

**CITY OF ESSEX JUNCTION  
CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
August 27, 2025**

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

**ADMINISTRATION:** Regina Mahony, City Manager; Ricky Jones, Public Works Superintendent, Carl Wermer, EJFD Dispatch.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Rick Hamlin, Dennis Thibeault, Resa, vtemi.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**

It was requested that Business Item #5c be moved up in the agenda.

**3. APPROVE AGENDA**

**Councilor Miller made a motion, seconded by Councilor Shelden, to reorder the Business Items such that #5c is now #5a. The motion passed 4-0.**

**4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**

a. Comments from Public  
None.

**5. BUSINESS ITEMS**

a. Discussion and Consideration of Health Officer and Deputy Health Officer Appointments  
City Manager Mahony began by noting that Assistant Fire Chief John Rowell is serving as the current Health Officer but will be retiring at the end of September. She said that Carl Wermer of the Essex Junction Fire Dispatch is recommended for the position once Assistant Chief Rowell steps down, and that the City Council must make this recommendation to the Vermont Department of Health, which approves these appointments. She also noted that staff are recommending the reappointment of Sharon Kelly as the Deputy Health Officer, whose current term expires on August 31, 2025.

**Councilor Miller made a motion, seconded by Councilor Shelden, that the City Council make a recommendation to the Department of Health to appoint Carl Wermer to the position of Health Officer for the City starting October 1, 2025; and to re-appoint Sharon L. Kelley to the position of Deputy Health Officer for the City starting September 1, 2025. The motion passed 5-0.**

b. Public Works Department Head Brief to Council

Public Works Superintendent Jones began by summarizing activities from the past six months. He noted that the Public Works Department is now fully staffed, having hired two additional staff. He noted that they had looked into contracting out certain services, such as snow removal and line striping, but that they determined it was more cost-effective to retain services in house. He spoke about activities over the next six months, including wrapping up the Lincoln Hall renovations, work on the Iroquois water line, working with the WWTF to identify issues in the sewer lines, taking on some additional building maintenance, and working on Crescent Connector traffic lights. Councilor Miller commended the Public Works Department for its prompt response to issues the public raises. Councilor Shelden asked about the sewer activity work that is occurring, and Public Works Superintendent Jones spoke about the activity occurring and how it affects residents' sewer systems. Councilor Shelden asked if they could explore communicating a schedule to residents about sewer activity and flushing, and Public Works Superintendent Jones replied that they could discuss this further with the Council and the City administration.

c. Discussion and Consideration of Initial Concepts for Public Works Facility Renovation

Rick Hamlin, Chief of Engineering at Hamlin Consulting Engineers, spoke regarding this item. He noted that the last time the Public Works facility was upgraded was in 1996, and that the only major addition since then was the addition of the salt shed in 2005. He provided a brief overview of the current 3-acre Public Works facility site, located off Jackson Street, noting where current buildings and parking lots are located. He pointed out the locations of two different options: one which represents removing current buildings and constructing a new building, and the other which represents building an addition to connect and renovate existing buildings. He noted that one option shows a 9,900 square foot infill between the 5,000 square foot building and the 2,000 square foot building, which would connect the structures and allow for complete passage from one structure to another without going outside. He said that this would be the new shop and prime vehicle storage space for the Public Works department. He showed details about the elevation of each building in this infill option. He noted that the other option shows a 21,000 square foot new building, which proposes to remove every current building on site except for the 3,000 square foot salt shed. He showed details about the elevation of each building in the replacement option. He noted that both options propose expanding the salt shed from its current size. Mr. Hamlin noted that one exercise conducted was to inventory every single piece of rolling stock that Public Works has, in order to determine how each piece of equipment could be stored inside the buildings in both options. He provided details about the layout of the interiors of the buildings in both options. Mr. Hamlin then spoke about the pros and cons of each of these options, based on the information and feedback gathered from other regional municipalities' Public Works department facility renovations. He noted that one potential disadvantage of removing current buildings and rebuilding a brand new set of buildings is that the Public Works department would essentially not have a location for operations and storage while construction and renovations occur, whereas pursuing the option that retrofits current facilities would allow for continued operations on site during renovations. He noted that a complete renovation would yield a brand-new facility. He spoke about cost estimates for each option, noting that an infill option could cost around \$5 million and a brand-new facility could cost around \$8 million. He noted that the very preliminary estimated timelines for completion for both options are around the same (approximately a year).

Councilor Miller noted that both Georgia and Milton renovated their own public works facilities recently using relatively similar design builds, and that the Milton project cost around \$6 million for 27,000 square foot facility, and the Georgia project cost around \$3.5 million based on the bond used to fund it. He said that having toured the current facility and having also learned from some of the experience of renovating 2 Lincoln Street, he would advise the City to pursue a tear-down and complete rebuild. Councilor Certa asked about the condition of the current buildings and whether they have deferred maintenance or would otherwise need additional renovation. Mr. Hamlin noted that in the infill version, the existing building would largely be used for cold storage and the new infill would be where staff office spaces and other amenities would be located. Councilor Shelden noted that these designs attempt to anticipate and address the City's needs for the next 50-100 years, and Public Works Superintendent Jones added that they allow for the storage of the City's current equipment with some additional space left over for more equipment, if needed in the future. Councilor Shelden asked about the condition of the buildings at the existing facilities, and Public Works Superintendent Jones replied that the conditions of most buildings is good, except for one of the structures in the corner of the lot. Councilor Certa noted that a number of vehicles in the Public Works Department's current inventory are not able to be stored inside currently, and asked if this impacts the length of their useful life. Public Works Superintendent Jones replied that moving vehicles into heated storage where possible would help extend their working lives by some time. Councilors Certa and Miller and City Council President Thibeault expressed support for the option involving replacing the current facility with a brand-new facility. Councilor Shelden expressed support for the option involving utilizing existing buildings and constructing infill, given that the brand-new building option would involve the complete loss of use of the site for storage of vehicles while construction is occurring.

d. \*Executive Session to Discuss Negotiating Lease Options for the Teen Center/CHIPS at 2 Lincoln  
See item #9a below.

e. \*\*Executive Session to Discuss and Possible Contract with the Town for Assessing Services

See item #9b below.

6. **CONSENT ITEMS**

- a. Approve Meeting Minutes: August 13, 2025
- b. Acting as the Liquor Control Commission – Approve Liquor/Tobacco Licenses

**Councilor Miller made a motion, seconded by Councilor Shelden, to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed 4-0.**

7. **COUNCILOR COMMENTS & CITY MANAGER REPORT:** City Manager Mahony noted that the City, Town, Westford, and the Essex Westford School District are holding an opioid forum on September 9, 2025 at 5:00 P.M. She noted that it will include a community barbecue, resource booths, and discussion panels. Councilor Certa congratulated Councilor Haney for winning a blue ribbon at the Champlain Valley Fair for her flowers.

8. **READING FILE**

- a. Check Warrant #24083, August 22, 2025
- b. Governance Committee Minutes – August 4, 2025
- c. Recreation Advisory Committee Minutes – August 6, 2025
- d. Planning Commission Minutes – August 7, 2025
- e. Bike Walk Advisory Committee Minutes – August 14, 2025

9. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- a. \*An Executive Session may be needed to discuss negotiating lease options for the Teen Center/CHIPS at 2 Lincoln

**Councilor Miller made a motion, seconded by Councilor Shelden, that the City Council make the specific finding that premature disclosure of contractual matters would place the City at a substantial disadvantage. The motion passed 4-0.**

**Councilor Miller made a motion, seconded by Councilor Shelden, that the City Council enter into executive session to discuss a contract, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(2) to include the City Council and City Manager. The motion passed 4-0.**

- b. \*\*An Executive Session may be needed to discuss a possible contract with the Town for assessing services

**Councilor Certa made a motion, seconded by Councilor Miller, that the City Council make the specific finding that premature disclosure of contractual matters would place the City at a substantial disadvantage. The motion passed 4-0.**

**Councilor Certa made a motion, seconded by Councilor Miller, that the City Council enter into executive session to discuss a contract, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(A) to include the City Council and City Manager. The motion passed 4-0.**

**Councilor Miller made a motion, seconded by Councilor Shelden, to exit executive session. The motion passed 4-0 at 8:44 P.M.**

10. **ADJOURN**

**Councilor Miller made a motion, seconded by Councilor Shelden, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 5-0 at 8:46 P.M.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Amy Coonradt