



Town of Essex Selectboard

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Regular Meeting Agenda

Monday, November 7, 2022 – 6:30 PM
81 Main St., Essex Junction, VT 05452

This meeting will be in person and online. Available options to watch or join the meeting:

- **VISIT** www.essex.org/zoomselectboard for direct meeting links and options to participate.
- **JOIN ONLINE:** Zoom Meeting ID: 987 8569 1140; Passcode: 032060
or <https://zoom.us/j/98785691140?pwd=WENqeFhITGVDS0Q5bIROdkhuS3RkZz09>
- **JOIN CALLING:** (*toll free audio only*): (888) 788-0099 | Meeting ID: 987 8569 1140; Passcode: 032060

1. **CALL TO ORDER** 6:30 PM
2. **AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**
3. **APPROVE AGENDA**
4. **PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**
 - a. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda
5. **PUBLIC HEARING**
 - a. Public hearing on Public Nuisance Ordinance
6. **BUSINESS ITEMS**
 - a. Consider final passage of, or warning of fourth public hearing for, Public Nuisance Ordinance
 - b. *Interviews and possible appointment of a volunteer to serve as the Town of Essex Moderator - John Sonnick
 - c. Presentation and discussion about Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission annual report
 - d. Presentation on Housing Trust Fund Proposal
 - e. Consider approval of focus areas for Fiscal Year 2023 Human Services Funding
 - f. Consider approval of the Winter Operations Plan for 2022-2023 and the Winter Policy Resolution
 - g. **Discussion about acquisition of land for municipal complex and possible use of American Rescue Fund Act funding for purchase
 - h. Continue Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Work Session
 - i. **Discussion and potential action about lease agreement with Tree Farm Management Group
7. **CONSENT ITEMS**
 - a. Approve minutes: October 17, 2022
 - b. Approve check warrants: # 18042 10/14/22
 - c. Consider approval of corrections of errors and omissions on the 2022 Grand List as provided for in 31 V.S.A. 4261
 - d. *Consider approval of Town Manager's appointment of Deputy Health Officer
8. **READING FILE**
 - a. Board member comments

- b. Upcoming meeting schedule
- c. Memo from Tom Yandow re: Salt shed
- d. Essex News - November 4, 2022

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. *An executive session may be necessary to discuss the appointment of a public official
- b. **An executive session is anticipated to discuss negotiating or securing of real estate purchase or lease options

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Certification: _____  _____ 11/04/2022

SELECTBOARD

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TOWN OF ESSEX SELECTBOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF MEETING November 7, 2022

SELECTBOARD: Andrew Watts, Chair; Tracey Delphia, Vice Chair; Ethan Lawrence, Clerk; Kendall Chamberlin; Dawn Hill-Fleury.

ADMINISTRATION: Greg Duggan, Town Manager; Charlie Baker, Executive Director, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission; Tammy Getchell, Assistant to the Manager; Ron Hoague, Chief of Police; Robert Kissinger, Police Lieutenant; Aaron Martin, Public Works Director; Dan Roy, Finance Director; Katherine Sonnick, Community Development Director.

OTHERS PRESENT: Katie Ballard, Ken Signorello, Margaret Smith

1. CALL TO ORDER

Andy Watts called the meeting of the Town of Essex Selectboard to order at 6:30 P.M.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

None at this time.

3. AGENDA APPROVAL

No approval needed as no changes were made.

4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

a. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda

None.

5. PUBLIC HEARING

a. Public hearing on Public Nuisance Ordinance

Chief Hoague noted further changes to be made to the ordinance, which included rescinding ordinances that would be duplicates of this ordinance.

Margaret Smith spoke about an app that could record decibel levels, which could be useful since there is currently no clear path to making a noise complaint.

ETHAN LAWRENCE made a motion, seconded by KENDALL CHAMBERLIN, to close the public hearing. The motion passed 5-0.

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Consider final adoption of, or warning of fourth public hearing for, Public Nuisance Ordinance
The Selectboard discussed several areas where they would like to make minor changes or modify language for clarity. Mr. Duggan said that they can modify language for clarity at this juncture, and can make minor changes to this ordinance when they conduct a general cleanup of ordinance activity later on in the year.

DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by ETHAN LAWRENCE, to adopt the Public Nuisance Ordinance. The motion passed 5-0.

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ANDY WATTS made a motion, seconded by ETHAN LAWRENCE, to modify the agenda to move Business Item d up above item b. The motion passed 5-0.

b. Presentation on Housing Trust Fund Proposal

Katie Ballard, Chair of the Joint Housing Commission provided a brief presentation on the Commission's proposal on the Housing Trust Fund. She said that establishing a Housing Trust Fund (HTF) was identified as an action item during a needs assessment conducted in 2018 and has been a priority over the last several years. She noted that a housing trust fund is a flexible source of funding to support activities related to affordable housing and could be a source of local match funds and supported by private donors. She noted that the vast majority of states, as well as numerous counties and municipalities, have established housing trust funds. She said that a housing trust fund in Essex and Essex Junction could increase housing stock and used to leverage other funds to support affordable housing. She provided examples of how the funds could be used and accessed. She spoke about possible funding mechanisms, which included property taxes, a Local Option Tax, payment-in-lieu from inclusionary zoning (if inclusionary zoning is established), grants, donations, and other mechanisms. She spoke about process and timeline, including research, community outreach, presenting the findings to the Selectboard and/or City Council, finalizing policies and financing, and then putting forth the proposal for public vote at Town/City meetings. She asked the Selectboard what its priorities are, how it would support the HTF, who would administer the HTF, and what additional information the Selectboard would need to make decisions.

Ms. Hill-Fleury asked what kind of startup money would be needed to start this. Ms. Ballard replied that the first step could be voting to create an HTF, and then municipalities could decide how to direct funding.

Mr. Lawrence asked how much funding would be needed to obtain matchable grants. Ms. Ballard replied that it varies, since there is a wide range of options. She said that the more funding the municipality puts in, the more it can leverage matching funds.

Mr. Watts expressed support for this proposal and the establishment of a housing trust fund. He said that this may end up requiring two votes (a floor vote and a ballot vote). Other Selectboard members also expressed support for this proposal.

c. *Interviews and possible appointment of a volunteer to serve as the Town of Essex Moderator – John Sonnick

Mr. Sonnick spoke about his qualifications for and interest in serving as the Town of Essex Moderator. He noted that he was the moderator for the Essex/Westford School District for almost 10 years, has been a poll worker, and is interested in civics and government.

The Selectboard asked the Applicant questions around what he views as the biggest challenge of being a moderator, if he has moderated any contentious votes, and examples of issues where Mr. Sonnick changed his mind or position.

Mr. Watts noted that the Selectboard will be interviewing two other candidates at its next meeting.

d. Presentation and discussion about Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission annual report
Charlie Baker, the executive director of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, provided an overview of its annual report. He spoke about some of the projects the CCPRC has engaged

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in with the Town over the last year, what projects are being worked on during the current year, and the activities that the CCRPC has conducted with other communities in the region.

Ms. Hill-Fleury asked if the CCRPC has concerns that supply chain issues will negatively impact construction plans or other projects. Mr. Baker replied that it is a concern, though they are in the planning phase of a number of projects.

Mr. Lawrence asked if the CCRPC has looked at tying agriculture into some of their activities. Mr. Baker replied that they address that in their regional plan, and they have a strategy on protecting land and keep it in agriculture.

Mr. Duggan said that CCRPC provides valuable resources in terms of technical assistance and support for many of the Town's planning activities, and that the Town and CCRPC enjoy an extremely collaborative relationship.

e. Consider approval of focus areas for Fiscal Year 2023 Human Services Funding
Tammy Getchell spoke briefly about the Human Services Funding Review Committee's proposed focus areas for Fiscal Year 2023 Human Services Funding. She noted that the FY23 budgeted amount for this funding is \$166,753. She noted that the focus areas are similar to those of past years, but with several modifications/additions, namely the emphasis on community-based resources for health and behavioral health supports, and the addition of a focus area on increasing workforce development. She noted that the application period for funding will open in November, with anticipated an anticipated award date of June 2023. Ms. Hill-Fleury noted that because of the limited amount of funding, the committee decided to lower its top tier award from \$25,000 to \$20,000.

Mr. Chamberlin said it will be important to try and focus support on organizations that provide a high proportion of their services to the Essex community. Ms. Getchell agreed, noting that one of the scoring criteria for proposals is to look at how much service is provided to Essex.

TRACEY DELPHIA made a motion, seconded by ETHAN LAWRENCE, that the Selectboard approve the focus areas as presented in the attachment as human service priorities for FY23 human Services Funding. The motion passed 5-0.

f. Consider approval of the Winter Operations Plan for 2022-2023 and the Winter Policy Resolution
Aaron Martin noted that the Selectboard has approved a Winter Operations Plan each year for at least the last 35 years. He noted that there are both internal and external versions of the document. He noted that the major change in this year's version of the plan was to remove references to Essex Junction. He noted that the coverage area for this plan has not changed, though they did add the new multi-use path on Route 15 as a responsibility for plowing.

Mr. Chamberlin noted that the Public Works Department does not have enough funding to plow all of the Town's 56 miles of sidewalk, and noted that they must prioritize which sidewalks to plow. He also noted that sidewalks under 4 feet in width are not able to be plowed, due to lack of appropriate equipment. He said that this should be a priority area in terms of service provision by the Town. He said he would like the Selectboard to help figure out how to fund the Public Works Department to provide services to all of the Town equally. Mr. Watts noted that the current version of the policy is constrained

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in terms of the funding that was allocated to this in the Town's budget and that this can be added to discussions for next year's budget.

Ms. Hill-Fleury asked why the bike path from the Town/Village line to the Countryside development was chosen as a priority for plowing. Mr. Martin replied that it is a link between the two communities and is viewed as a major pedestrian thoroughfare within the Town center.

DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by ETHAN LAWRENCE, that the Selectboard approve the Winter Operations Plan for 2022 - 2023 after hearing any public input and sign the Policy Resolution. The motion passed 5-0.

g. **Discussion about acquisition of land for municipal complex and possible use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for purchase

Katherine Sonnick noted that this item is to discuss the possibility of purchasing a parcel of property for a municipal complex with ARPA funding, and to discuss whether to enter into executive session to discuss this further. She said that the Town offices and facilities are currently limited in size and are currently located in Essex Junction, that the Fire Station is also undersized, and that there is the need for affordable or workforce housing. She said that Town staff have been looking at a number of parcels for purchase or lease within the Town Center area. She said that the Town has \$3.3 million in ARPA funding and she suggested considering it as a potential funding source, since it can be used relatively flexibly. She said that they could also fund this through a bond, but would need bonding authority from voters to do so.

Margaret Smith spoke in support of this, saying that it would be a great use of ARPA funding.

h. Continue Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Work Session

Mr. Duggan noted that staff are working to compile a comprehensive list of items for consideration for the 2024 budget, based on the lengthy work session last week. Mr. Chamberlin suggested that the public be given ample opportunity to provide input and feedback on the 2024 budget proposal. Mr. Lawrence suggested leveraging social media and Front Porch Forum to solicit public input for the budget.

i. **Discussion and potential action about lease agreement with Tree Farm Management Group

7. CONSENT ITEMS

a. Approve minutes – October 17, 2022

b. Approve check warrants: #18042 – 10/14/22

c. Consider approval of correction of errors and omissions on the 2022 Grand List as provided for in 31 V.S.A 4261

d. *Consider approval of Town Manager's appointment of Deputy Health Officer

DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by ETHAN LAWRENCE, that the Selectboard accept the consent agenda as presented (with corrections). The motion passed 5-0.

The Selectboard corrected the October 17, 2022 minutes to reflect Kendall Chamberlin's attendance at the meeting.

8. READING FILE

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- a. Board member comments: Mr. Lawrence said that he would like white lines painted (or ideally, flashing lights) at the crosswalk at Irene Avenue and Route 128 and at Alder Lane and Route 128, since there are many children who cross the street at those areas. Mr. Duggan replied that he will discuss this with Aaron Martin and the Public Works Department. He noted that because Route 128 is a state highway, they may need to work with VTrans. Ms. Delphia thanked Town staff for their work on the Essex News newsletter. In light of Veterans Day, she also thanked members of the community who have served in the armed forces.
- b. Upcoming meeting schedule
- c. Message from Tom Yandow re: Salt shed
- d. Essex News – November 4, 2022

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. * **An executive session may be necessary to discuss the appointment of a public official**
- b. ****An executive session is anticipated to discuss negotiating or securing of real estate purchase or lease options**

DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by TRACEY DELPHIA, that the Selectboard enter executive session to discuss the negotiating or securing of real estate purchase or lease options in accordance with 1 V.S.A. Section 313(a)(2) and to include the Town Manager and Parks & Recreation Director. The motion passed 5-0 at 8:30 PM.

DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by ETHAN LAWRENCE, that the Selectboard enter executive session to discuss the negotiating or securing of real estate purchase or lease options in accordance with 1 V.S.A. Section 313(a)(2) and to include the Town Manager and Community Development Director. The motion passed 5-0 at 8:31 PM.

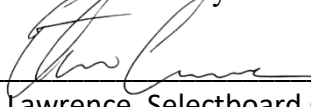
DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by TRACEY DELPHIA, to exit executive session. The motion passed 5-0 at 9:05 PM.

10. ADJOURN

DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by ETHAN LAWRENCE, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 5-0 at 9:08 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amy Coonradt,
Recording Secretary

Approved this 21st day of November, 2022
(see minutes of this day for corrections, if any)


Ethan Lawrence, Selectboard Clerk