



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

Online & 2 Lincoln St.
Essex Junction, VT 05452
Wednesday, March 25, 2026
6:30 PM

E-mail: admin@essexjunction.org

www.essexjunction.org

Phone: (802) 878-6944

This meeting will be in-person at the Municipal Offices located at 2 Lincoln 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. Discussion on Essex Westford School District Request to Voters Regarding Annual Meeting Date Change [10 Minutes]
 - b. Brownell Library Trustees Brief to Council [10 Minutes]
 - c. Library Department Head Brief to Council [10 Minutes]
 - d. Discussion and Consideration of FY27 Enterprise Fund Operating and Capital Budgets for Water, Wastewater, Sanitation and EJRP Program Fund; and Warn Public Hearing for Utility Rates for April 29th [20 Minutes]
6. **CONSENT ITEMS**
 - a. Approve Meeting Minutes: 3/11/2026
 - b. Approve July 4th Fireworks Display Permit – EJRP
 - c. Approve Memorial Day Banner Request
 - d. Approve Memorial Day Parade Street Closure
 - e. Approve Main Street Sidewalk Bid Award
 - f. Approve Certification of Compliance for Town Road and Bridge Standards and Network Inventory
7. **COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS & CITY MANAGER REPORT**
8. **READING FILE**
 - a. Check Warrant #24113, 3/20/2026
 - b. Brad Luck Resolution of Appreciation – Signed
 - c. Streets as Places Grant Program Guide
 - d. SFY27 TA 60 Annual Financial Plan Essex Junction
 - e. Manager Evaluation Report
 - f. Comprehensive Plan Progress Report and Public Engagement Plan
 - g. EPD Preparedness Concerning Immigration Enforcement
 - h. Planning Commission Minutes 3/5/26
 - i. Board of Civil Authority Minutes 3/9/26
 - j. Tree Farm Management Group Minutes 3/10/26
 - k. Bike Walk Advisory Committee Minutes 3/12/26
9. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** – Not Anticipated

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.

**Upcoming City Council Meetings
(Meeting Dates are Subject to Change)
(* denotes special meeting or date change)**

*April 15, 2026	June 10, 2026	
*April 29, 2026	June 24, 2026	
May 13, 2026		
May 27, 2026		

**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.

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
March 25, 2026
Approved April 15, 2026**

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

ADMINISTRATION: Regina Mahony, City Manager; Mark Brislin, EJRP Director; Wendy Hysko, Library Director; Chelsea Mandigo, Water Quality Superintendent; Jess Morris, Finance Director;

OTHERS PRESENT: Bethany Clark, Karen Hergesheimer, Reed Nye, Jemima Talbot, Dennis Thibeault, Marlon Verasamy, Michael, 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

None.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Discussion on Essex Westford School District Request to Voters Regarding Annual Meeting Date Change

Marlon Verasamy, Vice Chair of the School Board, and Jemima Talbot, Clerk of the School Board, presented on this item. Mr. Verasamy noted that the School Board approved an article to be on the April 14th ballot to ask the voters if they would like to move the voting date to Town Meeting Day starting in 2027. He and Ms. Talbot emphasized that this change would streamline processes around voting, make voting easier for the community, and save money. Councilor Miller expressed support for this move, given that it would cut down on the number of dates that residents would need to vote. Councilor Haney agreed, saying that this change is anticipated and welcomed. Mr. Verasamy thanked the Council for their support, noting that 109 school districts in the state already have their votes on Town Meeting Day, and aligning with that will be helpful in the long term. Councilor Shelden asked if moving the vote to Town Meeting Day will impact work on finalizing the school budget, and Mr. Verasamy replied that the school district is prepared for any impacts and is ready to make this change. City Manager Mahony noted that the City Council has the authority to change the annual meeting date for the City's budget, and that if the school district budget voting date changes, the Council is prepared to change its voting date in order to align with that change.

b. Brownell Library Trustees Brief to Council

Karen Hergesheimer, Chair of the Brownell Library Trustees, presented on this item. She began by speaking about challenges the Trustees have been working through over the past year, including strengthening governance and community outreach, streamlining reporting for meetings, aligning the Library Foundation with the Supporting Non-Profits of Brownell Library Policy, addressing and balancing aging building needs against collections costs, making funding choices in the budgeting process, and addressing the limited understanding of library funding models. She then spoke about the Trustees' achievements over the last year, which include working with staff on the library's strategic plan goals, the onboarding of three new Trustees who have brought new energy and perspectives onto the Board, focusing on building a more diverse

57 and skilled Board, the adoption of the new Supporting Non-Profits of Brownell Library Policy (which clarifies
 58 criteria for organizations supporting the library), creating and planning for events to celebrate the 100-year
 59 anniversary of the Brownell Library in 2026, improved communication between library staff, Trustees, and
 60 City leadership, participation in community events, more in-depth training and education of the Trustees by
 61 library staff, and the relaunch of the Friends of the Brownell Library to support fundraising and community
 62 engagement. Councilor Haney asked about the distinction between the new Supporting Non-Profits policy
 63 and the Friends of the Brownell Library and Foundation. Trustee Chair Hergesheimer replied that the new
 64 policy sets the guardrails for non-profits to be in existence on behalf of Brownell Library and to protect the
 65 Library from organizations that purport to be altruistic but that have ulterior motives. She said that part of the
 66 policy requires the Trustees to recognize the organizations that come forward with support, and requires
 67 certain criteria and documentation to be met. She said that the policy also requires a Memorandum of
 68 Understanding (MOU) between the Library, Trustees, and the supporting non-profit. She said that the Friends
 69 and the Foundation are the two nonprofits that are currently supporting Brownell Library. Councilor Certa
 70 asked how this interacts with City administration. Trustee Chair Hergesheimer replied that the City’s legal
 71 counsel advised the Trustees on the policy and reviewed the draft prior to approval by the Trustees, to ensure
 72 that City leadership was involved and aware. Trustee Chair Hergesheimer described the respective roles of
 73 the Friends and the Foundation in terms of library support. Councilor Certa asked for more details on
 74 community engagement by the library and whether the City has a role in that. City Manager Mahony replied
 75 that the City administration has been fairly hands off and that the library has largely been handling their own
 76 outreach and engagement activities. Trustee Chair Hergesheimer added that the Trustees have been
 77 stepping in where they can to provide more community engagement to take burden off of library staff.

78
 79 c. Library Department Head Brief to Council

80 Library Director Hysko began by reflecting on library activities over the past six months. She noted that the
 81 level of library traffic has returned to pre-pandemic levels, and that it is a more diverse group of users and in
 82 some ways a more challenging group. She noted that library staff help guests out with accessing a number
 83 of governmental and social services online, and that staff also make a number of referrals to the outreach
 84 team. She spoke about the strategic planning process and the positive experience staff and the Trustees
 85 had in developing the plan. She said that one of the main areas of focus in that process has been improving
 86 communication and raising public awareness of library services and programming. She spoke about the
 87 difficulty in maintaining safe walkways and entrances during the winter and said she hopes that the roof
 88 repair project in June will help alleviate some of that difficulty. She also spoke about work staff have done to
 89 strengthen inter-library sharing services. She then spoke about planned and anticipated activities over the
 90 next six months, which include the roof replacement noted above, carpet replacement, the 100th anniversary
 91 celebration on July 17th, the retirement of the longtime assistant youth librarian, and work on the Sustainable
 92 Libraries Initiative certification goals.

93
 94 Councilor Certa noted that demand for digital materials is high and asked how the library envisions its future
 95 as this demand continues to grow. Director Hysko replied that many patrons still prefer hard-copy books over
 96 digital ones, and said that she does not believe that physical copies of books will be phased out anytime
 97 soon. Trustee Chair Hergesheimer also noted that there has been a push across the country to democratize
 98 the price of electronic books, so she hopes the price of digital resources will come down.

99
 100 d. Discussion and Consideration of Fiscal Year 2027 Enterprise Fund Operating and Capital Budgets for
 101 Water, Wastewater, Sanitation, and EJRP Program Fund; and Warn Public Hearing for Utility Rates for
 102 April 29th

103 Finance Director Morris began by speaking about the EJRP Program Fund, noting that the only change from
 104 February in this third round of reviewing these budgets is that they have updated the allocations for some of
 105 the citywide shared expenses. She noted that the EJRP Program Fund is in a \$33,000 deficit (brought down
 106 from a \$68,000 deficit in the first round of budget review). She noted that this deficit can be covered with a
 107 portion of the \$1 million program fund balance. She spoke about the Senior Center Fund, which the City
 108 plans to use to furnish the new Senior Center.

109
 110 Director Morris then spoke about the water, wastewater, and sanitation budgets. She said that they stand at
 111 a combined 7.6% increase for FY27, or roughly \$62 per year for the average household. She noted that

changes from the last round of review in the Water Fund were to reduce the capital transfer and reduce postage expenses related to billing, to reduce the overall budget by \$51,000. She also noted a reduction in the Wastewater Budget of \$5,000 since the last round of review, through a reduction in the capital transfer. She said that they have been able to reduce the estimated stormwater fee for the wastewater fund based on the updated and finalized stormwater budget and rates. She noted that they have reduced the Sanitation Budget by around \$53,000 since the last round of review, by increasing the revenue assumptions for the two-party agreement with the Town, reducing the postage amount for utility billing, and reducing the capital transfer. She then spoke about operating budgets, noting that the Stormwater operating budget has seen the biggest change—an increase of \$77,00—for the vacuum truck camera and an increase in capital transfer, as well as decreases for professional services, repair and maintenance, and other maintenance categories. She said that in working with a third-party vendor on accounting for the stormwater utility, they have recalculated the stormwater utility rate for FY27, which will be \$88.91 per ERU. She then spoke about the Enterprise Capital Funds for each of these budgets, noting that the Water Fund and Wastewater Fund's capital transfers were level-funded from FY26, that there is a \$20,000 increase in the capital transfer for the Sanitation Fund over FY26, and that the Stormwater Fund has added a significant amount to capital. She noted a previous question from City Council President Thibeault about whether an increased capital transfer in Stormwater would have an impact on the bond vote, particularly for the Hiawatha project. She said that in order to conduct the Hiawatha project on the required timeline (by 2028) and if the City chose not to bond for the expense of the project, the City could absorb the full amount in FY27 or spread the cost over two fiscal years (FY27 and FY28). She said that if the City pursues the first option, the ERU rate would be \$286, and if they spread it over two years, the ERU rate would be \$215.

Councilor Certa made a motion, seconded by Councilor Shelden, that the City Council approve the FY27 Enterprise Fund operating and capital budgets for Water, Wastewater, Sanitation, Stormwater, and EJRP Program Fund as presented. The motion passed 5-0.

Councilor Certa made a motion, seconded by Councilor Shelden, that the City Council warn a public hearing on April 29, 2026 for FY27 rate setting for the Water, Wastewater, Sanitation, and Stormwater funds. The motion passed 5-0.

6. **CONSENT ITEMS**

- a. Approve Meeting Minutes – March 11, 2026
- b. Approve July 4th Fireworks Display Permit – EJRP
- c. Approve Memorial Day Banner Request
- d. Approve Memorial Day Street Closure
- e. Approve Main Street Sidewalk Bid Award
- f. Approve Certification of Compliance for Town Road and Bridge Standards and Network Inventory

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 the City's Annual Meeting and voting day is April 14, 2026. She also spoke briefly about the Streets As Places Grant opportunity from Local Motion, which is a small grant opportunity for community members to do block parties and revitalize streets for people. City Council President Thibeault noted that the City's food drive is still going on through March 30 at 2 Lincoln Street.

8. **READING FILE**

- a. Check Warrant #24112 – March 20, 2026
- b. Brad Luck Resolution of Appreciation – Signed
- c. Streets as Places Grant Program Guide
- d. SFY27 TA 60 Annual Financial Plan Essex Junction
- e. Manager Evaluation Report
- f. Comprehensive Plan Progress Report and Public Engagement Plan
- g. EPD Preparedness Concerning Immigration Enforcement

- 167 h. Planning Commission Minutes – March 5, 2026
- 168 i. Board of Civil Authority Minutes – March 9, 2026
- 169 j. Tree Farm Management Group Minutes – March 10, 2026
- 170 k. Bike Walk Advisory Committee Minutes – March 12, 2026

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172 9. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- 173 a. None anticipated

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175 10. **ADJOURN**

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177 **Councilor Certa made a motion, seconded by Councilor Shelden, to adjourn the meeting. The motion**

178 **passed 5-0 at 7:08 P.M.**

179

180 Respectfully Submitted,

181 Amy Coonradt