



Town of Essex

Selectboard

Phone: (802) 878-1341

Email: manager@essex.org

Regular Meeting Agenda

Monday, June 5, 2023 – 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:

• **JOIN ONLINE:** Zoom Meeting ID: 987 8569 1140; Passcode: 032060 or

<https://zoom.us/j/98785691140?pwd=WENqeFhITGVDS0Q5blROdkhuS3RkZz09>

• **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 the public on items not on Agenda
5. **BUSINESS ITEMS**
 - a. * Interview volunteers to serve on the Community Advisory Board - Gwendolyn Evans and Kirk Smith
 - b. *Interview volunteers to serve on the Conservation and Trails Committee - Bino Cummings, April Petersen, and Morgan Kirk
 - c. * Interview volunteers to serve on the Economic Development Commission - Tim Mack, Rey Garofano, Paulina Thompson, and Melissa Stewart
 - d. * Interview volunteers to serve on the Essex Free Library Board of Trustees - Lynn Smith and Pamela Blake
 - e. *Interview a volunteer to serve on the Housing Commission - Lauren Ressue
 - f. *Interview a volunteer to serve on the Planning Commission- Dustin Brusco and David Raphael
 - g. *Interview a volunteer to serve as the Winooski Valley Park District representative for Essex - Jeffery Theis
 - h. Consider approval of Human Services Funding recommendations for fiscal year 2023
 - i. Discussion about improving communications with municipal boards, commissions, and committees
 - j. *Discussion about the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee
 - k. **Discussion about real estate
 - l. ***Discussion and potential action on tax stabilization contracts
6. **CONSENT ITEMS**
 - a. Approve minutes: May 15, 2023
 - b. Approve check warrants: # 18134 -05/12/23 ; # 18136 - 5/19/23
 - c. Consider approval of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Class liquor license renewals
 - d. Consider approval of comments to VTrans about VT Route 15 and Susie Wilson Road Intersection Improvement Project
7. **READING FILE**
 - a. Board member comments
 - b. Upcoming meeting schedule
 - c. Letter from Emily Taylor re: Resignation as Clerk from Town of Essex Housing Commission
 - d. Email from Lorna Swerhone re: Library Board Term
 - e. Vote on the Town of Essex Logo
 - f. Update on Declaration of Inclusion
 - g. Letter from Charlie Baker re: CCRPC FY24 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
 - h. Juneteenth 2023 flyer
8. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**
 - a. *An executive session is anticipated to discuss the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee
 - b. ** An executive session is anticipated to discuss the negotiating or securing of real estate purchase or lease options
 - c. ***An executive session is anticipated to discuss contracts

This agenda is available in alternative formats upon request. Meetings of the Selectboard, like all programs and activities of the Town of Essex, are accessible to people with disabilities. For information on accessibility or this agenda, call the Town Manager's office at 878-1341.

Certification: _____  _____ 06/02/2023 _____

SELECTBOARD

TOWN OF ESSEX SELECTBOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES MONDAY JUNE 5, 2023

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

ADMINISTRATION and STAFF: Greg Duggan, Town Manager; Caitlin Corless, Library Director; Tammy Getchell, Public Information Officer/Assistant to the Manager; Ron Hoague, Police Chief; Marguerite Ladd, Deputy Manager; Sharon Kelley, Zoning Administrator

OTHERS PRESENT: Pamela Blake, Dustin Brusco, Christina Corodimas, Jonathan Crumly, Bino Cummings, Patty Davis, Gwendolyn Evans, Rey Garofano, Gina Halpin Barrett, K. Johnson, Morgan Kirk, Charisma Parker April Petersen, Lauren Ressue, Ken Signorello, Kenly Smith, Kirk Smith, Lynn Smith, Melissa Stewart, Jeff Thesis, John Watson, Irene Wrenner, Lorraine Zaloom, Lauren

1. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Delphia called the Town of Essex Selectboard meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

Regarding Business Item 5c, Mr. Duggan said that the interview of Paulina Thompson will need to be rescheduled to June 26.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by ETHAN LAWRENCE, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion passed 4-0.

4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

a. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda

Ms. Zaloom expressed a concern that the Selectboard was not able to use Google to research topics during meetings. She thanked Tammy Getchell for her impressive work on the Town newsletter.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Interview volunteers to serve on the Community Advisory Board - Gwendolyn Evans and Kirk Smith

Ms. Evans said that she has lived in Essex for twenty-eight years and is interested in getting involved in the community. She has volunteered for the Community Justice Center, and has a background in human services, art, non-violent communication, and spiritual coaching. Ms. Evans said that she has a disability and believes that more disabled voices need to be heard. Ms. Hill-Fleury asked her how she sees the Community Advisory Board (CAB) functioning, and the role that she sees herself playing in it. Ms. Evans spoke about facilitating positive relationships between the departments. Mr. Lawrence asked Ms. Evans what she would do if she finds herself in a conflict between the community as a whole and the department. Ms. Evans spoke about looking at multiple needs and facilitating common ground between the parties. Mr. Chamberlin asked what issues Ms. Evans wished to address first, she said increased visibility for the police department. Answering a question from Ms. Evans, Mr. Hoague said that the CAB can offer advice and community input in helping the department best serve the community.

Mr. Smith said that he has lived in Essex for thirty-two years and is semi-retired and a small business owner. Ms. Hill-Fleury asked her how he sees the CAB functioning, and the role that he sees himself

playing in it. Mr. Smith spoke of bringing his knowledge of management training and problem-solving to the CAB. Mr. Chamberlin asked Mr. Smith if he had any experience working with those who have been traditionally systematically oppressed or marginalized and Mr. Smith said that he has worked with a wide spectrum of people. Ms. Delphia asked Mr. Smith how comfortable he is listening to others' life experiences and letting these guide the conversation. He said that he feels he is an open-minded person who wants to allow everyone to be heard.

b. Interview volunteers to serve on the Conservation and Trails Committee - Bino Cummings, April Petersen, and Morgan Kirk

Mr. Cummings said that he moved to Essex recently, works full-time, and runs a mobile bicycle repair business. He would like to advocate for continued improvements to bike trails. Ms. Hill-Fleury asked what Mr. Cummings plans to contribute to the Conservation and Trails Committee (CTC) other than work on bike trails. He said that he is a good problem-solver and listener. Mr. Lawrence asked if Mr. Cummings had attended CTC meetings in the past and if he understood how the board functioned. Mr. Cummings said he had not attended CTC meetings and was interested in learning more about the functioning of this board. Mr. Chamberlin asked Mr. Cummings how he would handle a personal conflict, Mr. Cummings said that he would recuse himself if need be.

Ms. Petersen said that she has lived in Essex for five years and has experience working with AmeriCorps and is in the National Guard. She enjoys utilizing the trails in the community and would like to get more involved in maintaining these resources. Ms. Hill-Fleury asked Ms. Petersen how she would handle a situation where the rest of the CTC wanted something different from herself. She said that she would respect the opinion of the majority. Mr. Lawrence asked Ms. Petersen if she has attended CTC meetings in the past; she stated that she has reviewed materials but not attended. Mr. Chamberlin asked Ms. Petersen if she had a specific area of focus, Ms. Petersen spoke of her interest in trails and environmental cleanups.

Ms. Kirk said that she has lived in Essex for three and a half years. She enjoys using local trails and is a veterinary technician who has an interest in wildlife conservation. Ms. Hill-Fleury asked Ms. Kirk how she would handle a situation where the rest of the CTC wanted something different from what she wanted. She said that she would like to learn more about other opinions and look for a compromise. Mr. Lawrence asked if Ms. Kirk had attended any CTC meetings, she said that she had not but had met members at the Indian Brook clean-up event. Mr. Chamberlin asked if Ms. Kirk had a specific area of focus, she said that she would look for guidance from other members.

c. Interview volunteers to serve on the Economic Development Commission - Tim Mack, Rey Garofano, ~~Paulina Thompson~~, and Melissa Stewart

Tim Mack was not in attendance and thus not interviewed. Ms. Garofano said that she has been an Essex resident since 2009, works for the state of Vermont, and serves in the House of Representatives. She currently serves on the Economic Development Commission (EDC). Ms. Hill-Fleury asked if Ms. Garofano's service in the legislature would interfere with her EDC service; Ms. Garofano said that she was able to participate remotely if needed. Answering a question regarding the skills she brings to the EDC, Ms. Garofano discussed her knowledge of early childhood education and childcare capacity needs. Mr. Chamberlin asked if Ms. Garofano sees any conflicts between the Economic Development in the state of Vermont and economic development in Essex. Ms. Garofano spoke of state initiatives that are in line with the needs of Essex. She also spoke of a desire to increase the number of women and BIPOC owned businesses in the community as a goal should she be appointed to the EDC.

Ms. Stewart said she has lived in Essex for a little over a year and is an engineer working for Efficiency Vermont who works with many small businesses. Ms. Hill-Fleury asked if Ms. Stewart had attended an EDC meeting, she said that she had not. Answering a question from Ms. Hill-Fleury, Ms. Stewart said that she would use compassionate respectful listening and look for common ground if she had a conflict if on the EDC. Answering a question from Mr. Lawrence, Ms. Stewart said that she appreciated the local schools, welcoming environment, and community environment in local businesses in Essex.

d. Interview volunteers to serve on the Essex Free Library Board of Trustees - Lynn Smith and Pamela Blake

Ms. Smith said that she is a long-term resident who used the library often when she had young children. She is a semi-retired small business owner and a piano teacher. Ms. Hill-Fleury asked Ms. Smith how she handles conflict and she spoke of the importance of listening and compromise. Ms. Hill-Fleury asked Ms. Smith how she would like the library to change, Ms. Smith says that she loves the library as is. Answering a question from Mr. Lawrence, Ms. Smith said her skills teaching literacy would be helpful I she is appointed to the Board. Ms. Blake said that she has lived in the community for sixty-four years and enjoys using the library. She has served on the Friends of the Library and as a volunteer. Mr. Lawrence asked Ms. Blake if she had any suggestions for the library, she said that she would take the lead from staff should she be appointed to this role.

e. Interview a volunteer to serve on the Housing Commission - Lauren Ressue

Ms. Ressue said that she has lived in Essex for two years, is a data analyst for the Department of Health and has experience working with refugees and seniors. She discussed the connections between health and stable, secure housing. Answering a question from Ms. Hill-Fleury, Ms. Ressue said that she has not attending a Housing Commission meeting. Answering a question from Ms. Hill-Fleury, Ms. Ressue said that her definition of affordable housing is paying approximately 1/3 of household income and receiving safe and up to standard housing. Answering a question from Mr. Lawrence, Ms. Ressue said that she is especially interested in looking into housing quality and health equity.

f. Interview a volunteer to serve on the Planning Commission- Dustin Brusio and David Raphael

Mr. Brusio said that he has served on the Planning Commission (PC) for the past twenty-two years. Answering a question from Mr. Lawrence, Mr. Brusio said that he has no development conflict of interests and spoke of the long-term process of community planning. Answering Mr. Lawrence's question, Mr. Brusio said that there is not a clear understanding of what the Development Review Board (DRB) and PC will look like in the future. He said that more work needs to be done to further define the roles of each but that he is willing to work through the process. Ms. Hill-Fleury asked Mr. Brusio about the high and low points of his service on the PC. He said that a high point is the successful completion of an application, and a low point feeling forced into a decision because of regulations. He said that a contrasting high point could be correcting these issues with regulation updates. Ms. Hill-Fleury asked how Mr. Brusio handled conflict on the PC. He said that discussion and conflicting ideas are healthy. Mr. Chamberlin asked what Mr. Brusio felt were the biggest challenges facing the PC. Mr. Brusio spoke about the change to a DRB/PC model and efforts at increased community communication. Ms. Delphia asked about Mr. Brusio's feelings on mentoring new Commissioners. He said that in the past he has met with new Commissioners, encouraged them to listen and engage and look to staff as the authority of planning issues. David Raphael was not present and thus not interviewed.

g. Interview a volunteer to serve as the Winooski Valley Park District representative for Essex - Jeffery Theis

Mr. Theis said that he has served as the representative to the Winooski Valley Park District (WVPD) for the past three years. He works as a Human Resources Manager and has worked in risk management for the Vermont League of Cities and Towns. Mr. Lawrence asked Mr. Theis to share his accomplishments during his time on the WVPD Board. He spoke of how he has used his HR and risk management knowledge to help staff and the WVPD's efforts to connect with local Native American communities. Mr. Chamberlin asked Mr. Theis if he had any projects he would like to be completed in Essex. He said that he takes a more holistic approach and considers all communities in the district.

h. Consider approval of Human Services Funding recommendations for fiscal year 2023

Ms. Getchell said that 1% of the Town budget goes to human services funding annually. The Town received twenty-eight applications this year totaling \$276,410. This is approximately \$109,000 more than is budgeted for this purpose, and the Human Services Committee had to use the approved priorities to make determinations of which organizations to fund. Ms. Hill-Fleury lauded Ms. Getchell for her work on this process. Mr. Lawrence noted that he had done business with Aunt Dot's Place in the past, however he did not feel that this vote was a conflict of interest for him. Ms. Delphia requested public comment. Mr. Signorello asked clarifying questions about the human services document. Ms. Corodimas said that she is the Director of Essex CHIPS and that she appreciates the Selectboard's ongoing support.

DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by ETHAN LAWRENCE that the Selectboard approve contributions to the human services agencies as presented on the attached list, Attachment A and recommended that the Selectboard consider approving the proposed focus areas for the FY24 funding cycle. Motion passed 4-0.

i. Discussion about improving communications with municipal boards, commissions, and committees

Ms. Delphia said that this is an open discussion for the Selectboard to meet their goal of improving communication both ways. Some of the ideas discussed include staggered in-person updates from each board, annual board work plans, a yearly breakfast with the Chair/Vice-Chair of each board, and including board meeting minutes in the reading file. Ms. Delphia spoke of making the committee/Selectboard communications as meaningful as possible for both sides. Ms. Delphia requested public comment. Mr. Signorello suggested including the minutes for other boards be included in the reading file for the Selectboard. Mr. Duggan said that this was done to keep the length of the packet down, and that all minutes are available on the website. Ms. Delphia requested that Mr. Duggan prepare an estimate for the amount of staff hours that it would take to include these minutes in the reading file. Ms. Zaloom echoed Mr. Signorello's request, as she believes that it would make it easier to have all the minutes in one place. She also requested that each board have a direct e-mail to minimize staff time spent responding to such. Ms. Wrenner said that the minutes from all meetings had been included in past year's Selectboard packets.

j. Discussion about the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee

This was discussed during Executive Session.

k. Discussion about real estate

This was discussed during Executive Session.

l. Discussion and potential action on tax stabilization contracts

This was discussed during Executive Session.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by ETHAN LAWRENCE, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion passed 4-0.

a. Approve minutes: May 15, 2023

b. Approve check warrants: # 18134 -05/12/23 ; # 18136 - 5/19/23

c. Consider approval of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Class liquor license renewals

d. Consider approval of comments to VTrans about VT Route 15 and Susie Wilson Road Intersection Improvement Project

Mr. Chamberlin asked for clarification of the paving of Susie Wilson Road, noting that the Town should not be paving the road if VTRANS is planning on making improvements in upcoming years.

7. READING FILE

a. Board member comments: Ms. Hill-Fleury thanked Ms. Swerhone, Ms. Taylor, and Mr. Botula for their service on their respective boards. Mr. Lawrence asked clarifying questions on the logo document.

b. Upcoming meeting schedule

c. Letter from Emily Taylor re: Resignation as Clerk from Town of Essex Housing Commission

d. Email from Lorna Swerhone re: Library Board Term

e. Vote on the Town of Essex Logo

f. Update on Declaration of Inclusion

g. Letter from Charlie Baker re: CCRPC FY24 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

h. Juneteenth 2023 flyer

8. EXECUTIVE SESSION

a. An executive session is anticipated to discuss the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee

ETHAN LAWRENCE made a motion, seconded by KENDALL CHAMBERLIN that the Selectboard enter into executive session to discuss the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee in accordance with 1 V.S.A. Section 313(a)(3), to include the Town Manager and Deputy Manager. Motion passed 4-0.

b. An executive session is anticipated to discuss the negotiating or securing of real estate purchase or lease options

ETHAN LAWRENCE made a motion, seconded by KENDALL CHAMBERLIN 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 Deputy Manager. Motion passed 4-0.

c. An executive session is anticipated to discuss contracts

DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by ETHAN LAWRENCE, that the Selectboard make the specific finding that general public knowledge of contracts would place the Town at a substantial disadvantage. Motion passed 4-0.

DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by ETHAN LAWRENCE that the Selectboard enter into executive session to discuss contracts, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(1)(A) to include the Town Manager and Deputy Manager. Motion passed 4-0.

DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by ETHAN LAWRENCE, to exit executive session. Motion passed 4-0 at 9:40 PM.

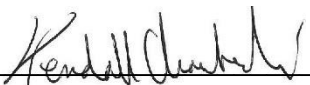
241 **9. ADJOURN**

242 **DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by KENDALL CHAMBERLIN, for the**
243 **Selectboard to adjourn. Motion passed 4-0 at 9:40 PM.**

244
245 Respectfully Submitted,
246 Darby Mayville
247 Recording Secretary

248
249 Approved this 26th day of June, 2023

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

251 
252 _____
253 Kendall Chamberlin, Selectboard Clerk