



VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION TRUSTEES  
TOWN OF ESSEX SELECTBOARD  
Subcommittee on Governance  
Special Meeting Agenda

81 Main Street  
Essex Junction, VT 05452  
Thursday, July 18, 2019  
7:00 PM

E-mail: [manager@essex.org](mailto:manager@essex.org)

[www.essexjunction.org](http://www.essexjunction.org)  
[www.essex.org](http://www.essex.org)

Phone: (802) 878-1341

*The Governance Subcommittee consists of two members of the Essex Junction Board of Trustees and two members of the Essex Selectboard. The members will not discuss or take action on any issue outside of the scope of the subcommittee and shall not act as the Town Selectboard or Village Board of Trustees at the meeting.*

1. **CALL TO ORDER** [7:00 PM]
2. **AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**
3. **APPROVE AGENDA**
4. **PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**
5. **BUSINESS ITEMS**
  - a. Review results of first survey about governance change
  - b. Discussion of process for analyzing KSV qualitative survey
  - c. Approve focus group screener
  - d. Discussion of FAQs about governance change—Ann Janda
  - e. Discussion of elevator speech about governance change
  - f. Approve minutes: June 20, 2019
6. **READING FILE**
  - a. Governance Change (Merger) Vote 2020—Project Timeline
7. **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 Chair or 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 Chair or President. This agenda is available in alternative formats upon request. Meetings, like all programs and activities of the Village of Essex Junction and the Town of Essex, are accessible to people with disabilities. For information on accessibility or this agenda, call the Unified Manager's office at 878-1341.*

Certification: \_\_\_\_\_ 07/16/2019 \_\_\_\_\_ *Amitchell*

**Memorandum**

**To:** Governance Subcommittee; Evan Teich, Unified Manager  
**Cc:** Ann Janda, Project Manager  
**From:** Greg Duggan, Deputy Manager  
**Re:** Reviewing results of first survey about governance change  
**Date:** July 16, 2019

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**Issue**

The issue is for the Governance Subcommittee to review the results of the first community-wide survey on governance change.

**Discussion**

The first survey about governance change wrapped up this week, with more than 640 responses. KSV will be at the July 18 Governance Subcommittee meeting to review the results of the survey.

**Cost**

N/a

**Recommendation**

This memo is for discussion purposes.

**Memorandum**

**To:** Governance Subcommittee; Evan Teich, Unified Manager

**Cc:** Ann Janda, Project Manager

**From:** Greg Duggan, Deputy Manager *GSD*

**Re:** Analyzing KSV qualitative survey

**Date:** July 16, 2019

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**Issue**

The issue is for the Governance Subcommittee to discuss how to analyze the KSV qualitative survey, the first community-wide survey on governance change.

**Discussion**

KSV is going to review the results of the first community-wide survey on governance change on July 18. The Governance Subcommittee should discuss how it wants to analyze and use the results of the qualitative survey.

**Cost**

n/a

**Recommendation**

This memo is for discussion purposes.

**Memorandum**

**To:** Governance Subcommittee; Evan Teich, Unified Manager  
**Cc:** Ann Janda, Project Manager  
**From:** Greg Duggan, Deputy Manager *GSD*  
**Re:** Approval of focus group screener  
**Date:** July 16, 2019

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**Issue**

The issue is whether the Governance Subcommittee will approve the focus group screener.

**Discussion**

With the first survey on governance change now complete, KSV is ready to move on to focus groups as the next component of community engagement. A focus group screener will identify people who want to participate in the focus groups and are available to participate August 13 – 15.

The Governance Subcommittee has shared feedback on the draft of the focus group screener. A revised, redlined draft is attached, along with a clean copy and a paper copy. The Governance Subcommittee can provide additional feedback about the screener on Thursday, July 18. The final version of the screener should be approved that night so that KSV can start distributing the screener electronically and in hard copies on Tuesday, July 23.

**Cost**

n/a

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Governance Subcommittee approve the focus group screener.



**Town of Essex & Village of Essex Junction Potential Merger**  
**Focus Group Recruitment Screener**  
**July 9<sup>16</sup>, 2019 – DRAFT v2**

Commented [CR1]:

Preview Link:

Will be added once we program the screener

Proposed Live Survey Link (for Distribution):

[www.surveymonkey.com/r/EssexListeningSessions](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/EssexListeningSessions)

Title:

Essex Merger Listening Sessions

Intro

The Town of Essex and the Village of Essex Junction are holding a series of listening sessions to gather Essex resident feedback on proposed options for a potential merger between the municipal governments of the Town of Essex and the Village of Essex Junction.

We are looking for Essex residents who would be interested [in](#) sharing their opinions by participating in a 90-minute group discussion with fellow residents. These listening sessions will be moderated by our research partner KSV and will be similar to a focus group. Town of Essex and Village of Essex Junction municipal officials will not be present at the sessions, but will be briefed on the output of the discussions at a later date.

The listening sessions will take place in the evenings of August 13-15, 2019. Refreshments will be provided.

If you are interested in participating, we ask that you fill out this short questionnaire that will help us ensure we recruit a diverse mix of Essex residents for these sessions.

Thank you for your interest!

S1. What will your age be on November 3, 2020? [single selection]

- Under 18 [terminate]
- 18-24



- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75+

S2. Have you served as an elected government official for either on the Town of Essex Selectboard or the Village of Essex Junction Board of Trustees within the last 10 years? [single selection]

- Yes [terminate]
- No

**Commented [GD2]:** Change in response to Wendy Hysko's comment about elected Library Board officials.

**Commented [DT3]:** Makes sense to us.

S3. In which part of the Town of Essex do you live? Please reference this list of street names. [list streets grouped by "Town Outside the Village" and "Village of Essex Junction", using a list from 2018 that was sent to us by Greg] [single selection]

- I live in Essex Town outside the Village [will see question S5a]
- I live in the Village of Essex Junction [will see question S5b]
- I live someplace else besides the Town of Essex [terminate]

S4. To help accurately capture the feedback shared in these listening sessions, audio of the sessions will be recorded. Because this is official Town of Essex and Village of Essex Junction government business, these recordings may be made public if requested.

Do you consent to audio recording during the group listening sessions? [single selection]

- Yes, I would be ok with audio of the listening session being recorded
- No, I would not be ok with audio of the listening session being recorded [terminate]

S5a. [shown to TOTV residents only] Below is a list of the dates, times, and locations of the listening sessions. Would you be able to attend one of these sessions? [single selection]

- Tuesday, August 13, 2019. 6:00pm-7:30pm. Essex Police Dept. Community Room.
- Tuesday, August 13, 2019. 7:45pm-9:15pm. Essex Police Dept. Community Room.
- Thursday August 15, 2019. 6:00pm-7:30pm. Town of Essex Fire Dept. Community Room.
- Thursday August 15, 2019. 7:45pm-9:15pm. Town of Essex Fire Dept. Community Room.



- Yes
- No [terminate]

S5b. [shown to Village residents only] Below is a list of the dates, times, and locations of the listening sessions. Would you be able to attend one of these sessions? [single selection]

- Tuesday, August 13, 2019. 6:00pm-7:30pm. Essex Police Dept. Community Room.
- Tuesday, August 13, 2019. 7:45pm-9:15pm. Essex Police Dept. Community Room.
- Wednesday, August 14, 2019. 6:00pm-7:30pm. Brownell Library.
- Wednesday, August 14, 2019. 7:45pm-9:15pm. Brownell Library.

- Yes
- No [terminate]

Q6a. [shown to TOTV residents only] Please select which dates/times you would definitely be able to attend. [multiple selection]

- Tuesday, August 13, 2019. 6:00pm-7:30pm. Essex Police Dept. Community Room.
- Tuesday, August 13, 2019. 7:45pm-9:15pm. Essex Police Dept. Community Room.
- Thursday August 15, 2019. 6:00pm-7:30pm. Town of Essex Fire Dept. Community Room.
- Thursday August 15, 2019. 7:45pm-9:15pm. Town of Essex Fire Dept. Community Room.

Q6b. [shown to Village residents only] Please select which dates/times you would definitely be able to attend. [multiple selection]

- Tuesday, August 13, 2019. 6:00pm-7:30pm. Essex Police Dept. Community Room.
- Tuesday, August 13, 2019. 7:45pm-9:15pm. Essex Police Dept. Community Room.
- Wednesday, August 14, 2019. 6:00pm-7:30pm. Brownell Library.
- Wednesday, August 14, 2019. 7:45pm-9:15pm. Brownell Library.

Q7. How familiar are you with the past efforts to merge the Town of Essex and the Village of Essex Junction under a single government structure? [single selection]

- Extremely familiar
- Very familiar
- Moderately familiar
- Slightly familiar
- Not at all familiar



Q8. How often do you attend public meetings hosted by the Town of Essex or the Village of Essex Junction? [single selection]

- Always
- Very often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

Q9. Do you own or rent your primary residence? [single selection]

- Own
- Rent
- Other (please specify)

Q10. How long have you lived in the Essex community? [drop-down list from "1 year or less" up to "more than 25 years" in one year increments] [single selection]

- 1 year or less
- 2 years
- 3 years
- ...
- 25 years
- More than 25 years

**Commented [CR4]:** For the demographic section, how will we handle submissions from those who leave these blank or partially blank?

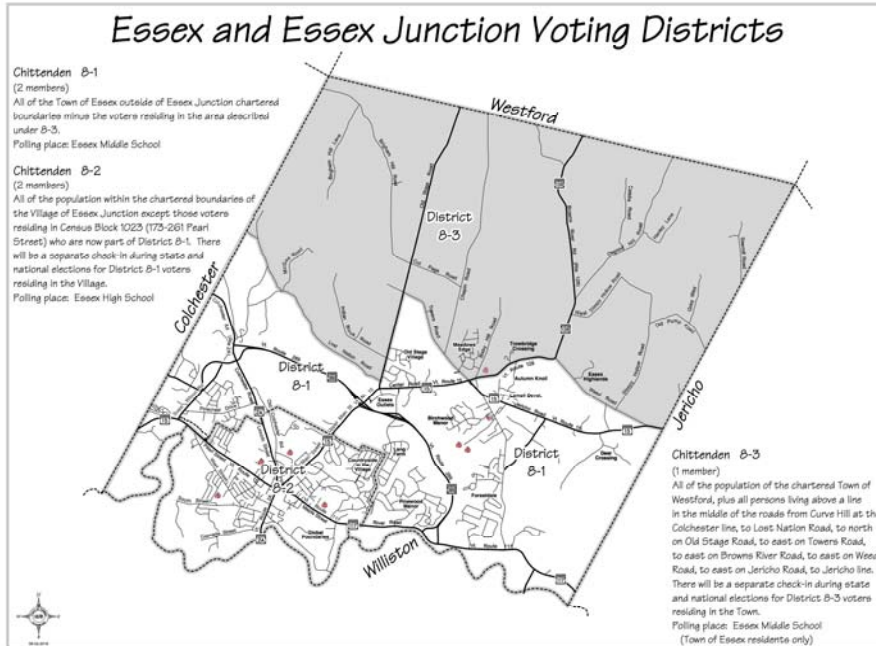
**Commented [DT5]:** All questions on the online survey will be mandatory and if they select "Other (please specify)" they will be asked to include a text explanation. For the paper version, there isn't much we can do to force someone to make a selection.

We do recommend giving people the option to not reveal certain characteristics such as income, race, and gender because some people aren't comfortable sharing that information. For example, almost 23% of those that responded to the first survey selected "Prefer not to say" in the household income question.

When analyzing the results of the recruitment screener, the first thing we are going to look at is the location of the respondent to ensure we're getting a split between EJ and TotV residents. Then we'll prioritize selecting from those that identify their demographic information in order to get a good mix of ages, genders, and length of time lived in Essex, primarily. HHI, race, kids/no kids, are somewhat secondary or tertiary. Those that don't identify certain demographic info will still be in the selection pool, but obviously it may be a little more challenging to match them to a specific demo we're looking to fill. However, if we're looking for a female aged 45-54 from TotV and we have a person that identifies as that but doesn't reveal her HHI, most likely we would still reach out to schedule her.

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Q11. Are you currently registered to vote in Essex? [single selection]

- Yes, District 8-1
- Yes, District 8-2
- Yes, District 8-3
- Yes, but I'm not sure of my district
- No

**Commented [DT6]:** Based on an initial pass through the results of the first survey, we recommend including this question in the screener. For the TotV groups, we'd ideally like a mix of 8-1 and 8-3 residents.

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Q124. Do you have children under the age of 18 living in your household? [single selection]

- Yes [go to Q12]
- No [skip to Q13]



Q13. Would you need to seek childcare arrangements in order to attend one of these listening sessions? [single selection]

- Yes
- No

Q14. What is your gender? [single selection]

- Female
- Male
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Q15. How would you identify your race or ethnicity? (Select all that apply) [multiple selection]

- Asian
- Black/African-American
- Caucasian/White
- Hispanic/Latin
- Native American
- Pacific Islander
- Prefer not to answer
- Other (please specify)

Q16. What was the combined income for all members of your household last year? [single selection]

- Less than \$25,000
- \$25,000-\$49,999
- \$50,000-\$74,999
- \$75,000-\$99,999
- \$100,000-\$149,999
- \$150,000-\$199,999
- \$200,000+
- Prefer not to say

Q17. Where did you get the link for this survey or hear about it? [multiple selection]

- Town of Essex or Village of Essex Junction affiliated website or social media account



- Email from Town of Essex or Village of Essex Junction government or affiliated organization
- Essex Reporter
- Front Porch Forum
- Essex Area Senior Center
- Brownell Library
- Essex Free Library
- Link was shared by a neighbor or colleague on social media or via email
- Other (please specify)

**Q186.** Please provide your contact information below so that our research partner, KSV, can follow up with you regarding scheduling. You can provide either your email address, phone number, or both, whichever you prefer.

By providing your information, you give KSV permission to contact you to either schedule your participation or inform you if you are not selected. We hope to accommodate as many people as possible, however space is limited for these listening sessions. [open-ended]

- **Name** (either full name or just your first name is ok):
- Email address:
- Phone number:

### Outro

Thank you for your interest in attending one of our listening sessions! Our research partner KSV will be in touch within the next two weeks to confirm scheduling with you.

Please note there is limited space for these group discussions, and we unfortunately won't be able to include everyone. However, we will be launching a survey in mid-September on the topic of the potential merger of the Town of Essex and Village of Essex municipal governments, and we encourage you to complete that survey.

Thank you again!

**Commented [CR7]:** Do we want language in here that permits Essex / KSV to contact folks in future related to this effort if they aren't chosen? And will there be a note sent to those not selected? I feel like we need to acknowledge folks reaching out even if we they don't end up in a meeting. Lots of work, yes.

**Commented [DT8]:** We had discussed over the phone that KSV would only provide to Essex the first name of respondents and no other information, so we wouldn't want to say that Essex would be contacting people here.

Regarding informing people that they aren't selected, yes, we plan to do that. We want to be careful with the language around this, however, because we don't want to sound dismissive and potentially discourage them from filling out the survey in the future.



**Town of Essex & Village of Essex Junction Potential Merger  
Focus Group Recruitment Screener  
July 16, 2019 – DRAFT v2**

Preview Link:

Will be added once we program the screener

Proposed Live Survey Link (for Distribution):

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We are looking for Essex residents who would be interested in sharing their opinions by participating in a 90-minute group discussion with fellow residents. These listening sessions will be moderated by our research partner KSV and will be similar to a focus group. Town of Essex and Village of Essex Junction municipal officials will not be present at the sessions, but will be briefed on the output of the discussions at a later date.

The listening sessions will take place in the evenings of August 13-15, 2019. Refreshments will be provided.

If you are interested in participating, we ask that you fill out this short questionnaire that will help us ensure we recruit a diverse mix of Essex residents for these sessions.

Thank you for your interest!

S1. What will your age be on November 3, 2020? [single selection]

- Under 18 [terminate]
- 18-24



- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75+

S2. Have you served on the Town of Essex Selectboard or the Village of Essex Junction Board of Trustees within the last 10 years? [single selection]

- Yes [terminate]
- No

S3. In which part of the Town of Essex do you live? Please reference this list of street names. [list streets grouped by “Town Outside the Village” and “Village of Essex Junction”, using a list from 2018 that was sent to us by Greg] [single selection]

- I live in Essex Town outside the Village [will see question S5a]
- I live in the Village of Essex Junction [will see question S5b]
- I live someplace else besides the Town of Essex [terminate]

S4. To help accurately capture the feedback shared in these listening sessions, audio of the sessions will be recorded. Because this is official Town of Essex and Village of Essex Junction government business, these recordings may be made public if requested.

Do you consent to audio recording during the group listening sessions? [single selection]

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- Thursday August 15, 2019. 6:00pm-7:30pm. Town of Essex Fire Dept. Community Room.
- Thursday August 15, 2019. 7:45pm-9:15pm. Town of Essex Fire Dept. Community Room.



- Yes
- No [terminate]

S5b. [shown to Village residents only] Below is a list of the dates, times, and locations of the listening sessions. Would you be able to attend one of these sessions? Though you can select all times you are available, you would only attend one session. [single selection]

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- Wednesday, August 14, 2019. 6:00pm-7:30pm. Brownell Library.
- Wednesday, August 14, 2019. 7:45pm-9:15pm. Brownell Library.

- Yes
- No [terminate]

Q6a. [shown to TOTV residents only] Please select which dates/times you would definitely be able to attend. [multiple selection]

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Q7. How familiar are you with the past efforts to merge the Town of Essex and the Village of Essex Junction under a single government structure? [single selection]

- Extremely familiar
- Very familiar
- Moderately familiar
- Slightly familiar
- Not at all familiar



Q8. How often do you attend public meetings hosted by the Town of Essex or the Village of Essex Junction? [single selection]

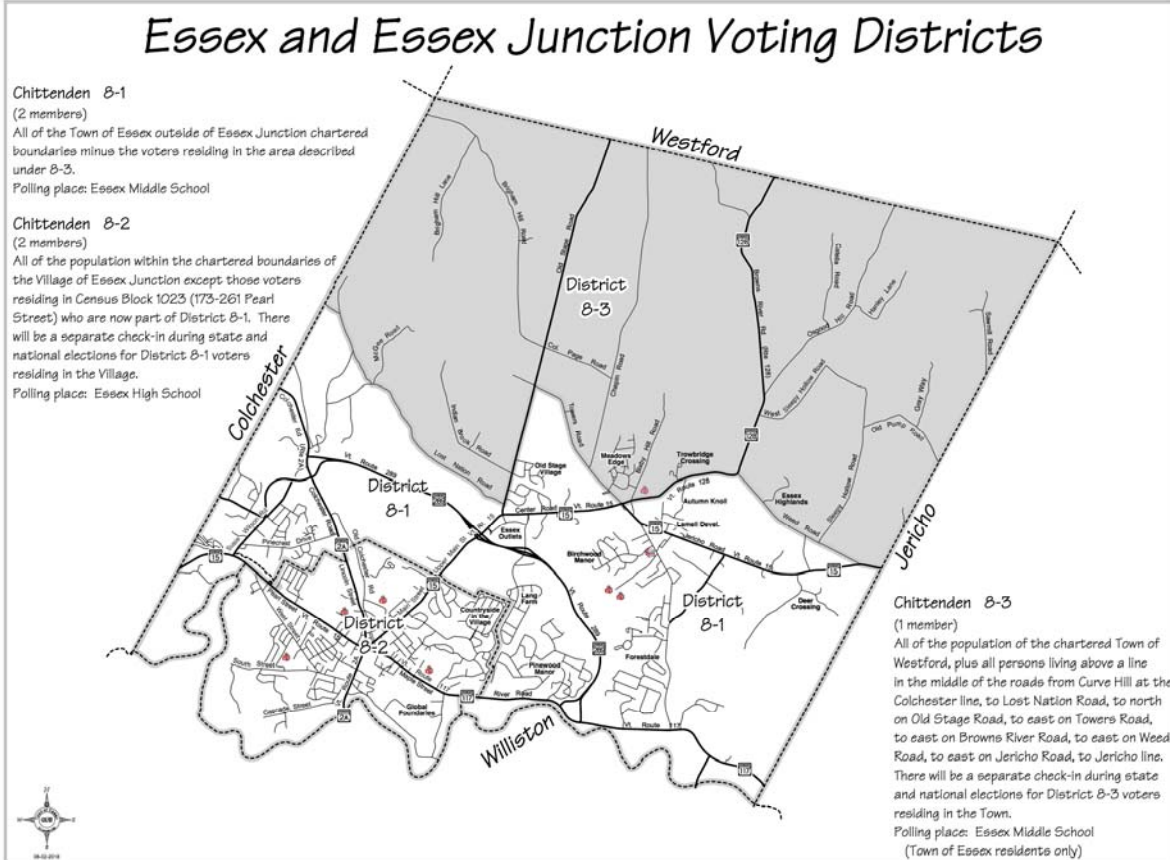
- Always
- Very often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

Q9. Do you own or rent your primary residence? [single selection]

- Own
- Rent
- Other (please specify)

Q10. How long have you lived in the Essex community? [drop-down list from “1 year or less” up to “more than 25 years” in one year increments] [single selection]

- 1 year or less
- 2 years
- 3 years
- ...
- 25 years
- More than 25 years



Q11. Are you currently registered to vote in Essex? [\[single selection\]](#)

- Yes, District 8-1
- Yes, District 8-2
- Yes, District 8-3
- Yes, but I'm not sure of my district
- No

Q12. Do you have children under the age of 18 living in your household? [\[single selection\]](#)

- Yes [\[go to Q12\]](#)
- No [\[skip to Q13\]](#)





Q13. Would you need to seek childcare arrangements in order to attend one of these listening sessions? [single selection]

- Yes
- No

Q14. What is your gender? [single selection]

- Female
- Male
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Q15. How would you identify your race or ethnicity? (Select all that apply) [multiple selection]

- Asian
- Black/African-American
- Caucasian/White
- Hispanic/Latin
- Native American
- Pacific Islander
- Prefer not to answer
- Other (please specify)

Q16. What was the combined income for all members of your household last year? [single selection]

- Less than \$25,000
- \$25,000-\$49,999
- \$50,000-\$74,999
- \$75,000-\$99,999
- \$100,000-\$149,999
- \$150,000-\$199,999
- \$200,000+
- Prefer not to say

Q17. Where did you get the link for this survey or hear about it? [multiple selection]

- Town of Essex or Village of Essex Junction affiliated website or social media account



- Email from Town of Essex or Village of Essex Junction government or affiliated organization
- Essex Reporter
- Front Porch Forum
- Essex Area Senior Center
- Brownell Library
- Essex Free Library
- Link was shared by a neighbor or colleague on social media or via email
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Q18. Please provide your contact information below so that our research partner, KSV, can follow up with you regarding scheduling. You can provide either your email address, phone number, or both, whichever you prefer.

By providing your information, you give KSV permission to contact you to either schedule your participation or inform you if you are not selected. We hope to accommodate as many people as possible, however space is limited for these listening sessions. [\[open-ended\]](#)

- Name (either full name or just your first name is ok):
- Email address:
- Phone number:

### Outro

Thank you for your interest in attending one of our listening sessions! Our research partner KSV will be in touch within the next two weeks to confirm scheduling with you.

Please note there is limited space for these group discussions, and we unfortunately won't be able to include everyone. However, we will be launching a survey in mid-September on the topic of the potential merger of the Town of Essex and Village of Essex municipal governments, and we encourage you to complete that survey.

Thank you again!



## ESSEX MERGER LISTENING SESSIONS – Aug 2019

The Town of Essex and the Village of Essex Junction are holding a series of listening sessions to gather Essex resident feedback on proposed options for a potential merger between the municipal governments of the Town of Essex and the Village of Essex Junction.

We are looking for Essex residents who would be interested in sharing their opinions by participating in a 90-minute group discussion with fellow residents. These listening sessions will be moderated by our research partner KSV and will be similar to a focus group. Town of Essex and Village of Essex Junction municipal officials will not be present at the sessions, but will be briefed on the output of the discussions at a later date.

The listening sessions will take place in the evenings of August 13-15, 2019. Refreshments will be provided.

If you are interested in participating, we ask that you fill out this short questionnaire that will help us ensure we recruit a diverse mix of Essex residents for these sessions.

**Please note: These listening sessions are only open to residents of the Town of Essex and the Village of Essex Junction that will be of voting age by the November 2020 election.**

Please drop off completed forms **before Monday, August 5, 2019** at any of the following:

- Town of Essex Municipal Building, 81 Main St.
- Village of Essex Junction Municipal Building, 2 Lincoln St.
- Brownell Library, 6 Lincoln St.
- Essex Free Library, 1 Browns River Rd.
- Essex Area Senior Center, 2 Lincoln St.
- Essex Junction Recreation and Parks, 75 Maple St.



**Would you prefer to submit your response online?**

Visit <http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/EssexListeningSessions> or scan the QR code image with your smartphone camera to be taken to the online questionnaire.

Please visit [www.GreaterEssex2020.org](http://www.GreaterEssex2020.org) for more information about a governance change vote in November 2020. The site will be updated regularly.

How old will you be on **November 3, 2020**? \_\_\_\_\_ years old

**Where do you live?** Circle one.

Village of Essex Junction / Essex Town outside the Village / I live in Essex but not sure where

*(For a listing of streets in the Village of Essex Junction and Town outside the Village, please refer to the end of this questionnaire. Village streets are lowercase, Town outside the Village streets are UPPERCASE.)*

**Have you served on the Town of Essex Selectboard of the Village of Essex Junction Board of Trustees within the last 10 years?** Circle one.

Yes / No

To help accurately capture the feedback shared in these listening sessions, audio of the sessions will be recorded. Because this is official Town of Essex and Village of Essex Junction government business, these recordings may be made public if requested. **Do you consent to audio recording during the group listening sessions?** Circle one.

Yes / No

**Below is a list of dates, times, and locations of the listening sessions. Please circle all options you would be able to attend**, though you would only attend one session. Please note: Some sessions are reserved for Village residents only or Town outside the Village residents only, while others are open to both.

**Open to both Village and Town outside the Village residents:**

Tuesday, August 13, 2019. 6:00pm-7:30pm. Essex Police Dept. Community Room.

Tuesday, August 13, 2019. 7:45pm-9:15pm. Essex Police Dept. Community Room.

**Open to Village residents only**

Wednesday, August 14, 2019. 6:00pm-7:30pm. Brownell Library.

Wednesday, August 14, 2019. 7:45pm-9:15pm. Brownell Library.

**Open to Town outside the Village residents only:**

Thursday, August 15, 2019. 6:00pm-7:30pm. Essex Fire Dept. Community Room.

Thursday, August 15, 2019. 7:45pm-9:15pm. Essex Fire Dept. Community Room.

**How familiar are you with the past efforts to merge the Town of Essex and the Village of Essex Junction under a single government structure?** Circle one.

Extremely familiar / Very familiar / Moderately familiar / Slightly familiar / Not at all familiar

**How often do you attend public meetings hosted by the Town of Essex or the Village of Essex Junction?** Circle one.

Always / Very often / Sometimes / Rarely / Never

**Where did you hear about this survey?** Circle all that apply.

- Town of Essex or Village of Essex Junction affiliated website or social media account
- Email from Town of Essex or Village of Essex Junction government or affiliated organization
- Essex Reporter
- Front Porch Forum
- Essex Area Senior Center
- Brownell Library
- Essex Free Library
- Link was shared by a neighbor or colleague on social email or via email
- Other (please specify):

**Do you own or rent your primary residence?** Circle one.

Own / Rent / Other (please specify):

**How long have you lived in the Essex community?** \_\_\_\_\_ years

**Do you have children under 18 living in your household?** Circle one.

Yes / No

**Would you need to seek childcare arrangements in order to attend one of these listening sessions?** Circle one.

Yes / No

# Essex and Essex Junction Voting Districts

**Chittenden 8-1**  
(2 members)

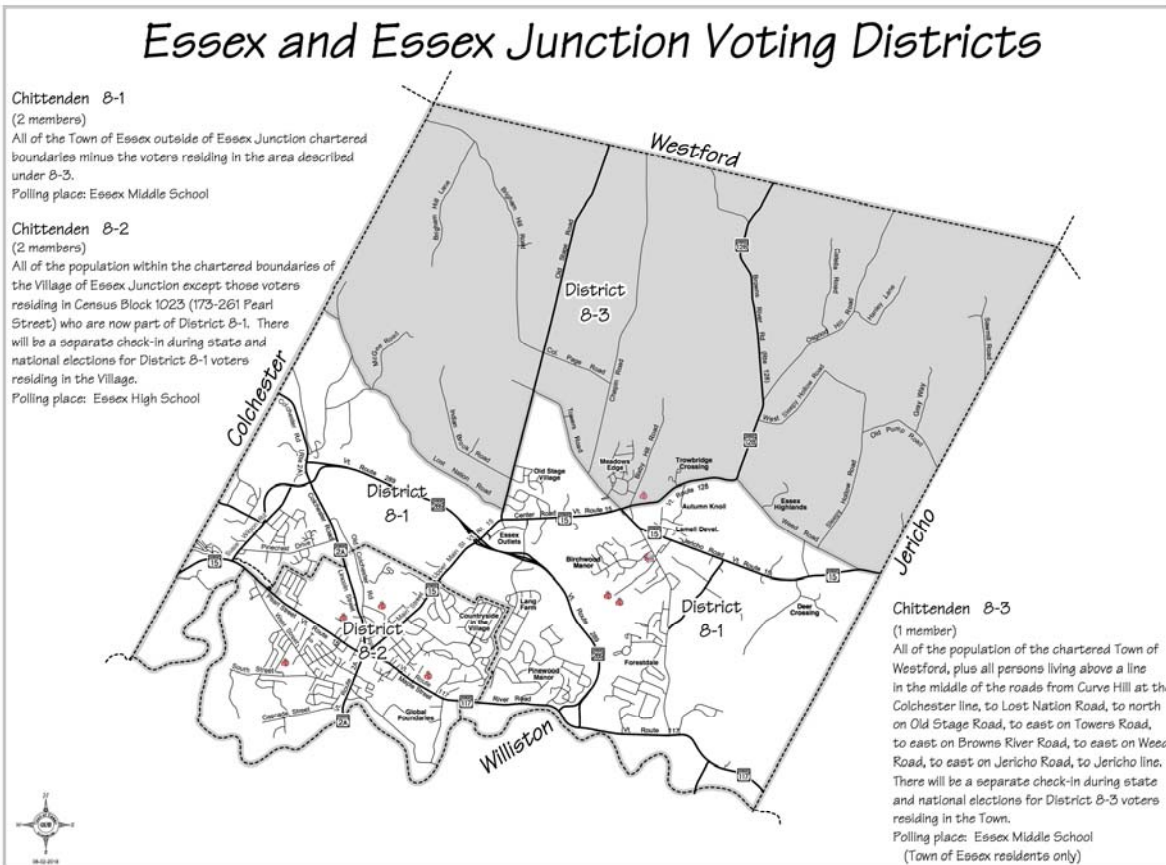
All of the Town of Essex outside of Essex Junction chartered boundaries minus the voters residing in the area described under 8-3.

Polling place: Essex Middle School

**Chittenden 8-2**  
(2 members)

All of the population within the chartered boundaries of the Village of Essex Junction except those voters residing in Census Block 1023 (173-261 Pearl Street) who are now part of District 8-1. There will be a separate check-in during state and national elections for District 8-1 voters residing in the Village.

Polling place: Essex High School



**Chittenden 8-3**

(1 member)

All of the population of the chartered Town of Westford, plus all persons living above a line in the middle of the roads from Curve Hill at the Colchester line, to Lost Nation Road, to north on Old Stage Road, to east on Towers Road, to east on Browns River Road, to east on Weed Road, to east on Jericho Road, to Jericho line. There will be a separate check-in during state and national elections for District 8-3 voters residing in the Town.

Polling place: Essex Middle School  
(Town of Essex residents only)

**Are you currently registered to vote in the Essex? Circle one.**

- Yes, District 8-1
- Yes, District 8-2
- Yes, District 8-3
- Yes, but I'm not sure of my district
- No

**What was the combined income for all members of your household last year? Circle one.**

- Less than \$25,000
- \$25,000-\$49,999
- \$50,000-\$74,999
- \$75,000-\$99,999
- \$100,000-\$149,999
- \$150,000-\$199,999
- \$200,000+
- Prefer not to say

**What is your gender?** Circle one.

Female / Male / Other / Prefer not to say

**How would you identify your race or ethnicity?** Circle all that apply.

- Asian
- Black/African-American
- Caucasian/White
- Hispanic/Latin
- Native American
- Pacific Islander
- Other (please specify):
- Prefer not to say

**Please provide your contact information below so that our research partner, KSV, can follow up with you regarding scheduling. You can provide either your email address, phone number, or both, whichever you prefer.** By providing your information, you give KSV permission to contact you to either schedule your participation or inform you if you are not selected. We hope to accommodate as many people as possible, however space is limited for these listening sessions.

**Name:**

**Email address:**

Thank you for your interest in attending one of our listening sessions! Our research partner KSV will be in touch within the next two weeks to confirm scheduling with you.

Please note there is limited space for these group discussions, and we unfortunately won't be able to include everyone. However, we will be launching a survey in mid-September on the topic of the potential merger of the Town of Essex and Village of Essex municipal governments, and we encourage you to complete that survey.

Thank you again!

**Memorandum**

**To:** Governance Subcommittee; Evan Teich, Unified Manager

**CC:** Greg Duggan, Deputy Manager

**From:** Ann Janda, Project Manager

**Re:** Merger website update about FAQs

**Date:** July 12, 2019

**Issue**

The issue is to provide the Governance Subcommittee a chance to review and edit some FAQs to be posted on [greateressex2020.org](http://greateressex2020.org)

**Discussion**

Staff has developed the following FAQs based on past FAQs and questions raised in social media formats. The below language was developed for discussion.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Proposed Merger of Town of Essex and Village of Essex Junction

#### Current Timeline/Process Questions

1. Why are we doing this now?

The Town of Essex Selectboard and the Village of Essex Junction Board of Trustees have been meeting jointly for the last several months, preparing for a dialogue with the Greater Essex community regarding our consolidation efforts going forward. In June 2018 both boards created a joint Governance Subcommittee tasked with researching potential new governance structures. In December, after researching and vetting over a dozen possibilities, the subcommittee recommended two unification options to consider: a single municipality with one charter, and a single municipality with one charter that includes up to two special districts. Another option is to keep the current governance structure we have now: two separate municipalities with separate charters, sharing some municipal services under contract. Residents will have an opportunity to weigh in through surveys and focus groups during the summer of 2019 and then later through other outreach efforts.

2. What is the process leading up to a possible vote on November 3, 2020?

After reviewing the results of the resident surveys and focus groups, the Town of Essex Selectboard and the Village of Essex Junction Board of Trustees will choose a preferred governance model and begin drafting a proposed charter for a unified community. The proposal is expected to be placed on the November 3, 2020 ballot. Additional public input would be sought at Town of Essex Selectboard and Village of Essex Junction Board of Trustees meetings and official public hearings would be held in the early fall 2020.



## General Questions

3. What about the culture of the two communities?

Culture means different things to different people. The Selectboard and Trustees will be reviewing responses from surveys and focus groups to understand how to best retain the culture of the Town of Essex and the Village of Essex Junction.

4. Have the consolidation of some services in the past several years, starting with a shared Town and Village Manager as of 2013, saved money?

Yes, consolidation efforts to date have saved more than \$2.5 million from Fiscal Year 2014 to Fiscal Year 2020. (This does not include ordinary everyday things like the sharing of equipment or when the Town Engineer helped the Village receive a grant for bridge work.)

Here is the breakdown for each municipality:

• **FY2014 - FY2019: \$2.13 Million**

<u>Service</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Village</u>
Manager	\$367,000	\$606,000
Finance & Admin	\$378,000	\$179,000
Stormwater & Public Works	\$344,000	\$254,000
<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>\$1,089,000</b>	<b>\$1,039,000 = \$2.13M</b>

• **FY2020: \$0.69 Million**

<u>Service</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Village</u>
Manager	\$67,200	\$113,500
Finance & Admin	\$194,300	\$195,600
Stormwater & Public Works	\$59,800	\$62,300
<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>\$321,300</b>	<b>\$371,400 = \$0.69M</b>

### Cost

N/a

### Recommendation

This memo is for discussion purposes.

**Memorandum**

**To:** Governance Subcommittee; Evan Teich, Unified Manager  
**Cc:** Ann Janda, Project Manager  
**From:** Greg Duggan, Deputy Manager *GSD*  
**Re:** Elevator speech about governance change  
**Date:** July 16, 2019

---

**Issue**

The issue is for the Governance Subcommittee to start creating an elevator speech about governance change.

**Discussion**

The Selectboard and Trustees tasked the Governance Subcommittee with creating a “why unify” elevator speech, to be approved by both boards.

The Governance Subcommittee can begin working on the elevator speech on July 18, and may be able to create a final draft at its meeting on July 26. Minutes from the June 25 Trustee and Selectboard meeting, as well as a summary of the June 22 Strategic Advance, are attached to help inform the discussion.

**Cost**

n/a

**Recommendation**

This memo is for discussion purposes.

55 boards is to, eventually, advocate for what they determine may be best for the municipalities  
56 based on a robust community input and vetting processes as well as their thorough  
57 discussions and research. She said that there is not complete agreement on the boards yet  
58 about what to move forward with and there is a lot of work and research to do still in order to  
59 get to an agreement. She explained that no community vote has taken place and that, before  
60 the greater community votes on anything, each of the two boards will need to individually vote  
61 on a plan.

62  
63 Robert Bates shared that, at a recent Governance Committee meeting with KSV, there were  
64 some “loaded” words included in some of the plans and materials being discussed. He  
65 pointed out that semantics go a long way to forming public perception. He wondered why  
66 there has been a recent re-emergence of the word “merger” when, for the last few years, the  
67 word being used was “consolidation”. Mr. Bates pointed out that the word merger comes with  
68 a history of tensions for previous efforts in Essex. He suggested that there be clarification and  
69 clear definitions about language being used in this process.

70  
71 Mary Lou Hurley commented that she does not believe the consolidation process can be fair  
72 without equal representation from individuals who live in the Town Outside the Village.  
73

74 **5. BUSINESS ITEMS**

75  
76 a. **Update on website revisions—Rob Paluba & Greg Duggan**

77 Mr. Duggan discussed the status of work being done by staff on the new website. Mr. Paluba  
78 showed the current draft of the Town Website landing page, revised for simplicity and  
79 consistency. He said the goal was for this page to be clean, easy to navigate and to have  
80 effective search functionality. He pointed out the buttons, bars and sections of the page that  
81 will provide ease in navigation, municipality news and a calendar of events. Mr. Paluba noted  
82 that all decisions being made are within a high standard of ADA compliance and that the  
83 website is designed to work on multiple types of equipment.  
84

85 b. **Follow-up discussion from Strategic Advance**

86 The Selectboard and Trustees who attended the Strategic Advance said that it was a great  
87 day. They noted that it was effectively facilitated and they thought learning about different  
88 perspectives, on the part of staff and elected officials, was valuable as an opportunity to  
89 discuss solutions to potential roadblocks. Mr. Duggan and Mr. Teich expressed the sentiment  
90 of staff that the day was beneficial and they would like to propose doing one annually.  
91

92 c. **Creation of “why merge” elevator speech**

93 Mr. Brown reminded the Trustees and Selectboard that in April of 2018, at a Joint Meeting of  
94 the Trustees and Selectboard, each person described the end goal of consolidation as “one  
95 community and one board”. He reminded them that it is important for each person in the Joint  
96 body of elected officials to share the same messages about what it would look like to unify,  
97 what the status quo is and what it would look like if they moved away from it. The boards  
98 discussed the importance of semantics and legal terminology, suggesting that they reconsider  
99 some of the Heart and Soul Values developed previously as they move forward. They pointed  
100 out that the elevator speech should not push an agenda but inform the public to make a  
101 decision. They agreed to engage the Governance Subcommittee to work on the elevator  
102 speech, with board comments.  
103

104 **ANDREW BROWN** made a motion, and **GEORGE TYLER** seconded, that the Trustees  
105 authorize the Governance Subcommittee to draft a “why unify” elevator speech, for final  
106 approval by both boards. The motion passed 5-0.  
107

108 **ANNIE COOPER** made a motion, and **PATRICK MURRAY** seconded, that the Selectboard  
109 authorize the Governance Subcommittee to draft a “why unify” elevator speech, for final  
110 approval by both boards . The motion passed 5-0.  
111

112 **d. Update from Governance Subcommittee**

113 Mr. Levy provided a brief account of the Governance Subcommittee meeting that took place  
114 on June 20 at 7 PM. As Vice Chair, Mr. Levy ran the meeting because the meeting Chair, Mr.  
115 Tyler, was not in attendance.  
116

117 **e. Approve web address for merger website**

118 The Selectboard and Trustees discussed the options for a merger website address, to  
119 determine what to use for this effort to inform the public, going forward.  
120

121 **PATRICK MURRAY** made a motion, and **ANNIE COOPER** seconded, that the Selectboard  
122 approve the use of [www.greateressex2020.org](http://www.greateressex2020.org) as the address for a merger website.

123 Mr. Watts expressed reservation with using the word “Great” in conjunction with the date  
124 “2020” because there is a national candidate who is also using these terms together.

125 **The motion passed 4-1, with Andy Watts dissenting.**  
126

127 **GEORGE TYLER** made a motion, and **DAN KERIN** seconded, that the Trustees approve the  
128 use of [www.greateressex2020.org](http://www.greateressex2020.org) as the address for a merger website . The motion  
129 passed 5-0.  
130

131 **f. Appoint alternates to Governance Subcommittee**

132 Mr. Duggan explained that because the KSV contract schedule requires approvals on a  
133 weekly basis, having enough people to make a quorum at the subcommittee meetings will be  
134 essential. As such, he suggested that two alternates be appointed, from each board, who can  
135 step in if one or more Subcommittee members cannot attend a meeting. The board members  
136 discussed how many people should be in attendance at these meetings and what the  
137 configuration should be.  
138

139 **Mr. Kerin and Ms. Thibeault** nominated themselves on behalf of the Trustees. **Annie**  
140 **Cooper** nominated herself as first alternate and **Patrick Murray** nominated himself as  
141 second alternate on behalf of the Selectboard.  
142

143 **ANDREW BROWN** made a motion, and **GEORGE TYLER** seconded, on behalf of the  
144 Trustees, that **Dan Kerin** is the first alternate on the Governance Subcommittee and **Ms.**  
145 **Thibeault** is the second. The motion passed 5-0.  
146

147 **ELAINE HANEY** made a motion, and **MAX LEVY** seconded, the Selectboard accept the  
148 slate of nominees. The motion passed 4-1, with Andy Watts dissenting.  
149

150 **g. Determine role and authority of Governance Subcommittee as steering committee for**  
151 **public outreach**

152 Mr. Duggan discussed the recommendation that the Selectboard and Trustees authorize more  
153 decision making authority to the Governance Subcommittee and final approval authority to  
154 staff after vetting by the subcommittee, in order to effectively respond to the fast turnaround

## Memorandum

**To:** Selectboard and Trustees; Evan Teich, Unified Manager

**CC:** Greg Duggan, Deputy Manager; Sarah Macy, Finance Director & Assistant Manager; Department Heads

**From:** Ann Janda, Project Manager

**Re:** Summary of Strategic Advance – Broad Themes

**Date:** July 12, 2019

Here are the broad themes that emerged at the June 22, 2019 Strategic Advance meeting.

### Department Head Presentations

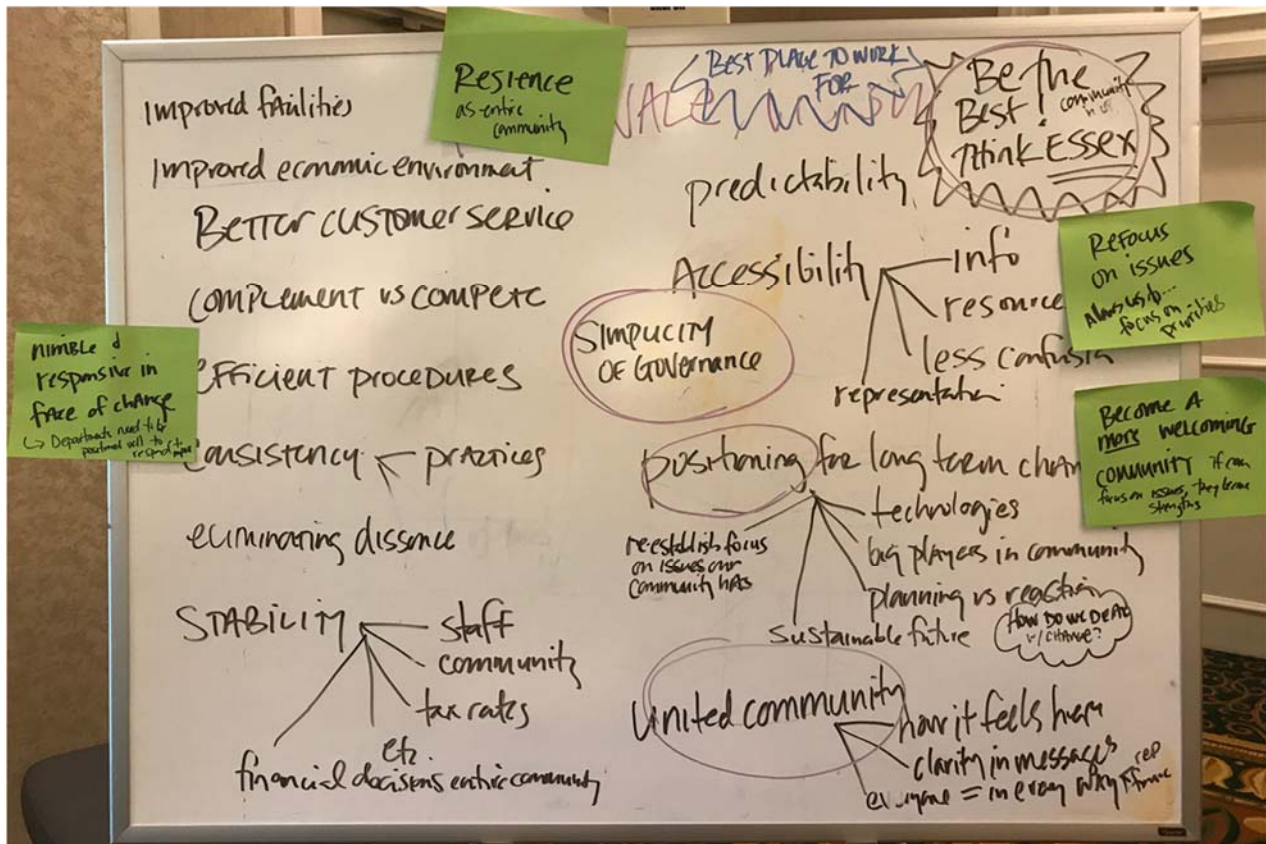
Department heads asked for clear direction from the boards. Some issues to think about:

- **Recreation:** not duplicating programs, resident/non-resident fees, pool program access, Not having two different childcare programs
- **Libraries:** Brownell's permanent Trustees, keeping identity of both libraries in tact
- **Public Works:** Capital planning – how to prioritize, rates currently not based on same methodology
- **Fire:** Volunteers want to maintain identity and history of each department even if both are in same community
- **Planning Departments:** Aligning fees, considering Development Review Boards
- **General Admin:** Aligning pay, benefits, policies, a taxation plan

### What Can We Achieve Together Exercise – Repeating Themes

- Better service
- Focus on bigger picture
- Predictable business environment
- Improved economic environment
- One-stop shopping for residents – less confusion- better customer service
- Less confusion over voting
- Improved hiring and retention
- Public safety – improved coordination
- Public Works – equipment/contracting cost savings
- Common rates/fees

**Visioning Exercise – to be continued by elected officials (see image on following page)**



## Decision Making Discussion

Both legislative bodies will be striving for unanimity on all big decisions, but in the event that a full consensus cannot be reached, decisions require a simple majority of each body. Chairs assume the responsibility to check for members' readiness to vote.

Striving to give as much notice of upcoming decisions/votes as possible so that members have time to research and make informed deliberations.

- Upcoming decisions/votes will be flagged on the agenda via the following key:
  - D (next to topics that are discussion)
  - DV (next to topics that are discussion and vote)
- Elected Officials will give due respect to Staff recommendation / expertise that is offered.
- Agendas for joint meetings will stay consistent with current guidelines for consent agenda items vs. business agenda items.

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION TRUSTEES  
TOWN OF ESSEX SELECTBOARD  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON GOVERNANCE - SPECIAL MEETING  
June 20, 2019**

**SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS:** Max Levy, Vice Chair; Raj Chawla; Andrew Watts

**ADMINISTRATION:** Evan Teich, Unified Manager; Greg Duggan, Deputy Town Manager

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Margaret Smith, Irene Wrenner, Bruce Post, Betsy Dunn, Bridget Meyer, Dave Treston (KSV)

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

In the absence of George Tyler, Max Levy called the meeting of the Village of Essex Junction Trustees and Town of Essex Selectboard Subcommittee on Governance (hereafter referred to as “Subcommittee on Governance”) to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**

There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

**3. AGENDA APPROVAL**

RAJ CHAWLA made a motion, and ANDREW WATTS seconded, to approve the agenda of June 20, 2019 as written. Motion passed 3-0.

**4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**

Ms. Meyer asked if Mr. Treston (of KSV) had received the Heart & Soul application, which gives good information about the layout of the Town and Village and historical context for the current merger efforts. She stated that she would be happy to forward the application to KSV. She additionally suggested that the focus group portion of this project could benefit from historical and contextual information as well, and further suggested that a fact sheet or a short video explaining this information could be helpful.

Irene Wrenner noted several inconsistencies between the draft survey and what had been discussed based on the meeting minutes from the previous meeting, which were discussed and clarified.

**5. BUSINESS ITEMS**

**a. Review draft survey with KSV**

The Subcommittee on Governance reviewed the draft survey produced by KSV, as well as feedback from committee members who were not able to attend the meeting. In addition to minor adjustments for typos or clarifying terms, the Subcommittee made the following substantive changes:

- Reorganized the survey to include background information prior to the first set of demographic questions.

- 47 - Recommended that a map including Essex neighborhoods and voting districts be
- 48 included as a reference document for respondents.
- 49 - Struck the question asking if respondents currently serve on any Essex boards. Board
- 50 members and Trustees will not take the survey.
- 51 - Rewrote the question asking respondents if they were aware that Town and Village
- 52 residents have separate governments and pay separate taxes. This question was rewritten
- 53 into five separate questions around this topic as an opportunity to educate respondents
- 54 regarding the current relationship between the Town and Village in terms of taxes and
- 55 governance.
- 56 - Added more examples of municipal services and departments that have already been
- 57 consolidated to the description/history section of the survey.
- 58 - Reworded certain terms to ensure maximum accessibility and readability of the survey.
- 59 - Adjusted all questions to require some kind of response in the free text boxes (no blank
- 60 responses).
- 61 - Struck the question asking about gender as not pertinent to the goals of the survey
- 62 - Adjusted references to the Town and Village to consistently read “Town of Essex” and
- 63 “Village of Essex Junction”.
- 64

65 Mr. Treston noted that the survey will be available online and Mr. Teich suggested that paper  
66 copies also be available in specific locations, such as libraries and the senior center. Mr. Treston  
67 also added that a QR code will be added to the paper copy of the survey, in case respondents  
68 would like to scan it on their smartphones and take the survey that way.

69  
70 **b. Schedule of upcoming meetings based on KSV timeline**

71 KSV, subcommittee members, and staff discussed scheduling upcoming meetings. Meetings  
72 were scheduled for July 18 and July 26 (this will be a morning meeting).

73  
74 *Public discussion:*

75 Ms. Meyer noted that many residents are not aware of current municipal arrangements and  
76 structures and said it will be important to structure the survey to give enough information about  
77 the current state in plain English. Mr. Teich replied that one of the goals of the survey is to use it  
78 as an educational opportunity for the public in addition to soliciting feedback, and that staff will  
79 include background and introductory information in the survey.

80  
81 A resident noted that it may be important to add that current consolidation efforts are through  
82 memoranda of understanding between the two entities and that they are not currently codified  
83 into law and can expire.

84  
85 Mr. Post emphasized the importance of educating the public about what a chartered municipality  
86 would look like and how it would impact residents. He also noted that discussing a merger and  
87 retaining separate identities simultaneously might be contradictory or confusing.

88  
89 Ms. Wrenner requested that any merger discussion in the survey be referred to as a potential  
90 merger. She also requested to clarify in the survey that the Town of Essex “may” be represented  
91 by the Selectboard, due to the nature of at-large elections not guaranteeing an equal number of  
92 Town and Village members on the Selectboard.



**SUBCOMMITTEE ON GOVERNANCE  
(DRAFT)**

**June 20, 2019**

93  
94 Ms. Smith noted that the nature of the open-ended questions in the survey could be interpreted  
95 subjectively by whomever is tasked with analyzing the surveys, and was reassured that KSV was  
96 brought on as a set of outside, nonbiased consultants for this work for this reason.  
97

98 **c. Update on merger website**

99 Mr. Duggan stated that staff had conducted research on developing a merger website. He stated  
100 that Weebly is the most feasible platform on which to do so, since it is user-friendly and not  
101 costly. Staff reserved three web addresses for the consideration of the Subcommittee on  
102 Governance, and would like the Subcommittee to choose one of them for the merger website.  
103

104 **ANDREW WATTS made a motion, and RAJ CHAWLA seconded, that the Subcommittee**  
105 **on Governance recommends that the merger website use the web address**  
106 **“Essexmerger2020.org”. Motion passed 3-0.**  
107

108 **d. Approval of minutes:**

109 *June 6, 2019:*

110 **ANDREW WATTS made a motion, and RAJ CHAWLA seconded, to approve the**  
111 **Subcommittee on Governance meeting minutes from June 6, 2019 as written. Motion**  
112 **passed 3-0.**  
113

114 *June 13, 2019:*

115 **ANDREW WATTS made a motion, and RAJ CHAWLA seconded, to approve the**  
116 **Subcommittee on Governance meeting minutes from June 13, 2019 with Subcommittee**  
117 **corrections. Motion passed 3-0.**  
118

119 The Subcommittee on Governance members suggested the following changes to the minutes:  
120

- 121 • Line 127: change sentence to read “Mr. Watts would like to ask whether respondents  
122 understand that paying fewer taxes may reduce access to some services.”  
123

124 **6. READING FILE:**  
125

126 **7. ADJOURN:**

127 RAJ CHAWLA made a motion, and ANDREW WATTS seconded, to adjourn the meeting. The  
128 meeting adjourned at 8:53pm.  
129

130  
131 Respectfully Submitted,  
132 Amy Coonradt  
133 Recording Secretary  
134

135 Approved this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2019  
136

137 (see minutes of this day for corrections, if any)

# Governance Change (Merger) Vote 2020 - Project Timeline

