

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17

**CITY OF ESSEX JUNCTION  
CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING  
June 10, 2026**

8 **COUNCILORS PRESENT:** Amber Thibeault, President; Tim Miller, Vice President; Bethany Clark, Clerk;  
9 Raj Chawla, Brian Shelden.

10 **ADMINISTRATION:** Regina Mahony, City Manager;

11  
12 **OTHERS PRESENT:** Amanda Borok, Marcus Certa, Clayton Clark, Thomas Coen, Kevin Collins,  
13 Bridget Downey-Meyer, Rachel Hamm Vaughan, Jessie Huntley, Luca Karki,  
14 Pat Lynch, Dan Maxon, Nick Meyer, Michael Miller, Reed Nye, John O'Brien,  
15 Drew Perry, Mike Plageman, Justin Rabidoux, Heidi Swevens, Susan  
16 Swogger, Resa.

18 1. **CALL TO ORDER**

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

20  
21 2. **AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**

22 None.

23  
24 3. **APPROVE AGENDA**

25 None needed.

26  
27 4. **PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**

28 a. Comments from Public

29 Dan Maxon said he would like to discuss concerns regarding City staff with the Council. City Council  
30 President Thibeault asked that he reach out to her directly to have this discussion.

31  
32 Marcus Certa expressed concern about car and motorcycle speeds and the lack of police presence and  
33 enforcement. He summarized specific examples and asked for more information related to the Police  
34 Department's patrol plan. He also spoke about one of the City Council's topics from their annual retreat,  
35 regarding economic development. He emphasized the importance of prioritizing this topic this year, to  
36 decrease the burden on residents.

37  
38 Heidi Swevens spoke about the potential change in the Green Mountain Transit #4 bus schedule, and  
39 expressed concern about how this will negatively impact her access to the community. She said that public  
40 transportation fills an important gap for many individuals and families. Councilor Miller suggested that she  
41 also speak to the Town Selectboard about this route change.

42  
43 Bridget Meyer spoke about the traffic concerns expressed by Mr. Certa and said that traffic calming is  
44 important and needs a concerted effort to address safety concerns in Essex Junction. She also shared an  
45 idea of holding a meeting among the City's committees, to make sure that committees are communicating  
46 and coordinating with each other.

47  
48 Resa also expressed concern about traffic concerns and noise in residential neighborhoods. She also spoke  
49 about the City's reappraisal process, noting that there have been concerns expressed in the community  
50 about inaccurate appraisals.

51  
52 5. **BUSINESS ITEMS**

53 a. Interview and Consideration of Appointments to Bike Walk Advisory Committee, Capital Review  
54 Committee, Development Review Board, Moderator, Planning Commission, Recreation Advisory  
55 Committee, and Tree Advisory Committee

56

57 The Council interviewed Jessica Huntley and John O'Brien for open positions on the Bike Walk Advisory  
58 Committee. The applicants spoke about their relevant experience, involvement in the community,  
59 qualifications, and interest in participating on the Bike Walk Advisory Committee. Councilors asked them  
60 questions related to the City's bike/walk infrastructure and their vision for this in the future.

61  
62 The Council interviewed Marcus Certa, Thomas Coen, Kevin Collins, and Susan Swogger for open positions  
63 on the Capital Review Committee. The applicants spoke about their relevant experience, involvement in the  
64 community, qualifications, and interest in participating on the Capital Review Committee. Councilors asked  
65 them questions related to projects on the Capital Review list that they would prioritize, and their interest in  
66 serving on other committees if they are not appointed to the Capital Review Committee.

67  
68 The Council interviewed Bridget Downey-Meyer, Rachel Hamm Vaughan, Patrick Lynch, and Drew Perry for  
69 open positions on the Recreation Advisory Committee. The applicants spoke about their relevant experience,  
70 involvement in the community qualifications, and their interest in participating on the Recreation Advisory  
71 Committee. Councilors asked them questions related to recommendations related to meeting periodicity,  
72 their past experience on the Recreation Advisory Committee (if they hold current seats), and their interest in  
73 serving on other committees if they are not appointed to the Recreation Advisory Committee.

74  
75 The Council interviewed Amanda Borok, Luca Karki, and Nick Meyer for open positions on the Tree Advisory  
76 Committee. The applicants spoke about their relevant experience, involvement in the community  
77 qualifications, and their interest in participating on the Tree Advisory Committee. Councilors asked them  
78 questions related to their past experience on the Tree Advisory Committee (if they hold current seats), their  
79 vision for more active involvement in the development of the City, and their interest in serving on other  
80 committees of they are not appointed to the Tree Advisory Committee.

81  
82 See item #9a below for appointments.

83  
84 b. Discussion and Consideration of Green Mountain Transit's #4 Bus Service

85 City Manager Mahony began by noting that this topic relates to the #4 bus service, the challenges of funding  
86 it, and exploring potential ways to continue the service. She said that keeping the #4 bus at its current service  
87 level of around 50 runs per week has a \$112,000 funding gap, and that keeping it at a reduced service level  
88 of 26 runs per week would close the funding gap to about \$58,000. She said that the final decision on this  
89 will be made by the Green Mountain Transit Board at their June 16, 2026 meeting. She acknowledged that  
90 the City is not in a decision-making spot on this topic, and noted that both scenarios above assume that the  
91 City will continue to contribute to the #4 service at the level that has been budgeted (\$19,000 in the FY27 for  
92 the #4 bus service). She also spoke about paratransit services, noting that GMT partially funds SSTA  
93 services because of its connection to fixed route service, and that these paratransit services are provided  
94 within a fixed geographic boundary for those who cannot walk and use that fixed route service. She said that  
95 if this fixed route service for the #4 route is eliminated, paratransit services would be eliminated as well. She  
96 said that it would be helpful for other stakeholders, such as the Town of Essex and the Essex Westford  
97 School District, to know whether Essex Junction would be willing to maintain funding for the #4 service, even  
98 in a reduced capacity, since those other stakeholders also access and use this route. Clayton Clark, the  
99 General Manager of Green Mountain Transit, added that GMT is anticipating hearing from the School District  
100 on their contribution, and added that GMT statutory authority could allow them to demand the full assessment  
101 even if the service for the route is cut, but said that GMT would be reluctant to do so and potentially damage  
102 its partnerships with municipalities. Councilor Chawla asked for clarification on the School District's obligation  
103 and thinking, and Mr. Clark replied that the School District is focusing on the route as it pertains to running  
104 during the school day and serving individuals during that time. Councilor Chawla asked for a summary of the  
105 funding model, and Mr. Clark replied that costs are shared equally and assessments are based on origin and  
106 destination of rides. Councilor Chawla asked what funding and operations would look like if they were to  
107 reduce the #4 route to 26 runs per week, but preserve the paratransit option in full. Mr. Clark said that this  
108 point is worth further discussion with the City and Council. Mr. Clark also spoke about the uncertainty of  
109 future federal funding and the difficulties in exploring options now with that unknown future state. City

110 Manager Mahony said that the City can't determine funding implications for a reduced service and full  
111 paratransit service until they know what the Town of Essex and the School District decide. Mr. Clark noted  
112 that the City is fully covering paratransit costs in its FY27 budget, regardless of the fixed route decision.  
113 Councilor Clark agreed about the importance of preserving the paratransit service, and said the City should  
114 do what it can to maintain the 50 runs per week of the #4 service. Councilor Miller said he would be interested  
115 in further exploring the details around the City's funding obligation to maintaining service going forward.  
116 Councilor Shelden agreed that some level of service should be maintained, and would be interested in seeing  
117 further details.

118  
119 The following public comments were received:

- 120 • Heidi Swevens said she would be interested in providing public comments to the GMT Board, the  
121 School District, and the Town of Essex.
- 122 • Marcus Certa asked about the implications for the Town of Essex and City of Essex Junction if the  
123 School District were to participate in cost-sharing. He also asked for statistics about ridership and  
124 utilization of GMT services for the City. Mr. Clark noted that there are 78 individuals who received  
125 ADA pickup on the #4 route.
- 126 • Resa noted that not everyone in the community can bike or walk, and expressed fear about the #4  
127 route being eliminated and what that means for the future. She emphasized the importance of mass  
128 transit for the City.

129  
130 The City Council discussed whether to fund GMT for its full assessment, which is included in the FY27 budget  
131 and was passed by voters, even if the #4 service is operating in a reduced capacity (or eliminated). Councilors  
132 expressed support for maintaining the GMT line item in the FY27 budget. Councilor Chawla asked how the  
133 City can better coordinate and communicate with the Town on this topic, given that there is a sense of  
134 urgency around this topic. City Manager Mahony said that she can relay to the Town of Essex Manager and  
135 the School Board Chair how the City Council feels about the topic. Mr. Clark noted that the Town of Essex  
136 may possibly vote at an upcoming meeting to no longer be a GMT member, but added that GMT serves non-  
137 members (such as Colchester).

138  
139 c. Discussion and Consideration of Essex Junction – Vermont's 10<sup>th</sup> City – Historical Marker Application  
140 City Manager Mahony said the City is contemplating an application to the State of Vermont for a historical  
141 marker denoting Essex Junction as Vermont's tenth city. She said that the hope is to have the marker, if  
142 approved by the State, for the City's fifth birthday in July of 2027.

143  
144 **Councilor Clark made a motion, seconded by Councilor Miller, that the City Council authorize the**  
145 **City Manager to apply for the historic site marker sign, approve the text for the historic marker sign,**  
146 **with the understanding that the VDHP has a final say in text, approve the location of the historic**  
147 **marker sign in the flower bed by the flagpole in front of the 2 Lincoln building, and approve the**  
148 **installation if approved by VDHP. The motion passed 5-0.**

149  
150 d. **\*\*Discussion and Consideration of an Executive Session to Discuss Personnel**  
151 **See item #9b below.**

152  
153 **6. CONSENT ITEMS**

- 154 a. Approve Meeting Minutes: May 27, 2026
- 155 b. Acting as the Liquor Control Commission – Approve Liquor/Tobacco Licenses
- 156 c. Approve Local Match Commitment for the All Hazard Mitigation Plan
- 157 d. Approve VT Route 15 (Main Street) Shared Use Path, Phase 2 – Approval of VTrans bicycle and  
158 Pedestrian Program Grant Application

159  
160 **Councilor Chawla made a motion, seconded by Councilor Miller, to approve the consent agenda. The**  
161 **motion passed 5-0.**

162  
163 7. **COUNCILOR COMMENTS & CITY MANAGER REPORT:** City Manager Mahony noted several  
164 infrastructure projects occurring currently, including the Railroad Avenue Water Line project, thanked  
165 VTrans for adding a section of Pearl Street to their paving schedule for 2026, and noted that sidewalk  
166 work on Main Street will start next week. She noted that the Brownell Library roof replacement was  
167 completed. She noted that testing occurred for one lane westbound on Pearl Street from the West Street  
168 Extension to Susie Wilson Road, and said that they will return to the Council with the multimodal  
169 alternative for Pearl Street at a meeting in the near future. Councilor Miller noted that the Senior Center  
170 has reopened at 2 Lincoln Street and that the reopening event was well-attended and successful. He  
171 welcomed seniors back to the space.

172  
173 8. **READING FILE**

- 174 a. Check Warrant #24119 – May 29, 2026  
175 b. May Financial Reports  
176 c. Regional Boards and Committees Minutes Memo  
177 d. Development Review Board Minutes – May 21, 2026  
178

179 9. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- 180 a. \*An Executive Session may be needed to Discuss Public Officials

181 **City Council President Thibeault made a motion, seconded by Councilor Chawla that the City Council**  
182 **enter into executive session to discuss the appointment of public officials, pursuant to 1 V.S.A.**  
183 **§313(a)(3) to include the City Manager. The motion passed 5-0.**  
184

185 **Councilor Chawla made a motion, seconded by Councilor Miller, to exit executive session. The**  
186 **motion passed 5-0 at 8:46 P.M.**  
187

188 **Councilor Chawla made a motion, seconded by Councilor Miller, to appoint Robert Frederick to the**  
189 **Bike Walk Advisory Committee for a 2-year term ending June 30, 2028 and John O'Brien, Ian Van**  
190 **Kirk, and Jessical Huntley to the Bike Walk Advisory Committee for a 3-year term ending June 30,**  
191 **2029. Further, to appoint Kevin Collins, Mike Plageman, and Justin Rabidoux to the Capital Program**  
192 **Review Committee for a 3-year term ending June 30, 2029. Further, to appoint Steve Eustis as**  
193 **Moderator for a 1-year term ending June 30, 2027. Further, to appoint Kirstie Paschall to the Planning**  
194 **Commission for a 3-year term ending June 30, 2029. Further, to appoint Bridget Downey-Meyer,**  
195 **Patrick Lynch, Rachel Hamm Vaughan, and Drew Perry to the Recreation Advisory Committee for a**  
196 **2-year term ending June 30, 2028. Further, to appoint Amanda Borok to a vacant position on the Tree**  
197 **Advisory Committee for the remaining 1-year term ending June 30, 2027 and Luca Karki and Nick**  
198 **Meyer to the Tree Advisory Committee for a 3year term ending June 30, 2029. The motion passed 5-**  
199 **0.**  
200

- 201 b. \*\*An Executive Session may be needed to Discuss Personnel

202 **Councilor Miller made a motion, seconded by Councilor Clark, that the City Council enter into**  
203 **executive session to discuss a personnel evaluation (check-in), pursuant to 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3) to**  
204 **include the City Council and the City Manager. The motion passed 5-0.**  
205

206 10. **ADJOURN**

207  
208 **Councilor Clark made a motion, seconded by Councilor Miller, to adjourn the meeting. The motion**  
209 **passed 5-0 at 8:51 P.M.**  
210

211 Respectfully Submitted,  
212 Amy Coonradt