

WARNING
VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION ANNUAL MEETING
APRIL 4 & 10, 2018

The legal voters of the Village of Essex Junction are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Essex Community Educational Center on Educational Drive in the Village of Essex Junction on Wednesday, April 4, 2018 at 7:00 PM to act upon any of the following articles not involving voting by Australian ballot, said meeting to be adjourned to reconvene at the Essex Community Educational Center, on Tuesday, April 10, 2018 to vote for Village officers and transact any business involving voting by Australian ballot, said voting by Australian ballot to begin at 7:00 AM and close at 7:00 PM.

ARTICLE 1. Shall the voters act upon the report of the auditor?

ARTICLE 2. Shall the voters approve an annual General Fund Budget in the amount of \$4,954,687 for fiscal year July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019, \$3,423,606 of which is to be levied in taxes against the Village Grand List?

ARTICLE 3. Shall the voters approve holding the 2019 Annual Meeting on Wednesday, April 3, 2019 to act upon any articles not involving voting by Australian ballot and to reconvene on Tuesday, April 9, 2019 to vote for the Village officers and transact any business involving voting by Australian ballot?

ARTICLE 4. To transact any other business that may lawfully come before the meeting?

BALLOT QUESTIONS


ARTICLE 5. To elect Village officers required by law including: Moderator (one year term); two Village Trustees (three year term); three Library Trustees (1 one year term, 1 four year term, 1 five year term); one School director for the Essex Westford School District #51 (three year term)?

Dated this 27th day of February, 2018

VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

By:

George A. Tyler, President



Elaine H. Sopchak, Vice President



Daniel S. Kerin, Trustee



Lori A. Houghton, Trustee

ATTEST:



Susan McNamara-Hill, Village Clerk



Andrew P. Brown, Trustee

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
ESSEX COMMUNITY EDUCATIONAL CENTER
April 4, 2018**

Moderator Steve Eustis welcomed the assemblage to the 125th Annual Meeting of the Village of Essex Junction and opened the meeting at 7 PM.

MOTION by Tim Jerman, SECOND by Ann Gray, to recess the meeting for a re-enactment of the first Board of Trustees meeting held in 1893. VOTING: unanimous; motion carried.

Ed Von Sitas, Carl Houghton, Ann Gray, Tim Jerman, the sitting Board of Trustees and the Unified Manager performed the re-enactment.

The annual meeting resumed and the assemblage recited the Pledge of Allegiance. The high school chorus quartet of Grace Brouillette, Sosenna Palmer, Jenna Agricola, and Joseph Coulombe sang "The Star Spangled Banner". Village President, George Tyler, mentioned the following attendees:

- Village Board of Trustees - Village President, George Tyler, Village Vice President, Elaine Sopchak, Trustees, Andrew Brown, Dan Kerin, Lori Houghton.
- Village Administration – Unified Manager, Evan Teich; Finance Director, Lauren Morrisseau, Clerk/Treasurer, Susan McNamara-Hill; Administrative Assistant to the Unified Manager, Patty Benoit; Assistant Zoning Administrator, Terry Hass; Public Works Superintendent, Rick Jones; Water Quality Superintendent, Jim Jutras; Village Engineer, Rick Hamlin and Jeff Kershner; Essex Junction Fire Chief, Chris Gaboriault; Brownell Library Director, Wendy Hysko, Brownell Library Board of Trustees Chair, Christine Packard.
- State Representatives – Lori Houghton and Dylan Giambatista.
- Essex Selectboard – Max Levy, Irene Wrenner, Andy Watts, Mike Plageman.
- Recording Secretary, Marianne Riordan.

Moderator Eustis explained the meeting procedure to be followed.

ARTICLE 1: Shall the voters act upon the report of the auditor?

MOTION by Mary Jo Engel, SECOND by Chuck Barry, to approve Article 1 as read.

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTING ON ARTICLE 1: unanimous; motion carried. Article 1 is adopted.

ARTICLE 2: Shall the voters approve the annual General Fund Budget in the amount of \$4,954,687 for fiscal year July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019 of which \$3,423,606 is to be levied in taxes against the Village Grand List?

MOTION by Chuck Barry, SECOND by Mike Plageman, to approve Article 2 as read.

DISCUSSION: Village President George Tyler highlighted the following:

- The difference between the proposed budget amount and the amount to be raised by taxes is due to the shift of Public Works costs to the town. The 2019

proposed village budget shows an increase of 2.9%. Capital expenditures equal \$2.8 million for sidewalk, street, rolling stock, recreation and parks, water, waste water, and sanitation projects.

- Increasing the salaries of the village volunteer fire department to align with the town fire department is proposed.
- New shared services with the town include IT and employee benefits (HR).
- The amount going into the Capital Fund is increased to cover capital projects.
- The tax rate is projected to increase 3.7% for an impact of approximately \$30 on a house assessed at \$280,000.
- Challenges to the budget include maintaining services, having more shared services, aligning the fire departments. Challenges with the water/sewer budget include cost to meet state regulations, bond payments, water meter replacements, and maintaining a robust Water Fund.
- Efficiencies include the shared manager, finance director, clerk, shared administrative costs, TGIA (combining the planning and community development offices).
- Capital projects in the village include Railroad Avenue water line replacement, facilities assessment, West Street and West Street Extension intersection, and the crescent connector road. Rolling stock purchases include Vector truck, sidewalk plow, pickup trucks, tractor mounted boom lift.
- Taxes paid by villagers include school tax (66%), town tax (21%), village tax (13%).

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Abbie Tykocki, resident, spoke of the time and effort to solicit donations to support SteAmfest which reminds the public the village is an incredible community of innovation and forward thinking. Ms. Tykocki suggested the village's contribution to the SteAmfest budget be increased by \$10,000.

AMENDMENT by Abbie Tykocki, **SECOND** by Greg Morgan, to amend the General Fund Budget to add \$10,000 for SteAmfest.

DISCUSSION ON AMENDMENT:

- Abbie Tykocki said SteAmfest highlights the special place the village is and has an impact on reminding people that the village is the innovation center of the state, but the event is expensive to produce.
- Greg Morgan, resident and Chair of the Essex Economic Development Committee, spoke in support of SteAmfest and what is happening at Five Corners with three areas of innovation: Accelerate Essex which is co-working space to develop ideas and businesses, Artist Space where artists can do their craft, and Word & Pictures where people can self-publish their work. People are building innovative spaces and this came out of SteAmfest.
- There were requests for further explanation of the budget for SteAmfest and its use. Evan Teich explained the budget for the village is \$4,000 and the amendment is for an additional \$10,000. Julie Miller-Johnson, managing director of SteAmfest, said the budget for the event last year

was approximately \$9,000 to cover the cost of marketing, advertising, promotions, printing, and Maker Faire. All other costs were covered by donated funds. More funding is needed to take the event to a more polished artistic, creative level.

- Andy Kolovos, resident, asked what other events are financially supported by the village. George Tyler answered the annual village block party, train hop and tree lighting, Memorial Day Parade, and farmers market.
- Karen Dolan asked if there is a process in place to request money for events. George Tyler said Julie Miller-Johnson brought the SteAmfest proposal to the Trustees meeting for discussion and the Trustees agreed to provide some support.

CALL THE QUESTION by Bob Trudo, SECOND by John Wermer. VOTING: majority of ayes; motion carried. Debate ceased on the amendment.

VOTING ON AMENDMENT (add \$10,000 to the General Fund budget and amount to be raised by taxes for SteAmfest): majority of nays; motion did not carry. The amendment fails.

AMENDMENT by Steve Gragg, SECOND by Abbie Tykocki, to increase the General Fund budget and amount to be raised by taxes by \$8,969 to be added to the operating cost of Park Street School.

DISCUSSION ON AMENDMENT:

- Lauren Morrissette, Finance Director, explained the village support both Lincoln Hall and Park Street School. Liability insurance decreased for Lincoln Hall and there are no capital projects planned for Lincoln Hall so even with the addition of Park Street School the budget remained flat.
- Allison Wermer, resident, noted there is \$458,000 in the village fund balance so there is money to draw from if needed for the school.
- Tim Jerman, resident, said Park Street School is the oldest and longest serving school in the state. The building is beautiful. The Trustees should make the decisions on the building rather than amending the budget.

VOTING ON AMENDMENT (add \$8,969 to Park Street School budget): all nays; motion did not carry. The amendment fails.

AMENDMENT by Richard Smith, SECOND by Chuck Barry, to add \$33,935 to the General Fund budget and the amount to be raised by taxes to align the Essex Junction Fire Department with the Essex Town Fire Department.

DISCUSSION ON AMENDMENT:

- Evan Teich explained the alignment was not included at this time, but the salary paid to on-call firefighters at \$12.50 was included.
- Lauren Morrissette said the Town of Essex approved use of \$13,000 of fund balance to raise the base rate for town firefighters on July 1st. The departments will be completely aligned on 1/1/19.
- Richard Smith, resident, said the village firefighters do 3,000 hours of annual training to be prepared to fight fires, but are not paid for the training.

- **Sam Hooker, resident, asked for further explanation of the request to add \$34,000 to the budget. Lauren Morriseau said adding \$33,000 will bring the village up to the town with paid training, but the town will not be fully aligned until 1/1/19.**
- **Diane Clemens, resident, asked for further explanation of the pay for training. Lauren Morriseau said the town is paid a lower per call rate than the village and the village is paid a two hour minimum per fire call while the town has a one hour minimum. The cost for paid training in the village is \$33,000, but the village fire department will then be ahead of the town fire department.**
- **Jan Abbott, resident, observed the budgets have been carefully considered by the Trustees. There is no favoritism and the two departments will be aligned on 1/1/19. Changes to the budget should not be done mid-stream.**

CALL THE QUESTION by Jan Abbott, SECOND by Paul Belliveau. VOTING: majority of ayes; motion carried. Debate ceased on the amendment.

VOTING ON AMENDMENT (add \$33,935 to the General Fund budget and amount to be raised by taxes for the Fire Department): majority of nays; motion did not carry. The amendment fails.

CALL THE QUESTION by Diane Fuchs, SECOND by Jan Abbott. VOTING: unanimous; motion carried. Debate ceased on the motion to adopt the budget.

VOTING ON ARTICLE 2: majority of ayes; motion carried. Article 2 is adopted.

ARTICLE 3: Shall the voters approve holding the 2019 Annual Meeting on Wednesday, April 3, 2019 to act upon any articles not involving voting by Australian ballot and to reconvene on Tuesday, April 9, 2019 to vote for the village officers and transact any business involving voting by Australian ballot?

MOTION by Chuck Barry, SECOND by Mike Munson, to approve Article 3 as read.

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTING ON ARTICLE 3: unanimous; motion carried. Article 3 is adopted.

ARTICLE 4: To transact any other business that may lawfully come before the meeting.

Status of Consolidation of Village and Town Services

Consolidated services to date include Police, Senior Bus, Unified Manager, Tax Billing & Collection, Finance, Administration, Storm Water, Highway, IT, Public Works, Clerk, HR, Fire Department alignment. Not consolidated as yet: Community Development, Planning & Zoning, Fire Department, Library, Recreation.

125th Anniversary of the Village of Essex Junction

State Representative, Dylan Giambatista, read a resolution honoring the 125th anniversary of the Village of Essex Junction.

Vermont Neighbors Day

State Representative, Lori Houghton, read a resolution announcing Vermont Neighbors Day as June 2, 2018.

Paving

Rick Jones, Public Works Supervisor, reported the portion of Route 117 through the village has been repaved, but the remainder of the road outside the village is a state project because Route 117 is a state highway.

Recreation

Brad Luck, EJRP Director, announced Adam Sollace, EJRP Childcare Services Director, has resigned. Mr. Luck listed the camps and programs created by Mr. Sollace and thanked him for his years of service at EJRP.

Elections

- Moderator (one year term)
- Two Village Trustees (three year terms)
- Three Library Trustees (one year term, one four year term, and one five year term)
- One School Director (three year term)

Adjournment

MOTION by Chuck Barry, SECOND by Bob O'Neill, to adjourn the 125th Annual Meeting of the Village of Essex Junction. VOTING: unanimous; motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:49 PM. Voting by Australian ballot will take place on April 10, 2018 from 7 AM to 7 PM at Essex Community Educational Center.

ATTEST:



Trustee



Trustee



Susan McNamara-Hill

Village Clerk