Town of Essex Selectboard
Draft Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday June 16, 2025

Selectboard Members: Tracey Delphia – Chair, Kendall Chamberlin – Vice Chair, Shannon Jackson – Clerk, Ethan Lawrence, Andy Watts.

Administration and Staff: Greg Duggan - Town Manager, Karen Adams - Deputy Town Manager, Fire Chief - Charles Cole, Police Chief - Ron Hoague, Deputy Fire Chief -Tom Richards, Community Development Director – Katherine Sonnick (via Zoom), Assistant Fire Chief – Steve Trenholm (via Zoom)

Others Present:– Paul Bohne, Derek Brouwer, Clayton Clark, Betsy Dunn, Jeffrey Kershner, John McClellan, Anne Miller, Bruce S. Post, Darren Schibler, Ken Signorello, Rod Williams, Irene Wrenner.

Others Present on Zoom – Gina Halpin Barrett, Will Dodge, Elizabeth Dunn, Cheryl Van Epps, Bruce Post, Jon Slason, Ella Tabone, Lois Whitmore, Sharon Zukowski, Lorraine Zaloom, Maya Balassa.

1. **<u>Call to Order</u>**
    a. Tracey Delphia called to order the Essex Selectboard meeting for Monday, June 16, 2025, at 6:30 PM.
2. **<u>Agenda Changes/Additions</u>**
    a. **Andy Watts, seconded by Ethan Lawrence, made a motion to move Consent item 6c to Business item 7j and move all other Business items past that down one letter at 6:42 PM. Motion passed 5-0.**
3. **<u>Approval of Agenda</u>**
    a. **Ethan Lawrence, seconded by Shannon Jackson, made a motion to approve the agenda as amended at 6:42 PM. Motion passed 5-0.**
4. **<u>Public To Be Heard</u>**
    a. Comments from the public on Consent Items and Items not on the agenda.
    b. Betsy Dunn is concerned about the wastewater allocation for 56 Tanglewood Drive that needs to be addressed. Bruce Post spoke about 56 Tanglewood Drive and he is concerned about the subdivision and possible use of such. Lorraine Zaloom spoke about her concerns regarding how the agenda gets posted to allow for more public comment and a way to make the names/dates more relevant. Jeff Kershner spoke about 56 Tanglewood wastewater approval that is on the agenda. Betsy Dunn made mention that at the DRB meeting there was concern that information regarding 56 Tanglewood was incomplete.
5. **<u>Public Hearing</u>**
    a. Chief Charles Cole requested the Selectboard consideration and approval of the impact fee ordinance amendments.

- **b. Andy Watts, seconded by Shannon Jackson, made a motion to open a public hearing on the fire impact fees at 6:44 PM. Motion passed 5-0.**
- c. Greg Duggan gave a quick overview of how the proposed changes to the impact fee ordinance changes were looked at and what it might impact.
- d. There was no public comment.
- **e. Ethan Lawrence, seconded by Andy Watts, made a motion to close the public hearing on the fire impact fees at 6:46 PM. Motion passed 5-0.**

6. <u>Consent Items</u>

- a. Approval of minutes: June 9, 2025.
- b. Approve check warrants: #18279 – 05/30/2025; #18280 – 06/06/2025.
- c. Consider approval of purchase of sewer bypass pump
- **d. Ethan Lawrence, seconded by Shannon Jackson, made a motion to approve the Consent Items as amended at 6:47 PM. Motion passed 5-0.**

7. <u>Business Items</u>

- a. *Interview a volunteer to serve on the Energy Committee - Will Dodge
  - i. Will Dodge gave an overview of his background and previous experience on the Energy Committee and is looking to have his current term renewed. He spoke on some ideas he has for the committee if appointed. The Selectboard provided various interview questions for him to answer.
- b. *Interview a volunteer to serve on the Energy Committee - Rod Williams
  - i. Rod Williams gave an overview of his background and experience and interest in assisting Essex on the Energy Committee. The Selectboard provided various interview questions for him to answer.
- c. *Interview of a volunteer to serve on the Economic Development Committee - Irene Wrenner
  - i. Irene Wrenner gave her background and experience and qualifications. The Selectboard provided various questions for her to answer.
- d. ** Consider approval of resolution to withdraw from Green Mountain Transit Authority in fiscal year 2027
  - i. Tracey Delphia gave an overview of the current status of the Town with Green Mountain Transit. Greg Duggan expanded on what was said and described some of the options resultant of withdrawing and alternatives. The Selectboard provided Clayton Clark of Green Mountain Transit with various questions to assist with the decision-making process.
  - ii. Lorraine Zaloom had a question about the numbers of riders and that the assessment might not be accurate. Also, how would this impact on our school taxes. Clayton Clark explained that the assessment is based on time in Essex and not ridership.
- e. Consider final adoption of proposed amendments to Impact Fee Ordinance
  - i. There were no questions or comments from the Selectboard or the public.
  - **ii. Ethan Lawrence, seconded by Shannon Jackson, made a motion that the Selectboard approve the final passage of the proposed amendments to the town's impact fee ordinance with an effective date of July15, 2025, at 7:38 PM. Motion passed 5-0.**

f. Consider approval of Schedule A for Fire Impact Fees and Recreation Impact Fees
   i. There were no questions or comments from the Selectboard or the public.
   ii. Andy Watts, seconded by Ethan Lawrence, made a motion that the Selectboard adopt Schedule A specifying option A as the specific fees to be collected to go into effect July 15, 2025, at 7:39 PM. Motion passed 5-0.

g. Consider approval of amendments to Fund Balance Policy.
   i. Karen Adams gave an overview of how the amendments to the fund balance are made and to provide additional transparency. Andy Watts was concerned about how various factors impact fund balance decisions and that they can transition across different fiscal years. Shannon Jackson provided insight into his opinions on how this would work. Andy Watts gave some historical perspective. Tracey Delphia said that we would revisit this topic at a future meeting.

h. Consider approval of grant application to Vermont Agency of Transportation for funding assistance for design and construction of multi-use path along VT Route 15 between Orleans Road & VT Route 289
   i. Kent Johnson reviewed and explained the information relevant to the work done that has led to being able to apply for this grant. He also reviewed updated cost factors of this project. The Selectboard had some questions on design and other specifications of the project. Betsy Dunn mentioned that CTC should have been included in this process.
   ii. Ethan Lawrence, seconded by Shannon Jackson, made a motion that the Selectboard authorize staff to submit an application to VTRANS to request funding assistance for the design and construction of the VT 15 shared use path in accordance with the preferred alternative approved by Staff and the Selectboard provide a letter of support acknowledging their willingness to provide the local match and accept future maintenance at 8:17 PM. Motion passed 4-1. Kendell Chamberlain nay.

i. Consider opting into Act 181 Tier 1B status for recommended areas of Essex.
   i. Representing CCRPC Darren Schibler and Katherine presented information to the Selectboard regarding Act 151 Tier 1B status recommendations and Act 250 considerations. Katherine presented and explained map information to the Selectboard and how it applies to some different types of current exemption and how some of the different areas can be used. They also discussed future amendment procedures. Selectboard provided questions to them for further explanation.
   ii. The Selectboard decided to add the new maps to the current packet. Also, that the Selectboard members should email any questions they have to Greg Duggan to coordinate follow-up.

j. Consider approval of additional wastewater allocation for 56 Tanglewood Drive.
   i. There was discussion on this issue regarding land covenants, and it is ultimately not up to the town. Also, if the town approves the allocation, then what happens if a permit gets rescinded.

   ii. Bruce Post said that he has filed for a reconsideration of the DRB approval of the sub-division and other issues regarding how town decisions and deeds would interact with state policies. Lorraine Zaloom spoke about why the Selectboard would approve when a request for reconsideration is in process. Betsy Dunn voiced concerns that we should not be approving a sewer allocation if this is not going to go through. Jeff Kershner agreed with everything previously said, although he is just here for one EU and that anything other than what is planned would require the Selectboard to approve additional allocations.
   iii. Ethan Lawrence, seconded by Andy Watts, made a motion that the Selectboard approve the additional allocation in the amount of 200 gallons per day, one EU for a future single family home on the newly created lot at 56 Tanglewood Drive with the following conditions: 1. The applicant will be required to purchase the approved sewer and water allocation prior to the issuance of a building permit at 9:45 PM. Motion approved 4-1. Kendall Chamberlain nay.

k. ** Discussion about allocation of costs in Police Services Agreement with City of Essex Junction
l. *Consider appointments to Town of Essex boards, committees and commissions
   i. Due to the possibility of the appearance of a conflict of interest, Andy Watts recused himself from any discussion about library trustee appointees and the election thereof.
m. *** Discussion about Tree Farm Recreational Facility lease options
n. *** Discussion about the negotiating or securing of real estate purchase or lease options

8. <u>Reading File</u>

a. Board member comments.
   i. Tracey Delphia thanked Mukesh on the Energy Committee and David Harrington on the Police Community Advisory Board for their service. Andy Watts said thank you for including all the thank you notes from all the human service organizations. Kendall Chamberlain thanked the public works department for their work on the Maple Street gravity project.
b. Upcoming meeting schedule
c. Thank you letters from Human Services organizations
d. Draft Saxon Hill Forest Management Plan
e. Letter re: Town Plan and zoning regulations
f. Information regarding the Grants-in-Aid Bid Award
g. Maple Street Gravity Sewer Manhole Replacements
h. Draft list of Selectboard work items for fiscal year 2026
i. VTrans Paving Update - Week of June 16, 2025
j. Resignation from the Police Community Advisory Board - David Harrington (City Seat)
k. Resignation from the Energy Committee - Mukesh Kumar

9. <u>Executive Session</u>

a. * An executive session is anticipated to discuss the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee.
   i. **Andy Watts, seconded by Shannon Jackson, made a motion that the Selectboard enter into executive session to discuss the proposed public official appointment in accordance with 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(3) to include the Town Manager and the Deputy Town Manager. Motion passed 5-0.**

b. ** An executive session may be requested to discuss contracts
   i. **Ethan Lawrence, seconded by Andy Watts, made a motion that the Selectboard make the specific finding that general public knowledge of contracts would place the town at a substantial disadvantage. Motion passed 5-0.**
   ii. **Ethan Lawrence, seconded by Andy Watts, made a motion 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 the Deputy Town Manager. Motion passed 5-0.**

c. Shannon Jackson made a motion, seconded by Ethan Lawrence, to appoint Erin DeVries, Sarah Salatino, and Duane Millar Barlow to three-year terms on the Conservation and Trails Committee; Ken Signorello to a two-year term on the Conservation and Trails Committee; Irene Wrenner to a three-year term on the Economic Development Commission; Rod Williams to a one-year term on the Energy Committee; and Will Dodge to a three-year term on the Energy Committee. The motion passed 5-0.

d. Shannon Jackson made a motion, seconded by Ethan Lawrence, to appoint Mallori Longevin, Ellen Knowles, and Janet Watts to three-year terms on the Essex Free Library Board. The motion passed 4-0-1, with Andy Watts abstaining.

e. *** An executive session is anticipated to discuss the negotiating or securing of real estate purchase or lease options.
   i. **Ethan Lawrence, seconded by Shannon Jackson, made a motion that the Selectboard enter into executive session to discuss the negotiating or securing of real estate purchase or lease options in accordance with 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(2) to include the Town Manager and the Deputy Town Manager. Motion passed 5-0**

f. Shannon Jackson made a motion, seconded by Andy Watts, to extend the Selectboard meeting to 11:30 p.m. The motion passed 5-0 at 10:57 p.m.

g. Shannon Jackson, seconded by Ethan Lawrence, made a motion to exit executive session at 11:27 PM. Motion passed 5-0.

10. <u>Adjourn</u>

a. **Ethan Lawrence, seconded by Andy Watts, made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:30 PM. Motion passed 5-0.**

Respectfully Submitted,
Kariella Tabone
Secretary

Approved this _______ day of ______________, 2025.
(see minutes of this day for corrections, if any)

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Signed by Name, Title