



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

Online & 145 Maple St.  
Essex Junction, VT 05452  
Wednesday, June 25, 2025  
**6:30 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 in the Community Room at the Essex Police Department located at 145 Maple 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
5. **BUSINESS ITEMS**
  - a. \*Interviews and Consider Appointments to the Bike Walk Advisory Committee, Capital Program Review Committee, Development Review Board, Moderator, Planning Commission, Police Community Advisory Board, Tree Advisory Committee [30 Minutes]
  - b. Department Head Brief with Recreation Director Brad Luck [10 Minutes]
  - c. Discussion and Consideration of Amendments to Municipal Code Chapter 9: Enforcement and Chapter 18: Ordinance regulating control of litter, refuse, garbage, junk, junk motor vehicles, trash, and solid waste; and Setting a Public Hearing [10 Minutes]
  - d. Discussion of Retreat Summary and Council Engagement Plan Framework [20 Minutes]
  - e. Discussion of FY27 Budget Direction [10 Minutes]
  - f. \*\*Executive Session to discuss Negotiating Lease Options for the Tree Farm Recreational Facility
  - g. \*\*\*Executive Session to Discuss the Allocation of Costs in Police Services Agreement with the Town of Essex
6. **CONSENT ITEMS**
  - a. Approve Meeting Minutes: 06/04/2025 and 06/11/2025
  - b. Approve Rebranding Consultant Selection
  - c. Approve Varec Biogas Purchase Order for Digester Flare
  - d. Acting as the Liquor Control Commission – Approve Liquor/Tobacco Licenses
7. **COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS & CITY MANAGER REPORT**
8. **READING FILE**
  - a. Check Warrant #24077 06/13/2025
  - b. Champlain Water District Water Quality Report
  - c. Decrease in the Grand List from Utility Valuations at the State Level
  - d. Opioid Community Forum Memo
  - e. EJRP Programs Team Info
  - f. Invitation to Lafayette 200 event in Essex Junction Village Cemetery 6/29
  - g. Recreation Advisory Committee Minutes 06/04/2025
  - h. Planning Commission Minutes 06/05/2025
  - i. Development Review Board Minutes 06/09/2025
  - j. Bike Walk Advisory Minutes 06/12/2025

**9. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- a. \*An Executive Session may be needed to discuss the appointment of public officials
- b. \*\*An Executive Session may be needed to discuss the negotiating or securing of real estate purchase or lease options
- c. \*\*\*An Executive Session may be needed to discuss a contract

**10. 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.*

**City Council Rules for Public Participation**  
**City of Essex Junction**

Vermont's Open Meeting Law protects the public's right to attend and participate in meetings of local public bodies, but the purpose and function of these meetings is for the public body to do the work of the public; they are not meetings of the public (i.e., public forums). Consequently, these rules are necessary to manage the public's participation to ensure an environment in which the public feels safe to express their views on matters considered by the public body while minimizing disruptions so that the public body can get its work done. The full City Council Rules of Procedures for Meetings can be found here: [www.essexjunction.org/codes/policies](http://www.essexjunction.org/codes/policies).

- 1. Please raise your hand to speak, whether in person or attending virtually.
- 2. You may only speak after you have been recognized by the president.
- 3. Before speaking, please state your name and address for the record.
- 4. All remarks must be addressed to the president.
- 5. Comments must be germane to the agenda item being addressed.
- 6. Comments under "Public to be Heard" must pertain to the business of the public body.
- 7. Repetitive and irrelevant comments are not allowed.
- 8. Please wait your turn; do not interrupt others.
- 9. Each person will be limited to two minutes of comment. This time may be extended only by permission of the president. The balance of time not used by each person will expire and cannot be reserved or yielded to another.
- 10. Each person may only speak once on the same agenda item, time permitting, with the consent of the president.
- 11. Those yet to be heard will be given priority over those who have already spoken.
- 12. You do not have the right to vote on agenda items.
- 13. Please obey orders and rulings of the president.
- 14. Keep your cool. Disruptive people will be asked to leave and removed if necessary.
- 15. Listen well, pay attention, and participate.

**CITY OF ESSEX JUNCTION  
CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
June 25, 2025**

**COUNCILORS PRESENT:** Amber Thibeault, President; Marcus Certa, Vice President; Tim Miller, Clerk; Elaine Haney; Brian Shelden.

**ADMINISTRATION:** Regina Mahony, City Manager; Brad Luck, EJRP Director; Ashley Snellenberger, Communications & Strategic Initiatives Director; Chris Yuen, Community Development Director.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Rich Boyers, Elijah Massey, Dennis Thibeault, Resa

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

City Council President Thibeault called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

**2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**

None.

**3. APPROVE AGENDA**

None needed.

**4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**

**a. Comments from Public**

Resa spoke about traffic improvements due to improved signal work at the Five Corners intersection. She also asked about how the site coordinator position for the Fleming School is funded, and City Manager Mahony clarified that the Essex Westford School District funds that position by paying the City for it.

**5. BUSINESS ITEMS**

**a. Interviews and Consider Appointments to Bike Walk Advisory Committee, Capital Program Review Committee, Development Review Board, Moderator, Planning Commission, and Tree Advisory Committee**

The City Council interviewed Elijah Massey for a position on the Planning Commission. He spoke briefly about his background and interest in continuing to serve on the Commission. Councilors asked questions of the candidate, and he was given the opportunity to ask questions of the Council.

The City Council interviewed Rich Boyers for a position on the Tree Advisory Committee. He spoke briefly about his background and interest in continuing to serve on the Committee. Councilors asked questions of the candidate, and he was given the opportunity to ask questions of the Council.

**b. Department Head Brief with Recreation Director Brad Luck**

Essex Junction Recreation & Parks Director Luck spoke about activities and accomplishments over the last six months. He noted the efforts of staff to secure a number of grants for the department, noted that the Recreation Advisory Committee launched in April, that staff trainings have been conducted for summer staff, and spoke about some staff hires and reorganizations. He then noted a number of events and programs, spoke about statistics related to the number of visitors at Maple Street Park this year to date, and spoke about the exploration work being conducted for a future gymnasium facility. Director Luck then spoke about the anticipated activities and work over the next six months in the department. These include anticipated changes to licensed childcare, hiring for a number of vacancies, implementing new software, projects related to the resurfacing of the Maple Street Park skate park and basketball court, a number of programs and events over the summer and into the fall, and the continued exploration work for a future gymnasium facility. Councilor Certa spoke about comments from residents of Whitcomb Woods about not feeling connected to

the City, and asked about the relationship between EJRP and Whitcomb Woods programming. Director Luck spoke about outreach and connections between EJRP programming staff and the Whitcomb Woods residents and program coordinator, and said they will work to reiterate and strengthen that connection. He also noted that once construction is completed at 2 Lincoln Street, having the Senior Center move back into that space will help with that connection as well. Councilor Certa asked about the future planning for the gymnasium and how it should also include a broader recreation facility for the community. Director Luck replied that having a community center is the goal, but that he is mindful of the cost of construction and wants to be realistic in terms of a tolerable bond amount for the City. Councilor Certa said he would like the City to conduct a study of current facility conditions and needs and factoring in growth to determine what the needs will look like in the next 5-10 years. City Manager Mahony noted that other public facilities that are needed include a public works facility and a wastewater facility. Councilors agreed that this is a large topic that warrants more in-depth conversation. Councilor Miller asked about the maintenance of Veterans Memorial Park, and Director Luck clarified that it is currently managed jointly between Public Works and EJRP.

c. Discussion and Consideration of Amendments to Municipal Code Chapter 9: Enforcement and Chapter 18: Ordinance regulating control of litter, refuse, garbage, junk, junk motor vehicles, trash, and solid waste; and Setting a Public Hearing

Community Development Director Yuen said that the Community Development Department has been tracking code enforcement and non-compliance more closely over the last several years and have been following up more rigorously with cases of non-compliance. He said that there have been cases of chronic non-compliance that require escalation, and that these amendments to the municipal code make that easier. He noted that these amendments have been put together in consultation with the City Attorney. City Council President Thibeault noted that one question for the Council is whether the City should establish an Ordinance Appeals Board, but said her preference for now would be to keep this function with the Council for now and reassess whether this Board is needed in the future. Other Councilors agreed with this. City Council President Thibeault offered a friendly amendment to section 905 to add the words “and cost”, and asked whether in section 1801, the exclusion of farm vehicles and equipment are excluded only in the Planned Agricultural District or in all districts. Director Yuen replied that these exclusions used to apply to all districts but in this context would only apply to the Planned Agricultural District. City Council President Thibeault asked about the reference to criminal penalties in section 1802, and Director Yuen said that because the ordinance is civil, the criminal penalties reference should be removed. City Council President Thibeault asked that the reference in section 1805 be modified to reflect the City and not the Town.

**Councilor Certa made a motion, seconded by Councilor Miller, that the City Council warn a public hearing on July 23, 2025 at 6:30 P.M. to receive comments on changes to the Essex Junction Municipal Ordinance Chapter 9 and Chapter 18, as presented with any edits discussed. The motion passed 5-0.**

d. Discussion of Retreat Summary and Council Engagement Plan Framework

City Manager Mahony said this is an opportunity to share the details of the Council Retreat with the public as well as reflect on and discuss the priorities from the Retreat and discuss the Council Engagement Plan. Communications & Strategic Initiatives Snellenberger provided a summary of the topics discussed at the Council Retreat, and asked if the Council has thoughts they'd like to share about the priority items in order to give staff a better understanding of direction for departmental work plans for FY27. Councilor Certa said he is looking forward to further discussion about committees, as this will help move some of the larger topics forward. Councilor Sheldon said that the Retreat did not focus on housing as much as he would have liked, even though the list of priorities includes a number of initiatives related to housing. He agreed that focusing on and standing up new committees may be what helps move these important initiatives and topics forward. Councilor Miller said the entire retreat was very well-run and productive. Councilor Haney agreed that emphasizing communication and community engagement is important and must become part of the budget conversation.

Director Snellenberger then spoke about the Council Engagement Plan, noting that staff developed three goals based on the discussion during the Council Retreat on this topic. The goals are that residents are aware of who the City Council members are and feel that the Council is approachable, that residents have

multiple ways to interact with the Council, and to improve the structure of the City Council meetings. She said that staff are working on developing ideas and strategies to help achieve these goals. She noted that she is beginning to populate an events calendar of upcoming events and will send Councilors emails reminding them of the events and whether they'd like to participate in them. City Council President Thibeault suggested holding a 1-hour public forum on July 9<sup>th</sup> (in lieu of a regular City Council meeting) to solicit input from the public on any topic they wish to discuss. Other Councilors agreed. City Council President Thibeault also noted that the Essex Reporter launched its "Get To Know Your Council" section, which will cover every Councilor and help get the public more familiar with the Council.

e. Discussion of FY27 Budget Direction

City Manager Mahony said the main ask of the Council for this item is a target for a budget range for the FY27 budget, as one of the key initial steps in budget development. She noted that staff will provide budget and work plan instructions to department heads in July and that having a budget target is helpful. City Council President Thibeault noted that last year's target was 3%. Councilor Haney said that 3% has served as a *de facto* target for the last number of years, and that she would not recommend level funding (as in this inflationary environment, level funding represents a cut). She said that 3% could continue to serve as a safe target. Councilor Miller noted that different departments have different needs (e.g., wastewater has had substantial needs over the last several years), and bringing forward a budget that addresses needs (as opposed to wants) is crucial in this environment of unaffordability. He said that understanding if 3% is a reasonable target is a crucial first step, and City Council President Thibeault agreed, asking if there are important implications for targeting a 3% budgetary increase. Councilor Haney noted that in the past, staff have presented draft budget scenarios that represent a 3% or a 5% increase, for review and comparison. She also noted that even if the City targets a 3% increase, they have little control or understanding of what final utility rates are until late in the budget discussion and timeline. Other Councilors agreed that they would like to see a 3% and 5% scenario for the draft FY27 budget. Councilor Certa said he agrees that a 3% target is good, but said he struggles to see how this can be achieved without cutting services. He said that there needs to be a discussion with the community about this, to make sure they are comfortable of letting go of certain services or are comfortable with what will be asked of them in order to achieve the City and community's strategic goals.

f. \*\*Executive Session to discuss Negotiating Lease Options for the Tree Farm Recreational Facility  
See item #9b below.

g. \*\*\*Executive Session to Discuss the Allocation of Costs in Police Services Agreement with the Town of Essex  
See item #9c below.

6. **CONSENT ITEMS**

- a. Approve Meeting Minutes: June 4, 2025; June 11, 2025
- b. Approve Rebranding Consultant Selection
- c. Approve Varec Biogas Purchase Order for Digester Flare
- d. Acting as the Liquor Control Commission – Approve Liquor/Tobacco Licenses

**Councilor Certa made a motion, seconded by Councilor Miller, to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed 5-0.**

7. **COUNCILOR COMMENTS & CITY MANAGER REPORT**: City Manager Mahony noted that traffic signal work at the Five Corners intersection are still ongoing.

8. **READING FILE**

- a. Check Warrant #24077 – 6/13/2025
- b. Champlain Water District Water Quality Report
- c. Decrease in the Grand List from Utility Valuations at the State level
- d. Opioid Community Forum Memo
- e. EJRP Programs Team Info

- f. Invitation to Lafayette 200 event in Essex Junction Village Cemetery: June 29, 2025  
g. Recreation Advisory Committee Minutes: June 4, 2025  
h. Planning Commission Minutes: June 5, 2025  
i. Development Review Board Minutes: June 9, 2025  
j. Bike Walk Advisory Committee Minutes: June 12, 2025

9. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- a. \*An Executive Session may be needed to discuss the appointment of public officials

**Councilor Certa made a motion, seconded by Councilor Shelden, that the City Council enter into executive session to discuss appointment of public officials, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) to include the City Manager. The motion passed 5-0.**

**Councilor Certa made a motion, seconded by Councilor Shelden, to exit executive session. The motion passed 5-0 at 8:42 P.M.**

**Councilor Certa made a motion, seconded by Councilor Shelden, that the City Council appoint Nathan Doudera to the Capital Programs Review Committee, Daniel Liguori to the Bike Walk Advisory Committee, Maggie Massey and Dylan Zwicky to the Development Review Board, Steve Eustis as Moderator, Elijah Massey and Diane Clemens to the Planning Commission, Finn Hamilton to the Planning Commission as a non-voting member, and Rich Boyers and Leslie Goldring to the Tree Advisory Committee. The motion passed 5-0.**

- b. \*\*An Executive Session may be needed to discuss the negotiating or securing of real estate purchase or lease options

**Councilor Certa made a motion, seconded by Councilor Haney, that the City Council enter into executive session to discuss contracts, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(2) to include the City Council, City Manager, and Mark Brislin. The motion passed 5-0.**

- c. \*\*\*An Executive Session may be needed to discuss a contract

**Councilor Certa made a motion, seconded by Councilor Miller, that the Council make the specific finding that general public knowledge of contracts would place the City at a substantial disadvantage. The motion passed 5-0.**

**Councilor Certa made a motion, seconded by Councilor Miller, that the City Council enter into executive session to discuss appointment of public officials, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(A) to include the City Manager. The motion passed 5-0.**

10. **ADJOURN**

**Councilor Certa made a motion, seconded by Councilor Shelden, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 5-0 at 8:45 P.M.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Amy Coonradt