

**SELECTBOARD & TRUSTEES
(DRAFT)**

**TOWN OF ESSEX SELECTBOARD
VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION TRUSTEES
DRAFT JOINT MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, AUGUST 23, 2021**

SELECTBOARD: Andy Watts, Chair; Tracey Delphia; Dawn Hill-Fleury; Patrick Murray

TRUSTEES: Andrew Brown, President; Raj Chawla; Amber Thibeault; George Tyler

ADMINISTRATION and STAFF: Evan Teich, Unified Manager; Greg Duggan, Deputy Manager; Bill Ellis, Town Attorney; Brad Luck, Essex Junction Recreation & Parks (EJRP) Director; Claudine Safar, Village Attorney; Ally Vile, Essex Parks and Recreation (EPR) Director.

OTHERS PRESENT: Jim Barnes (sp?); Ben Bergeron, Andy Champagne; Annie Cooper; Patty Davis; Mike Dimitroff; Betsy Dunn; Sven Eklof, Tree Farm Board; Steve Eustis; William Hines; Jill Lampron, Tree Farm Management Group; Jim Gaby; Barbara Higgins; Deb McAdoo; Dylan McNamara; Meg Munson, Vermont Youth Soccer Association; Ed DeMulder, TOPSoccer; Mike Nick, Elite Eight Soccer League; Mary Post; Paula Sargent; Eric Senn; Cory Smith; Gabrielle Smith, Essex Housing Commission; Harlan Smith; Lorraine Zaloom; Mr. ____; Ken Willetts, Charles ____, Dustin ____

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Watts called the Town of Essex Selectboard to order for the Joint meeting with the Village of Essex Junction Board of Trustees at 6:30 PM.

Mr. Brown called the Village of Essex Junction Board of Trustees to order for the Joint meeting with the Essex Selectboard at 6:30 PM.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

Not required.

4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

Mr. Watts explained that this is the time during the meeting for members of the public to speak on items not included in tonight's agenda.

- Ms. Dunn said that the Sand Hill Pool is difficult for families to use due to the pool depth and needs other updates. Maple Street Pool has a zero-entry pool; however, it is much more expensive to use. Ms. Dunn expressed concern about the safety of the slides at Sand Hill Park during hot weather. She ended by saying that she believes that the Conservation and Trails Committee should be split into two different groups since the current committee has been focusing almost exclusively on trails.
- Ms. Post said that the Selectboard needs to pay more attention to Town Outside the Village (TOV) issues, specifically firearms discharge and safety in the Saxon Hill area. She requested that the Selectboard stop negotiating with the Trustees and said that the number of meetings currently happening is untenable. Mr. Teich said that the Town of Essex does not put-up signs for shooting zones, since bullets can travel a long distance and the Town does not want to give a false sense of safety. Ms. Post responded that this issue should be brought up to the wider community.

- 49 • Ms. Sargent said that she is a former member of the Essex Senior Center and expressed concern that
50 the Senior Center has not reopened. The reopening effort has been chaotic and not well-
51 communicated, and members are unsure what the opening procedures will be. Mr. Teich said that the
52 Senior Center will be open on September 3rd, and that it will be staffed by volunteers, rather than
53 staff.
- 54 • Mr. H. Smith said that he is concerned with the Boards use of Executive Session. He said that
55 reducing the number of conversations in Executive Session would help increase transparency and help
56 the public to understand how decisions are made.
- 57 • Mr. Champagne expressed support for installing no-shooting zone signs in Saxon Hill.
- 58 • Ms. Davis also expressed support for installing no-shooting signs in Saxon Hill. She said that it is the
59 Selectboard’s responsibility to keep trail users safe and offered to assist the Conservation and Trails
60 Committee in this initiative.

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62 **5. BUSINESS ITEMS**

63 **a. Update and discussion on Housing Commission**

64 Ms. Smith, Vice-Chair of the Essex Housing Commission, said the seven-member group first met last fall.
65 The goal of the commission is to work to ensure that all residents have affordable, accessible, safe, and
66 appropriate housing. The commission has been looking into developing a Housing Trust Fund and hopes
67 to have a proposal for this in the next few months. The commission is also working on inclusionary
68 zoning initiatives, renter/landlord surveys, and the possibility of a rental registry. The Housing
69 Commission is a joint commission with members in both the Town and Village. Ms. Smith said that the
70 Commission is requesting a change to their charter so that quorum will consist of four members, rather
71 than three. This will assist in more easily planning working group meetings, as presently these can consist
72 of no more than two members. In addition, the Commission plans to present a budgetary request for the
73 next fiscal year.

74
75 Mr. Watts referenced a statement in the Essex Housing Needs Assessment which said that many renters do
76 not receive the financial support that they are entitled to and asked if the Commission planned to work
77 with renters to educate them on eligibility. Ms. Smith will discuss this with the rest of the Commission.
78 Mr. Teich asked Ms. Smith to estimate the amount of housing units Essex is lacking. Ms. Smith said that
79 it is difficult to estimate, but the number has been rapidly growing due to large increases in prices. Ms.
80 Smith said that one way that the Commission has been working to support an increase in housing units is
81 to promote the addition of accessory units on existing dwellings. Ms. Delphia asked if there was interest
82 on the part of the Commission to change their metrics of measuring housing affordability to something
83 more uniform, rather than an income percentage. Ms. Smith will bring the issue back to the Commission
84 to discuss.

85
86 In public comment, Ms. Higgins suggested consulting with legal council as she is concerned about setting
87 a potential precedent for other committees to change their charter to avoid conducting business in warned
88 meetings. Mr. Watts said that, in this case, the Board was removing an exception rather than creating one.
89 Mr. Champagne said that housing in Essex is unaffordable. Ms. Zaloom asked if the Housing
90 Commission collaborated in any way with the Champlain Housing Trust, as it seems like that group is
91 already doing much of the work that the Commission hopes to do. Ms. Smith said that they do not
92 formally collaborate, but that the two groups have had discussions. She said that many other
93 municipalities throughout the state have a Housing Trust Fund, in addition to working with Champlain
94 Housing Trust. Mr. Brown said that he has previously worked in affordable housing, and that a municipal
95 Housing Trust could be one of a variety of sources to promote affordable housing and other economic
96 development. Ms. Post asked if there is anything that the community can do to enforce affordability in

97 new developments. Ms. Smith said that this is one of the things can be done using inclusionary zoning,
98 which could mandate that a certain number of affordable units be constructed with a project. Mr. Duggan
99 said that the development regulations currently provide density bonuses for affordable housing, which
100 would allow a developer to build more homes in an area than they normally would be allowed to do. Ms.
101 Dunn said that she was happy to see the Housing Commission present to the Selectboard, and that she
102 would like to see this done with all the volunteer boards. Mr. Chawla asked if the Housing Commission
103 has been working with the Essex Junction Planning Commission on updates to the Land Development
104 Code. Ms. Smith said that this has not been done but this is a goal for the future.

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106 **GEORGE TYLER made a motion, seconded by RAJ CHAWLA that Trustees make a motion to**
107 **change the Housing Commission’s charter so that a quorum shall consist of four members. The**
108 **motion passed 4-0.**

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110 **TRACEY DELPHIA made a motion, seconded by DAWN HILL-FLEURY, that the Selectboard**
111 **update the Housing Commission’s charter so that a quorum is defined as four members. The motion**
112 **passed 4-0.**

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114 **b. Discussion and possible action on Tree Farm Lease**

115 Mr. Luck said that the Tree Farm parcel is co-owned by the Village and Town and that it is currently
116 managed by the Tree Farm Management Group. Mr. Luck recommended the following:the lease is not
117 renewed; the property to be managed by both Recreation Departments in the future; and that the parcel
118 operates like a public park. He said he hopes this change will allow the community to have more of a say
119 in how the parcel is used. It is anticipated that the Tree Farm Management Group will still have input and
120 a seat on the advisory board in the future. Mr. Chawla suggested adding baseball and softball
121 representation on the board as well and said that this property could bring forward increased recreational
122 opportunities for other sports. Mr. Tyler asked if there were use restrictions on the property and whether it
123 could be used for other recreational uses besides soccer and rugby. Mr. Luck said all recreational and
124 educational uses were allowed. Mr. Brown asked how users will be impacted by this change and Ms. Vile
125 said there will be minimal changes. Mr. Luck said that all fee and user agreements will be honored going
126 forward. Ms. Delphia asked about the financial impact of this change as well as the impact on municipal
127 staff. Ms. Vile said this will not have a large impact on staff as current seasonal staff can be used to staff
128 this property. Ms. Hill-Fleury asked how seasonal staffing will work because their employment typically
129 ends in August. Ms. Vile said that an experienced seasonal staffer could have their time extended for this
130 purpose and Mr. Luck said that all direct expenses for the Tree Farm are paid for by facility users. Mr.
131 Watts expressed concern that, should separation occur and the two communities not come to an agreement
132 about how to manage the space, the facility could suffer. Mr. Luck said that this should be determined
133 prior to the start of the next season and thus not be an issue. Mr. Tyler asked about the revenue generated
134 by the Tree Farm and expressed concern that this budget is never reviewed by either Board. Mr. Teich
135 said that this was never required since it is a lease.

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137 Mr. Eklof, Tree Farm Board member, was invited to speak. He said expenses for the year are around
138 \$110,000 and revenues around \$150,000. Mr. Eustis, a former Trustee, was invited to explain the history
139 of the property. Mr. Eustis said this property was handed down from the state of Vermont as a sports and
140 trails facility. It was intended to be available for members of the public for recreation. He said that the
141 facility has been locked in recent years and that “no parking” signs are visible in nearby neighborhoods.
142 Non-field areas and trails are also not being maintained or mowed. He said that both things are
143 preventing the general public from being able to use the area for recreation other than team sports. Mr.
144 Eusits supports the transition of this property due to these concerns.

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Public Comment:

- Mr. Nick said that he runs the Elite Eight Soccer League and has been playing at the facility for 15 years. The success of his league hinges on the success of the Tree Farm. He would like a guarantee given to current renters indicating they will be able to use the facility. There is not enough room at the Tree Farm for current soccer needs and he is concerned that adding other sports will worsen this problem.
- Mr. Champagne said that taking over the Tree Farm is a power grab by EJRP. He expressed concern with the conditions and maintenance at current parks. In addition, Mr. Champagne said that Stevens Park is not being mowed and falling into disrepair. He is concerned that the same thing will happen to the Tree Farm should it be taken over by either Recreation Department and that the money for its operation will be funneled to other facilities. In addition, he called for the resignation of the Town Manager. Mr. Brown and Mr. Murray reminded Mr. Champagne to refrain from attacking staff, making unsubstantiated accusations and encouraged him to remain civil.
- Mr. McNamara, a cross country coach at Essex High School, indicated his support for Mr. Eustis’s comments as he believes that trails are not being maintained properly.
- Mr. DeMulder said when the state handed over the property, the original documents stated that there would be no permanent structures including little league backstops. He asked if this has changed. Mr. Teich said that he is not aware of anything in the deed that prevents recreation equipment from being placed on the property. Mr. DeMulder said that the use of this facility by sports other than soccer will impact soccer users. He is the state coordinator for Vermont TOPSoccer, which is a group for special needs soccer players. He has been very impressed with the Tree Farm Management group in their support of Vermont TOPSoccer and hopes that this relationship continues.
- Mr. _____ expressed concern that, should management change hands, the facility will not be as accessible to soccer players as it has in the past. He said that more notice should have been given to the regular lessees at the Tree Farm regarding this proposal and asked to hear more about the long-term plans for the property.
- Ms. Lampron said that she is the scheduler at the Tree Farm and prior to that was the parent of a soccer player. She said that the Tree Farm gate typically opened at dawn and closed at dusk. This changed due to COVID, however residents can always park outside the gate and enter on foot or bike. The Tree Farm Management Group recently changed landscaping companies and will work to increase the amount of space mowed in the future. Ms. Lampron said that the high school cross-country team recently moved their Labor Day tournament to the Tree Farm and one of the conditions of this agreement was that they would maintain the trails that they created. She noted that an ultimate frisbee team currently practices at the Tree Farm.
- Mr. Barnes said that he is a parent of cross-country runners and that the Tree Farm is an amazing property. Much of the trail upkeep is done by the team and their parents. He suggested that they have some oversight from a professional landscaping company. With some work, the Tree Farm could be one of the best cross-country facilities in the state.
- Mr. Hines said that he runs the Vermont Amateur Soccer League and has been renting from the Tree Farm for years. He is concerned about his league being squeezed out of the space should it be taken over by the Recreation Departments. The Tree Farm Management Group has been great to work with and highly responsive. He would have upkeep concerns if the Recreation Departments were to take it over.
- Charles ____ requested the Boards consider the impact of this decision on the New American community, as many of them enjoy soccer. There is much less access to soccer facilities in the United States than in other countries. Should other sports be allowed to use the space, it is inevitable that soccer will be given less space.

- 193 • Mr. Dimitroff said that he is a soccer parent, and that this decision seems to be rushed, even if it is in
194 fact the best decision in the long-term. Some of the arguments made by the Recreation Directors are
195 contradictory, as things will change at the facility if other sports fields are added. It is difficult to
196 believe that this will have no tax impact, as this is a large parcel and facility. He said this decision
197 should wait until the dust has settled with separation.
- 198 • Mr. Chawla clarified his earlier comments regarding adding additional sport fields at the Tree Farm.
199 This was his idea alone and not included in any formal plans.
- 200 • Dustin _____ said that he encourages the communities to extend the lease and use this time to have the
201 groups collaborate to form a better plan. The Tree Farm Management Group has tournaments planned
202 for several years from now and does not believe that the community is ready for a change at this time.
- 203 • Mr. C. Smith is a referee and player at the Tree Farm. He said the fields are overused and that turf
204 fields are needed to increase the playing season.
- 205 • Mr. Bergeron said that he has been playing soccer for many years at the Tree Farm and is a current
206 player in the Elite Eight. He believes that the facility is at capacity with soccer and cannot support any
207 other sports.
- 208 • Ms. Zaloom asked what the sports capacity was in the Town. She also asked for quantification of the
209 volunteer hours that go into maintaining the Tree Farm and asked if taking these hours away would
210 impact staff time and thus taxes. She asked for clarification regarding ultimate frisbee and lacrosse
211 representation on the Tree Farm Advisory Board. She asked if there has been an impact assessment
212 done regarding the number of people brought into Essex through Tree Farm activities. She does not
213 believe that the Town can manage the property as well as the current management group. She
214 suggested adding a representative of running groups to the current Tree Farm Advisory Board.
- 215 • Ms. Munson said that she is the Executive Director of the Vermont Youth Soccer Association. She
216 wants to advocate for the continued use of soccer at the Tree Farm, as it is an essential property for
217 soccer in Vermont. She asked for more transparency on the planned use for the property in the future.
- 218 • Ms. Cooper asked where the profits from the Tree Farm goes. In addition, she said that these
219 conversations are common when contracts are up for renewal and that this does not seem rushed to
220 her. She said the voices of soccer players will be heard no matter who is managing the property.
- 221 • Mr. Gaby said that the Tree Farm Management Group is a non-profit organization and that any profits
222 are invested back into the Tree Farm operations and facility improvements.
- 223 • Ms. McAdoo said that she is a rugby player and encouraged the road to be fixed. She also said that
224 she is happy with EJRP's management of current resources.
- 225 • Mr. Eklof said that he believes that this process has been rushed, and that there has been very limited
226 discussion between the Town and Tree Farm Management Group. The Town and Village currently
227 make up 1/3 of the Tree Farm Advisory Board. He is concerned that the 2 Recreation Departments are
228 not getting along and this could impede the process. The Tree Farm Advisory Board has been doing a
229 great job for the past 20 years. There are plans to fix the road this year, as well as a schedule to retire
230 fields yearly to strengthen the grass.
- 231 • Ms. Dunn said that Tree Farm Management Group does a very good job managing the property for a
232 low price. The Conservation and Trails Committee could assist with trail management. She read from
233 legal documents and said that buildings can be built or altered on the property, however, there is a
234 process that needs to be followed due to their historic status.
- 235 • Ms. Post said that this process felt similar to the Memorial Hall process, where there was a major
236 change in management and it was not publicized to the general public. She would like to see these
237 items brought up at one meeting and voted on at the next to allow for citizen input and more
238 transparency.

- 239 • Mr. Senn said that he was a previous president of the Tree Farm Advisory Board. He said that the gate
240 was installed due to vandalism. The Tree Farm closes at dusk to prevent drug use on the property. He
241 said he does not believe that the Recreation Directors understand the amount of work that will go into
242 managing the property without increased staff or budget.
- 243 • Mr. Willetts said that he is a coach, soccer player, and has been involved in the Tree Farm for the past
244 17 years. This property is a huge value for the community and the Tree Farm Management Group
245 does a great job managing it. The Town and Village should not be taking over the property during the
246 middle of separation efforts and should consider extending the lease. Bringing in additional groups
247 will harm the field and will displace groups who have put in hundreds of volunteer hours over the
248 years. He said the Foster Road fields are maintained by the Little League due to EPR's inability to
249 maintain the property to an appropriate level. Should his club be displaced, there would be no other
250 comparable field for them to play on.
- 251 • Ms. Sargent said that the Recreation Departments need to build credibility at this time. They are
252 unable to get the staffing needed to re-open the Senior Center and have been providing limited
253 communication on this issue. They departments need to work on reestablishing existing programs
254 before implementing new ones.
- 255 • Ms. Higgins said that she is not opposed to moving the Tree Farm to municipal management but now
256 is not the time to do so. The lease should be extended through 2023, if not longer.
- 257 • Ms. Davis asked if the Tree Farm allows hunting. Mr. Watts said that it does not. Ms. Davis
258 suggested that the same hold true for Saxon Hill.

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260 Ms. Hill-Fleury asked how much land is available for uses besides soccer. Ms. Lampron said the space is
261 split evenly between parking, trails, and fields. Mr. Brown said that he heard a lot of concerns regarding
262 continuing the allow soccer to thrive at the Tree Farm, as well as the development of a business and
263 maintenance plan. He would like to hear how other similar facilities are managed before making any
264 decisions. Mr. Chawla said the MOU does not specifically mention soccer and said that it is important to
265 see how all users can be included. He would also like information on how an Enterprise Fund would work
266 for this purpose. Mr. Tyler said that there is no desire to push soccer outside of the Tree Farm. He also
267 said most of the recreation budget consists of program fees, rather than tax revenue. Mr. Tyler said that
268 the main issue in front of the Boards is that a non-profit organization is operating on municipal property
269 and that this can affect efficient operations. Mr. Luck said that the intention of this change is not to stop
270 the success of the Tree Farm and that this is not in jeopardy in any way. The Recreation Departments
271 hope to establish a Field Management Plan. The departments are used to running events on the weekends
272 and managing large groups. The goal of a Recreation Department is to maximize knowledge, use, and
273 community management of publicly owned facilities and this is an effort to do so.

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275 This issue will be discussed further at a future meeting. Mr. Brown called for a ten-minute recess. When
276 the meeting was called back to order, the Boards choose to discuss items "E" and "G" prior to item "C."
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278 **e. Consider designating voting delegates for Vermont League of Cities and Towns' Annual Town**
279 **Meeting, VLCT Employment and Resource Benefits Trust annual meeting, and Property and**
280 **Casualty Intermunicipal Fund annual meeting**

281 Mr. Watts said these meetings would be held on September 29 and that the Boards would need a
282 representative for each. This could, but does not have to be, the same person for all three.

283
284 **ANDY WATTS made a motion, seconded by DAWN HILL-FLEURY, that the Selectboard**
285 **nominate Tracey Delphia as their voting delegate for the VLCT Annual Town Fair. The motion**
286 **passed 4-0.**

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Mr. Brown discussed this commitment with the Trustees and no one in attendance was available. He suggested appointing Mr. Teich to attend this event.

RAJ CHAWLA made a motion, seconded by GEORGE TYLER, that the Trustees nominate Evan Teich as their voting delegate for the VLCT Annual Town Fair. The motion passed 4-0.

g. Consider appointment of Selectboard member to Cannabis Study Committee (Selectboard only)

TRACEY DELPHIA made a motion, seconded by PATRICK MURRAY to appoint Dawn Hill-Fleury as the Selectboard representative to the Cannabis Study Committee. The motion passed 3-1, with Dawn Hill-Fleury abstaining.

c. Discussion of sharing services in event of creation of independent City of Essex Junction

Mr. Watts and Mr. Brown suggested prioritizing tonight’s discussion to the following areas: Indian Brook, Senior Services, Police, Finance, and Reappraisal. Mr. Watts said that the Selectboard supports providing contracted Police services to the new City of Essex Junction. He said that this contract would include all Policing costs, including those which are not typically included in the Police budget. The Selectboard would support a contract cost on a per-capita basis, however, is also willing to looking at other metrics. While the Trustees asked for a long-term contract, Mr. Watts said that the Selectboard is considering a 3–5-year contract with an annual budgetary review. The Town Manager will have final say regarding the hiring of the Police chief, however the Village Manager will likely be consulted. Mr. Watts said that the Selectboard does not want to be contractually bound by any ordinance alignment, although he does support it. Special events, possibility including school dismissal at Five Corners, would be discussed on a case-by-case basis. All Police debt would be voted on by the Town only, but pricing based on these debts could be incorporated into contract pricing for the City. All future revenue would be retained by the Town but would be used to offset costs for the Police Department.

Mr. Brown said that it would be helpful to develop informal consensus at this meeting and that this would be used to develop into a contractual document in the future. Mr. Watts asked if the Trustees expect the Selectboard to sign a contract before separation is approved and Mr. Brown answered affirmatively. Mr. Ellis said that he supports a Tentative Agreement but recommended that singular agreements are not made for specific issues. A formal binding agreement will be put in place when all parties agree on all issues.

The Trustees agreed with the Selectboard that Policing costs be determined on a per-capita basis, with Mr. Tyler suggesting that the Police Chief be consulted to ensure that this is the best method. Mr. Brown indicated support for City funding the actual cost of the Police Department but asked that the Finance Department come up with a proposal for what this cost would actually look like. From the audience, Ms. Higgins asked for a point of order. She said that the Selectboard had never voted to enter into formal negotiations with the Trustees regarding separation. The public was told that this was an investigation, not a negotiation. Mr. Ellis said that the Trustees made a proposal and the Selectboard was responding to this. This discussion ought not be stopped for a procedural objection. Ms. Hill-Fleury suggested that the Selectboard listen to the Trustees responses during this time and not comment on them. Mr. Teich said that tonight’s discussion was to set up the parameters for further detailed conversations as there is no way for the Selectboard to plan for the future without having conversations with the Trustees. Mr. Ellis reiterated that the purpose of tonight’s meeting was to see where each Board stands on specific issues.

334 Mr. Brown asked if revenue and surplus would go back to the Town and City equally and Mr. Ellis
335 suggested having a true-up at the end of the year. Mr. Brown agreed with Mr. Watt’s earlier suggestion of
336 the inclusion equity groups on the Police Oversight Board. Mr. Watts also said this board would be
337 established by the Town, as the Police Department is a Town department. It would be anticipated that at
338 least one City resident would have a seat on the board. Mr. Chawla expressed support for including equal
339 representation for Village residents on this board. Policing in the Village is different than in the Town and
340 it will be important to provide this input to the Police Department. Mr. Watts asked if an advisory board
341 membership was a “sticking point” for the Trustees. Mr. Chawla said that this was very important to him
342 as the City residents need to have their own input and oversight on Policing. Mr. Brown said that this is
343 desired but not a showstopper at this time. Mr. Watts asked if flexibility to go to other organizations is
344 something that the City would be interested in pursuing. Mr. Teich said if there is a service that the
345 Village desires that is not typically provided, such as the school crossing at the Five Corners, this ought to
346 be listed as a separate contractual cost. He also suggested that manhours can be tracked for events in
347 either the Town or City, if this is desired. Mr. Luck said that tracking manhours for events can become an
348 administrative nightmare and could be seen as a challenge to the Chief’s ability to manage the department.
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350 Mr. Watts said that the Selectboard would also like to have the Village pay the complete costs associated
351 with the Finance Department. He said Town employees will be hired at the full discretion of the Town
352 Manager, however, the City Manager may be consulted. The Selectboard would like more information
353 about the proposed sixth employee proposed by the Trustees and their role in the department. The
354 Selectboard would also like to learn more about the City’s intention for sharing the Clerk and Treasurer,
355 as they may be interested in continuing to share the position. Mr. Brown said that current Town/Village
356 Clerk/Treasurer has said that each community must have their own Clerk/Treasurer. Regarding the
357 Finance Department, Mr. Brown said that, during the transition period, this would be a truly shared
358 department. Finance is an essential service to the City and they need to have some authority. Mr. Watts
359 said these are the same constraints the contract placed on the Police Department and asked why Finance
360 was seen differently. Mr. Brown said Finance would only be for a specific period to allow for the
361 unwinding of the department. Mr. Brown said his main concern is that the person who is responsible for
362 finances needs to have some type of oversight by the City Manager or council. Mr. Ellis said that the
363 Selectboard feels this would cause the Finance Director to have 2 bosses with separate priorities. Mr.
364 Brown says this mirrors the current setup with the Unified Manager. Ms. Safar said there is no problem
365 with this from a legal perspective but rather a lack of willingness to manage jointly and administratively.
366 Mr. Teich said that it can be difficult to listen to 2 bosses and this is especially hard when they are not
367 going in the same direction. Mr. Tyler offered during the transitional period, the management will be
368 people that we know and trust, and he feels comfortable with them being managed exclusively by the
369 Town.
370

371 There was some discussion on whether the external costs of the Finance Department (i.e., IT, Workers
372 Comp, etc.) would need to be paid for by the Village. Currently, there are five Finance employees, with
373 another to be added. Currently, only one Finance employee is exclusively a Village employee. Most of
374 these employees are Town employees who do work for the Village. During the transitional period, some
375 of the costs would be transferred out as three of the six employees would become Village employees. Mr.
376 Luck said that by the end of FY2023, there will be 2 Finance employees in both the Village and Town and
377 the Finance Director and Assistant Director would be shared. Mr. Luck said that these positions would be
378 full-time Town employees and the City would pay a share of this. There was some discussion on whether
379 or not a sixth employee would be required should separation not occur, as well as how their training would
380 be provided. Mr. Luck said that the person would be brought on while the Finance team is still shared and
381 would be needed regardless.

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Mr. Watts noted that the time is now past 11 PM, and that a unanimous vote is required to continue past this time.

PATRICK MURRAY made a motion, seconded by TRACEY DELPHIA that the Selectboard continue the August 23rd meeting to 11:30 PM. Motion passed 4-0.

Regarding reappraisal: Mr. Watts said that the Selectboard would like to have a Common Reappraisal Fund with the City, as well as continuing with a shared Assessor. Mr. Teich said that reappraisal is likely to begin at the end of 2022 and may take 2-3 years to complete. Both Boards expressed a desire to figure out how separation would impact this process.

Regarding Senior Services: Mr. Watts said the Selectboard does not want to pay half for a Senior Center space that can be used for other services by the City. If this is the case, the Selectboard would like to find its own space for a Senior Center and would be happy to consider sharing the space. Mr. Brown said the Town could be charged for the time that the space would be used for Senior Services. Mr. Tyler said that the seniors are a vulnerable population and encouraged sharing the services. He would like to reassure our seniors that they are not going to lose their services because of politics.

Regarding Indian Brook: Mr. Watts said that the current fee structure does not cover the full cost of the park. The Selectboard stated they would be open to offering the resident rate to City residents but the City would need to pay some of the costs. In addition, the Town would like resident access to all EJRP programs including childcare. Mr. Brown said that this is not fair to the Village, as we would be supporting Indian Brook and losing revenue from EJRP programs. He said that he would want to know more of the financial details for offering resident rate to Town residents. He also said that, at future meetings, the Boards need to be willing to do the work needed for separation without having other agenda items interfere.

f. Discuss agenda topics for next joint meeting

The Boards discussed item “f” prior to item “d.” Mr. Brown requested that the Tentative Agreements be presented at the next joint meeting and Mr. Watts said this could be difficult to do since the Selectboard only has one meeting prior to the next joint meeting. Other items suggested for the next meeting agenda include: retail cannabis sales, the Tree Farm property, and the evaluation of the Unified Manager.

PATRICK MURRAY made a motion, seconded by DAWN HILL-FLEURY that the Selectboard continue the August 23rd meeting to 12 AM. Motion passed 4-0.

d. Discussion about planning for Fiscal Year 2023 budget

Mr. Teich asked both Board members for their priorities for the next budgetary year. Some of the suggestions included: diversity and equity initiatives, economic development, sidewalk plowing, stormwater initiatives, and energy efficiency. Mr. Watts requested that tax equity between the Town and Village continue to be pursued. Mr. Brown stated, should the Selectboard move forward with this suggestion, that funding capital projects in the Village using the Town Capital Fund would be helpful.

6. READING FILE

a. Board member comments: None.

b. List of Boards/Committees/Commission openings

- 430 c. Memo from Karen Lemnah re: Reappraisal & Common Level of Appraisal (CLA)
- 431 d. Upcoming meeting schedule

432
433 **7. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

434 None.

435
436 **8. ADJOURN**

437 **DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by PATRICK MURRAY, that the Selectboard**
438 **adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 4-0 at 11:41 PM.**

439
440 **GEORGE TYLER made a motion, seconded by RAJ CHAWLA, that the Trustees adjourn the**
441 **meeting. The motion passed 4-0 at 11:41 PM.**

442
443 Respectfully Submitted,
444 Darby Mayville
445 Recording Secretary

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