



Town of Essex

Selectboard

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Regular Meeting Agenda

Monday, July 17, 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 and possible appointment of volunteers to serve on the Energy Committee - Natalee Braun and David Skopin
 - b. *Interview and possible appointment of volunteer to serve as the Chittenden County Communications Union District representative for Essex - Hubert Norton
 - c. Discussion and potential action on future of Essex Housing Commission
 - d. Consider warning public hearings for proposed amendments to Zoning and Subdivision Regulations
 - e. Discussion to review proposed Town of Essex Charter updates to Chapters 1 and 2
 - f. Discussion about recruitment and appointment process for board/commission/committee volunteers
6. **CONSENT ITEMS**
 - a. Approve minutes: June 26, 2023
 - b. Approve check warrants: # 05020- 06/23/23; # 18154 - 6/30/23; #18156 7/6/23
 - c. Consider approval of change to Public Works Vehicle Replacement Plan and purchase approval for new Buildings Truck
 - d. Consider approval of Manager's appointment of Deputy Health Officer
 - e. Consider approval to participate in the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Community Formula Grant Program
 - f. Consider approval to add two advisor role seats, expiring after one year, for the Police Community Advisory Board
 - g. Consider approval of contract for the pipe replacement for the stormwater ponds at the Essex Experience
7. **READING FILE**
 - a. Board member comments
 - b. Upcoming meeting schedule
 - c. Grant application for Municipal Energy Resilience Program
 - d. Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission June 2023 Newsletter
 - e. Charter - upcoming chapters to review
 - f. Fort Ethan Allen Sewer Allocation Policy RFQ Award
 - g. Fiscal Year 2024 Water Leak Detection Survey
 - h. Essex News - July Edition
8. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**
 - a. *An executive session is anticipated to discuss the appointment of a public officer

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: _____  _____ 07/14/2023

**TOWN OF ESSEX SELECTBOARD
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES OF MEETING
July 17, 2023**

SELECTBOARD: Andrew Watts, Chair; Kendall Chamberlin, Clerk; Dawn Hill-Fleury.

ADMINISTRATION: Greg Duggan, Town Manager; Kent Johnson, Town Planner; Marguerite Ladd, Deputy Town Manager; Katherine Sonnick, Community Development Director; Tom Yandow, Facilities Manager;

OTHERS PRESENT: Katie Ballard, Natalee Braun, Gina Halpin Barrett, Betsy Dunn, John Larkin, Hubert Norton, Ken Signorello, David Skopin, Gillian Smith, Margret Smith, Kate Vanni.

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

Ms. Hill-Fleury requested moving Consent Item #6d to be Business Item #5g. Mr. Watts suggested postponing Business Item #5e, given the absence of two Selectboard members.

3. AGENDA APPROVAL

ANDY WATTS made a motion, seconded by KENDALL CHAMBERLIN, to move Consent Item #6d to be Business Item #5g and to postpone item #5e to a future meeting. The motion passed 3-0.

4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

a. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda

John Larkin expressed a concern about the road conditions of Saxon Hollow Road and asked about the timeline for completion of road paving. He also expressed concern about the increased development and associated truck traffic on Sand Hill Road. Town Manager Duggan noted that the paving was scheduled for completion last week, but that the large storms and heavy rains delayed that activity.

Ken Signorello provided an update on the latest Conservation and Trails Committee meeting, which was an organizational meeting.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. *Interviews and possible appointment of volunteers to serve on the Energy Committee – Natalee Braun and David Skopin

The Selectboard interviewed Natalee Braun and David Skopin for a position on the Energy Committee. Each candidate introduced themselves and spoke about their interest in serving on the Energy Committee. The Selectboard asked each candidate further questions related to their past accomplishments on the Energy Committee (as both candidates had served on it previously) and their vision for future work for the Committee. Each candidate was also given the opportunity to ask questions of the Selectboard.

DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by KENDALL CHAMBERLIN, to appoint Natalee Braun and David Skopin to the Energy Committee. The motion passed 3-0.

SELECTBOARD

July 17, 2023

b. *Interview and possible appointment of volunteer to serve as the Chittenden County Communications Union District representative for Essex – Hubert Norton
The Selectboard interviewed Hubert Norton for a position on the Chittenden County Communications Union District. Mr. Norton introduced himself and spoke about his experience in Essex working in telecommunications and his interest in serving on the CCCUD. The Selectboard asked Mr. Norton further questions related to his approach to serving on the board.

DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by KENDALL CHAMBERLIN, to appoint Hubert Norton as the Essex Representative to the Chittenden County Communications Union District. The motion passed 3-0.

c. Discussion and potential action on future of Essex Housing Commission
Katie Ballard spoke about the proposal related to a Town Housing Commission. Ms. Ballard noted that staff are recommending a Commission of five members that meets generally once per month. She recommended that more thought be put into how the Commission communicates, both with the community and with other boards and commissions. She also noted that several current members advocate for a seven-member rather than a five-member board, though acknowledged that there may be challenges with recruiting for seven members.

DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by KENDALL CHAMBERLIN, that the Selectboard approves the proposed revisions to the Town Housing Commission Job Description and Charter. The motion passed 3-0.

d. Consider warning public hearings for proposed amendments to Zoning and Subdivision Regulations
Community Development Director Sonnick provided an overview of the proposed amendments to the zoning and subdivision regulations, which were approved by the Planning Commission in late May. She walked through the zoning and subdivision regulation amendment process. She noted that most of the changes to the zoning regulations are minor, but that there are some substantial changes related to duplexes, multi-family, and group homes becoming permitted uses, allowing development on smaller lots served by municipal water/sewer, and more flexibility around accessory apartment regulations. She also noted changes related to the business design control overlay regulations, access standards, sign regulations, density in the B1 district, dwelling area requirements, chicken regulations, and municipal administrative requirements. She also spoke about changes to the subdivision regulations. She asked that the Selectboard warn public hearings for August 7 and September 18.

Betsy Dunn expressed concern that there were changes requested by Al Senecal during Planning Commission discussions on this topic that were not incorporated into these amendments. Ken Signorello spoke about several changes to the Resource Preservation District-Industrial (RPD-I). He also suggested modifying the chicken language to instead refer to poultry, to broaden the regulation to include other fowl such as ducks.

DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by KENDALL CHAMBERLIN, that the Selectboard hold two public hearings on the Zoning and Subdivision bylaws on August 7, 2023 on September 18, 2023. The motion passed 3-0.

e. Discussion to review proposed Town of Essex Charter updates to Chapters 1 and 2

SELECTBOARD

July 17, 2023

Agenda item removed.

f. Discussion about recruitment and appointment process for board/commission/committee volunteers
Town Manager Duggan said that this is an opportunity for the Selectboard to reflect on the process for recruiting and appointing volunteers to serve on boards, commissions, and committees, and to provide staff with feedback or recommendations for improvement for next year. Ms. Hill-Fleury suggested that the Selectboard could recommend that candidates who are not appointed to boards but would be good fits for other boards be encouraged to apply for those other positions. Mr. Watts added that improved communication between the boards and the Selectboard was a great suggestion from Ms. Ballard earlier in the meeting.

g. Consider approval of Manager's appointment of Deputy Health Officer **was item 6d**
Town Manager Duggan said that prior to separation, the Town/Village had a primary and secondary health officer, but one of them resigned. He noted that staff between the Town and City discussed having their health officer serve as the deputy health officer of the other municipality, to provide back-up services. Ms. Hill-Fleury expressed concern that the Town and City have separated and that this would be a shared service between the two. She additionally expressed a larger concern that Town residents were not given the first chance/priority to apply for this position. Town Manager Duggan said that this is a difficult position to fill and does not have a residency requirement. He said that this is a less of a volunteer position like on some other boards and commissions and more of a staff-appointed role, as required by State statute.

DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by KENDALL CHAMBERLIN, that the Selectboard approve the Town Manager's appointment of Faith Foley as Deputy Health Officer. The motion passed 3-0.

6. CONSENT ITEMS

- a. Approve minutes – June 26, 2023
- b. Approve check warrants: #05020 -- 6/23/2023; #18156 – 7/6/2023
- c. Consider approval of change to Public Works Vehicle Replacement Plan and purchase approval for new Buildings Truck
- d. Consider approval of Manager's appointment of Deputy Health Officer **now item 5g**
- e. Consider approval to participate in the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Community Formula Grant Program
- f. Consider approval to add two advisor role seats, expiring after one year, for the Police Community Advisory Board
- g. Consider approval of contract for the pipe replacement for the stormwater ponds at the Essex Experience

DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by KENDALL CHAMBERLIN, to approve the consent agenda as presented and amended. The motion passed 3-0.

7. READING FILE

- a. Board member comments: Ms. Hill-Fleury thanked the Public Works Department for their hard work during the flooding that occurred over the past week and for keeping the community safe. Mr. Chamberlin noted that the Town is paying for one week of leak protection but that there is money in the budget for two weeks. He recommended that the Department spend the entire budget available for

SELECTBOARD

July 17, 2023

leak protection. Mr. Watts spoke about a breakfast that the Selectboard had with board chairs and vice-chairs. He said he would like to have events like this occur several times per year.

- b. Upcoming meeting schedule
- c. Grant application for Municipal Energy Resilience Program
- d. Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission June 2023 Newsletter
- e. Charter – upcoming chapters to review
- f. Fort Ethan Allen Sewer Allocation Policy RFQ Award
- g. Fiscal Year 2024 Water Leak Detection Survey
- h. Essex News – July Edition

8. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. * An executive session is anticipated to discuss the appointment of a public officer
- An executive session was not needed.

9. ADJOURN

DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by KENDALL CHAMBERLIN to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 3-0 at 8:10 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amy Coonradt,
Recording Secretary

Approved this 7th day of August, 2023
(see minutes of this day for corrections, if any)


Kendall Chamberlin, Selectboard Clerk