa asked when the fenced-in area on Ms. Blake's property was installed, and Ms. Blake replied that it was installed 2-3 years prior. Councilor Certa asked whether Ms. Blake has had experience with bully breeds of dog, and Ms. Blake replied that she has owned four pit bulls prior to Dozer, yes. Councilor Certa asked for more detail about why the previous owner (with the newborn) gave up Dozer, and Ms. Blake replied that they did not have the time for taking care of Dozer in an adequate way.

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Councilor Chawla asked if there are others living at the property who would also help to look after Dozer, and Ms. Blake confirmed that her family members are all willing and able to help care for the dog.

Ms. Blake provided a copy of the dog registration for Dozer, and City Manager Mahony confirmed that the dog is registered in Essex Junction.

Ms. Thibeault asked for more detail on the dog’s history. Ms. Blake replied that Dozer has been with two families, Ms. Ploof, and now her, and that it is unfortunately that he hasn’t had a stable family. She spoke about his interactions with other dogs, saying that they are generally positive but that sometimes he clashes with some other dogs.

City Manager Mahony noted that Dozer is good with people but not with certain other dogs, and asked if there have been issues with other dogs. Ms. Blake replied that there have not been major issues with other dogs to date and to her knowledge.

Amanda Sayles, the complainant, noted that in her original statement she had said that the dog’s owner, Ms. Ploof, arrived at the scene during the attack, but now realizes that it was Ms. Blake who arrived on the scene and was present at the end of the incident.

Lieutenant Kissinger noted that the fence at 48 Old Colchester Road (where Ms. Blake resides) is not closed in and would need to be closed in to contain the dog. Ms. Blake noted that the fence by the door is closed in and that her mother’s dogs use that closed-in area every day.

**RAJ CHAWLA made a motion, seconded by MARCUS CERTA, to close the dog hearing. The motion passed 3-0.**

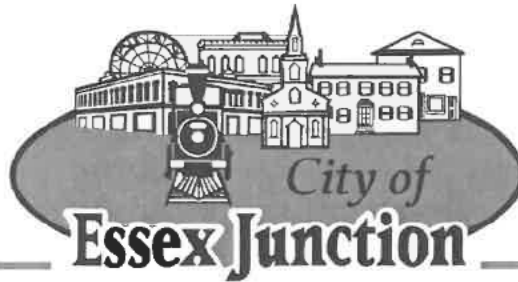
City Manager Mahony noted that once the Council enters into a deliberative session, it has 30 days to issue a written decision regarding this matter. Councilor Chawla noted that Dozer is impounded until the Council issues its decision, which it will try to do as soon as possible.

**AMBER THIBEAULT made a motion, seconded by RAJ CHAWLA, to enter into deliberative session. The motion passed 3-0 at 5:20 P.M.**

6. **ADJOURN**

**MARCUS CERTA made a motion, seconded by AMBER THIBEAULT, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 3-0 at 7:42 P.M.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Amy Coonradt



## CITY COUNCIL ORDER

To: Jamie Blake

[REDACTED]  
Essex Junction, VT 05452

This Order is issued after a hearing held in the City of Essex Junction on January 17, 2024 and continued to January 19, 2024, pursuant to Chapter 5 of the City of Essex Junction Municipal Code ("Code") and the provisions of Title 20 Section 3546, Vermont Statutes Annotated. Notice of the hearing was provided to Jamie Blake, an individual residing at [REDACTED] Essex Junction, Vermont, by hand delivery. Jamie Blake did not attend the hearing on January 17, 2024, but did attend the hearing on January 19, 2024 and provided testimony. Ms. Blake's mother, Jody Benoit, did attend the hearing on January 17, 2023, but did not present any testimony or evidence. Based upon evidence and testimony presented at the hearing, the City of Essex Junction City Council makes the following findings and rulings:

### A. Findings.

1. Dozer is a dog owned by Jamie Blake, a resident of the City of Essex Junction.
2. At the time of this incident, Dozer was not registered in the City of Essex Junction. Dozer was registered by Jamie Blake on January 19, 2024.
3. On January 9, 2024, Dozer engaged in an unprovoked dog attack of another dog owned by Amanda Sayles.
4. During that attack, Dozer bit Daisy.
5. Amanda Sayles sustained minor injuries for which she sought and received medical attention.
6. The Council finds Dozer to be a potentially vicious dog, as defined in Section 503(F) of the Code.

### B. Rulings.

1. It is necessary for the protection of persons in the City of Essex Junction for the Council to impose the following conditions upon Dozer:
  - a. Prior to the dog being released from impoundment, an appointment shall be scheduled with the Animal Control officer to verify the fence is a complete enclosure and sufficient height to keep Dozer on the property.
  - b. At no time shall Dozer be outside the fenced in area unless muzzled and on a leash.
  - c. Dozer must undergo training by a certified trainer or facility to address aggression within 60 days. Training verification must be submitted no later than 60 days to the City Manager and the Animal Control Officer.
  - d. Dozer can only be released to the dog owner.
  - e. A fine of \$500 for violating Section 510 - Running at Large and Section 508 – Dog Bites on the date of this incident.

- f. Jamie Blake will keep Dozer registered and up to date on rabies vaccination within timelines set by the City of Essex Junction. Jamie Blake will provide copies of these documents to the City Clerk for recording immediately.
- g. The above listed requirements shall be completed within seven (7) days of the issuance of this order to Jamie Blake, unless stated otherwise.

Should this order be violated, you are subject to the penalties provided in Section 519 of the Code and Title 20 Section 3550, Vermont Statutes Annotated.

  
Raj Chawla (Jan 24, 2024 08:41 EST)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Raj Chawla, City Council President

24-Jan-2024  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date