

Governance Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 22, 2025

Members Present: Steve Eustis, Gabrielle Smith, Brian Sheldon, Elaine Haney, Deb McAdoo; Thomas Coen

Absent: Marlon Verasamy, Candace Morgan

Staff: Brad Luck

Members of the public: Bethany Clark

Steve Eustis called meeting to order at 6:40 PM.

There were no agenda additions or amendments.

Public to be heard: NA

Gabrielle Smith moved to approve the minutes of the May 8, 2025 meeting; Deb McAdoo seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Brad reviewed potential process for examining other communities. Three groups will each review three communities for a total of nine communities,

The committee will finalize questions to ask the communities and project details at the June 12th meeting. Groups will have between 6/12-7/10 to gather information.

Brad reviewed the list of nine communities. Inclusion on the list is based on those communities that are closest to Essex Junction in either population or square miles.

Observations and considerations that were discussed:

- How many members of each governing body should the group interview?
- Questions for board members could be similar to those in the survey sent to former Essex Junction officials.
- Probably should interview a mix of board members and municipal manager.
- Are the meetings on the phone, in person, or on Zoom?
- It would be helpful to have some kind of connection to the people to be interviewed to ensure the interviews are a priority for the interviewees.
- Some interviewees may not have the time and might prefer a survey to fill out.

- Consider interviewing multiple board members together and interviewing municipal manager separately.
- What would the value be of collecting general public feedback? With the wide variety of types of municipalities (rural and urban), would this bring in too much unrelated data? Perhaps a literature search in local papers or a discussion with the local editor. Including this information may expand the scope of the project unnecessarily.
- Interview questions for the board members and municipal managers can be the same.
- Definitely want to interview the board leader; can include an additional board member (to avoid quorum issues).
- Each committee member should come up with a few questions that the committee can choose from.
- We will want to fill out the table with the basic data about each community; these are not questions we'll need to ask.
- Could use the same questions from our internal survey, reframed for each community.
- Potential questions: Can you think of something good that happened in your community that was the result of the work of the board? Can you think of a time when the board got in the way of accomplishing?
- Brad will compile questions and send them around; each committee member can add their own questions.
- Next meeting, groups will form and begin to plan interviews and schedules.
- May meet just once in June, July, and August.

Next meeting is June 12th. Committee members should bring their draft questions.

Thomas Coen moved to adjourn; Deb McAdoo seconded. The meeting ended at 7:40 PM.