

**TOWN OF ESSEX
BOARD OF CIVIL AUTHORITY
MEETING as BOARD of ABATEMENT
APPROVED MINUTES OF MEETING
OCTOBER 7, 2025**

Members Present In-Person: Dawn Hill-Fleury, Chair; Betsy Dunn, Vice-Chair; Kendall Chamberlin; Tracey Delphia; Leonora Dodge; Alexis Dubief; Rey Garofano; Shannon Jackson; Ken Signorello; Nanette Rogers, Town Clerk; Erik Post; Cindy Seivwright; Margaret Smith; Liz Subin; Irene Wrenner

Others Present: Yvette Blair; Jennifer Booker, Deputy Town Clerk

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Dawn Hill-Fleury, Chair.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

BETSY DUNN made a motion, seconded by ERIK POST, to accept the agenda as presented. Motion passed 15-0.

4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

None.

5. CONSENT ITEMS

a. Approve Minutes: August 11, 2025

GEORGIA LAVIGNE made a motion, seconded by BETSY DUNN to accept the meeting minutes, as amended. Motion passed 15-0.

6. REQUESTS FOR ABATEMENT

a. Yvette Blair - Request to abate taxes of persons who are unable to pay their taxes, interest, and/or collection fees (24 V.S.A. §1535(a)(3)).

Ms. Blair said that she is financially unable to pay her taxes, stating that she makes \$780 per month. She does not currently owe any money however she would like her taxes reduced for the future. The Town of Essex can receive monthly payments towards taxes. Ms. Blair's property is listed as a "life estate." Her state payment has decreased from last year however she is unsure why this is the case. Answering a question from Mr. Signorello, Ms. Blair said that she was unsure how she would pay the following years' taxes. No proof of income was provided. Ms. Hill-Fleury encouraged Ms. Blair to develop a personal payment plan for future installments, as she did not believe that there was anything that the Board could do. Ms. Smith noted that Ms. Blair's taxes have increased substantially since last year. Ms. Rogers suggested that Ms. Blair provide her income and expense information at a future meeting. Payments on taxes cannot be made before August 15 nor after March 15 without penalty. Ms. Hill-Fleury said that it is possible that something can be done in this situation as Ms. Blair borrowed the money for her taxes from her

daughter. She said that Ms. Blair's daughter will need to attend the meeting, provide a statement from her daughter that she paid the taxes, an attestation that this would need to be paid back, trust/life estate assets, a copy of the life estate, proof of income and a list of expenses.

IRENE WRENNER made a motion, seconded by KEN SIGNORELLO, to table the abatement hearing. Motion passed 15-0.

7. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Discuss and possibly provide feedback to Selectboard on draft Handbook for Board, Committee & Commission Members and their Staff Representatives

Ms. Delphia, Mr. Chamberlin and Mr. Jackson left the meeting to ensure that there was not influence from the Selectboard on the topic.

KEN SIGNORELLO made a motion, seconded by BETSY DUNN, to strike in the acknowledgement section all the words between "and" and "by."

Ms. Dodge said that she believes that this should remain as it states that members will abide by the rules received. Mr. Signorello said that staff are not meeting their requirements, however they are not required to sign this.

Voting: Motion failed 3-7.

IRENE WRENNER made a motion, seconded by KEN SIGNORELLO, to add the words "staff representatives" to the list of people on page 4 that are required to sign this acknowledgement.

AMENDMENT by IRENE WRENNER to change the font to italics.

Voting: 10-0.

IRENE WRENNER made a motion, seconded by KEN SIGNORELLO, to ensure that page numbers match with the table of contents. Motion passed 10-0.

KEN SIGNORELLO made an amendment to the motion to edit page 12, first paragraph, line three, to change "shall" to "should." Motion passed 10-0.

Ms. Wrenner suggested adding the Orderly Conduct of Business on page three as an appendix. All agreed.

DAWN HILL-FLEURY requested a vote on including "ethical behavior" to page five. Motion passed 10-0.

DAWN HILL-FLEURY requested a vote on changing "may recuse themselves" to "shall recuse themselves" and add "unless otherwise permitted by statute to participate" to the end of the sentence on page 9. All in favor, motion passed.

Mr. Signorello suggested striking several staff responsibilities, as he believed that several of these could be taken care of by the Chair.

DAWN HILL-FLEURY requested a vote on changing the verbiage regarding agenda determination on page 10, second bullet, to read, “Staff representatives will assist Board Chairs to create agendas. Board Chairs with the assistance of staff representative, should work together....”. Motion passed 9-1.

DAWN HILL-FLEURY requested a vote on striking language regarding the staff role in bringing issues to the Selectboard, page 10, seventh bullet. Motion passed 5-4-1.

On page 12, end of second paragraph, add “field motions” after discussion. Under Meetings in General, second paragraph change “may work with” to “will assist”. All agreed

DAWN HILL-FLEURY requested a vote on listing consent items as being discouraged, rather than optional on Page 13. Motion passed 9-1.

DAWN HILL FLEURY requested a vote on changing the word “shall” to “should” in two instances on page 14 under Changing an Agenda. Motion passed 8-2.

DAWN HILL FLEURY requested a vote on page 15, Quorum to read “The presence of a majority of the board membership shall constitute a quorum for conducting business.” and to strike the last sentence in that paragraph. Motion passed 8-2.

DAWN HILL-FLEURY requested a vote on the inclusion of the phrase, “It is recommended that all Board members read Roberts Rules of Order” on page 23 under Training. Motion passed 10-0.

BETSY DUNN made a motion, seconded BY IRENE WRENNER that the changes be forwarded via the Town Clerk to Tammy Getchell. Motion passed 10-0.

8. ADJOURNMENT

BETSY DUNN made a motion, seconded by LEONORA DODGE, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed 10-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Darby Mayville,
Recording Secretary