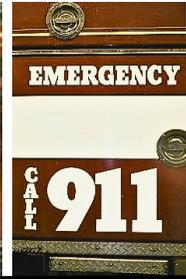




TOWN OF ESSEX



ANNUAL REPORT

2023



Celebrating 50 Years
of Essex Fire Department Service



www.essexvt.org

Essex
VERMONT



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this page!



Important Dates to Remember

March 4 - Town Showcase & Informational Hearing

March 5 - Town Meeting - Voting by Australian Ballot

March 15 - 2nd half of 2023 property taxes due

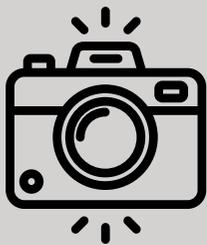
April 1 - Dog licenses are due

April 15 - Water/Sewer payments due

August 15 - Water/Sewer payments due

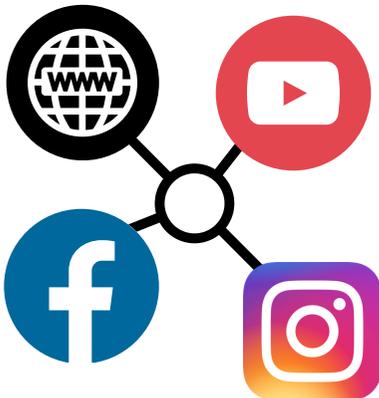
September 16: 1st half of 2024 property taxes due

December 16 - Water/Sewer payments due



Send us your photos!

Do you have a beautiful old barn photo or a snapshot of your kayak adventure on Indian Brook? Send along your photos and you may see them in future communications from the Town of Essex! Email your photos to hello@essex.org. Be sure to tell us where it was taken!



Stay connected

www.essexvt.org/newsletter - sign up for monthly emails - Essex News

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www.instagram.com/exploreessexvt - Follow Explore Essex

www.frontporchforum.com - watch for posts from Essex



essexvt.org/townmeeting

TOWN MEETING



Attend the Informational Hearing on Zoom

Meeting ID: 987 8569 1140
Passcode: 032060

Scan for
Informational Hearing
Zoom Link



Informational Hearing

March 4, 2024

Showcase starts at 6 pm, Hearing begins at 7:30 pm
Essex Middle School, 60 Founders Rd.

Voting on the budget and all articles will be by Australian ballot. Attend the Informational Hearing to view presentations on ballot items, ask questions, and provide comments. The local Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts will be assisting with the event and a soloist from the Essex High School Chamber Choir will perform.



Stop in early to visit with municipal departments, boards, committees, commissions, and other organizations providing support to the Town of Essex. The Essex High School Student Government will be serving up warm soup and bread to start off your evening. Learn more at essexvt.org/showcase.

Voting

March 5, 2024

7:00 am to 7:00 pm

Essex Middle School, 60 Founders Rd.

Learn more about voting and early/absentee voting on page 50 of this report and online at essexvt.org/voting.

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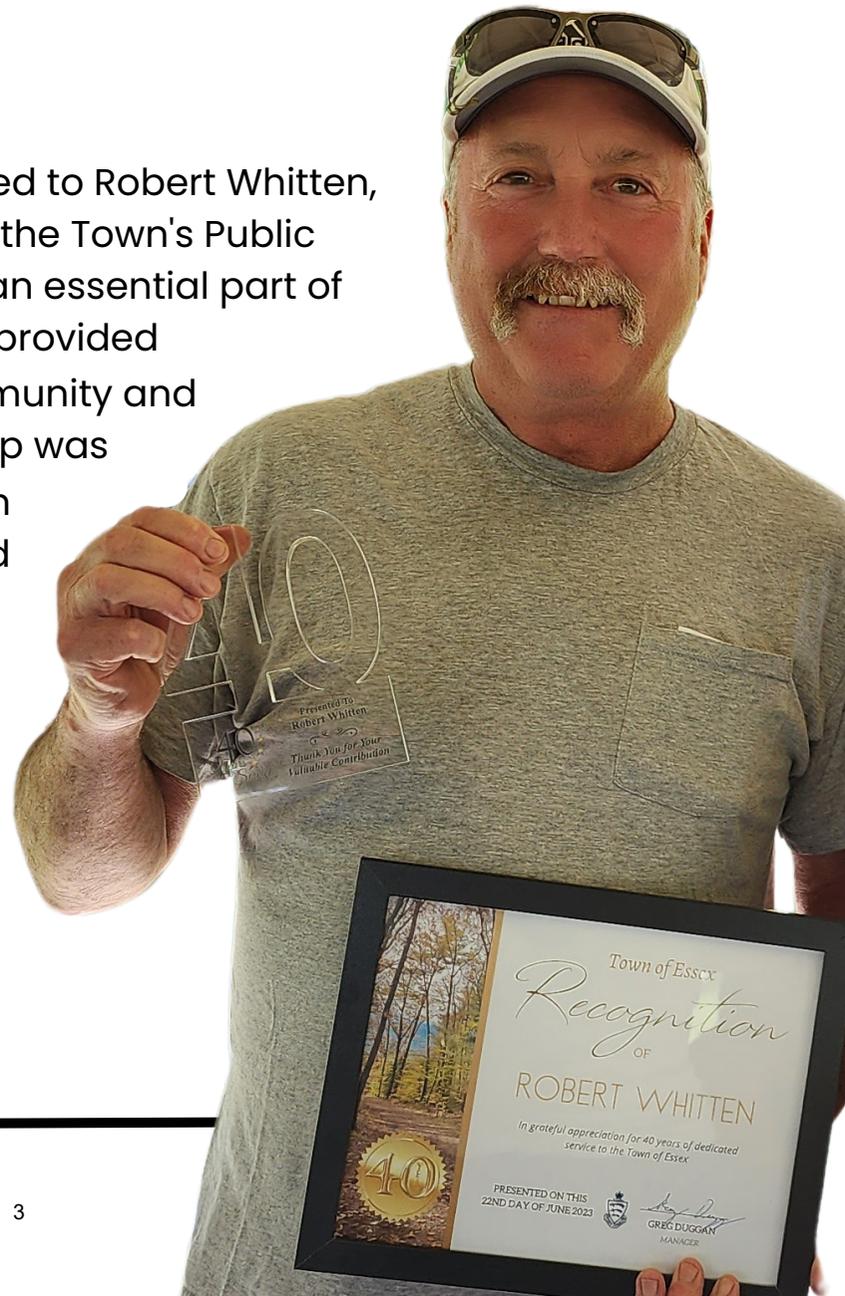
DEDICATION

Honoring a Dedicated Public Works Employee

Bob Whitten

40 Years of Service

The 2023 Annual Report is dedicated to Robert Whitten, "Bob," who served as a member of the Town's Public Works crew for 40 years. Bob was an essential part of the Public Works Department and provided valuable support to both the community and his fellow employees. His leadership was particularly crucial in the operation and maintenance of the water and sewer systems throughout Essex. Bob retired in December 2023, leaving behind an inspiring legacy of hard work and dedication.





DECLARATION OF INCLUSION

The Town of Essex Selectboard hereby declares our commitment to fostering an inclusive and welcoming place for all residents, visitors, employees, and more. We recognize that people have unique experiences, perspectives and identities that shape their individuality, and it is that diversity that contributes to the richness and strength of our community. We understand that our community is best served when all residents feel included and have a sense of belonging with equitable access to town services and facilities.

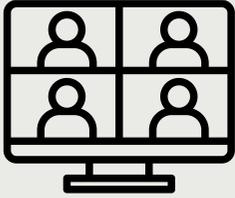
To that end, The Town of Essex Selectboard condemns racism, sexism, classism, ableism, ageism, discrimination, religious intolerance, and homophobia, in all their forms. We welcome all people, regardless of ethnicity, color, religion, national origin, gender identity or sexual expression, age, or physical and/or mental capabilities, to participate in governance. We will make every effort to provide a safe and welcoming community for all.

The Selectboard understands that inclusion is not merely a statement but a continuous effort that requires active engagement and collaboration from all members of the community. We commit to regularly review our efforts and policies, engage in constructive feedback, and make adjustments as necessary to ensure that our community is welcoming, inclusive, and accessible for all.

Adopted June 26, 2023



essexvt.org/selectboard



Attend Selectboard meetings on Zoom

Meeting ID: 987 8569 1140

Passcode: 032060



Watch Livestream

www.youtube.com/@townmeetingtv



Find Meeting Agendas

essexvt.org/meetings

SELECTBOARD



A message from Chair Andy Watts

This past year included some big changes for Essex, one of which was moving all Town Meeting business to the ballot. This means that the in-person gathering prior to the vote on Town Meeting Day will be informational only going forward.

This current fiscal year (July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024) is the first budget year since Essex Junction separated from the Town of Essex. As such, the budget that was approved on Town Meeting Day 2023 drove a significant municipal tax increase. The Selectboard is highly appreciative that voters approved this budget and requested that this year's increase be limited to 5% or less. It will likely be at least a year or two before increases to the operating budget get back to the more historical 3-4% annual increase.

At Town Meeting last year, voters also approved a one cent increase in the capital tax. The request for this increase was spurred mainly by the separation of Essex Junction from Essex and the resultant 41% reduction in the Essex property tax base. Though Town Staff requested a larger increase, the Selectboard backed off on the request due to the large general fund increase and because of the anticipated reassessment that will likely affect all Essex property values. Since the capital tax is a flat tax, it will increase proportional to the increased value for all properties. It is not known, nor can it be predicted, how much property values will increase. For that reason, the Selectboard chose a smaller capital tax increase than was requested by Town Staff with the intent to revisit the tax rate after reassessment.

Essex voters also approved five **charter changes**. It has been many, many years since the Essex charter has had any update. A charter should be a live document that is updated as needs change. Many questions that have been left dormant for many years have been brought forward for discussion by the input provided by the Charter Review Committee that the Selectboard established in the summer of 2022. Five of the

A message from Chair Andy Watts

committee's recommendations were approved by voters in 2023 and are, as of this writing, being considered for approval by the Legislature. Much Selectboard meeting time this past year was spent discussing the remaining proposals and it is expected that at least some of the proposals will be highlighted as high priority in the Selectboard's spring Strategic Planning Session. Remaining members of the Charter Review Committee began meeting again in January 2024 to review questions and comments from the Selectboard.

The Selectboard established and appointed members to a **Police Community Advisory Board** whose primary mission is to provide an open channel of communication between residents and the Essex Police Department with a focus on advocating for marginalized, disenfranchised, and oppressed members of the community. The intent is to foster a strong positive trusting relationship between the community and law enforcement.

The Selectboard also updated its committee procedures by requiring all open seats to be advertised with all candidates being interviewed including those asking for reappointment. All committees and commissions have also been invited to attend Selectboard meetings allowing them to highlight their efforts and to ask for help where needed. It is felt that this has greatly improved communication and interlock with all our appointed committees.

"I also encourage all residents to attend the meetings of any board, committee or commission whose work interests or impacts them, as public input is invaluable in creating a community that works for all of us."

As an aside, I would like to thank everyone who stepped forward to volunteer and would encourage everyone to consider where you might be able to support the betterment of our community. I also encourage all residents to attend the meetings of any board, committee or commission whose work interests or impacts them, as public input is invaluable in creating a community that works for all of us. Information about the Town's committees, including meeting schedules, can be found at www.essexvt.org.

On June 26, the Selectboard joined more than one hundred Vermont municipalities in adopting a **Declaration of Inclusion**. This is an important step for Essex. The Town Plan which is before voters at Town Meeting this year includes many action items in line with this declaration. As indicated in the declaration itself, it is not merely a statement, but it is a challenge to all of us to review our thoughts and actions to ensure that our community is welcoming, inclusive, and accessible for all.

A message from Chair Andy Watts

On November 20th, the Selectboard authorized the Town Manager to execute any and all documents necessary for the purchase of property at 80 and 90 Upper Main Street for the purposes of developing a new municipal center for Essex. The \$3M purchase was made using federal ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funding, of which the Town had nearly \$3.3M. With the separation of Essex Junction from the Town, our Town Offices are no longer in the Town of Essex. We also have outgrown our Fire Station and Library both of which are being considered for relocation to this new property. The 5-year capital plan, recently approved by the Selectboard, includes \$40M in future years intended to cover the cost of building a new Town Hall, Fire Station and Library. Yes, building a new municipal center will be expensive and all efforts will be made to secure funding to offset the impact to Essex taxpayers including grants, phasing of construction and possibly new revenue sources. The site also has the potential to host private development, public recreation space, and other amenities beneficial to the community. Developing the plans for this project will hopefully involve many of you. Please take the time to engage with the public process that will surround this effort.

Wishing you all the best in the coming year. Please feel free to reach out to any Selectboard member with comments or questions. Please, please, please consider volunteering and/or attending Selectboard or other Committee/Commission meetings and, again, please consider engaging with the plan to develop our new property in the center of Essex. All input and participation is welcome and appreciated.

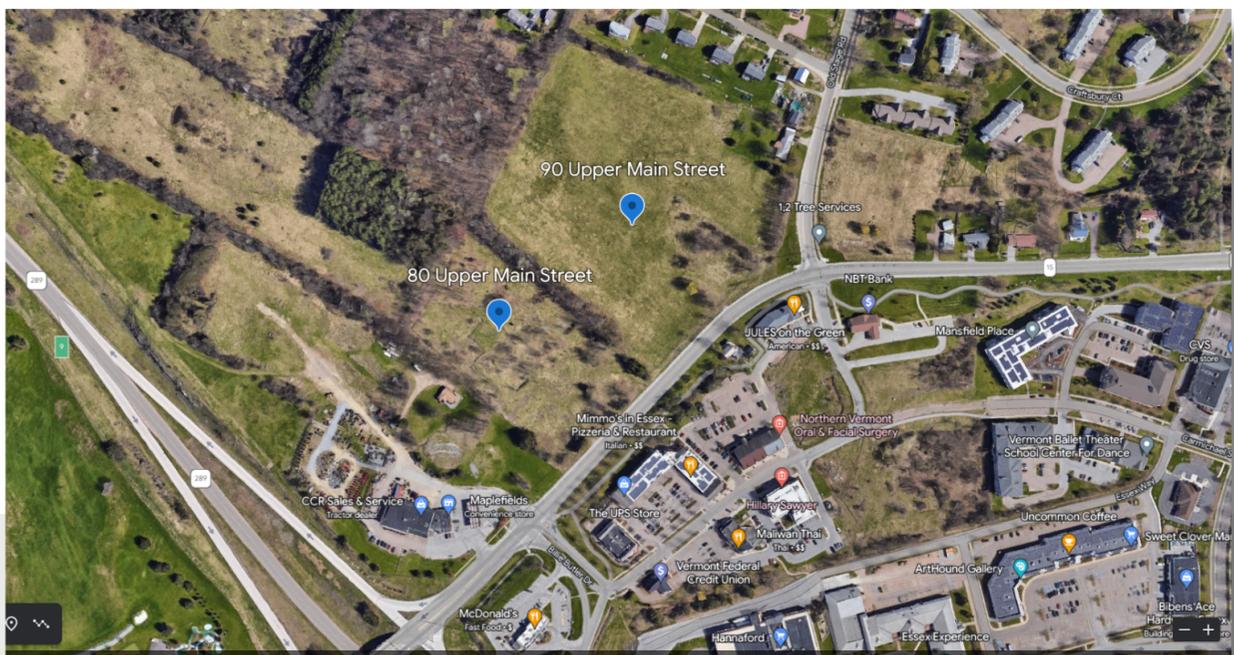


Image generated from Google Earth



essexvt.org/administration



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essexvt.org/coffee

You Tube Channel
youtube.com/@essexvt

Watch for posts and events from the Town of Essex!



TOWN MANAGER



A message from Town Manager Greg Duggan

The past year has been one of growth and transition. The Town of Essex has continued to adapt to existence without Essex Junction being a part of the Town, taking important financial steps and embarking on exciting initiatives.

Residents have been instrumental in ensuring Essex remains a vibrant, community-oriented town. Voters overwhelmingly supported the fiscal year 2024 operating budget in March 2023, allowing the Town to provide undiminished services despite a hefty tax rate increase after losing a large chunk of its tax base. Voters also approved an increase to the capital tax, which further helped mitigate the loss of the Essex Junction tax base and will better allow the Town to meet its capital needs.

One of my goals a year ago was for the Town to return to a place of financial predictability as soon as possible after losing the Essex Junction tax base, and I'm happy to report that the budget proposal for the coming fiscal year 2025 carries a much more reasonable projection of a 4.24 percent tax rate increase. More information on the FY25 budget is included below.

In addition to supporting the Town financially, many residents also stepped up to volunteer for Essex. When the Selectboard interviewed candidates for volunteer boards, commissions, and committees in the spring of 2023, they met many people coming out to enhance Essex in their areas of interest, be that cemeteries, conservation and trails, economic development, energy, housing, libraries, policing and community safety, planning, and zoning.

The community also came together over many events in the past year, including the Spring Scavenger Hunt, Juneteenth, National Night Out, Explore Essex, and the Fire Department Open House.

Many other efforts in 2023 were aimed at planning for and establishing a solid foundation for Essex's future. The Planning Commission,

A message from Town Manager Greg Duggan

Community Development Department, and many volunteers completed work on the Town Plan, which sets the direction for the community's next eight years. The Town Plan also serves as the basis for Essex's zoning and subdivision regulations. Voters will decide whether or not to approve the Town Plan at Town Meeting.

Voters passed five changes to the Town Charter last year that, if approved by the Vermont Legislature, would allow the Town to set licensing fees, enact a Just Cause Eviction ordinance, let voters recall Selectboard members, and transition from a Zoning Board to a Development Review Board. The fifth change reorganizes the charter to read and flow more cohesively. As of this writing, four of the five changes – with the Just Cause Eviction ordinance being the exception – have been approved by the Vermont House of Representatives. The charter changes would take effect upon full passage from the Legislature and approval of the Governor.

The Town also acquired property on Upper Main Street that will allow Essex to build for the municipal organization's future. The property at 80 and 90 Upper Main Street has the potential to house new Town Offices, a fire station, library space and community and recreation space – while also supporting a vibrant downtown envisioned in the Town Plan and the ETC Next (Essex Town Center) plan. The Public Works Department has also taken steps to improve water and sewer infrastructure in the Town Center area. Outdoor public space such as walking trails are a possibility on the site. Private development could support other community needs such as housing and commercial space. Public input will shape the vision for the property, and the coming year will provide ample opportunity for residents to weigh in on the future of the site.

As the Town moves into the future, it will be doing so without some key employees who have been with Essex for many years. Dispatcher Ray LaCroix (14 years), Accountant Heather Packard (7 years), and Water Sewer Foreman Bob Whitten (40 years) retired in 2023. All three often worked outside the public eye, yet have been critical in making sure the Town functions seamlessly. I thank them for their service and wish them the best in retirement.

As we approach Town Meeting on March 5, 2024, residents should be aware of changes from past Town Meetings. Last year, voters elected to conduct all Town business by Australian ballot. As a result, voters will either need to request an early ballot from the Town Clerk's Office or show up at the polls at Essex Middle School on March 5. Rather than the in-person Town Meeting, there will instead be an Informational Hearing on the evening of March 4, at which residents can learn about ballot items. The Town Showcase will happen on the same evening, also at Essex Middle School, where municipal departments and the Town's volunteer boards, commissions and committees will be available to highlight their work and engage with residents. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

A message from Town Manager Greg Duggan

FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET

On the Town Meeting ballot, voters will be asked whether or not to approve the proposed fiscal year 2025 budget. The proposed budget represents months of work from the Selectboard and Town staff, and contains the funding necessary to maintain and improve municipal services.

The overall budget proposal is \$16,106,421, with \$11,382,473 of that amount to be raised by the tax levy. Grand list growth was conservatively estimated at 0.75 percent. The tax levy would result in an estimated municipal tax rate increase of 4.24 percent, for an increase of \$80.36 on the average home.

	FY2024	FY2025 Proposed	\$ Change	% Change
Total Budget	\$ 15,401,152	\$ 16,106,421	\$ 705,269	4.58%
Tax Levy	\$ 10,837,562	\$ 11,382,473	\$ 544,911	5.03%
Grand List	\$ 16,017,549	\$ 16,137,681	\$ 120,132	0.75%
Tax Rate	0.6766	0.7053	0.0287	4.24%
\$280k Home	\$ 1,894.48	\$ 1,974.84	\$ 80.36	4.24%

Inflation continues to drive up costs. Health insurance premiums are increasing 12.8 percent or 14.2 percent, depending on the plan; contractual raises to staff are driven in part by inflation; and gasoline costs for vehicles are projected to increase 37.5 percent over FY24.

Increases to the FY25 budget are coming in the following areas:

Salaries (more details below about proposed staffing changes)	\$416,271
Benefits (more details below about proposed staffing changes)	\$52,319
Gasoline	\$60,000
Technology, Subscriptions, Licenses	\$36,617
Vehicle purchases in Police (to be shared with Essex Junction)	\$24,000

The Town is also losing approximately \$50,000 of revenue from Essex Junction in FY25, since the Town stopped providing senior services to Essex Junction on December 31, 2023.

Despite increased costs and reduced revenue in some areas, the FY25 budget includes many areas of cost savings and additional revenue.

Revenue

The Town continues to share Assessing and Police services with Essex Junction, with departmental costs shared on a per parcel and per capita basis, respectively. Those cost sharing agreements will result in \$3,179,451 of revenue from Essex Junction.

A message from Town Manager Greg Duggan

The Town has also taken advantage of generous interest rates to raise revenue. Interest revenue is projected at \$320,000 for FY25, up from the \$17,000 budgeted in FY24. (FY24 is also now projected to have much more than \$17,000 in interest revenue.) It is important to note that while the interest revenue will greatly benefit the Town in FY24 and FY25, interest rates can fluctuate and may decline in the future. Therefore, long-term reliance on interest should not be anticipated.

Cost savings

Major savings were found for the FY25 budget in the way the Town budgets for health insurance, even with the hefty increases in health insurance premiums. The Town offers opt-out payments for employees who choose not to accept the Town's health insurance plans. In past years, the Town has budgeted those employees on single-person plans, providing a conservative estimate for instances when a person may opt back into the Town's insurance. Upon deeper review, however, the HR Director found that employees rarely opt back into the Town's health insurance plans unexpectedly.

As a result, all current staff have been budgeted with the health insurance plans or opt-outs that they are expected to elect in FY25. Making the change from budgeting single-person plans to opt-out costs resulted in budgetary savings of \$83,066.

Additional cost savings were created through staffing changes, including a reallocation of some salaries to enterprise funds, despite the addition of two new, part-time positions in the budget. More details on staffing changes are included below.

Staffing changes

The FY25 budget proposal contains several changes to existing staffing levels that will affect the operating budget, including two new positions and the elimination of others.

The new positions are a part-time Administrative Assistant for the Manager's Office (20 hours/week), and a part-time Trails Coordinator (28 hours/week).

The Administrative Assistant will primarily take on work currently being done by the Assistant to the Manager/Public Information Officer and the Human Resources Director, which will in turn allow the Manager and Deputy Manager to spend more time on higher level management functions and less time on specific projects. The Assistant to the Manager/Public Information Officer currently handles most of the administrative functions in the Manager's Office. Bringing in an Administrative Assistant will allow the Assistant to the Manager/Public Information Officer to spend more time on strategic communications and special projects. Additional administrative tasks can also be completed, and the Administrative Assistant will also be able to handle administrative HR functions such as posting job advertisements, scheduling interviews, submitting retirement contributions, administering medical leave, and managing COBRA payments. The HR Director will then have more time to devote to policies, compensation research, union negotiations, targeted hiring efforts, and supporting staff with various personnel issues, among other responsibilities.

A message from Town Manager Greg Duggan

The Trails Coordinator will finally allow the Town to devote more attention to its trail networks and pedestrian infrastructure, which has been a goal of the Selectboard, the community, and staff for quite some time. The position would relieve pressure on existing Parks and Recreation staff and would complement the Town Planner in supporting the Conservation and Trails Committee and planning and expanding trail systems.

The Fire Department budget includes the addition of stipends for volunteers to be on call for evening and weekend shifts. As a paid, on-call department, Essex Fire and the community rely on volunteers. Since the beginning of FY23, the Fire Department has bolstered daytime coverage with per diem firefighters. The FY25 budget aims to increase the pay rates for the per diems by \$1/hour to better match market rates. Additionally, the FY25 budget proposal seeks to incentivize volunteer coverage by including stipends of \$40 per evening and weekend shift, for four volunteers per shift.

In the Library, an additional 15 hours per week are proposed, to be allocated between two existing part-time employees and the substitute hours. The FY24 library budget added five hours of staffing, which has been useful, but the library still operates with barebones staffing. Ensuring adequate coverage can be a challenge for the library, particularly if people are unexpectedly out sick. The additional hours will also support the Library's effort to bring more programs to residents outside of the library, such as a reading program for seniors.

The Library budget also includes funding for an Assistant Library Director, which would be a promotional opportunity for existing staff. Having an Assistant Director would build capacity in the library and ensure better redundancy and support for times when the Director is out of the office.

The FY25 budget also includes staffing reductions in some areas. With the Town no longer staffing the Essex Area Senior Center as of January 1, 2024, a Senior Center Coordinator is no longer needed. Senior Van Drivers are being reduced from 3 to 2 based on more consistent coverage. In the Finance Department, staffing has stabilized tremendously after a year of turnover. The separation of Town and City finances is nearly complete, and the department can once again devote its energy almost entirely to Town finances. As a result, part-time staff and consultant work is no longer needed. Lastly, the Police budget has historically included a Seasonal Records Clerk. That position is rarely used, and recent staffing changes have allowed for the hire of a dedicated Records Clerk (the previous Records Clerk also worked occasionally in Dispatch).

Allocations of staff to enterprise funds have also been updated. For instance, the Water/Sewer Clerk has been budgeted entirely to the water/sewer fund, even though that position supports the Finance Department with accounts payable and other duties for the entire Town. As a result, 10 percent of that salary and benefits was shifted back to the Finance Department. Going in the other direction of shifting salaries and benefits, Parks and Recreation Administrative Staff (Director, Assistant Director, Business Coordinator, Senior Programs Director) had portions of their salaries and benefits shifted to the Recreation Program Fund; this is intended as the first step in a two-year process to more accurately allocate those costs to the Rec Program Fund. In Public Works, two part-time staff who now spend all of their time on water/sewer responsibilities have been moved entirely to the water/sewer fund.

A message from Town Manager Greg Duggan

The financial impacts of the changes are presented below. Total cost includes salaries and benefits.

<i>New positions</i>	Total Cost	FTE
Admin Assistant (part-time) for Manager's Office	\$24,680.66	0.5
Trails Coordinator (part-time) for Parks and Recreation	\$32,261.76	0.7
 <i>Increases to existing staffing</i>		
Fire Department – addition of on-call stipends	\$74,880.00	
Library increase of 15 hours allocated to existing staff and substitutes (10 hours to existing staff)	\$20,247.54	0.25
 <i>Reductions of staff</i>		
Elimination of Senior Center Coordinator	(\$14,201.76)	(0.375)
Senior van drivers from 3 to 2	(\$19,176.72)	(0.3)
Elimination of part-time staff in Finance	(\$25,624.89)	(0.57)
Elimination of Police Seasonal Records Clerk	(\$7,061.51)	(0.14)
 <i>Other changes to operating budget</i>		
Assistant Library Director (promotional opportunity for existing staff)	\$4,674.20	
Police Records Clerk/Dispatcher will become Records Clerk	(\$58,225.97)	
Water/Sewer Clerk allocated 10% to Finance	\$11,954.10	
Part-time Public Works staff allocated entirely to Water-Sewer	(\$26,869.44)	
Part-time Highway/Water-Sewer position allocated entirely to Water-Sewer	(\$19,283.30)	
Stormwater summer interns now both fully Town- paid	\$10,076.04	
Parks and Recreation staff partially allocated to Rec Programs	(\$51,265.70)	
TOTALS	(\$42,934.99)	.065

Fund balance

The proposed budget includes the use of \$325,000 of unassigned fund balance to offset the tax rate. Another \$73,100 of fund balance will be used to cover one-time costs in Economic Development, Fire, Information Technology, and Parks. The Town will also meet its policy goal of keeping an unassigned fund balance equivalent to 15 percent of the operating budget, which can be used in cases of unexpected need.

Capital budget

The FY25 budget includes \$470,000 of transfers to the capital fund, which is the same amount as fiscal years 2023 and 2024. The capital tax rate will remain at 3 cents, and is expected to generate approximately \$484,130.

A message from Town Manager Greg Duggan

The Town's many capital needs include, but are not limited to, paving, storm water requirements, vehicle replacements, and building needs. The capital budget is also instrumental in providing local matches to state and federal grants.

In January 2024, the Selectboard assigned \$150,894 of FY23 surplus to the capital budget, which will support a new salt shed and road reconstruction.

Additional details about the FY25 capital plan are included in the annual report.

LOOKING AHEAD

In the coming year, I hope Essex will continue to see robust public involvement. Volunteer boards, commissions, and committees are often seeking new members. Public input about the Town-owned parcels in the Town Center will have a lasting impact on the community's long-term future.

Town staff seeks to keep the community informed through the Town website (www.essexvt.org), through social media such as Facebook and Front Porch Forum, and through monthly, electronic newsletters. Residents can sign up to receive the monthly Essex News at www.essexvt.org/newsletter.

As in years past, it has been a pleasure to serve the Town of Essex, and I look forward to that ongoing privilege.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

JOIN A BOARD OR COMMITTEE

www.essexvt.org/boardscommittees



essexvt.org/finance



REPORTS



Audit Report

The full audit report including basic financial statements can be obtained by visiting the Town of Essex website or by contacting the Finance Department.

Budget Documents

The annual report provides a broad view of the budget proposals for the General Fund Budget and Capital Budget. To view the entire budget package, please visit the website or contact the Finance Department for a copy.

Online payments

Make water/sewer or tax payments online with a debit or credit card (a small service charge is applied). Visit essexvt.org/finance to learn more.

For more information

Finance Department

Dan Roy, Finance Director

81 Main Street

Essex Junction, VT 05452

email: finance@essex.org

phone: 802.878.1359

essexvt.org/audit

essexvt.org/budget

Town Meeting Warning

TOWN OF ESSEX Annual Town Meeting Official Warning March 5, 2024

THE LEGAL VOTERS OF THE TOWN OF ESSEX IN THE COUNTY OF CHITTENDEN ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED AND WARNED TO MEET AT ESSEX MIDDLE SCHOOL, 60 FOUNDERS ROAD, ESSEX, VERMONT ON TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2024 TO TRANSACT THE FOLLOWING BUSINESS BY AUSTRALIAN BALLOT. THE POLLS FOR SAID BALLOT SHALL BE OPEN FROM 7:00 AM UNTIL 7:00 PM AT WHICH TIME THEY SHALL BE CLOSED.

- Article I. Shall the Town adopt a budget for the fiscal year July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 as recommended by the Selectboard in the amount of \$16,106,421?
- Article II. Shall the Town of Essex adopt the proposed 2024 Town Plan?
- Article III. Shall the voters require the Town Annual Report to list the location of commercial properties that received a municipal tax stabilization benefit within the report fiscal year, the amount of that benefit and property owners? (Advisory)
- Article IV. Shall the voters require the Town Annual Report to list the names, position titles, salaries and benefits of all town employees within the annual report fiscal year? (Advisory)
- Article V. Election of the following:
Moderator, 1 vacancy (1-year term)
Selectboard, 1 vacancy (3-year term)

The legal voters of the Town of Essex are further notified that voter qualification, registration and absentee voting relative to said annual meeting shall be in accordance with the Vermont Statutes Annotated.

Dated at Essex, Vermont, the 29th day of January 2024 by the Essex Town Selectboard.

Selectboard signatures:

Andrew J. Watts
Andrew J. Watts (Jan 31, 2024 08:37 EST)
Andrew J. Watts, Chair

Tracey A. Delphia
Tracey A. Delphia (Jan 30, 2024 22:07 EST)
Tracey Delphia, Vice Chair

Kendall Chamberlin
Kendall Chamberlin (Jan 30, 2024 10:50 EST)
Kendall Chamberlin, Clerk

Ethan Lawrence
Ethan Lawrence (Jan 31, 2024 10:46 EST)
Ethan Lawrence

Dawn Hill-Fleury
Dawn Hill-Fleury (Jan 30, 2024 10:10 EST)
Dawn Hill-Fleury

Received for record this 31st day of January, 2024 in the records of the Town of Essex.

Attest: Nanette Rogers
Nanette Rogers (Jan 31, 2024 10:14 EST)
Nanette Rogers, Town Clerk

Posted at: Essex Town Office, Essex Free Library, Essex Public Works, Essex Post Office, Essex Middle School, Essex Town Website



Kittell Branagan & Sargent

Certified Public Accountants

Vermont License # 167

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board of Selectboard
Town of Essex, Vermont
Essex, Vermont

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Town of Essex, Vermont as of and for the year ended June 30, 2023, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Town of Essex, Vermont's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Town of Essex, Vermont, as of June 30, 2023, and the respective changes in financial position and, where applicable, cash flows thereof for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinions

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Town of Essex, Vermont, and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Town of Essex, Vermont's ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months beyond the financial statement date, including any currently known information that may raise substantial doubt shortly thereafter.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinions. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Town of Essex, Vermont's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Town of Essex, Vermont's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

Required Supplementary Information

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the management's discussion and analysis, schedule of proportionate share of net pension liability, schedule of contributions and budgetary comparison information be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and, although not a part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. We have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, which consisted of inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

Other Information

Management is responsible for the other information included in the annual report. The other information comprises the introductory and statistical sections but does not include the basic financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinions on the basic financial statements do not cover the other information, and we do not express an opinion or any form of assurance thereon.

In connection with our audit of the basic financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and consider whether a material inconsistency exists between the other information and the basic financial statements, or the other information otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work performed, we conclude that an uncorrected material misstatement of the other information exists, we are required to describe it in our report.



St. Albans, Vermont
January 2, 2024

**TOWN OF ESSEX, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
JUNE 30, 2023**

Management of the Town of Essex (the Town) offers readers of the basic financial statements this narrative overview and analysis of the financial activities of the Town for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023. Readers should consider this information in conjunction with the financial statements immediately following this analysis. Please note that this section of the Basic Financial Statements is unaudited.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Government-wide Highlights

- The Town's assets and deferred outflows of resources exceeded its liabilities and deferred inflows of resources at the close of the fiscal year by \$39,538,742 (net position). Of this amount, \$8,919,475 (unrestricted net position) may be used to meet the Town's ongoing obligations. The balance of net position is made up of \$29,600,346 invested in capital assets net of related debt and \$1,018,921 restricted for specific purposes.
- The Town's total net position decreased by \$475,320 (1.19%). Of this amount, net position of the governmental activities decreased by \$544,465 (1.74%), and net position attributable to business-type activities increased by \$69,145 (0.80%).
- The Town's total debt decreased during the fiscal year to \$4,783,122, a net decrease of principal payments totaling \$552,379 as the Town did not incur any new debt during the fiscal year. Of the principal payments totaling \$552,379; of these, \$14,719 were in the water and sewer fund.

Fund Highlights

- At the end of the fiscal year, the Town's governmental funds reported a combined ending fund balance of \$9,691,763 an increase of \$173,180 from the prior year's combined ending fund balance.
- At the end of the current fiscal year, unrestricted fund balance (the total of the committed, assigned, and unassigned components of fund balance) for the general fund was \$5,072,859 or approximately 31.50% of total general fund expenditures (excluding transfers) in the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023. The Town has a fund balance policy authorizing the Town to maintain and administer an unassigned fund balance of up to 15% of the current year General Fund operating budget. The unassigned fund balance of \$2,310,173 as of June 30, 2023, is 15% of the General Fund operating budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024 (\$15,401,152).

OVERVIEW OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

This discussion and analysis is intended to serve as an introduction to the Town's basic financial statements which are presented in three sections: (1) government-wide financial statements, (2) fund financial statements, and (3) notes to the financial statements. In addition to the basic financial statements, this report also contains other and required supplementary information such as a general fund budget to actual comparison.

TOWN OF ESSEX, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
JUNE 30, 2023

It is important for the reader to understand that, although governmental accounting resembles private sector accounting, the two differ significantly. The government-wide financial statements will be the most familiar for readers versed in private sector financial reporting. Readers should know that the financial activities of the government unit are recorded in funds. A fund, generally, is a separate set of books for each major activity. For example, the Town has a Water and Sewer Fund and a Recreation Programs Fund. These operations are referred to as business-type activities, they are supported by user fees, and are recorded in enterprise funds separately from the general governmental activities which are accounted for primarily in the general fund and supported in large part by property tax revenues.

Government-Wide Financial Statements

The government-wide financial statements provide a general overview of the Town's operations presenting all data on a full accrual basis, similar to the way a private sector business would present its financial statements. There are two statements presented at the government-wide level: the Statement of Net Position and the Statement of Activities. Within each of these statements, governmental activities are presented separately from business-type activities. The governmental activities reflect the Town's basic services, including general government, public safety, public works, community development, parks and recreation, and public improvements. Property taxes finance the majority of these services supplemented by program fees, grant revenues, and other miscellaneous revenues such as investment earnings or proceeds from the sale of assets. The business-type activities reflect private-sector-type operations for which user fees recover all or a significant portion of costs. The business-type activities of the Town include the water and sewer operations and recreation programming.

The Statement of Net Position presents information on all of the Town's assets, deferred outflows of resources, liabilities, and deferred inflows of resources, with the difference reported as net position. Over time, increases or decreases in net position may serve as a useful indicator of whether the financial position of the Town is improving or deteriorating.

The Statement of Activities reports how the Town's net position changed during the most recent fiscal year. All changes in net position are reported as soon as the underlying event giving rise to the change occurs, regardless of the timing of related cash flows. Thus, revenues and expenses are reported in this statement for some items that will only result in cash flows in future fiscal periods (e.g., uncollected taxes and earned but unused leave time).

The government-wide financial statements include not only the Town itself (referred to as the primary government), but also other legally separate entities for which the Town is financially accountable (referred to as component units). During the current year, the Town was not responsible for any entities that qualify as component units.

The government-wide financial statements can be found on pages 1 and 2 of this report.

Fund Financial Statements

A fund is a group of related accounts used to maintain control over resources that have been segregated for specific activities or objectives. The Town, like other state and local governments, uses fund accounting to ensure and demonstrate finance-related legal compliance. The funds of the Town are segregated into three categories: governmental funds, proprietary funds, and fiduciary funds.

TOWN OF ESSEX, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
JUNE 30, 2023

Governmental funds are used to account for essentially the same functions reported as governmental activities in the government-wide financial statements. Unlike the government-wide financial statements however, governmental fund financial statements focus on near-term inflows and outflows of spendable resources, as well as on balances of spendable resources available at the end of the fiscal year. Consequently, the governmental fund financial statements provide a detailed short-term view that helps the reader determine the level of financial resources that are available to finance the Town's programs in the near future. Because this information does not encompass the long-term focus of the government-wide statements, additional information is provided that reconciles the governmental fund financial statements to the government-wide statements explaining the relationship between the two. The Town maintains two governmental funds - the General Fund and the Capital Projects Fund.

The basic governmental fund financial statements can be found on pages 3 through 6 of this report. The Town adopts an annual appropriated budget for its general fund. A budgetary comparison statement is provided on page 40 for the purpose of demonstrating compliance with the duly appropriated budget.

Reconciliation of Government-wide Financial Statements to Fund Financial Statements The governmental activities of the government-wide financial statements and the governmental funds of the fund financial statements do not use the same accounting basis or measurement focus. Because the focus of governmental funds is more limited than that of the government-wide financial statements, it is useful to compare the information presented for governmental funds with similar information presented for governmental activities in the government-wide financial statements. This comparison can help readers better understand the long-term impact of the Town's near-term financing decisions. Both the governmental fund balance sheet and the governmental fund statement of revenues, expenditures, and changes in fund balances provide a reconciliation to facilitate this comparison between governmental funds and governmental activities. These reconciliations are presented on the page immediately following each governmental fund financial statement.

The following indicates some of the reporting differences between the government-wide financial statements and the fund financial statements.

- Capital assets used in governmental activities are not reported on governmental fund statements.
- Long-term liabilities, unless due and payable, are not included in the fund financial statements. These liabilities are only included in the government-wide statements.
- Other long-term assets that are not available to pay for current period expenditures are deferred in governmental fund statements, but not deferred on the government-wide statements.
- Capital outlay spending results in capital assets on the government-wide statements but is reported as expenditures in the fund financial statements.
- Bond proceeds provide current financial resources on the fund financial statement but are recorded as long-term liabilities in the government-wide financial statements.

Proprietary funds are used to account for a government's business-type activities at the fund level. There are two types of proprietary funds: enterprise funds and internal service funds. Enterprise funds are used to report the same functions presented as business-type activities in the government-wide financial statements. The Town maintains two enterprise funds: the Water and Sewer Fund and the Recreation Programs Fund. Internal service funds are an accounting device used to accumulate and allocate costs internally among various functions. At this time, the Town has no internal service funds.

**TOWN OF ESSEX, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
JUNE 30, 2023**

Proprietary funds provide the same type of information as the government-wide financial statements, only in more detail. The proprietary fund financial statements provide information for the Water and Sewer Fund and the Recreation Programs Fund separately. The proprietary fund financial statements of the Town may be found on pages 7 through 9.

Fiduciary funds, also known as trust and agency funds, account for resources held for the benefit of parties outside the government. Fiduciary funds are not reflected in the government-wide financial statements because the resources of those funds are not available to support the programs of the Town. The accounting used for fiduciary funds is much like that used for proprietary funds. The Town maintains a Cemetery Trust Fund and an Agency Fund for developer escrow funds. The Town's fiduciary activities are reported in a Statement of Fiduciary Net Position and a Statement of Changes in Fiduciary Net Position beginning on page 10.

Notes to the Financial Statements provide additional information that is necessary to obtain a full understanding of the data provided in the government-wide and fund financial statements. The notes serve to explain, clarify, and expand upon the financial data presented in the financial statements, and provide some additional information. The notes can be found immediately following the basic financial statements.

In addition to the basic financial statements and accompanying notes, certain **Supplementary Information** is provided, including a budgetary comparison statement for the general fund, information on changes in the net pension liability, employer contributions to pensions, and investment returns. The supplementary information can be found immediately following the notes to the financial statements in this report.

GOVERNMENT-WIDE FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

	Governmental Activities		Business-type Activities		Total Government	
	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022
Assets:						
Cash	\$ 14,091,482	\$ 22,064,799	\$ 4,355,742	\$ 4,158,296	\$ 18,447,224	\$ 26,223,095
Other Assets	809,479	754,620	1,241,327	1,104,465	2,050,806	1,859,085
Capital Assets	30,391,971	30,917,635	3,991,497	4,190,593	34,383,468	35,108,228
Total Assets	45,292,932	53,737,054	9,588,566	9,453,354	54,881,498	63,190,408
Deferred Outflows of Resources	2,201,193	2,044,782	185,538	219,926	2,386,731	2,264,708
Liabilities:						
Other Liabilities	5,553,414	13,665,913	240,892	212,604	5,794,306	13,878,517
Noncurrent Liabilities	10,929,339	8,257,116	800,243	552,851	11,729,582	8,809,967
Total Liabilities	16,482,753	21,923,029	1,041,135	765,455	17,523,888	22,688,484
Deferred Inflows of Resources	193,266	1,924,451	12,333	174,019	205,599	2,098,470
Net Position:						
Net Investment in Capital Assets	25,737,707	25,725,711	3,862,639	4,047,016	29,600,346	29,772,727
Restricted	1,018,921	950,972	0	0	1,018,921	950,972
Unrestricted	4,061,478	4,685,888	4,857,997	4,604,475	8,919,475	9,290,363
Total Net Position	30,818,106	31,362,571 ₂₃	8,720,636	8,651,491	39,538,742	40,014,062

TOWN OF ESSEX, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
JUNE 30, 2023

As noted earlier, net position serves as a useful indicator of a government's financial position over time. At the end of the most recent fiscal year, the Town's assets and deferred outflows of resources exceeded liabilities and deferred inflows of resources by \$39,538,742. The Town's total net position is split between governmental activities net position of \$30,818,106 and business-type activities net position of \$8,720,636.

The largest portion of the Town's total net position \$29,600,346 (74.86%) reflects its investment in capital assets (construction in progress, equipment, land, buildings and infrastructure) net of any outstanding debt used to acquire or construct those assets. The Town uses capital assets to provide services to citizens; consequently, these assets are not available for future spending. Although the Town's investment in capital assets is reported net of related debt, it should be noted that the resources needed to repay the debt must be provided from other sources since the capital assets themselves cannot be used to liquidate these liabilities.

The Town's total net position includes \$1,018,921 (2.58%) of restricted net position. Restricted net position represents assets whose use is subject to external restrictions. The remaining balance of \$4,061,478 (22.56%) is unrestricted net position, which may be used to meet the government's ongoing financial obligations. Included in unrestricted net position are amounts that have been assigned for particular purposes, such as capital reserve funds and reserves for expenditures in subsequent years.

Governmental Activities

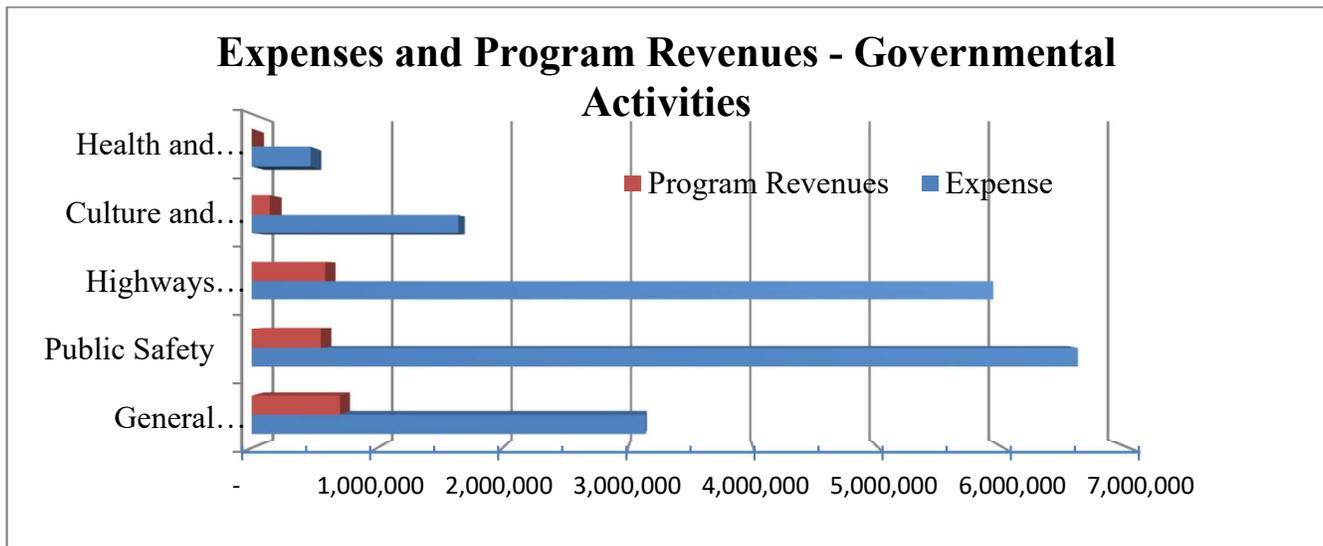
	<u>Governmental Activities</u>		<u>Business-type Activities</u>		<u>Total Government</u>	
	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022
Revenues:						
Program Revenues:						
Charges for Services	\$ 847,358	\$ 875,406	\$ 3,389,692	\$ 3,130,048	\$ 4,237,050	\$ 4,005,454
Operating Grants & Revenues	848,460	867,703	77,769	75,712	926,229	943,415
Capital Grants & Revenues	291,487	31,734	-	-	291,487	31,734
General Revenues:						
Property Taxes	15,528,875	14,814,089	-	-	15,528,875	14,814,089
Other	455,124	343,695	55,570	9,622	510,694	353,317
Total Revenues	<u>17,971,304</u>	<u>16,932,627</u>	<u>3,523,031</u>	<u>3,215,382</u>	<u>21,494,335</u>	<u>20,148,009</u>
Expenses:						
General Government	3,141,540	3,102,788	-	-	3,141,540	3,102,788
Public Safety	6,591,092	5,518,857	-	-	6,591,092	5,518,857
Highways and Streets	5,915,269	5,204,155	-	-	5,915,269	5,204,155
Health and Welfare	469,481	294,131	-	-	469,481	294,131
Culture and Recreation	1,647,217	1,494,940	-	-	1,647,217	1,494,940
Intergovernmental	557,308	501,051	-	-	557,308	501,051
Interest on Long-Term Debt	193,862	209,884	-	-	193,862	209,884
Water and Sewer	-	-	3,325,260	3,066,348	3,325,260	3,066,348
Recreation Programs	-	-	128,626	179,201	128,626	179,201
Total Expenses	<u>18,515,769</u>	<u>16,325,806</u>	<u>3,453,886</u>	<u>3,245,549</u>	<u>21,969,655</u>	<u>19,571,355</u>
Increase (Decrease) in Net Position						
Before Transfers	(544,465)	606,821	69,145	(30,167)	(475,320)	576,654
Transfers	-	(455)	-	455	-	-
Increase (Decrease) in Net Position	<u>(544,465)</u>	<u>606,366</u>	<u>69,145</u>	<u>(29,712)</u>	<u>(475,320)</u>	<u>576,654</u>
Beginning Net Position -as reported	31,362,571	30,756,205	8,651,491	8,681,203	40,014,062	39,437,408
Ending Net Position	<u>\$ 30,818,106</u>	<u>\$ 31,362,571</u>	<u>\$ 8,720,636</u>	<u>\$ 8,651,491</u>	<u>\$ 39,538,742</u>	<u>\$ 40,014,062</u>

**TOWN OF ESSEX, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT’S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
JUNE 30, 2023**

Governmental activities decreased the Town’s net position by \$544,465 for the year ended June 30, 2023. Key elements of the change are as follows.

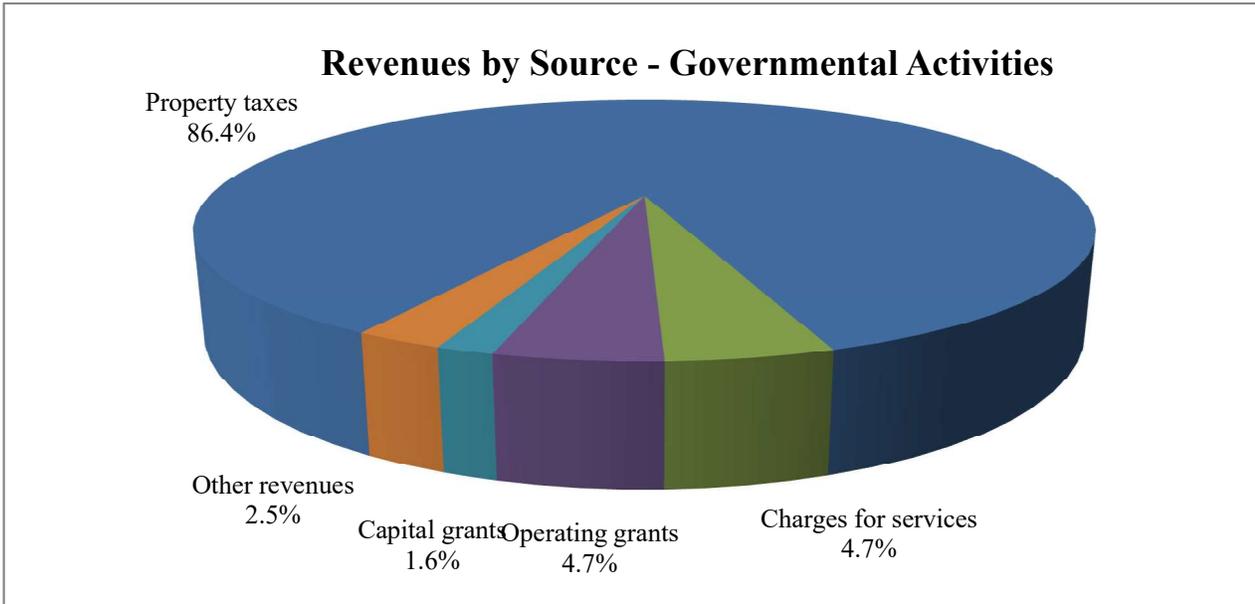
- Total governmental activities’ revenues increased by 6.5% (\$1,038,677) from 2022 to 2023. Operating grants and revenues decreased by \$19,242 (2.2%) while capital grants and revenues increased by \$259,753, due primarily to the capital work for the Cul-De-Sac retro project.
- Property tax revenues increased 4.8% or \$714,786 from the previous year as a result of growth in the grand list combined with a 0.1253 cent (22.7%) increase in the Town general fund tax rate.
- Total governmental activities’ expenses increased by 13.4% (\$2,189,963) from 2022 to 2023. Public Safety expenses end the year at 35.6% (\$6,591,092) of total governmental activities’ expenses. Public Safety remains the largest category of expenses from year to year followed by Highways and Streets which ended the year at 31.9% (\$5,915,269) of total governmental activities’ expenses.

The following graph entitled Expense and Program Revenues – Governmental Activities, gives the reader an idea of how each major program is funded. The revenues included in this graph are program specific revenues including user fees, operating grants, and capital grants. General revenues such as property taxes and interest earnings are excluded from the graph but are used to support the cost of each major program that is not covered by program specific revenues. The supporting data may be found in the Statement of Activities on page 2. As noted previously, Public Safety is the largest category of expenses in the current year and historically, followed by Highways and Streets.



Most of the governmental activities’ revenue comes from property taxes; 86.4% of total revenue or \$15,528,875. The second largest category of revenue is operating grants accounting for 4.7% or \$848,460. The third largest category of revenue is charges for services coming in at \$847,358; also at 4.7% of total revenue. Prior year property tax revenue accounted for 87.5% of total revenues, operating grants and revenues at 5.1% and charges for services at 5.2%. The following graph shows the distribution of governmental activities revenues by source for the year ended June 30, 2023.

**TOWN OF ESSEX, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
JUNE 30, 2023**

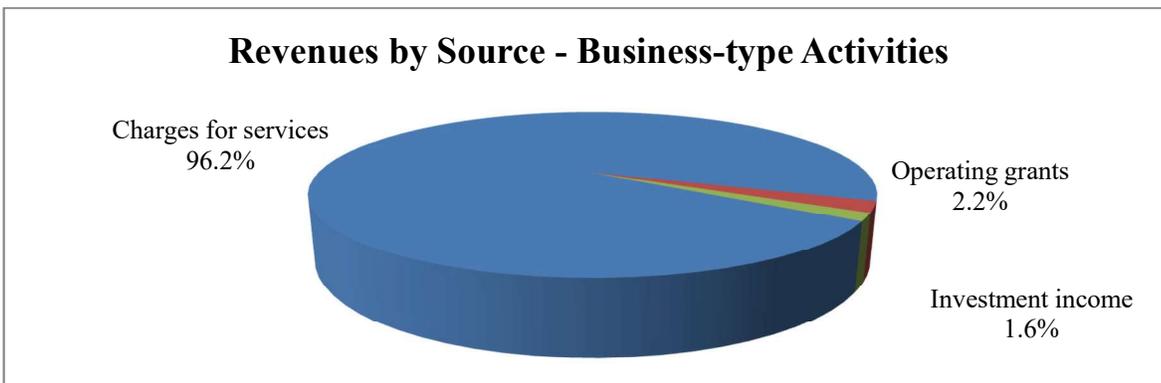


Business-type Activities

Business-type activities increased the Town's net position by \$69,145 (0.80%) during the current fiscal year. Key elements of this increase are as follows:

- Total revenues of \$3,523,031 were \$307,649 or 9.57% higher than the previous year. The increase is attributable to a \$259,644 (8.30%) increase in charges for services as well as an increase in other revenues by \$45,948 based mostly on interest earnings and a \$2,057 increase in operating grants.
- Total expenses of \$3,453,886 reflect an increase of \$208,337 (6.4%) from the prior year. This increase is primarily driven by a \$258,912 increase in water and sewer costs.

The Town's business-type activities are supported by user fees, also referred to as charges for services of \$3,389,692 or 96.2%, with assistance from operating grants of \$77,769 or 2.2% and investment income of \$55,570 at 1.6%.



**TOWN OF ESSEX, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT’S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
JUNE 30, 2023**

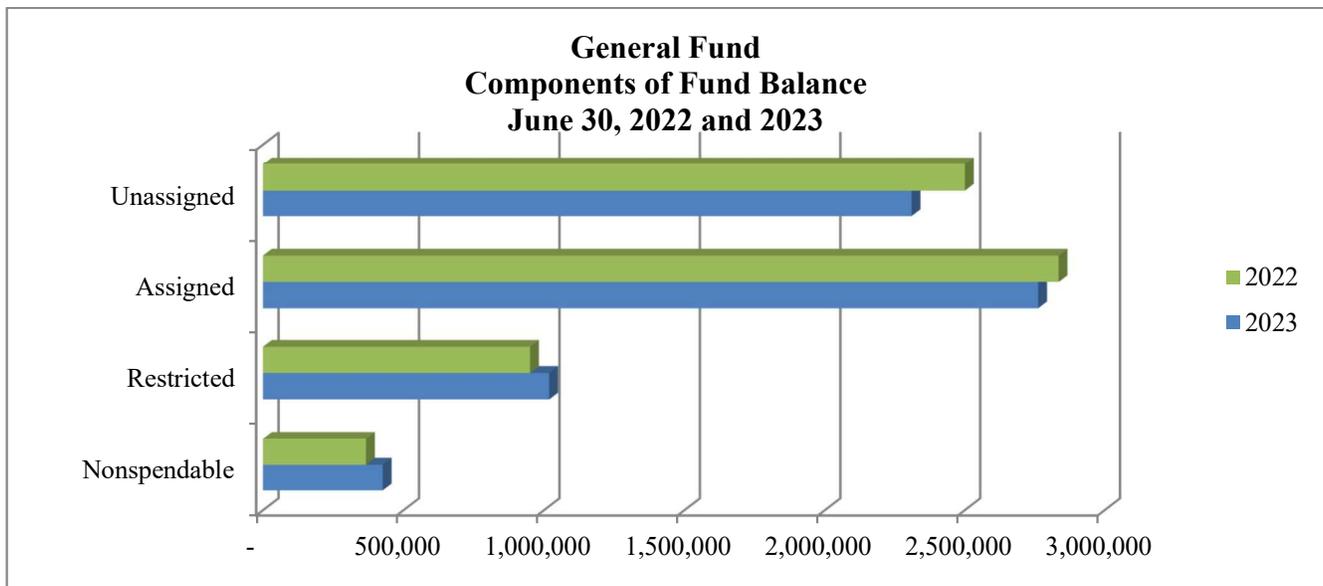
FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF THE GOVERNMENT’S FUNDS

As noted earlier, the Town uses fund accounting to ensure and demonstrate compliance with finance-related legal requirements. Information presented and discussed in this section is specific to the fund financial statements.

Governmental Funds

The focus of the Town’s governmental funds is to provide information on current year revenue, expenditures, and balances of spendable resources. Such information is useful in assessing the Town’s financing requirements. In particular, unassigned fund balance may serve as a useful measure of a government’s net resources available for spending at the end of the fiscal year.

At the end of the current fiscal year, the Town’s governmental funds (general fund and capital projects fund) reported combined ending fund balances of \$9,691,763, an increase of \$173,180 over the prior year. Of the total fund balance amount, \$426,378 is non-spendable (prepaid items and inventories) and \$1,018,921 is restricted, which indicates it is not available for discretionary spending, as it is otherwise restricted by grant agreements, statutes, or debt covenants. Of the remaining amount, \$5,936,291 has been assigned by the Town for various purposes (detailed in Note 14 Fund Balances and Net Position) and unassigned fund balance is \$2,310,173.



The general fund is the chief operating fund of the Town. At the end of the year, total fund balance in the general fund was \$6,518,158, a decrease of \$136,821 from the previous year. Of this amount, \$426,378 is non-spendable and \$1,018,921 is restricted. Assignments totaling \$2,762,686 in the general fund are detailed in Note 14 and unassigned fund balance is \$2,310,173. As a measure of the general fund’s liquidity, it may be useful to compare total fund balance to total general fund expenditures. Total fund balance represents approximately 42.32% of total general fund expenditures (excluding transfer), however, this amount includes nonspendable and restricted balances which would not be available to finance general fund expenditures if necessary.

**TOWN OF ESSEX, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
JUNE 30, 2023**

The remaining categories of fund balance (committed, assigned, and unassigned) are referred to as unrestricted fund balance and are resources that could be liquidated to support general fund expenditures if necessary. Unrestricted fund balance represents 35.17% of total general fund expenditures, excluding transfers.

The Selectboard is the body that authorizes assignments of fund balance in accordance with its fund balance policy and has the authority to make changes if they see fit. The Town's fund balance policy limits the amount of unassigned fund balance in the general fund to 15% of the current year's general fund operating budget.

General Fund Budgetary Highlights

The Town's budget for the year ended June 30, 2024 passed on the first vote at Town Meeting in March of 2023. There were no amendments made to the budget during the year.

On the revenue side, the Town recorded property tax revenue greater than the amount budgeted by \$35,225 and fines and forfeits revenue less than the amount budgeted by \$9,433. Recording fees were significantly below budget by \$190,527. Intergovernmental revenues exceeded budget by \$97,996.

Public safety expenditures were \$117,904 over budget driven by vehicle purchases. Culture and recreation expenditures were \$63,356 under budget, the majority of which was a result of actual personnel costs that were less than budgeted. General government expenditures were under budget overall by \$151,642.

During the year, the Town collected unbudgeted grants and other revenues which went to offset unbudgeted grant and other expenditures. One of the larger grant fundings was for the Community Justice Center at \$298,180 for the year. Other items in this category are federal forfeiture funds used for public safety purposes, unrestricted revenue raised by the Community Justice Center, and a small number of miscellaneous grants.

Proprietary Funds

The Town's proprietary funds provide the same type of information found in the government-wide financial statements, but in more detail.

Total net position in the Water and Sewer Fund is \$8,724,396 a decrease of 0.19% or \$17,025 from the previous year. Nearly half of the Water and Sewer Fund's net position is invested in capital assets net of related debt; 44.27% or \$3,862,639. This is a decrease from the previous year when the net investment in capital assets was \$4,047,016. Over time, the net book value (historical cost less accumulated depreciation) of assets decreases with the systematic allocation of the cost of said assets over their useful life by way of annual depreciation expense. Of the \$4,861,757 balance in unrestricted net position at the end of the year, \$833,500 is designated for future capital projects and \$8,005 is designated for prepaid expenses. This balance designated for future capital projects grows annually by the amount of connection fees received in excess of the amount budgeted to offset operating expenses.

The Town's second proprietary fund is the Recreation Programs Fund which was authorized by the Selectboard during the fiscal year ended June 30, 2011.

**TOWN OF ESSEX, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
JUNE 30, 2023**

This fund accounts for the majority of recreation programs which are expected to be supported by user fees. Program revenues, unlike property tax revenues, are derived from exchange transactions where the user receives a service of perceived equal value to the amount the user is willing to pay for the service. For the year ended June 30, 2023, this fund realized a net gain from operations in the amount of \$86,170. The fund has a deficit fund balance of \$3,760.

CAPITAL ASSETS AND DEBT ADMINISTRATION

Capital Assets

The Town's capital assets for governmental and business-type activities as of June 30, 2023, were \$69,717,587 offset by \$35,334,119 in accumulated depreciation resulting in capital assets net of accumulated depreciation of \$34,383,468. This investment in capital assets includes land, construction in progress, buildings and improvements, machinery and equipment, and infrastructure.

	<u>Governmental Activities</u>		<u>Business-type Activities</u>		<u>Total Government</u>	
	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
Capital Assets:						
Land	\$ 4,636,481	\$ 4,636,481	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,636,481	\$ 4,636,481
Construction in Progress	806,942	275,860	84,947	41,086	891,889	316,946
Buildings and Improvements	11,907,037	11,866,065	-	-	11,907,037	11,866,065
Vehicles and Equipment	9,043,673	8,760,682	621,730	585,422	9,665,403	9,346,104
Book Collection	459,726	459,726	-	-	459,726	459,726
Infrastructure	28,897,924	28,730,365	13,259,127	13,231,475	42,157,051	41,961,840
	<u>55,751,783</u>	<u>54,729,179</u>	<u>13,965,804</u>	<u>13,857,983</u>	<u>69,717,587</u>	<u>68,587,162</u>
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(25,359,812)	(23,811,544)	(9,974,307)	(9,667,390)	(35,334,119)	(33,478,934)
Total Assets, Net	<u>\$ 30,391,971</u>	<u>\$ 30,917,635</u>	<u>\$ 3,991,497</u>	<u>\$ 4,190,593</u>	<u>\$ 34,383,468</u>	<u>\$ 35,108,228</u>

Additional information on the Town's capital assets can be found in Note 7 Capital Assets.

Long-Term Debt

The Town began the year with \$5,335,501 in long-term debt outstanding. As of June 30, 2023, this amount had decreased by \$552,379 or 10.35% to end the current year with \$4,783,122 in long-term debt outstanding.

Summary of Long Term Debt

	<u>June 30, 2022</u>	<u>Additions</u>	<u>Deletions</u>	<u>June 30, 2023</u>
Governmental Activities				
General Obligation Bonds	\$ 4,140,000	\$ -	\$ 345,000	\$ 3,795,000
Notes Payable	1,051,924	-	192,660	859,264
Business-type Activities				
Water and Sewer Bond	<u>143,577</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>14,719</u>	<u>128,858</u>
Total Government	<u>\$ 5,335,501</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 552,379</u>	<u>\$ 4,783,122</u>

**TOWN OF ESSEX, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
JUNE 30, 2023**

The Town has no new debt during the year and made all required payments on long-term debt outstanding. Additional information about long-term debt can be found in Note 10 Notes and Bonds Payable.

ECONOMIC FACTORS AND NEXT YEAR'S BUDGET

Consolidation and Separation of Service Delivery Systems

- Starting in FY2015 the Town entered into an agreement with the Village (City) of Essex Junction and the Essex Junction School District to bill and collect their property taxes. This action was an effort to reduce the duplication of services that existed. As part of the agreement the Town assumed the delinquent taxes of the Village and Village School District. The Town of Essex will continue to do the school tax billing for those residents that reside in the Town of Essex. The Town has ended billing and collecting property taxes for the City of Essex Junction with the conclusion of FY23.

FY24 Budgets

The above listed factors were considered in preparing the Town of Essex's budget for the 2024 fiscal year. The approved budget resulted in a tax rate for FY23 of \$0.7066 (Town General and Capital Tax).

Rates for water and sewer operations were increased in fiscal year 2023 in response to increased costs for water purchases and an increase in repairs and maintenance.

REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

This financial report is designed to provide a general overview of the Town's finances to all those with an interest in the government's finances. Questions concerning any of the information provided in this report or requests for additional financial information should be addressed to the Finance Department at 81 Main Street, Essex Jct., VT 05452. The report is available online at www.essexvt.org.

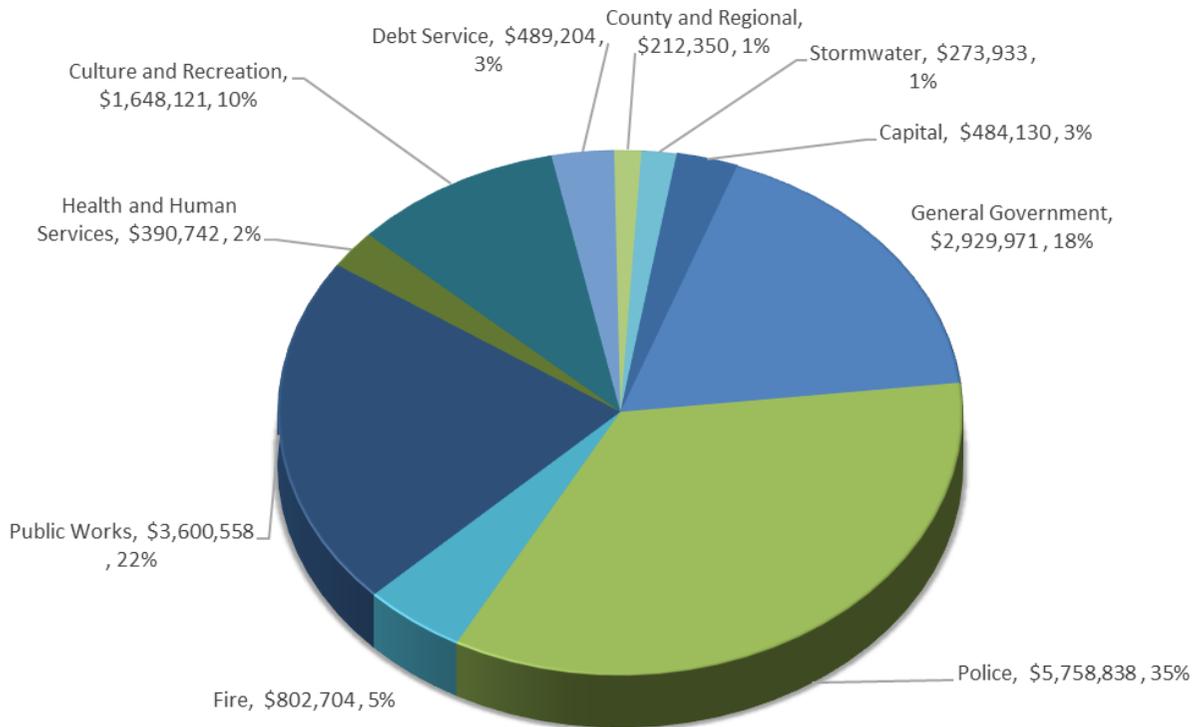
Town of Essex Capital Budget FY25

PROJECT NAME	TOTAL PROJECT COST	FY 24			FY 25		
		FY24 BALANCE (6/30/24 estimated)	FY25 Additions (CAPITAL TAX, budgeted)	FY25 Additions (TOTAL NON-CAPITAL, budgeted)	FY25 ADDITIONS TOTAL, budgeted	ESTIMATED SPEND FY25	FY25 BALANCE (6/30/25 estimated)
Highway Garage Area Improvements	\$ 525,263	\$ 25,263	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 25,263
New Town Municipal Complex	\$ 20,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Library Building	\$ 117,000	\$ 18,506	\$ 15,500	\$ -	\$ 15,500	\$ 34,006	\$ -
Memorial Hall	\$ -	\$ 2,034	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,034
Energy-saving projects	\$ -	\$ 7,048	\$ 1,000	\$ -	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,500	\$ 6,548
Historic Water Tower	\$ 229,000	\$ -	\$ 15,000	\$ -	\$ 15,000	\$ -	\$ 15,000
Tree Farm Improvements	\$ 185,000	\$ 38,791	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 38,791
Clerk Records Preservation	\$ 256,377	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 85,000	\$ 85,000	\$ 85,000	\$ -
Essex Police Station	\$ -	\$ 39,179	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 39,179
Building Facilities Needs	\$ 40,000	\$ 1,483	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,483
Fire Department Building	\$ 20,000,000	\$ 38,911	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 38,911
New Salt Shed	\$ 700,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 130,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 50,000
SUBTOTAL BUILDINGS	\$ 42,052,640	\$ 191,216	\$ 61,500	\$ 185,000	\$ 246,500	\$ 220,506	\$ 217,210
Road Reconstruction	\$ -	\$ (66,817)	\$ 175,000	\$ 50,894	\$ 225,894	\$ 200,000	\$ (40,923)
Gravel Roads Improvements	\$ -	\$ 25,509	\$ 20,000	\$ -	\$ 20,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 15,509
Roads relating to new Municipal Center	\$ 1,600,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
DESIGNATED FUNDS - VT15/Allen Martin Drive		\$ 8,494	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8,494
DESIGNATED FUNDS - West Sleepy Hollow Rd - Paving		\$ 66,287	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 66,287
DESIGNATED FUNDS - West Sleepy Hollow Rd - Gravel		\$ 12,585	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12,585
DESIGNATED FUNDS - WSHR - Road Maintenance		\$ 6,750	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,750
DESIGNATED FUNDS - Susie Willson Corridor		\$ 3,519	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,519
DESIGNATED FUNDS - Town Center Traffic Improvements		\$ 67,303	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 67,303
DESIGNATED FUNDS - Town Center Common		\$ 52,861	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 52,861
DESIGNATED FUNDS - Woodlands II Stub Road		\$ 9,849	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,849
DESIGNATED FUNDS - Hanley Road		\$ 900	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 900
SUBTOTAL HIGHWAYS	\$ 1,600,000	\$ 187,240	\$ 195,000	\$ 50,894	\$ 245,894	\$ 230,000	\$ 203,134
PW Major Equipment		\$ (71,215)	\$ 40,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 240,000	\$ 273,816	\$ (105,031)
Fire Department, Vehicles		\$ 126,124	\$ 30,000	\$ 175,000	\$ 205,000	\$ 175,017	\$ 156,107
Fire Dept, Equipment		\$ 109,878	\$ -	\$ 45,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 94,878
Police Dept, Equipment		\$ 36,779	\$ -	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 36,779
Parks Vehicles & Equipment		\$ 82,458	\$ -	\$ 28,000	\$ 28,000	\$ -	\$ 110,458
Senior Vans		\$ 70,997	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000	\$ 60,997
Admin Pool Vehicle		\$ 3,356	\$ -	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ -	\$ 6,356
SUBTOTAL VEHICLES & EQUIPMENT	\$ -	\$ 358,376	\$ 70,000	\$ 466,000	\$ 536,000	\$ 533,833	\$ 360,543
Park Asset Replacement Plan		\$ -	\$ 30,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 120,000	\$ 120,000	\$ -
Milfoil Mitigation at Indian Brook		\$ 94,303	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 94,303
Indian Brook Dam Repairs	\$ 205,000	\$ 131,416	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 131,416
Indian Brook		\$ 41,099	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 41,099
Firearms Signage		\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000
Rec Impact Fees		\$ 201,364	\$ -	\$ (85,000)	\$ (85,000)	\$ -	\$ 116,364
Cemetery Columbarium		\$ 3,033	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,033
DESIGNATED FUNDS - Woodlands Park/Path		\$ 7,043	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,043
SUBTOTAL PARK FACILITIES	\$ 205,000	\$ 483,258	\$ 30,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 120,000	\$ 398,258
VT RT 15 Circ to Mini-Golf Course (Route 15/McDonalds)	\$ 20,000	\$ 3,000	\$ -	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,000	\$ -	\$ 10,000
VT15 from Athens Dr to the Circ	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 30,000	\$ -	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	\$ -	\$ 70,000
ADA Compliance		\$ 24,786	\$ 13,000	\$ -	\$ 13,000	\$ 13,000	\$ 24,786
General Paths, Walks and Trails		\$ 163,583	\$ 15,000	\$ -	\$ 15,000	\$ -	\$ 178,583
DESIGNATED FUNDS - Saxon Hill Master Plan and/or Trails		\$ 18,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 18,000
SW Road to Pearl St. Park		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,500	\$ 7,500	\$ -	\$ 7,500
SUBTOTAL PATHS/WALKS/TRAILS	\$ 1,520,000	\$ 239,369	\$ 28,000	\$ 54,500	\$ 82,500	\$ 13,000	\$ 308,869
Stormwater construction projects		\$ 582,374	\$ 99,630	\$ (257,396)	\$ (157,766)	\$ 75,000	\$ 349,608
LDS Storm Pond Conversion	\$ 2,154,400	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,728,757	\$ 1,728,757	\$ 1,728,757	\$ -
2022 UPWP Village Storm Line Inspection Phase 4	\$ 50,000	\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000
Better Roads Grant		\$ 5,107	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,107
Town Grants in Aid 2024	\$ 45,500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 13,750	\$ 13,750	\$ 13,750	\$ -
SUBTOTAL STORMWATER	\$ 2,249,900	\$ 597,481	\$ 99,630	\$ 1,485,111	\$ 1,584,741	\$ 1,817,507	\$ 364,715
Equipment Replacement, Digital Records Management	\$ 125,000	\$ 64,501	\$ -	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ -	\$ 68,501
SUBTOTAL INFORMATION MANAGEMENT	\$ 125,000	\$ 64,501	\$ -	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ -	\$ 68,501
Natural Resources Management	\$ 100,000	\$ 42,956	\$ -	\$ 4,600	\$ 4,600	\$ 22,968	\$ 24,588
SUBTOTAL NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT	\$ 100,000	\$ 42,956	\$ -	\$ 4,600	\$ 4,600	\$ 22,968	\$ 24,588
Undesignated Funds	\$ -	\$ 816,725	\$ -	\$ 95,949	\$ 95,949	\$ -	\$ 912,674
<i>Undesignated</i>	\$ -	\$ 816,725	\$ -	\$ 95,949	\$ 95,949	\$ -	\$ 912,674
TOTAL GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES	\$ 47,852,540	\$ 2,981,120	\$ 484,130	\$ 2,351,054	\$ 2,835,184	\$ 2,957,814	\$ 2,858,490

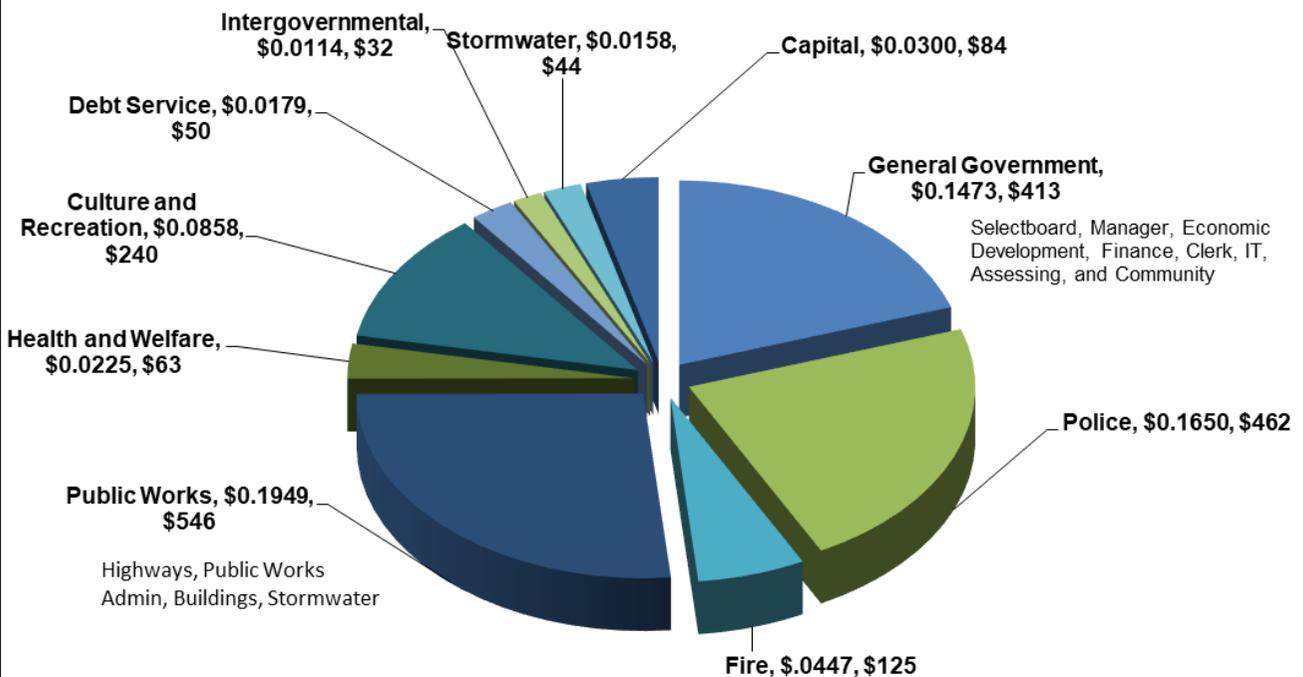
Town of Essex - General Fund Budget Summary

Department Name:	FY22 Budget	FY22 Actual	FY23 Budget	FY23 Actual	FY24 Budget	FY25 Budget Proposal
Revenues by Department						
Property Taxes	14,265,056	14,231,389	14,996,345	15,031,716	10,837,562	11,382,473
General Revenue	749,701	905,447	658,001	787,893	809,801	858,273
Administration	120,166	116,060	-	-	-	-
Selectboard	5,000	-	-	-	-	-
Clerk	249,205	330,163	311,185	131,791	160,105	103,170
Finance	-	-	61,000	-	-	-
Information Technology	14,000	18,788	-	-	6,500	5,000
Assessing	-	-	-	-	77,810	89,068
ComDev	81,800	80,841	142,510	162,797	137,600	144,600
EconDev	-	-	-	-	1,200	40,000
Public Safety						
Police	62,200	38,426	110,200	155,748	2,743,726	2,867,103
Animal Control	-	-	-	-	20,071	22,306
Fire	-	-	-	10	-	25,000
Culture & Recreation						
Pool	55,000	54,662	55,500	41,026	56,000	58,000
Parks	59,000	62,696	79,000	81,864	82,000	97,468
Seniors	-	-	-	-	50,379	-
Library	1,000	21,768	-	2,391	-	700
Public Works						
Public Works Admin	2,500	-	-	-	-	-
Highways	261,400	332,101	261,400	408,374	163,900	163,900
Stormwater	100	308	100	1,776	-	-
Buildings	-	-	-	-	51,295	48,786
Debt						
Debt	-	-	-	-	203,203	200,574
Total General Fund	15,926,128	16,192,647	16,675,241	16,805,387	15,401,152	16,106,421
Expenditures						
General Government						
Administration	667,520	825,773	652,579	620,930	644,259	694,316
Selectboard	121,608	99,551	109,730	80,043	112,145	82,948
Clerk	274,215	254,389	308,258	257,426	247,551	259,166
Finance	729,658	720,693	588,370	544,820	640,350	601,211
Information Technology	434,870	410,600	443,975	466,155	504,679	522,336
Assessing	174,672	167,973	171,887	174,527	180,953	207,141
Community Development	413,063	367,575	428,851	413,038	435,982	491,481
Economic Development	27,020	26,047	43,040	44,169	42,505	83,948
Health & Human Services	262,246	261,554	439,020	437,526	377,056	390,742
County Regional	502,243	501,051	554,381	557,308	193,457	199,774
Grants and Other	-	12,600	-	3,832	-	-
Public Safety						
Police	4,722,866	4,144,079	5,015,243	5,056,457	5,482,079	5,713,938
Animal Control	39,917	36,177	39,900	35,955	40,400	44,900
Fire	603,700	576,056	725,082	654,798	738,940	802,704
Culture & Recreation						
Rec Admin	357,058	321,730	363,254	375,814	386,512	242,560
Pool	141,066	135,578	142,837	140,343	136,752	236,419
Parks	353,078	313,540	353,714	335,401	364,294	462,692
Seniors	191,183	131,932	208,213	151,803	209,926	194,012
Library	433,880	407,120	444,315	445,193	468,575	512,438
Public Works						
Public Works Admin	276,740	270,018	210,389	242,272	223,918	221,363
Highways	3,862,142	3,918,373	4,082,082	4,064,184	2,692,422	2,848,364
Stormwater	359,452	326,769	357,577	317,643	256,730	273,933
Buildings	455,650	569,181	484,700	507,740	526,050	530,831
Debt						
Debt	522,281	522,280	507,844	507,844	495,617	489,204
Total General Fund	15,926,128	15,320,639	16,675,241	16,435,220	15,401,152	16,106,421

FY2025 Proposed Expenditure Budget



FY2025 Estimated Town Tax Rates and Taxes on \$280,000 Assessed Value Home



Total Estimated Taxes = \$2,059
Total Estimated Tax Rate = \$0.7353 (includes \$0.03 capital tax)

GENERAL FUND BUDGET DETAIL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025

110-00-00 - General Revenue - Town

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
010.000-Property Taxes	14,996,345	15,031,716	10,837,562	10,989,183	11,382,473	544,911
020.001-PILOT - Tax Agreements	11,000	10,854	-	-	-	-
020.017-Electric Car Charging Revenues	100	895	400	1,133	840	440
020.022-Rents and Royalties	1,001	1,001	1,001	1,001	1,101	100
041.000-Intergov: State and Other Grant	-	10,440	-	7,479	-	-
042.001-PILOT Revenue	28,000	31,186	16,000	14,118	16,160	160
042.002-Railroad Taxes	4,600	4,672	1,540	1,540	1,540	-
042.003-Current Use	23,000	26,274	27,200	27,158	27,472	272
042.004-Sate Act 60 Revenue	7,800	75,943	4,460	4,460	4,460	-
042.005-State Act 68 Revenue	82,500	88,737	48,000	48,000	52,000	4,000
060.000-Interest Income	30,000	89,348	17,000	329,066	320,000	303,000
085.000-Penalties	100,000	111,931	65,000	78,797	80,500	15,500
086.000-Interest	50,000	28,636	24,200	31,157	24,200	-
098.000-Miscellaneous Revenue	20,000	7,977	5,000	2,200	5,000	-
099.000-Use of Fund Balance/Reserves	300,000	300,000	600,000	600,000	325,000	(275,000)
Total Revenues	15,654,346	15,819,609	11,647,363	12,135,292	12,240,746	593,383

110-10-10 - Administration, Town

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Expenditure						
110.000-Regular Salaries	358,216	361,428	362,155	362,155	383,248	21,093
120.000-Part Time Salaries	-	-	-	-	22,880	22,880
210.000-Group Insurance	97,724	123,137	123,189	123,189	135,581	12,392
220.000-Social Security	27,799	27,131	28,110	28,110	33,513	5,403
230.000-Retirement	29,980	31,878	31,235	31,235	34,244	3,009
290.000-Other Employee Benefits	1,110	6,774	1,065	3,525	4,125	3,060
320.000-Legal Services	65,000	28,244	40,000	32,000	30,000	(10,000)
330.000-Professional Services	10,000	12,505	18,000	11,000	8,000	(10,000)
430.000-R&M Vehicles and Equipment	100	37	-	-	-	-
442.000-Rental of Vehicles or Equipment	2,800	3,523	2,800	3,487	3,000	200
500.000-Training, Conferences, Dues	6,515	6,701	6,000	6,000	6,300	300
505.000-Technology Subscription, Licenses	12,285	10,057	14,185	12,700	15,570	1,385
540.000-Advertising	6,500	3,310	5,000	3,300	5,000	-
550.000-Printing and Binding	200	-	-	-	-	-
570.000-Other Purchased Services	650	147	650	100	650	-
580.000-Travel	2,550	-	3,520	3,961	3,505	(15)
610.000-General Supplies	150	698	150	312	500	350
755.000-Furniture and Fixtures	1,000	347	200	100	200	-
810.000-Appropriations to committees	30,000	5,015	-	440	-	-
850.000 Community Events and Celebrations	-	-	8,000	7,460	8,000	-
Total Expenditure	652,579	620,930	644,259	629,073	694,316	50,057

110-11-10 - Legislative, Town

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Expenditure						
190.000-Board member payments	34,970	22,750	43,500	29,250	23,500	(20,000)
220.000-Social Security	574	574	574	574	607	33
330.000-Professional Services	36,186	17,531	43,080	42,096	28,741	(14,339)
500.000-Training, Conferences, Dues	26,800	28,696	17,491	17,138	19,600	2,109
550.000-Printing and Binding	11,200	10,492	7,500	7,500	10,500	3,000
Total Expenditure	109,730	80,043	112,145	96,558	82,948	(29,197)

GENERAL FUND BUDGET DETAIL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025

110-12-10 - Clerk

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
020.003-Use of Vault	4,000	2,216	3,000	1,490	2,000	(1,000)
020.004-Recording Fees	264,000	73,473	132,000	73,388	75,000	(57,000)
020.010-Printing and Duplication Services	13,000	8,851	10,000	8,345	10,000	-
020.012-Sale of Maps	300	78	40	24	40	-
020.013-Sales of Certified Copy	15,000	9,630	7,500	8,560	8,000	500
020.023-Records Preservation	-	27,982	-	24,968	-	-
030.001-Liquor Licenses	6,635	3,075	3,190	3,190	3,005	(185)
030.002-Land Postings	50	50	50	50	50	-
030.003-Marriage Licenses	1,300	1,610	800	1,670	1,200	400
030.004-Animal Licenses	6,300	3,933	3,150	3,150	3,500	350
030.005-Green Mountain Passport	250	644	200	354	200	-
030.006-DMV Registrations	350	249	175	216	175	-
Total Revenues	311,185	131,791	160,105	125,405	103,170	(56,935)
Expenditure						
110.000-Regular Salaries	99,748	93,001	115,793	115,793	141,206	25,413
120.000-Part Time Salaries	29,189	14,338	11,433	11,433	11,890	457
130.000-Overtime	7,210	1,537	1,729	1,535	1,874	145
210.000-Group Insurance	46,048	55,801	61,338	61,338	44,183	(17,155)
220.000-Social Security	10,629	8,025	10,095	10,095	12,674	2,579
230.000-Retirement	9,054	7,943	10,243	10,243	12,669	2,426
290.000-Other Employee Benefits	600	671	600	600	600	-
430.000-R&M Vehicles and Equipment	120	-	120	-	-	(120)
442.000-Rental of Vehicles or Equipment	2,400	2,826	2,400	2,421	2,500	100
500.000-Training, Conferences, Dues	1,500	500	600	468	1,695	1,095
505.000-Technology Subscriptions, Licenses	14,460	14,460	15,000	14,460	14,460	(540)
550.000 Printing and Binding	-	-	500	500	1,155	655
570.023-Records Preservation	-	-	-	775	-	-
580.000-Travel	1,000	521	600	350	540	(60)
610.000-General Supplies	2,500	2,498	3,000	2,537	2,920	(80)
820.000-Election Expenses	33,800	5,305	14,100	14,100	10,800	(3,300)
900.000-Transfer between Town/Village	50,000	50,000	-	-	-	-
Total Expenditure	308,258	257,426	247,551	246,647	259,166	11,615

110-13-10 - Finance, Town

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
Use of Fund Balance	61,000	-	-	-	-	-
Total Revenues	61,000	-	-	-	-	-
Expenditure						
110.000-Regular Salaries	207,820	165,726	191,427	195,500	206,393	14,966
120.000-Part Time Salaries	20,280	9,333	22,701	-	-	(22,701)
130.000-Overtime	1,064	176	1,114	905	1,290	176
210.000-Group Insurance	51,623	56,833	72,364	65,187	69,463	(2,901)
220.000-Social Security	17,795	13,703	16,775	16,779	17,467	692
230.000-Retirement	17,493	14,137	16,683	16,683	18,890	2,207
290.000-Other Employee Benefits	765	1,200	1,050	1,219	780	(270)
330.000-Professional Services	7,150	13,289	3,440	3,604	2,020	(1,420)
335.000-Audit	19,500	17,425	20,550	20,550	21,580	1,030
442.000-Rental of Vehicles or Equipment	2,000	1,959	2,000	1,711	2,000	-
500.000-Training, Conferences, Dues	3,720	1,258	2,430	2,307	2,077	(353)
505.000-Technology Subscription, Licenses	19,140	18,374	19,753	18,374	25,010	5,257
520.000-Insurance	209,920	222,120	264,563	242,000	227,688	(36,875)
550.000-Printing and Binding	3,400	3,338	2,000	3,111	2,365	365
560.000-Postage	3,100	3,604	2,150	2,400	2,268	118
580.000-Travel	2,600	-	500	260	720	220
610.000-General Supplies	1,000	805	850	710	1,200	350
735.000-Techinology: Hardware, Software, Equipment	-	1,508	-	-	-	-
990.000-Miscellaneous	-	33	-	-	-	-
Total Expenditure	588,370	544,820	640,350	591,301	601,211	(39,139)

GENERAL FUND BUDGET DETAIL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025

110-14-10 - Information Technology

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
099.000 Use of Fund Balance	-	-	6,500	6,500	5,000	(1,500)
Total Revenues	-	-	6,500	6,500	5,000	(1,500)
Expenditure						
110.000-Regular Salaries	216,925	220,906	231,717	231,717	235,660	3,943
210.000-Group Insurance	72,729	80,886	88,924	88,924	79,440	(9,484)
220.000-Social Security	16,831	16,449	17,979	17,979	19,307	1,328
230.000-Retirement	17,956	18,405	19,565	19,565	20,299	734
290.000-Other Employee Benefits	900	600	900	900	870	(30)
330.000-Professional Services	5,000	-	5,000	2,570	5,000	-
432.000-R&M Technology	8,000	1,089	4,500	3,454	3,500	(1,000)
500.000-Training, Conferences, Dues	10,200	1,460	11,200	7,350	12,580	1,380
505.000-Technology Subscription, Licenses	61,934	64,500	63,180	70,185	89,280	26,100
580.000-Travel	500	-	500	500	500	-
735.000-Technology: Hardware, Software, Equipment	29,000	57,861	57,214	55,182	51,900	(5,314)
920.000-Transfer between funds (capital)	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	-
Total Expenditure	443,975	466,155	504,679	502,326	522,336	17,657

110-15-10 - Assessing

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
090.000 Transfer between Town/City	-	-	77,810	77,810	89,068	11,258
Total Revenues	-	-	77,810	77,810	89,068	11,258
Expenditure						
110.000-Regular Salaries	85,934	85,866	88,972	88,972	101,836	12,864
120.000-Part Time Salaries	37,297	38,350	39,067	39,067	41,125	2,058
210.000-Group Insurance	23,360	25,266	26,449	26,449	31,559	5,110
220.000-Social Security	9,534	9,379	9,909	9,909	11,693	1,784
230.000-Retirement	10,282	10,355	11,011	11,011	12,584	1,573
290.000-Other Employee Benefits	300	-	300	300	330	30
330.000-Professional Services	300	110	-	-	-	-
500.000-Training, Conferences, Dues	1,115	2,036	1,030	1,615	1,064	34
505.000-Technology Subscription, Licenses	3,515	2,838	3,815	3,930	6,500	2,685
580.000-Travel	100	190	300	190	300	-
610.000-General Supplies	150	138	100	100	150	50
Total Expenditure	171,887	174,527	180,953	181,543	207,141	26,188

110-16-10 - Community Development, Town

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
020.005-Zoning Hearing Fees	1,500	1,784	5,000	1,700	3,000	(2,000)
020.006-Subdivision Filing Fees	11,500	18,020	11,000	21,800	12,500	1,500
020.007-Zoning Ordinance Pamphlets	260	2,722	100	100	100	-
020.008-CO Inspections and Re-Inspections	13,250	14,122	13,500	10,100	14,000	500
020.009-CO Compliance Certification	6,000	-	-	-	-	-
030.007-Building Structures	110,000	115,310	100,000	100,000	115,000	15,000
041.000-Intergov: State and Other Grant	-	5,940	-	-	-	-
050.000-Donation Revenue	-	1,400	-	-	-	-
050.001-Donations: Memorial Day Parade	-	3,500	-	-	-	-
099.000 Use of Fund Balance	-	-	8,000	8,000	-	(8,000)
Total Revenues	142,510	162,797	137,600	141,700	144,600	7,000

GENERAL FUND BUDGET DETAIL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025

Expenditure

110.000-Regular Salaries	240,973	238,419	253,144	253,144	266,221	13,077
120.000-Part Time Salaries	29,190	17,126	26,936	26,936	29,414	2,478
130.000-Overtime	-	52	-	-	-	-
210.000-Group Insurance	58,750	72,123	72,452	72,452	104,983	32,531
220.000-Social Security	20,946	19,391	21,677	21,677	24,264	2,587
230.000-Retirement	22,392	21,373	23,675	23,675	25,591	1,916
290.000-Other Employee Benefits	900	900	900	900	900	-
330.000-Professional Services	16,200	8,101	15,000	14,280	17,000	2,000
430.000-R&M Vehicles and Equipment	500	859	500	500	500	-
500.000-Training, Conferences, Dues	5,000	1,610	4,000	1,600	3,800	(200)
505.000 Tech, Sub. Licenses	-	-	498	359	508	10
540.000-Advertising	6,000	2,863	4,200	2,900	3,500	(700)
550.000-Printing and Binding	500	1,226	500	500	300	(200)
580.000-Travel	3,000	515	4,300	1,000	4,300	-
610.000-General Supplies	1,500	1,717	1,200	1,200	1,200	-
831.000-Special or New Programs	5,000	8,761	-	-	-	-
910.000-Transfer between funds (non-capital)	15,000	15,000	4,000	4,000	6,000	2,000
920.000-Transfer between funds (capital)	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	-
Total Expenditure	428,851	413,038	435,982	428,123	491,481	55,499

110-17-10 - Economic Development, Town

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
099.000 Use of Fund Balance	-	-	1,200	1,200	40,000	38,800
Total Revenues	-	-	1,200	1,200	40,000	38,800
Expenditure						
120.000-Part Time Salaries	29,206	33,194	33,353	33,353	34,941	1,588
220.000-Social Security	2,234	2,539	2,552	2,552	2,827	275
330.000-Professional Services	-	-	-	-	40,000	40,000
540.000-Advertising	500	-	200	100	200	-
800.104-Chamber of Commerce	1,100	1,134	1,200	1,171	1,230	30
800.105-Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation	7,000	7,000	4,000	4,000	3,750	(250)
800.110-Economic Development Committee	3,000	302	1,200	1,200	1,000	(200)
Total Expenditure	43,040	44,169	42,505	42,376	83,948	41,443

110-19-10 - County and Regional Functions

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Expenditure						
800.101-Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission	25,100	25,075	19,000	19,000	19,570	570
800.102-Green Mountain Transit	336,714	336,714	71,015	71,014	71,838	823
800.103-County Tax	127,780	130,732	66,100	76,745	69,866	3,766
800.109-Winooski Valley Park District	64,787	64,787	37,342	37,342	38,500	1,158
Total Expenditure	554,381	557,308	193,457	204,101	199,774	6,317

110-18-10 - Health and Human Services

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Expenditure						
330.000-Professional Services	21,241	20,243	11,232	11,100	11,794	562
500.000-Training, Conferences, Dues	200	-	200	100	100	(100)
530.000-Communications	780	484	540	503	500	(40)
800.100-Human Service Grants	166,753	166,753	154,012	154,012	161,064	7,052
800.106-Essex Rescue	241,046	241,046	207,072	207,072	213,284	6,212
800.107-Essex Jct. Cemetery Association	5,000	5,000	-	-	-	-
800.108-E.C. Historical Museum	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	-
Total Expenditure	439,020	437,526	377,056	376,787	390,742	13,686

GENERAL FUND BUDGET DETAIL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025

110-20-10 - Police, Operating

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
020.018-Special Police Services	40,000	38,579	40,000	24,588	40,000	-
020.019-VIN Verifications	200	145	200	635	200	-
040.800-OJP - Ballistic Vest Grant	-	2,796	-	1,398	-	-
041.000-Intergov: State and Other Grant	-	3,280	-	-	-	-
090.000 Transfer Between Town/City	-	-	402,992	388,807	427,710	24,718
098.000-Miscellaneous Revenue	-	40,947	-	-	8,186	8,186
SUMMARY Transfer Between Town/City (personnel)	-	-	2,300,534	2,300,534	2,391,007	90,473
099.000-Use of Fund Balance	70,000	70,000	-	-	-	-
Total Revenues	110,200	155,748	2,743,726	2,715,962	2,867,103	123,377
Expenditure						
SUMMARY-Regular Salaries	2,693,444	2,517,795	3,107,594	3,107,594	3,223,600	116,006
SUMMARY-Part Time Salaries	133,144	195,720	123,064	123,064	191,494	68,430
SUMMARY-Overtime	300,135	300,535	292,353	292,353	293,904	1,551
SUMMARY-Group Insurance	769,007	621,591	837,570	837,570	718,909	(118,661)
SUMMARY-Social Security	242,369	228,843	272,847	272,847	303,592	30,745
SUMMARY-Retirement	304,798	290,528	349,228	349,228	378,491	29,263
SUMMARY-Other Employee Benefits	11,400	7,500	11,400	11,400	11,100	(300)
SUMMARY-Allowance for Vacancies	(191,857)	-	(363,351)	(363,351)	(308,282)	55,069
320.000 Legal Services	-	25,184	10,500	10,500	20,000	9,500
330.000-Professional Services	65,096	49,309	68,912	53,161	73,293	4,381
430.000-R&M Vehicles and Equipment	24,000	33,540	28,000	37,018	34,000	6,000
432.000-R&M Technology	25,050	18,786	25,050	13,240	25,000	(50)
442.000-Rental of Vehicles or Equipment	5,000	5,033	5,000	4,991	5,000	-
500.000-Training, Conferences, Dues	27,500	30,933	30,000	29,900	32,000	2,000
505.000-Technology Subscription, Licenses	46,680	32,812	46,680	46,840	46,680	-
510.000-Permits, Licenses, Registrations	175	-	-	-	-	-
520.000-Insurance	231,452	256,490	318,932	275,932	256,907	(62,025)
530.000-Communications	31,850	54,583	31,850	40,200	32,000	150
540.000-Advertising	600	325	750	350	600	(150)
550.000-Printing and Binding	2,000	1,062	1,000	1,000	1,000	-
580.000-Travel	6,500	6,931	6,500	6,500	7,500	1,000
610.000-General Supplies	13,200	11,284	10,000	7,854	10,000	-
611.000-Small Tools and Equipment	8,000	13,635	7,000	7,184	7,000	-
612.000-Uniforms	37,500	48,094	40,000	34,544	47,950	7,950
613.000-Program Supplies	3,000	3,015	3,500	3,100	3,500	-
626.000-Gasoline	-	-	-	-	47,000	47,000
735.000-Technology: Hardware, Software, Equipment	20,000	13,035	20,000	15,000	20,000	-
751.000-Vehicle Purchases	159,000	246,467	134,000	134,000	158,000	24,000
830.000-Regular Programs	5,000	2,229	5,000	2,608	5,000	-
910.000-Transfer between funds (non-capital)	26,200	26,200	26,200	26,200	36,200	10,000
920.000-Transfer between funds (capital)	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	-
970.901 Police Lease Principal	-	-	17,500	17,500	17,500	-
Total Expenditure	5,015,243	5,056,457	5,482,079	5,413,328	5,713,938	231,859

110-20-11 - Police, Administration

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
090.000 Transfer between Town/City	-	-	353,818	353,818	425,223	71,405
Total Revenues	-	-	353,818	353,818	425,223	71,405
Expenditure						
110.000-Regular Salaries	422,659	382,197	484,817	484,817	500,893	16,076
120.000-Part Time Salaries	27,664	94,920	33,076	33,073	103,344	70,268
130.000-Overtime	5,182	1,975	1,121	1,121	3,125	2,004
210.000-Group Insurance	124,632	102,570	105,412	105,412	141,980	36,568
220.000-Social Security	35,357	36,035	40,079	40,079	49,600	9,521
230.000-Retirement	46,123	41,648	46,192	46,192	55,479	9,287
290.000-Other Employee Benefits	1,500	900	1,500	1,500	1,500	-
Total Expenditure	663,117	660,245	712,197	712,194	855,921	143,724

GENERAL FUND BUDGET DETAIL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025

110-20-12 - Police, Dispatch

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
090.000 Transfer between Town/City	-	-	297,914	297,914	259,028	(38,886)
Total Revenues	-	-	297,914	297,914	259,028	(38,886)
Expenditure						
110.000-Regular Salaries	343,120	327,606	385,852	385,852	311,426	(74,426)
120.000-Part Time Salaries	50,704	52,112	25,907	25,907	20,776	(5,131)
130.000-Overtime	48,176	67,290	56,606	56,606	38,671	(17,935)
210.000-Group Insurance	91,945	113,427	122,194	122,194	89,528	(32,666)
220.000-Social Security	34,165	32,522	36,246	36,246	29,638	(6,608)
230.000-Retirement	34,868	35,317	37,995	37,995	30,154	(7,841)
290.000-Other Employee Benefits	1,500	1,800	1,500	1,500	1,200	(300)
199.000-Allowance for Vacancies	(36,269)	-	(66,634)	(66,634)	-	66,634
Total Expenditure	568,209	630,075	599,666	599,666	521,393	(78,273)

110-20-13 - Police, Investigations Div

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
090.000 Transfer between Town/City	-	-	322,135	312,862	328,365	6,230
Total Revenues	-	-	322,135	312,862	328,365	6,230
Expenditure						
110.000-Regular Salaries	382,880	385,772	430,911	430,911	463,400	32,489
130.000-Overtime	30,354	18,330	31,831	13,168	25,569	(6,262)
210.000-Group Insurance	107,522	78,275	98,769	98,769	77,463	(21,306)
220.000-Social Security	32,046	31,017	35,816	35,816	39,751	3,935
230.000-Retirement	39,248	41,907	49,591	49,591	53,275	3,684
290.000-Other Employee Benefits	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	-
Total Expenditure	593,550	556,802	648,418	629,755	660,958	12,540

110-20-14 - Police, Patrol

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
090.000 Transfer between Town/City	-	-	1,326,667	1,308,965	1,378,391	51,724
Total Revenues	-	-	1,326,667	1,308,965	1,378,391	51,724
Expenditure						
110.000-Regular Salaries	1,544,785	1,422,220	1,806,014	1,806,014	1,947,881	141,867
120.000-Part Time Salaries	54,776	48,688	64,081	42,147	67,374	3,293
130.000-Overtime	216,423	212,939	202,795	202,795	226,539	23,744
210.000-Group Insurance	444,908	327,319	511,195	511,195	409,938	(101,257)
220.000-Social Security	140,801	129,268	160,706	160,706	184,603	23,897
230.000-Retirement	184,559	171,655	215,450	201,752	239,583	24,133
290.000-Other Employee Benefits	6,900	3,300	6,900	6,900	6,900	-
199.000-Allowance for Vacancies	(155,588)	-	(296,717)	(296,717)	(308,282)	(11,565)
Total Expenditure	2,437,564	2,315,390	2,670,424	2,634,792	2,774,536	104,112

110-20-15 - Police, Animal Control

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
090.000 Transfer between Town/City	-	-	20,071	16,164	22,306	2,235
Total Revenues	-	-	20,071	16,164	22,306	2,235
Expenditure						
330.000-Professional Services	37,000	35,155	37,500	31,537	42,000	4,500
570.000-Other Purchased Services	2,900	800	2,900	1,000	2,900	-
Total Expenditure	39,900	35,955	40,400	32,537	44,900	4,500

GENERAL FUND BUDGET DETAIL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025

110-25-10 - Fire, Town

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
098.000-Miscellaneous Revenue	-	10	-	-	-	-
099.000 Use of Fund Balance	-	-	-	-	25,000	25,000
Total Revenues	-	10	-	-	25,000	25,000
Expenditure						
120.000-Part Time Salaries	314,041	238,730	310,488	282,186	342,200	31,712
220.000-Social Security	20,841	18,269	23,752	20,057	27,683	3,931
260.000-Workers Comp insurance	30,000	16,304	24,000	23,345	15,821	(8,179)
330.000-Professional Services	6,000	1,878	7,000	10,744	32,000	25,000
430.000-R&M Vehicles and Equipment	34,000	63,144	40,000	43,407	40,000	-
442.000-Rental of Vehicles or Equipment	1,200	1,185	1,200	1,311	1,000	(200)
500.000-Training, Conferences, Dues	9,500	14,464	4,000	4,845	4,000	-
505.000 Tech Subs, Licenses	-	72	10,500	7,500	10,500	-
530.000-Communications	45,000	4,042	30,000	21,680	30,000	-
610.000-General Supplies	6,000	5,233	4,000	3,800	4,000	-
611.000-Small Tools and Equipment	15,000	19,121	18,000	16,191	22,000	4,000
612.000-Uniforms	28,000	50,521	35,000	47,420	42,000	7,000
613.000-Program Supplies	4,000	4,064	4,000	5,245	4,000	-
750.000-Machinery and Equipment	6,500	12,771	7,000	7,000	7,500	500
920.000-Transfer between funds (capital)	205,000	205,000	220,000	220,000	220,000	-
Total Expenditure	725,082	654,798	738,940	714,731	802,704	63,764

110-30-10 - EPR, Administration

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Expenditure						
110.000-Regular Salaries	210,887	210,501	216,502	216,502	122,409	(94,093)
120.000-Part Time Salaries	-	1,646	-	-	-	-
210.000-Group Insurance	84,368	97,548	104,491	104,491	67,567	(36,924)
220.000-Social Security	16,454	15,356	16,905	16,905	10,108	(6,797)
230.000-Retirement	17,745	17,718	18,784	18,784	10,932	(7,852)
290.000-Other Employee Benefits	900	600	900	900	532	(368)
330.000-Professional Services	10,000	10,680	11,000	10,878	13,100	2,100
500.000-Training, Conferences, Dues	2,600	2,970	3,000	2,709	2,900	(100)
505.000-Technology Subscription, Licenses	7,600	2,351	5,700	4,164	6,340	640
530.000-Communications	700	484	960	403	500	(460)
561.000-Credit Card Processing Fees	2,200	3,565	2,000	2,964	1,200	(800)
580.000-Travel	2,000	4,581	3,070	3,710	3,222	152
610.000-General Supplies	300	315	300	250	250	(50)
850.000-Community Events and Celebrations	7,500	7,500	2,900	2,900	3,500	600
Total Expenditure	363,254	375,814	386,512	385,559	242,560	(143,952)

GENERAL FUND BUDGET DETAIL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025

110-30-11 - EPR, Pool

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
020.303-Pool Fees	53,000	40,781	55,000	53,145	58,000	3,000
098.000-Miscellaneous Revenue	2,500	245	1,000	250	-	(1,000)
Total Revenues	55,500	41,026	56,000	53,395	58,000	2,000
Expenditure						
110.000-Regular Salaries	-	-	-	-	47,414	47,414
120.000-Part Time Salaries	85,125	73,943	85,928	84,456	88,936	3,008
130.000-Overtime	-	443	-	386	-	-
210.000-Group Insurance	-	-	-	-	22,866	22,866
220.000-Social Security	6,512	6,583	6,574	6,309	11,099	4,525
230.000-Retirement	-	-	-	-	4,224	4,224
290.000-Other Employee Benefits	-	-	-	-	180	180
410.000-Water and Sewer Charges	1,600	3,385	1,600	2,906	3,400	1,800
430.000 R&M Vehicles and Equipment	-	11,306	14,000	11,081	9,500	(4,500)
431.000-R&M Buildings and Grounds	21,000	7,407	-	248	9,500	9,500
500.000-Training, Conferences, Dues	-	3,314	350	878	2,850	2,500
530.000-Communications	3,000	3,879	3,000	2,157	3,000	-
570.000-Other Purchased Services	2,300	3,029	2,500	3,506	3,000	500
580.000-Travel	1,200	-	500	500	500	-
610.000-General Supplies	8,000	11,652	7,800	7,000	12,000	4,200
611.000-Small Tools and Equipment	3,000	2,615	3,000	2,700	3,000	-
612.000-Uniforms	1,600	968	1,500	1,000	1,000	(500)
621.000-Natural Gas/Heating	4,000	1,869	5,000	2,000	4,000	(1,000)
622.000-Electricity	5,500	9,951	5,000	9,398	9,950	4,950
Total Expenditure	142,837	140,343	136,752	134,526	236,419	99,667

110-30-12 - EPR, Parks and Facilities

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
020.308-Facility & Field Rental	9,000	8,497	6,000	6,000	8,100	2,100
020.309-Indian Brook Fees	70,000	73,367	76,000	72,000	82,000	6,000
098.000-Miscellaneous Revenue	-	-	-	2,135	4,268	4,268
099.000-Use of Fund Balance/Reserves	-	-	-	-	3,100	3,100
Total Revenues	79,000	81,864	82,000	80,135	97,468	15,468
Expenditure						
110.000-Regular Salaries	116,556	112,648	127,326	127,326	155,443	28,117
120.000-Part Time Salaries	56,105	52,585	53,021	53,021	82,472	29,451
130.000-Overtime	2,316	1,183	2,980	2,980	3,019	39
210.000-Group Insurance	46,391	37,669	57,557	57,557	43,850	(13,707)
220.000-Social Security	13,536	13,262	14,218	14,218	20,572	6,354
230.000-Retirement	9,970	9,779	11,292	11,292	17,456	6,164
290.000-Other Employee Benefits	540	383	750	750	825	75
430.000-R&M Vehicles and Equipment	11,000	15,806	12,000	12,000	16,000	4,000
431.000-R&M Buildings and Grounds	26,000	26,227	25,400	27,783	34,000	8,600
431.001-R&M Bldg. & Grounds - Cemetery	-	-	4,500	4,500	6,000	-
442.000-Rental of Vehicles or Equipment	350	371	-	375	400	400
500.000-Training, Conferences, Dues	550	210	550	1,200	600	50
530.000-Communications	2,400	1,805	1,200	1,500	4,955	3,755
570.000-Other Purchased Services	25,000	24,278	14,000	19,956	30,000	16,000
610.000-General Supplies	12,000	7,554	8,000	10,317	13,000	5,000
611.000-Small Tools and Equipment	1,000	602	1,500	1,500	1,500	-
612.000-Uniforms	2,000	3,038	2,000	2,000	3,500	1,500
920.000-Transfer between funds (capital)	28,000	28,000	28,000	28,000	28,000	-
Total Expenditure	353,714	335,401	364,294	376,275	462,692	98,398

GENERAL FUND BUDGET DETAIL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025

110-30-13 - EPR, Senior Activities

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
090.000 Transfer between Town/City	-	-	50,379	50,382	-	(50,379)
Total Revenues	-	-	50,379	50,382	-	(50,379)
Expenditure						
110.000-Regular Salaries	62,612	55,955	85,408	62,920	92,520	7,112
120.000-Part Time Salaries	71,828	34,490	47,589	39,384	17,906	(29,683)
130.000-Overtime	301	578	789	747	831	42
210.000-Group Insurance	36,521	36,937	51,214	41,182	55,176	3,962
220.000-Social Security	10,435	5,834	10,360	8,807	9,169	(1,191)
230.000-Retirement	7,606	5,308	7,466	6,400	8,349	883
290.000-Other Employee Benefits	360	300	450	450	435	(15)
430.000-R&M Vehicles and Equipment	10,000	5,836	4,500	7,053	6,000	1,500
500.000-Training, Conferences, Dues	-	-	-	-	1,350	1,350
530.000-Communications	2,000	1,375	1,100	1,188	1,426	326
560.000-Postage	350	252	250	250	250	-
570.000-Other Purchased Services	1,500	209	500	490	300	(200)
610.000-General Supplies	700	728	300	279	300	-
920.000-Transfer between funds (capital)	4,000	4,000	-	-	-	-
Total Expenditure	208,213	151,803	209,926	169,150	194,012	(15,914)

110-35-10 - Essex Free Library

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
040.802-Inter-Library Loan Grant	-	571	-	636	700	700
050.000-Donation Revenue	-	1,820	-	60	-	-
Total Revenues	-	2,391	-	696	700	700
Expenditure						
110.000-Regular Salaries	199,652	210,848	230,586	230,586	252,591	22,005
120.000-Part Time Salaries	48,261	53,475	49,271	51,288	62,376	13,105
130.000-Overtime	-	36	-	-	-	-
210.000-Group Insurance	101,173	75,819	89,342	89,342	90,201	859
220.000-Social Security	19,183	20,321	21,684	21,684	26,210	4,526
230.000-Retirement	16,706	19,408	22,414	22,414	25,610	3,196
290.000-Other Employee Benefits	1,200	300	1,200	1,200	1,200	-
442.000-Rental of Vehicles or Equipment	1,500	948	1,500	1,329	1,500	-
500.000-Training, Conferences, Dues	1,500	1,316	1,750	1,300	1,750	-
505.000-Technology Subscription, Licenses	10,800	11,478	18,220	18,486	19,300	1,080
570.000-Other Purchased Services	1,040	1,127	1,108	1,376	1,200	92
610.000-General Supplies	3,500	5,929	5,000	3,036	5,000	-
640.201-Adult Collection	15,200	15,220	16,000	16,757	16,000	-
640.202-Juvenile Collection	7,000	6,973	7,500	6,695	7,500	-
651.000-Technology Supplies	2,000	614	2,000	1,722	1,000	(1,000)
830.000-Regular Programs	600	618	1,000	1,000	1,000	-
890.832 Fed Grant Exp: ARPA	-	5,165	-	-	-	-
895.000-State or Other Grant Expense	-	600	-	-	-	-
900.000-Transfer between Town/City	15,000	15,000	-	-	-	-
Total Expenditure	444,315	445,193	468,575	468,214	512,438	43,863

GENERAL FUND BUDGET DETAIL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025

110-40-10 - PW, Administration

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Expenditure						
110.000-Regular Salaries	129,151	131,782	128,456	128,456	136,033	7,577
120.000 Part Time Salaries	-	25,944	12,978	15,060	-	(12,978)
130.000-Overtime	3,099	8	2,609	-	2,746	137
210.000-Group Insurance	37,237	37,090	39,786	39,786	41,857	2,071
220.000-Social Security	10,248	13,742	11,155	11,155	11,716	561
230.000-Retirement	10,974	11,467	11,294	11,294	12,671	1,377
290.000-Other Employee Benefits	540	300	540	540	540	-
330.000-Professional Services	850	-	1,000	1,000	500	(500)
331.000-Landfill Monitoring	14,000	14,622	12,000	12,000	12,000	-
442.000-Rental of Vehicles or Equipment	-	2,635	-	2,465	-	-
500.000-Training, Conferences, Dues	4,090	4,577	3,800	4,172	2,800	(1,000)
580.000-Travel	200	105	300	84	500	200
Total Expenditure	210,389	242,272	223,918	226,012	221,363	(2,555)

110-40-12 - PW, Highways Town

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
020.011-Sale of Public Works Specs	1,400	1,760	1,500	1,500	1,500	-
020.015-Public Works Services	-	1,385	-	685	-	-
040.801-FEMA Grants	-	4,925	-	-	-	-
041.000-Intergov: State and Other Grant	-	123,107	-	-	-	-
042.006-State Aid to Highways	260,000	277,084	162,400	160,180	162,400	-
098.000-Miscellaneous Revenue	-	113	-	458	-	-
Total Revenues	261,400	408,374	163,900	162,823	163,900	-
Expenditure						
110.000-Regular Salaries	640,527	637,350	682,235	682,235	723,664	41,429
120.000-Part Time Salaries	66,005	36,230	34,798	40,810	27,997	(6,801)
130.000-Overtime	79,154	36,033	54,999	26,359	54,999	-
210.000-Group Insurance	216,970	237,513	275,614	275,614	331,656	56,042
220.000-Social Security	61,013	53,749	60,112	60,112	66,273	6,161
230.000-Retirement	63,399	56,173	63,824	53,414	69,225	5,401
290.000-Other Employee Benefits	3,435	2,400	2,955	2,955	2,955	-
330.000-Professional Services	19,000	5,344	15,500	5,691	10,000	(5,500)
422.000-Snow Removal	35,950	36,850	40,750	37,443	43,500	2,750
430.000-R&M Vehicles and Equipment	47,000	59,375	49,500	42,445	52,000	2,500
430.001-R&M Vehicles Supplies	67,000	86,949	68,250	64,548	71,600	3,350
442.000-Rental of Vehicles or Equipment	15,800	19,740	16,500	23,034	16,995	495
451.000-Summer Construction Services	319,400	285,311	318,275	317,108	347,225	28,950
500.000-Training, Conferences, Dues	7,000	4,467	7,000	6,384	7,725	725
505.000 Tech Subs and Licenses	7,800	5,000	5,100	5,150	5,100	-
510.000-Permits, Licenses, Reg.	-	1,419	-	-	270	270
521.000-Insurance Deductibles	-	-	-	-	2,000	2,000
530.000-Communications	13,740	6,534	9,600	10,233	10,250	650
540.000-Advertising	1,800	1,186	1,800	1,100	1,800	-
570.000-Other Purchased Services	6,050	9,855	5,850	7,808	9,200	3,350
571.000-Streetscape Maintenance	20,550	8,353	20,700	19,267	15,500	(5,200)
572.000-Traffic Control	41,770	38,960	39,670	38,960	41,650	1,980
573.000-Sidewalk and Curb Maintenance	45,000	62,681	46,500	46,500	51,000	4,500
574.000-Bridges	500	-	-	-	500	500
575.000-Storm Sewer Maintenance	195,000	209,706	201,650	199,761	208,000	6,350
580.000-Travel	1,200	318	2,750	1,727	2,500	(250)
600.000-Salt, Sand and Gravel	231,500	241,336	252,175	200,000	255,100	2,925
605.000-Summer Construction Supplies	76,500	113,871	76,050	109,205	69,500	(6,550)
610.000-General Supplies	9,200	17,859	9,000	14,450	12,000	3,000
612.000-Uniforms	12,275	8,525	13,015	10,992	14,930	1,915
622.200-Streetlight Electricity	105,000	108,724	106,250	103,363	113,250	7,000
750.000-Machinery and Equipment	7,500	7,329	12,000	13,111	10,000	(2,000)
900.000-Transfer between Town/City	1,465,044	1,465,044	-	-	-	-
920.000-Transfer between funds (capital)	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	-
Total Expenditure	4,082,082	4,064,184	2,692,422	2,619,779	2,848,364	155,942

GENERAL FUND BUDGET DETAIL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025

110-40-13 - PW, Stormwater Town

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
020.016-Stormwater Management Fee	100	1,776	-	3,932	-	-
Total Revenues	100	1,776	-	3,932	-	-
Expenditure						
110.000-Regular Salaries	117,925	119,699	99,520	99,520	104,482	4,962
120.000-Part Time Salaries	15,426	14,390	13,803	13,803	17,971	4,168
130.000-Overtime	1,240	-	1,043	-	1,098	55
210.000-Group Insurance	23,902	18,242	21,137	21,137	22,028	891
220.000-Social Security	10,394	9,564	8,830	8,830	10,217	1,387
230.000-Retirement	9,907	9,996	8,637	8,637	9,477	840
290.000-Other Employee Benefits	465	300	360	360	360	-
330.000-Professional Services	20,000	19,565	30,000	27,000	25,000	(5,000)
451.000-Summer Construction Services	16,000	5,500	30,000	27,500	30,000	-
500.000-Training, Conferences, Dues	-	-	-	-	7,000	7,000
510.000-Permits, Licenses, Registrations	40,000	35,446	24,600	28,000	30,000	5,400
540.000-Advertising	1,000	-	1,000	300	1,000	-
570.000-Other Purchased Services	12,000	4,107	13,500	13,624	12,500	(1,000)
580.000-Travel	5,700	648	3,500	2,658	2,000	(1,500)
830.000-Regular Programs	5,600	2,169	800	1,168	800	-
900.000-Transfer between Town/City	78,018	78,018	-	-	-	-
Total Expenditure	357,577	317,643	256,730	252,537	273,933	17,203

110-41- SUMMARY BUILDINGS

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
090.000 Transfer Between Town/City	-	-	51,295	51,297	48,786	(2,509)
Total Revenues	-	-	51,295	51,297	48,786	(2,509)
Expenditure						
330.000-Professional Services	-	4,000	-	-	-	-
400.000-Contracted Services	71,600	77,000	87,300	95,381	81,600	(5,700)
410.000-Water and Sewer Charges	7,775	10,954	10,050	9,374	10,400	350
431.000-R&M Buildings and Grounds	93,450	83,879	93,450	87,309	91,581	(1,869)
530.000-Communications	36,950	44,317	56,150	56,877	51,450	(4,700)
610.000-General Supplies	43,200	23,170	27,200	25,163	27,200	-
621.000-Natural Gas/Heating	22,650	27,371	25,300	26,170	27,100	1,800
622.000-Electricity	66,500	66,835	66,600	67,807	68,500	1,900
626.000-Gasoline	138,400	167,067	160,000	160,000	173,000	13,000
755.000-Furniture and Fixtures	2,100	1,324	-	-	-	-
900.000-Transfer between Town/City	2,075	1,822	-	-	-	-
Total Expenditure	484,700	507,740	526,050	528,080	530,831	4,781

110-95-00 - Debt, Town

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Estimate	2025 Budget	\$ Change
Revenues						
090.000 Transfer between Town/City	-	-	203,203	203,203	200,574	(2,629)
Total Revenues	-	-	203,203	203,203	200,574	(2,629)
Expenditure						
950.901-Police Facility Debt Principal	345,000	345,000	345,000	345,000	345,000	-
955.901-Police Facility Debt Interest	162,844	162,844	150,617	150,617	127,216	(23,401)
970.901-Police Lease Principal	-	-	-	16,988	14,341	14,341
975.901-Police Lease Interest	-	-	-	-	2,647	2,647
Total Expenditure	507,844	507,844	495,617	512,605	489,204	(6,413)

**TOWN OF ESSEX
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
Monday March 6, 2023**

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

STAFF PRESENT: Greg Duggan, Town Manager; Marguerite Ladd, Deputy Manager; Susan McNamara-Hill, Clerk/Treasurer; Dan Roy, Finance Director

PUBLIC SPEAKERS: Gil Allen, Bill Doble, Will Dodge, Hannes Fischbyrne, Gerry Fox, Henry Gabert, Tara Gragg, Brad Kennison, Robert Leuang, Maureen McDermott, Lester Pelkey, Elizabeth Poulin, Bruce Post, Arthur Ramsay, Francis Raymond, Robert Renca, Mark Roberts, Margaret Smith

MODERATOR: John Sonnick

Mr. Sonnick introduced himself as Town Moderator at 7:30 PM. Local Girl Scout Troop #6185 and Boy Scout Troop #635 introduced the Essex High School Chamber Choir who then sang the National Anthem.

Mr. Sonnick introduced the Selectboard members, Town staff, state representatives and state senators present. He thanked staff of the T-Rex Theater as well as meeting volunteers for their hard work on the event. He welcomed all attendees to the meeting and explained Roberts Rules of Order for the meeting. Mr. Chamberlin read "An Invitation to Civility."

Mr. Sonnick asked if there was a motion on the floor.

DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by LOIS POMERLEE to suspend Roberts Rules of Order rules requiring a majority vote to request a paper ballot for any motion this evening.

As this is not a debatable motion, Mr. Sonnick called for a vote.

The motion failed by voice vote.

Article I: *Shall the reports of the Officers be accepted?*

MARK ROBERTS made a motion, seconded by ARTHUR RAMSAY, to approve Article I.

Hearing no comments, Mr. Sonnick called a voice vote to accept Article I.

The motion passed.

Article II: *Shall the Town of Essex vote on all public questions by Australian ballot?*

LINDA MYERS made a motion, seconded by ARTHUR RAMSAY, to approve Article II.

50 Mr. Sonnick opened public discussion on Article II:

- 51 • Francis Raymond asked for clarification on the question. Mr. Sonnick said that it would be that, from
- 52 now on, the Town of Essex would not make binding votes at Town Meeting via voice vote.
- 53 • Margaret Smith said that she enjoys the Town Meeting tradition and said that Australian ballot voting
- 54 reduces voter's personal power to make amendments to the budget. Mr. Watts clarified that the
- 55 budget would continue to be voted upon via Australian ballot and said that the last time there was a
- 56 floor vote was in 2015.

57

58 Mr. Sonnick called a voice vote to accept Article II.

59

60 **The motion passed.**

61

62 ARTICLE III, *Discussion of Ballot Items*

63

64 **BETSY DUNN made a motion, seconded by CHRISTOPHER BIRD to discuss the ballot items.**

65

66 Mr. Sonnick said that Article III was a discussion of the ballot items. Mr. Watts would be leading a
67 presentation on Article V, Adopting the fiscal year 2024 budget, followed by public comment. Mr.
68 Watts will then lead a presentation on Article VI, Increasing the Capital tax rate, followed by public
69 comment. The charter amendments will be explained together, followed by public comment on all.

70

71 *Article V, Adopting the fiscal year 2024 budget*

72 Mr. Watts said that this is the first budget post separation from the Village of Essex Junction, which was
73 41% of the total tax base. While the budget itself is reduced by 7.6% from the previous year, the tax
74 base is smaller. The current budget will result in a 22% tax increase, or a \$340 increase for an average
75 home assessed at \$280,000. Inflation and increased health care costs are also major cost drivers. He
76 described staffing changes across the various departments, and efforts to budget for overtime staffing at
77 historical levels. He noted an increase in the amount of funding requested by Essex Rescue, as well as
78 the use of fund balance to mitigate tax increases.

79

80 Mr. Sonnick opened public discussion on Article V:

- 81 • Robert Renca asked how many communities pay into Essex Rescue. Mr. Watts said that five
- 82 communities contribute at the same per capita rate as Essex. The increase is due to staffing issues,
- 83 increased call volume, and health insurance reimbursements.
- 84 • Tara Gragg expressed concern about current growth and asked if the roadway system can sustain the
- 85 additional traffic. She also expressed a concern about the intersection on Susie Wilson Road near
- 86 Colonial Mart, stating that the additional traffic has made it dangerous. She said that it is important
- 87 to plan for growth to ease traffic congestion. Mr. Watts explained the difference between state roads
- 88 and town roads and said that the Town participates in the regional planning process to assess traffic
- 89 and roadway concerns on state highways.
- 90 • Bill Doble asked how the Police Department budget was split between the Town and City, and if it
- 91 was determined by the number of calls. Mr. Watts said that it was based on population. He said that
- 92 it was difficult to determine which calls are allocated to each community and that the cost allocation
- 93 can be reevaluated in three years.
- 94 • Mark Roberts asked why the Selectboard wants to maintain current staffing levels when 41% of the
- 95 tax base is now gone. Mr. Watts said that the same services are still required, and thus will require
- 96 the same staff. He said that one management position and one position in the Clerk's office were
- 97 eliminated when creating the budget.

- 98 • Lester Pelkey said that more consideration needs to be put towards shrinking the budget, as he
99 believes that Town is asking too much from its citizens. He questioned the Culture & Parks budget
100 and said that it could be decreased. Mr. Watts clarified that the increase in taxes is only on the
101 municipal portion of the tax bill. He said that the Selectboard realizes that this increase is a big ask.
- 102 • Henry Gabert asked for clarification on who is managing the City land records. Mr. Watts said that
103 the Town will continue to maintain all City land records from prior to July 1, 2023. After this date,
104 the City of Essex Junction will maintain their own land records going forward.
- 105 • Gerry Fox said that Essex Junction residents were subsidizing taxes for Essex, which is why taxes are
106 increasing so much.
- 107 • Gil Allen said that residents should have known that this was coming, as it was predicted during the
108 merger discussions. He asked if other avenues of revenues, such as Local Option Tax, were explored
109 to mitigate the large increase. Mr. Watts said that a Local Option Tax is not off the table.
- 110 • Hannes Fischbyrne said that there was some conversation regarding moving the Town Offices to a
111 new space, and asked what the impact to the budget would be. Mr. Watts said that the Town is
112 considering using federal funds to buy property for a new Town Office. While this would not incur
113 any debt for the Town, the construction would require additional funds.
- 114 • Henry Gabert asked if there were plans to move the Police Department, Mr. Watts said there were
115 not.

116
117 *Article VI, Increasing the capital tax rate*

118 Mr. Watts read the full article, “*Shall the Town of Essex increase the Capital Reserve Fund by adding 1*
119 *cent to the tax rate, in addition to the two cents previously authorized, for the purpose of financing*
120 *capital projects?*”

121
122 Mr. Watts said that the Capital budget pays for Town vehicles, roads, parks/trails, stormwater, natural
123 resources, and vehicles. The funds can also be used as matching grant funds. This increase is largely
124 because of the separation of the Village of Essex Junction. The Capital Tax will be reassessed after
125 reappraisal occurs. Capital funds are not spent every year, as there are large peaks and valleys in
126 spending. The cost for an average home assessed at \$280,000 is \$28 per year.

127
128 Mr. Sonnick opened public discussion on Article VI:

- 129 • Will Dodge said that heating and gasoline costs are increasing and encouraged new buildings and
130 vehicles to be more energy efficient.

131
132 Mr. Sonnick requested discussion on the charter amendments (Articles VII-XI).

133
134 Mr. Watts said that the charter delineates what the Town can and cannot do, and how the community is
135 run. In order to be changed, it must be approved by the Vermont legislature. The legislature has the
136 power to make any changes to the Charter that they wish, or they may choose not to review the changes
137 at all. The Town appointed a Charter Review Committee, who reviewed the document and brought back
138 changes to the Selectboard. Mr. Watts provided a brief explanation of each amendment.

139
140 *Article VII, Charter amendment to reorganize the charter*

141 This will help to make the Charter more readable and more easily understandable.

142
143 *Article VIII, Charter amendment for ability to set license fees*

144 This will allow the Selectboard to determine costs for licenses and fees, as these are currently set by the
145 state. This will help the Town to generate more revenue.

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Article IX, Charter amendment to allow for just cause eviction ordinance

This will give the Selectboard the power to develop an ordinance to prevent a landlord for evicting a tenant for no cause. More details will be provided, as well as opportunities for public input, during the ordinance creation process.

Article X, Charter amendment to allow for recall of Selectboard members

The state of Vermont does not currently allow for communities to recall Selectboard members unless it is specifically outlined in the charter. For a recall to occur, a petition would need to be signed by 15% of legal voters, and an election would need to be called within sixty days. One-third of voters, or at least as many voters who originally voted for the recalled candidate, must vote for the recall of said candidate in order for recall to pass.

Article XI, Charter amendment to transition from Zoning Board of Adjustment to Development Review Board

This would change the structure of community planning in Essex. The Planning Commission would address planning issues, which the Development Review Board would be responsible for both development review and the current tasks of the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Mr. Sonnick opened public discussion on Articles VII-XI.

- Brad Kennison said that he is the resident who originally made the proposal to the regarding the charter change to allow for recalling public officials. He said that the Charter Review Committee changed this proposal dramatically. He believes that a simple majority should be sufficient, and expressed concern that different methods of voting over the years may result in different turnouts.
- Francis Raymond said that he does not think that Essex has a problem with a large amount of no cause evictions, and said that eviction, even for cause, can be almost impossible in Vermont.
- Arthur Ramsay asked how Essex’s recall voting provisions compare to other municipalities. Ms. Hill-Fleury said that these standards were chosen after reviewing other communities in Vermont with similar provisions.
- Mark Roberts said that the recall provision is reasonable, and that the standard for changing the will of the voters at a general election must be high.
- Robert Leuang said that he has been a landlord since 1976, and 99% of his tenants are fabulous. He said that there should be protections for the good tenants against the actions of the bad tenants. He asked that this be considered when developing the full ordinance.
- Bruce Post said that he was a member of the Charter Review Committee and said that the recall proposal developed by the committee is different than the one that the Selectboard is presenting today.
- Maureen McDermott asked if the Selectboard plans on enacting the just cause charter change, should it be approved by voters. Mr. Watts said that it is likely, however no discussions have been had about the issue.
- Tara Gragg said that just cause eviction will not protect bad tenants. Evictions with cause will still be fully legal.

Article XII, Election of the following: Moderator, 1 vacancy (1-year term) and Selectboard, 2 vacancies (3-year terms)

Mr. Sonnick opened public discussion on Article XII.

194 • Elizabeth Poulin said that she will be writing in John Sonnick for Moderator and suggested that
195 others do the same.

196
197 Article IV, *Public to be heard*

198 Mr. Sonnick opened public discussion on Article IV.

- 199
- 200 • Speaking as a member of the public, Mr. Sonnick thanked Tammy Getchell for her hard work in
201 arranging Town Meeting.
 - 202 • Mr. Watts wished Town Manager Greg Duggan a happy birthday.
- 203

204 Hearing no other comments, Mr. Sonnick called a motion to adjourn.

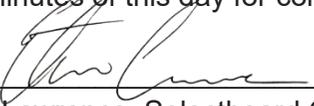
205
206 **DAWN HILL-FLEURY made a motion, seconded by MAGGIE HJORT, to adjourn the meeting.**

207
208 Mr. Sonnick called a voice vote to accept the motion.

209
210 **The motion passed unanimously at 9:13 PM.**

211
212 Respectfully Submitted,
213 Darby Mayville
214 Recording Secretary

215
216 Approved this 20TH day of March, 2023
217 (see minutes of this day for corrections, if any)

218
219 
220 _____
Ethan Lawrence, Selectboard Clerk

221
222



essexvt.org/voting

Polling Place

All Town of Essex residents vote from 7 am to 7 pm on March 5 at the Essex Middle School, 60 Founders Road, Essex, Vermont

Drop Box

Voted ballots may be dropped off in the drop box at the entrance of the Town Offices at 81 Main St., Essex Junction, Vermont until 6 am on March 5.

Online Voter Tool

My Voter Page

mvp.vermont.gov



Voter Registration

Register online at <https://olvr.vermont.gov/> or at the polling place for same day registration. Please bring your license number or the last four digits of your social security number. New Vermont residents must provide a proof of residence.

VOTER INFORMATION



Early/Absentee Ballots

The deadline to request an early/absentee ballot for the 2024 Town of Essex Annual Meeting, is 4:30 pm Monday, March 4, 2024. You can pick up your ballot at the clerk's office during regular hours or you can ask for it to be mailed (please allow sufficient time for mailing). Please note, only the voter can pick up their ballot. If you submit a request for a family member, it must be mailed. This is per State law.

Town Meeting ballots will be available by February 14. Please submit you request early to allow time for mailing and returning your ballot.

There are three ways to request a ballot to be mailed:

1. Call the clerk's office at 802-879-0413.
2. Email the clerk's office clerk@essex.org.
3. Submit a request through the My Voter Page.

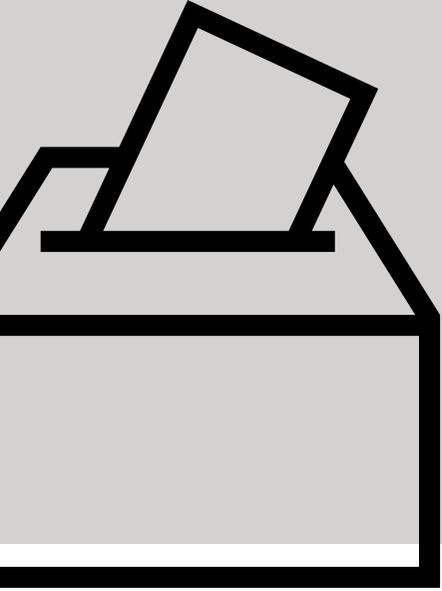
To return a voted ballot, you can:

1. Mail it in the envelope provided (return postage will be included).
2. Deliver it to the clerk's office by 6:00 am on March 5, 2024. There is a secure drop box located to the right of the door for after hours and weekends.
3. Deliver it to the polls on Tuesday, March 5, 2024 by 7 pm (Essex Middle School, 60 Founders Road).

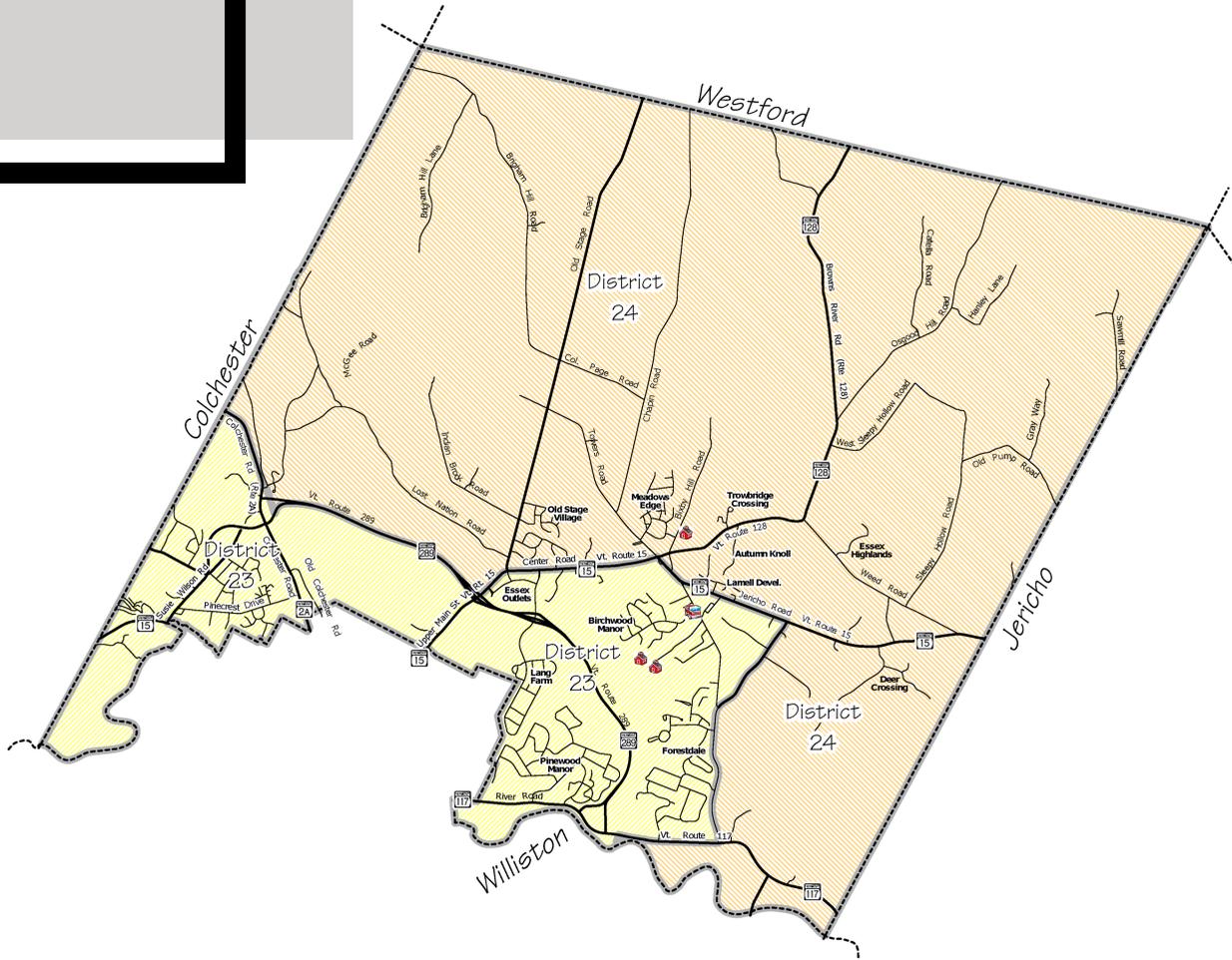
For more information

Clerk's Office

Nanette Rogers, Clerk
81 Main Street
Essex Junction, VT 05452
email: clerk@essex.org
Phone: 802.878.0413
Website: essexvt.org/voting

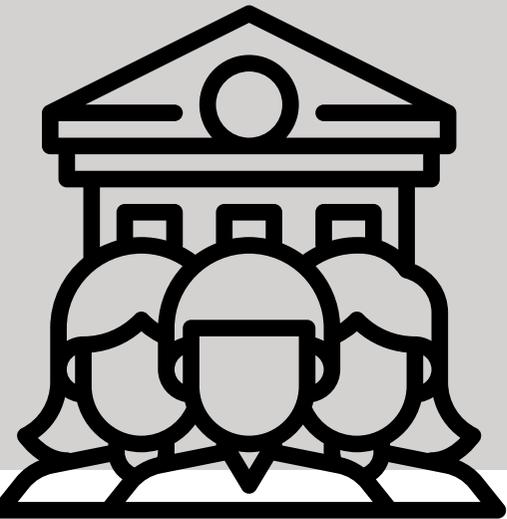


VOTING DISTRICTS



Chittenden District 23; included in Chittenden Central Senate District
Representatives - Golrang (Rey) Garofano and Leonora Dodge
Senators - Tanya Vyhovsky, Martine Gulick, Philip Baruth

Chittenden District 24; included in Chittenden North Senate District
Representative - Alyssa Black
Senator - Irene Wrenner



ELECTED TOWN OFFICIALS

Moderator

John Sonnick..... 2024

Selectboard (3-year terms)

Andy Watts..... 2026
 Tracey Delphia..... 2024
 Kendall Chamberlin..... 2025
 Dawn Hill-Fleury..... 2025
 Ethan Lawrence..... 2026

Champlain Water District Commissioner (3-year term)

Aaron Martin..... 2025

Justices of the Peace

(as of Jan. 1, 2024) - 2-year terms

Contact

*Alyssa Black..... 802.598.1026
 *Sianay Chase Clifford..... 802.363.2157
 *Tracey Delphia..... 802.598.3168
 *Leonora Dodge..... 802.324.3828
 *Alexis Dubief..... 802.881.2887
 *Elizabeth (Betsy) Dunn..... 802.238.4271
 *Rey Garofano..... 802.922.3311
 *Dawn Hill-Fleury..... 802.878.7622
 *Brian Hsiang..... 802.238.5074
 *Megan Humphries..... 202.361.3411
 *Georgia Lavigne..... 802.324.7838
 *Linda Myers..... 802.878.3514
 *Erik Post..... 802.399.4800
 *Margaret Smith..... 802.878.9251
 Irene Wrenner..... 802.338.2247

**Performs marriages*



81 Main Street
Essex Junction, VT 05452



Open 8:30 am to 4:30 pm
Monday through Friday



essexvt.org



facebook.com/essexvermont



essexvt.org/newsletter



youtube.com/@essexvt

TOWN INFORMATION

Active Voters 8,959

FY24 Grand List \$16,017,549

Entity	Tax Rate
Essex Town Capital	0.0300
Essex Town General Fund	0.6766
Local Agreement Rate	0.0017
Total Municipal Rate	0.7083
Nonhomestead Education Rate	1.7754
Homestead Education Rate	1.6646
Total - Homestead	2.3729
Total - Nonhomestead	2.4837

Meetings

Selectboard

1st and 3rd Monday - 6:30 pm

Planning Commission

2nd and 4th Tuesday - 6:00 pm

Zoning Board of Adjustment

1st Thursday - 6:00 pm



essexvt.org/assessing

Karen Lemnah

Assessor

81 Main Street (2nd floor)

Essex Junction, VT 05452

email: klemnah@essex.org

phone: 802.878.1345



essexvt.org/reappraisal

ASSESSING



As most property owners are aware, the Town of Essex has contracted with Catalis Tax & CAMA, Inc. (formerly known as Patriot Properties, Inc.) in completing a Town-wide reappraisal for all property on the Grand List. The last reappraisal was in 2007. Due to the time that has passed since the last reappraisal and in anticipation of a mandate by the State of Vermont based upon reappraisal standards at that time, a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was issued in September of 2022. Upon Select Board approval the above reappraisal contract was executed in December 2022 and the reappraisal process began in July 2023. The reappraisal completion date is slated for June 2025.

The primary reasons for a reappraisal are as follows:

- Over time, the market changes due to supply and demand as it relates to various aspects of buyer and seller behaviors, location, and building type.
- A location and/or building type may have become less or more valuable than it was in a previous reappraisal.
- A span between reappraisals creates more opportunity for inequities to grow and usually leads to larger and unpredictable changes to property values.
- As inequities increase, the tax burden on individual property owners becomes unfair.
- Property taxes are based on property values. Without periodic reappraisals, some property owners would pay more while others would pay less.
- Reappraisal resets property values to their current market value so that the property tax burden is equalized for all taxpayers.
- Reappraisal assures every property owner they are only paying their fair share.
- Property improvements/changes are captured to ensure the accuracy of our data.
- Improvements that need adding to the assessment include updated kitchen and bathrooms, new additions such as a patio or deck, or an enclosed porch converted to living space after the last reappraisal.
- Other changes captured are improvements no longer on the property, such as inground swimming pools and detached buildings.

- Deferred maintenance of improvements that assists in evaluating depreciation. Depreciation lowers the value; the amount depends on the deferred maintenance of the property.
- A reappraisal identifies these market and data changes and appropriately assesses any variations to ensure fair and equitable valuations.

Reappraisals consist of a review and revaluation of properties to determine their current fair market value for property tax purposes. During this process, we find it crucial to work with property owners in obtaining complete and accurate data that ensures fair and equitable valuation results. This will ensure all property owners are paying their fair share of property taxes. To this end, it is essential to have access to inspect both the property's exterior and interior improvements. If denied access to the property, it makes it difficult to generate an accurate valuation and forces an educated assumption based upon a comparison of like properties that have sold over the last three years.

Reappraisals are a component of the State of Vermont Property Valuation & Review Tax Department's annual Equalization Study. Below is information regarding the State of Vermont's Equalization Study and how it relates to reappraisals.

- The Equalization Study's purpose is to assess how close the grand list assessed values compare to 100% of Fair Market Value.
- The study analyzes sales ratios for the prior three (3) years (assessed value divided by sale price). This ratio is known as Common Level of Appraisal (CLA).
- Vermont law defines CLA as "the ratio-of the aggregate value of local education property tax Grand List to the aggregate value of the equalized education property tax Grand List." (32 V.S.A. § 5401(3)).
- The CLA is used to equalize education taxes statewide with the goal of having properties of equal value pay equal amounts of school taxes.
- Staying as close to 100% fair market value is the target and we want to stay as close to that as possible for as long as possible.
- A town's CLA has no effect on the amount of property taxes owed on the town portion of a property tax bill.
- The study indicates equity between the valuation of property types and is tracked by the State of Vermont in a statistic called the Coefficient of Dispersion (COD).
- The COD tells us the equity of the valuations for all property in the Town to ensure that all properties are taxed fairly.
- The Equalization Study relies upon both the CLA and COD.
- The 2023 State Equalization Study Results were issued from the Vermont Department of Taxes on January 2, 2024, and indicate an overall CLA ratio for property in the Town of Essex of 68.99%.
- The Town of Essex CLA is down from the prior year 2022 ratio of 78.35% which was a combined CLA with the Village of Essex Junction (now known as the City of Essex Junction).
- The 2023 study indicates an overall COD ratio for property in the Town of Essex of 14.92%, up from the prior year 2022 combined COD of 11.83%
- A COD below 10% is good, but as the number approaches 20% it will trigger a mandatory reappraisal order from the State of Vermont.

We welcome any questions or concerns. Please do not hesitate to call, email, or visit the Assessing Department during normal business hours (M-F 8:00am-4:30pm).



essexvt.org/clerk

Nanette Rogers

Clerk/Treasurer

81 Main Street (1st floor)
Essex Junction, VT 05452

email: clerk@essex.org

phone: 802.879.0413



Make tax and water
payments online at
essexvt.org



essexvt.org/doglicenses

CLERK/TREASURER



The Town Clerk's Office saw a few changes in staff the past year. Susan McNamara-Hill, Clerk/Treasurer worked in the Clerk's Office until June 30, 2023, and assisted through September 2023; Cheryl Brown, Deputy Town Clerk resigned in June 2023; Nanette Rogers was hired in September 2023 to fill the Town Clerk and Treasurer positions.

2023 Town Meeting

Approximately 159 voters attended an in-person Town Meeting on March 6, 2023 at the Double E Performance Center. The following articles were approved by a voice vote:

Article I. Accepted the reports of the Officers.

Article II. Approved voting all public questions by Australian ballot.

Australian ballot voting took place on March 7, 2023. Following are the results:

Article V. Shall the Town adopt a budget for the fiscal year July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 as recommended by the Selectboard in the amount of \$15,401,152? **Yes: 657, No: 303, Blank: 5**

Article VI. Shall the Town of Essex increase the Capital Reserve Fund by adding 1 cent to the tax rate, in addition to the two cents previously authorized, for the purpose of financing capital projects? **Yes: 604, No: 356, Blank: 5**

Article VII. Shall the Town of Essex reorganize its charter as recommended by the Charter Review Committee? **Yes: 770, No: 162, Blank: 33**

Article VIII. Shall the Town of Essex amend its charter to have the authority to adopt and enforce ordinances for the purposes of regulating, licensing, and fixing reasonable and necessary license fees? **Yes: 748, No: 197, Blank: 20**

Article IX. Shall the Town of Essex amend its charter to give the Selectboard the power to enact an ordinance to protect residential tenants from eviction without just cause? **Yes: 570, No: 383, Blank: 12**

Article X. Shall the Town of Essex amend its charter to allow for the recall of Selectboard members? **Yes: 666, No: 266, Blank: 33**

Article XI. Shall the Town of Essex amend its charter to create a Development Review Board to replace the Zoning Board of Adjustment by January 1, 2025, following passage by the Vermont Legislature? **Yes: 763, No: 175, Blank: 27**

Article XII. Election of the following:

Moderator (one 1-year term):

John Sonnicks: 106

Write Ins: 10

Blank: 785

Selectboard (two 3-year terms):

Ethan Lawrence: 664

Andy Watts: 794

Write Ins: 21

Blank: 451

Dog Licenses

In 2023, 821 dog licenses were issued. Dog licenses are due by April 1st each year. A current rabies certificate and fee are required to license your dog.

Land Records

During Fiscal Year 2023, 1,793 documents (deeds, liens, etc.) were recorded in the Land Records. Records with images are available online beginning in June 2015. As time permits, older records are being scanned and uploaded to expand the searchable database.

Services Provided

Following are some of the services provided by the Town Clerk's Office:

- Dog licenses
- Marriage licenses
- Certified copies of vital records
- Voter registration
- Notary services
- Bill collection (property taxes, water/sewer bills, etc.)
- Green Mountain Passports (state park pass for seniors and veterans)
- Motor vehicle registration renewals
- Access to public documents

The Town Clerk's Office is open Monday through Friday, 8am-4:30pm (except holidays). To reach us by phone call 802-879-0413 or email us at clerk@essex.org. For more information, please visit <https://essexvt.org/225/Clerk-and-Treasurer>.





essexvt.org/comdev

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Katherine Sonnicks

Director

81 Main Street (2nd floor)
Essex Junction, VT 05452

email: community-development@essex.org

phone: 802.878.1343



essexvt.org/townplan2024



essexvt.org/etcnext

Development applications and the crafting of the 2024 the Town Plan kept us busy in the Community Development Department in 2023. We were fortunate that we didn't have any staff transitions this year the occurred in the previous year.

The Year in Review

This year, the Community Development Department spent significant time supporting Boards and Committees, including the Economic Development Commission, the Housing Commission, the Conservation and Trails Committee, the Planning Commission and the Zoning Board of Adjustment. We are very grateful to all the hard work of our community volunteers who serve on those boards. You can find out more about the work of these boards in this Annual Report.

Zoning Permit Applications Approved	2020	2021	2022	2023
Commercial / Industrial	12	19	20	14
Demolition	2	3	7	4
Home Occupation	1	2	1	2
Miscellaneous / Use Permit	37	45	35	20
Accessory Dwelling Unit	1	3	9	8
Congregate Housing*	2	0	0	0
Multi-Unit Dwelling*	10	7	4	5
Single-Unit Dwelling	18	15	11	12
Residential Alteration	65	60	44	72
Residential Garage	9	10	7	13
Residential Storage	19	22	22	25
Swimming Pool	16	8	5	2
Chicken Permit	2	2	0	2
Sign Permit	18	14	15	8
Total Permit Activity	212	219	181	187

The largest planning project by far was the development of the 2024 Town Plan. In early 2023 Essex residents and businesspeople came together to offer their thoughts on what the Town of Essex can be, and, true to form, ways in which to continue building a community that is connected, diverse, inclusive, sustainable, and a joy to live in. This became the vision of the 2024 Town Plan. This vision was expressed across a variety of categories and topics in different ways:

- In the realm of Development, residents named affordable housing as a top priority. It is important to note, however, that residents wanted the development review process to consider the broader impacts of development on the community as a whole, as well as to pay attention to the aesthetics of development.
- In the realm of Economic Development specifically, the community emphasis was on creating and sustaining a variety of local businesses.
- With respect to Conservation and Climate and Agriculture, residents sought to preserve a sustainable working landscape that could provide both food security for all and economic diversity, as well as to preserve and promote biodiversity in those truly undeveloped parts of town. Both were seen as bulwarks against climate change, and residents expressed a preference for both regulations and so-called green incentives to bring this about. In addition, conservation was also seen as meaning the preservation of open space and scenic views.
- When it comes to Infrastructure, the generalized desire for connectivity was strongly expressed as a desire for infrastructure that supports bicycle and pedestrian connectivity. There were also concerns about lack of car connectivity and attendant travel times.
- Regarding Recreation, the common theme was “opportunities,” which can be taken to mean either an increase in the number of opportunities for recreation - such as more connections between trails in the town - or simply highlighting the current opportunities, such as Sand Hill Park or Saxon Hill. Whether that means more programs or more recreation space, townspeople want more opportunities to recreate in Essex.

The Town Plan is a ballot item for Town Meeting 2024. You can read more about the Town Plan process and read the Plan itself on the Town website: <https://www.essexvt.org/1140/Town-Plan-2024>.

In addition to the Town Plan, our department had a hand in helping with the Explore Essex Festival, where the community was able to visit many of our amazing places around town through the Passport Week activities as well as Community Day held at Essex Middle School. We continued to work on our state Bylaw Modernization Grant to map and plan for increased housing density in strategic places in our sewer core outside of the historic Essex Center and our New Town Center (ETC NEXT area) and amended the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations for the first time in 6 years.

Several development projects approved this year, including the following:

- Several new businesses in the Essex Experience, including Inspired the Outdoor Gear Exchange, A Clover and One Bee, and The Cidery
- Along Center Road, the UVM Medical Center expanded, an Eavesdrop Audiology, a dress design and wedding consulting business, and a cannabis business all opened.
- McDonald's completed and Price Chopper is undergoing major interior renovations.

Hopes for the Future

High on the list is planning for the future development of the recent land the Town purchased at 80/90 Upper Main. Additional time will be spend transitioning to a Development Review Board (DRB), further work on housing issues related to the Bylaw Modernization Grant, and planning in the RPD-I district.



ESSEX FREE LIBRARY



Caitlin Corless

Director

1 Browns River Road

Essex, VT 05452

email:

essexfreelibrary@essex.org

phone: 802.879.0313



essexfreelibrary.org



facebook.com/EssexFreeLibrary

Mission: Your road to discovery, enrichment, and community.

The Essex Free Library continues to grow, evolve, diversify, and enhance its collections, resources, services, and programs. With increased outreach efforts, new program offerings, highly attended events, and record-breaking participation in the children's summer reading program, 2023 was an exciting year for the Library. The Library remains committed to serving the community, bringing people together, and providing a safe and welcoming space for all.

Accomplishments of 2023

- The Library distributed more than 9,000 COVID test kits (approximately 18,000 tests) through a partnership with the Vermont Department of Health.
- Patrons checked out 64,479 items, including books, periodicals, DVDs, books on CD, eBooks, audiobooks, streaming videos, music, and more.
- The Library hosted 287 in-person programs with 2,330 participants of all ages.
- The Library welcomed 27,225 visitors.

Library Services

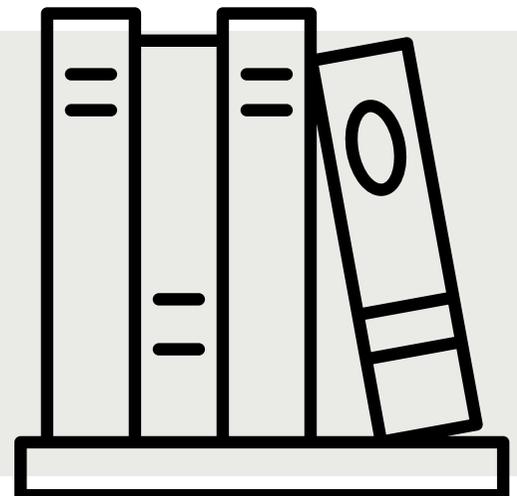
- **Library Cards** - All Essex Town residents are invited to register for a library card. With an Essex Free Library card, community members gain access to library materials, eBooks and audiobooks, video and music streaming, online databases, and more. Cardholders also have access to many other libraries throughout the Homecard system, a cooperative lending program of twenty-eight libraries in northwestern Vermont.
- **Library Collection** - The Library houses a collection of nearly 36,000 physical items, including books, DVDs, books on CD, Playaways, magazines, and more.
- **"Library of Things"** - The Library offers a collection of nontraditional library items for patron checkout. These nontraditional items include snowshoes, Chromebooks, hotspots, binoculars, sewing machines, ukuleles, guitars, a projector, a telescope, and more. The Library also circulates museum and local attraction passes that give library patrons entry at free or reduced rates.

- **Digital Offerings** - In addition to physical materials, the Library offers a collection of digital resources:
 - **Overdrive/Libby** provides access to thousands of eBooks and audiobooks.
 - **Hoopla** offers a wide collection of eBooks, audiobooks, movies, TV, and music.
 - **Mango** is a language learning resource that gives patrons the opportunity to learn more than 70 different languages.
 - **Universal Class** offers over 500 free, instructor-led online courses.
 - **Vermont Online Library** offers a wide array of research databases.
 - **Learning Express** is an online resource dedicated to resume building, job searching, and test preparation.
 - **Consumer Reports Online** provides ratings and reviews, recommendations, and buying advice for thousands of products and services.
- **Lobby Pickup Services** - The Library offers lobby pickup of items for patron convenience. Items may be requested via email, phone, or through the library catalog.
- **Printing Services** - A printer/copier is available for public use for a small fee. Patrons can also fax and scan documents.
- **Computers and Internet Access** - Five public computer workstations are available for patron use. Wi-Fi is available for those with laptops and other personal devices. Wi-Fi extends out into the parking lot and can be accessed when the building is closed.
- **Interlibrary Loan** - Essex Free offers an interlibrary loan service. Materials not owned by the Essex Free Library can be requested from other libraries throughout the state.
- **Library Staff** - Essex Free Library's helpful staff is always willing to provide book recommendations, reference services, and technology assistance. All are welcome to enjoy the Library's space and services.

Library Events and Programs

Library programs are offered nearly every day of the week for patrons of all ages. Programs include children's storytimes, musical programs, technology assistance, gaming groups, adult and children's crafts, book discussions, author events, STEAM activities, poetry circles, storywalks, Zentangle, Lego Club, and presenters and performers throughout the year. Through generous funding from the Friends of the Essex Free Library, the Library offers an exciting and dynamic reading program each summer for both children and adults.

Thank you for continuing to support the Essex Free Library. To learn more about our current offerings and services, please visit our website, www.essexfreelibrary.org. The Library can also be reached at (802) 879-0313 or contacted via email at essexfreelibrary@essex.org.





FIRE DEPARTMENT



Charles Cole

Fire Chief

190 Sand Hill Road

Essex, VT 05452

email: ccole@essex.org

phone: 802.878.5308

(non-emergency)

dispatch line: 802.878.1331

emergency: dial 9-1-1



essexvt.org/fire



[facebook.com/
EssexVTFireDepartment](https://facebook.com/EssexVTFireDepartment)

The Essex Fire Department celebrated 50 years of service to the Town of Essex in 2023 and had our busiest year yet with 1695 calls! Much of the Community is surprised to learn EFD is not a fulltime department like many of our neighboring departments. There are no full or part time employees. Our current roster has 33 paid-on-call members (who receive an average of \$32 per fire call and \$18 per medical call) and 6 per diem members. The per diem members are certified firefighter/EMT professionals who work part-time or full-time for other agencies. These individuals are hired for specific work hours based on their availability. Per Diem personnel cover workday hours from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM to help ensure we have available personnel to respond to as many calls as possible.

Of the 1695 calls, 1242 calls were for medical first response and 453 calls were fire related. Although we answered all fire related calls, some of them were with less than an adequate number of crew. EFD was only able to respond to 670 of the medical calls, leaving 572 that only had an ambulance respond for help. It is important to understand that an ambulance crew is staffed with just two people, often not enough for lifting assistance or providing some of the advanced life support services that a patient might require. Essex Rescue is our primary ambulance, contracting with 5 towns including Essex for coverage, responding to over 3,000 total calls annually. Frequently, Essex residents wait for a backup ambulance to come to their need as the primary ambulance(s) are already on another call. Volunteerism is waning as calls for service continue to increase. Candid dialog with the community is critical to develop a long-term plan for addressing these gaps and ensuring EFD meets the level of service Essex residents expect.

This upcoming budget request includes an increase in our salaries line item to allow us to increase our per diem hours to additional shifts during the day and weekends. In addition, we will begin paying a small stipend for a crew of 4 of our volunteers to sleep nights at the station to ensure having one engine crew available.

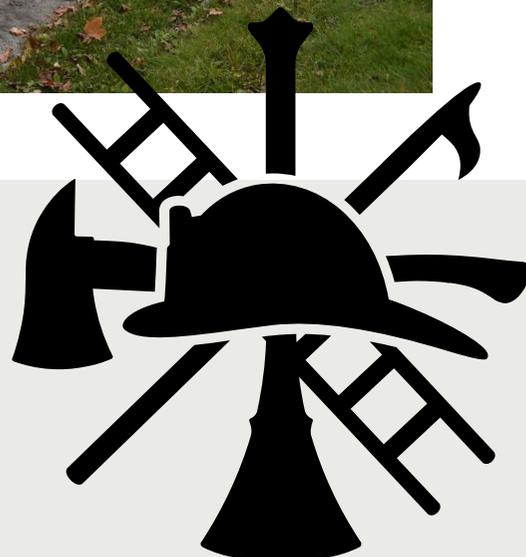
The nighttime standby coverage will require changes inside the station to accommodate sleeping quarters. We will be converting our two administrative offices into bunk rooms. Our radio room will become a meeting space to conduct a private meeting and all other daily business will be conducted from our training room. These changes are necessary as an assurance to the community due to declining availability of volunteers.

While we recognize the strong working relationship we have with our mutual aid partners, their agencies face the same challenges in covering calls as demand continues to increase. The budget request for additional per diem and nighttime standby is only a short-term solution. Further discussion with the community regarding emergency fire and first response services are critical to ensure the community experiences the expected level of service.

PLEASE check out our website (www.EssexFire.com) to meet the volunteers who protect our Town, and like us on Facebook.



*Fire Department Open House & 50th Year Celebration
October 2023*





1973 - 2023

Remembering History and Celebrating Service

A Project Started

“This project began as a simple curiosity thing, an attempt to find out more about the origin of my department and how things became the way they are and maybe see an old picture or two along the way. Well, as you can see it snowballed slightly into a compilation of what I found.” - Essex Firefighter Captain Brian Wellnitz.

Captain Wellnitz put together a history of photos and stories passed down from firefighter to firefighter in a celebration of the Essex Fire Department’s 50th year in service. The 50-page document (not sure if that was planned) can be found on the Town’s website at essexvt.org/fire. Included with this annual report are a few excerpts and photos.



Essex Fire Department History

At the annual town meeting in 1973, the Select Board recommended the creation of a fire department to the voters. When put to the vote, the citizens of the Town of Essex approved the creation of the Essex Fire Department. The original capital budget was \$125,000 and largely came from a grant from the Federal Revenue Sharing Fund.

In October of 1973, Town Manager Kevin Ryan appointed Phil Noyes Sr. (then the 1st Assistant Chief of the Essex Jct. Fire Department) to be the 1st Chief of the Essex Fire Department. A roster of 24 volunteers were appointed as firefighters for the newly formed department.



The First Trucks

Since the new engine would not be delivered for another month, our neighbors from the Colchester Center Volunteer Fire Company were generous enough to loan us a 1947 GMC engine. This engine had a 500gpm front mount pump and held 700 gallons of water. The Town of Essex also leased a 1950 GMC/OREN open cab engine from the Burlington Fire Department for \$1.00 a year. This unit had a 750gpm pump and carried 500 gallons of water. Pictured above, this truck was in service with us until 1976 when our own Engine 6 was delivered.

The Bell

Since the Fire Department's fire engines started responding to calls, there has been some sort of warning device on them to let people know they were coming and to move out of the way. One of the earliest ways was to have a bell on the truck and ring it while on the way to a call. With the invention of motorized apparatus (and later vehicles with soundproofing) the bells proved to be less effective, but since they had been a part of the apparatus for years, the fire service was slow to get rid of them. They became ceremonial instead. When Engine 4 was delivered, it was equipped with flashing lights and a siren, but no bell. The Ladies Auxiliary at the time purchased a bell for the truck and it was mounted on the front bumper in 1978. That same bell was moved from each new "lead" or "first out" engine.



Thank you

The Town of Essex thanks the volunteers and their families who have provided, and for those who continue to provide, essential services day in and day out to the Essex community and surrounding neighboring towns. Thank you for serving and doing a job that puts others first. You are the heroes of this story!

Photo Credits and Information Sources

Excerpts taken from "Essex Fire Department History" as put together by Essex Firefighter Brian Wellnitz. Photo credits: B. Wellnitz, Phillip Noyes Jr. Collection, Colchester Center Fire Company, J. Marshall, Essex Fire Department Archives. Information sources include: EFD History compiled by George Henry, History of the Village Center by Hubert Norton, History of the Town of Essex (from the History of Chittenden County VT), National Register of Historic Places (Firehouses of Vermont), and personal recollections from Phil Noyes Jr., John Jacob, Larry Ransom, Brian Wellnitz



PARKS AND RECREATION



Ally Vile

Director

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essexparksandrec.org



[facebook.com/
essexparksrec](https://facebook.com/essexparksrec)



instagram.com/essex_parksrec

By the end of the Fiscal 2022 year, we resumed close to a fully staffed department and started the new fiscal year with great energy, passion, and commitment. Our fall soccer program had 465 youth participate in the six-week program along with over 75 volunteer coaches. Our Bolton program had another successful session, transporting four full busses within the Essex Westford School District to the mountain each week in a five-week session of skiing and riding. The youth lacrosse program brought 121 kids to the fields each week for practices and games against neighboring towns. This program is another one that relies on volunteer coaches, and the success the program brings to the players, families, and community is heavily weighted on the commitment of our coaches. The season ended with our girls' 7th & 8th grade team winning the championship game in a nail-biter. These three large programs of ours are only a snapshot of our overall programming for youth and adults. Supplementing these larger programs, we continue to offer many specialty summer camps that vary in sports, art, culinary, and STEM activities. We also continue to gain interest in our fall field hockey program, school vacation specialty camps, self-defense classes, and more. All our programs are operated out of the Enterprise Fund, a self-sustaining budget separate from the operating budgets supported by tax dollars. Most of our programs are open to residents and non-residents alike, often without a difference in residency price.

Our department's aquatics program gained an incredible opportunity halfway through the fiscal year as we started offering indoor swim lessons at The Essex Resort & Spa. The demand and need for year-round swim instruction is high and our program structure, instruction, and communication have been well received with consistent and full session registrations.



The Essex Area Senior Center at 2 Lincoln Street continued to have a busy schedule each week, utilizing the three program spaces for most of the year. The “game room” and “library” spaces were transitioned into office space for the City of Essex Junction staff part way through the fiscal year, shifting program schedules to one main room. The Center remained staffed three days per week, while volunteers covered the Center two days per week when programs were in session, including opening and closing responsibilities. Throughout our fiscal year, we had approximately 2,800 visits to the Center by individuals 50 years of age or older, who participated in scheduled programs, and drop-in activities, and enjoyed affordable meal options that were offered weekly. Partnerships have held strong with the CTE-Essex Culinary Program, and Age Well. Staff retains a close relationship with community housing complexes and local business partners to stay current with the population’s needs without oversaturating the market.

In addition to programming for the 55+ community at the Essex Area Senior Center, our Program staff expanded offerings in the main conference room at the Town of Essex municipal building. An idea that started with beginner yoga has continued to grow into new offerings that fill the parking lot and utilize available space when staff and committee meetings are not using the room.



Overall, the year provided refreshing moments that reminded us all why we do what we do for the Town of Essex. We look forward to growing and moving forward with the community as we enhance our efforts that continue to be your connection to a healthy and happy Town of Essex.

Thank you to all our community partners,
volunteers and coaches, and seasonal staff who
kept us a strong and safe provider of
programs and recreation spaces.



POLICE DEPARTMENT



Ron Hoague

Police Chief

145 Maple Street

Essex Junction, VT 05452

email: epd.info@essex.org

(not monitored 24/7 - to report an incident, please call.

phone: 802.878.8331

emergency: dial 9-1-1



epdvt.org



[facebook.com/
essexvtpolice](https://facebook.com/essexvtpolice)



instagram.com/essexpolice802



**Join our Team!
Apply today.**

In 2023, the Essex Police Department continued to proudly serve the Town of Essex and the City of Essex Junction by providing professional, effective policing services. Contemporary policing has evolved to encompass much more than just the enforcement of laws and ordinances. Policing now means community caretaking, being the guardians of our citizens, and an ingrained sense of community well-being within the department.

At the time of this writing, the Essex Police Department has one sworn officer vacancy while being fully staffed in our administration and dispatch divisions. We have filled thirty of thirty-one authorized positions. Recruiting for sworn officers, especially those from female and traditionally marginalized groups continues to be a focus for us however, as we expect four retirements of long-serving officers in 2024. For those interested, our recruiting and hiring page can be found on our website or by using the QR code on this page.

Property crime, namely larcenies from vehicles and of the vehicles themselves have become a real challenge in late 2023. The statistics posted are for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023 and do not show that for the calendar year 2023, the Town and City saw a nearly 40% increase in the numbers of larcenies from vehicles from the prior year while our numbers of stolen vehicles nearly doubled during the same period (32 in 2023 vs. 18 in 2022). The department has attempted to address this by adding plain clothes personnel at night while also working with neighboring departments to charge those who are responsible. Most of this activity can be attributed to two groups of juveniles (under 16 yo) who have committed larcenies and vehicle thefts during late summer and early fall time period throughout Chittenden County. EPD continues to remind residents to lock their vehicles and not leave valuables inside overnight.

The department has also seen an increase in the number of incidents where illicit drugs are involved. We have not been immune to the crisis that the country is seeing with an influx of fentanyl and cocaine. The number of cases involving heroin or fentanyl were 46 in 2023, up from 29 in 2022. This is all cases that involve these drugs, not just where there was a possible overdose or death. EPD is one of the many partner organizations along with the VT Department of Health, Howard Mental Health and others who are working on this problem from all aspects of

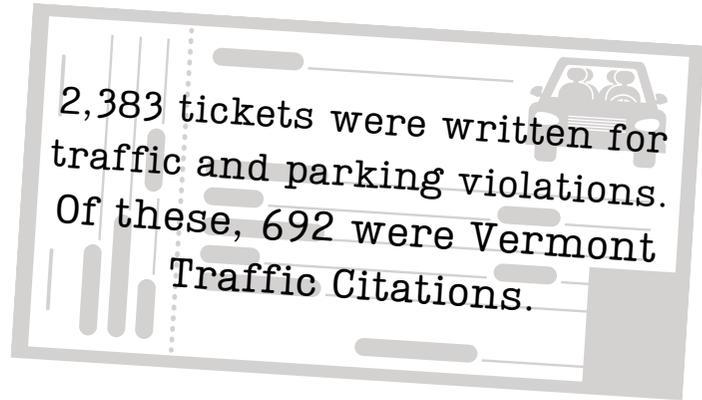
treatment and enforcement. All EPD officers have been carrying Narcan for many years now and used it eighteen times in 2023 to save a life. Further, our relationship with Community Outreach is a key part of our response to this issue as they provide immediate resources to people struggling with addiction and mental health crisis. Finally, EPD has assigned an officer to the Drug Enforcement Administration- Burlington office for many years and we will have one assigned in 2024.

In January 2023, EPD formed a partnership with Williston Police to staff our dispatch center with a combination of Essex and Williston employees. This collaboration has increased our capabilities and solidified an unstable work schedule for both entities. An example of the capability of this partnership came on November 4, 2023 when Fire Departments were called to Jericho Road for a major home fire. This fire required numerous fire assets to extinguish the fire and along with a new fire response protocol, having two dispatchers working made a significant difference in the ability of our dispatch center to handle all of the tasks needed. There are many other examples this past year of how the combined dispatch centers have benefitted both communities with all of them being a result of the professional public safety dispatchers who staff our center.

Finally, EPD continued to strengthen our relationship with the community through various initiatives and the establishment of a Police Community Advisory Board. The first ever Essex Police Citizen's Academy (to be repeated in early 2024), National Night Out, delivery of Senior meals, Essex PD's No-Shave November for Charity, and the Essex Community Day are just a few of the community events that EPD members took part in this year. In the fall of 2023, the Essex Police Community Advisory Board held its first meetings following a recommendation by the former Essex B.E.S.T. organization. The Board is made up of residents from both the City and the Town to advise the department on policy and act as a sounding board for community concerns, especially of minorities and marginalized groups. To this end, in addition to the semi-annual training in Fair and Impartial Policing required by State law, EPD developed training titled 'Response to Identity Based Incidents' and all employees attended. This training encompassed identity-based trauma, culturally competent response, and providing resources for those who have been victimized. Our commitment to community engagement is unwavering and we hope to bring more to community in 2024.

Thank you to all who continue to support the Department and public safety, we cannot accomplish our mission without you!



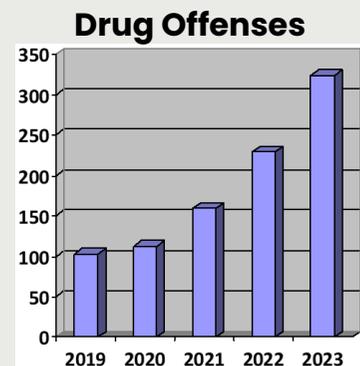
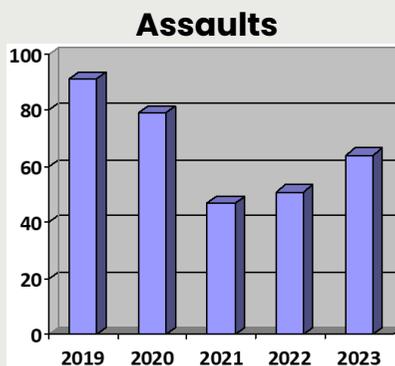
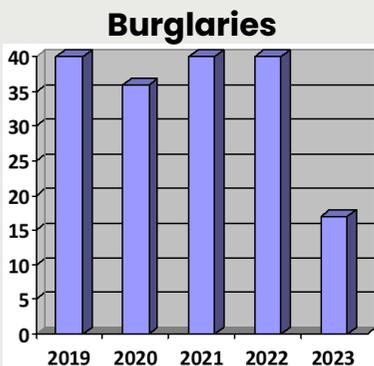


REPORTED CRIME ACTIVITY - PERIOD 07/01/22-06/30/23

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
HOMICIDE	0	0	0	0	0
ROBBERIES	3	0	2	3	3
BURGLARIES	40	36	40	40	17
ASSAULTS	91	79	47	51	64
SEX OFFENSES	16	17	28	19	21
DRUG OFFENSES	103	112	159	229	323
LARCENIES	214	300	288	320	242
VANDALISM	83	83	76	73	49
STOLEN VEHICLES	11	5	10	23	15
SUICIDES/ATTEMPTS	18	9	23	20	13
MISSING PERSONS	29	27	30	38	30
BAD CHECKS / FRAUD	63	92	71	75	69
D.U.I	74	56	49	54	54
COURT CASES	368	268	233	349	365
CRASHES	524	462	417	467	498

Only the facts, please...

In Vermont, officers are required to complete a minimum of 30 hours of training per year. In 2023, EPD officers completed a total of 5,445 hours, averaging 170 hours per officer.





essexvt.org/publicworks

Aaron Martin

Director

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PUBLIC WORKS



The Public Works Department continued to provide exceptional service to the community through 2023. The goal of Public Works has been and continues to be to maintain the existing infrastructure throughout the Town and concurrently improve the infrastructure when financially feasible, provide responsive service and quality work, support economic growth and development, and protect the public health and safety of all residents and visitors to this community in a timely, efficient, and equitable manner.

The Department said goodbye to another long-time employee last year. Robert Whitten started with the Town of Essex Public Works Department in 1983. With over 40 years of service with the Town, Bob saw many changes throughout his tenure. Over the last 25+ years, Bob was the Water and Sewer Foreman and provided exemplary service to the community ensuring the water was always on, and the sewer flowed, 24/7, 365 days a year. The Department appreciates Bob's service and congratulates him on his retirement. He will be missed.



Projects Completed 2023

In addition to the routine maintenance the Town's Public Works employees complete on a regular basis, a number of other projects were completed or in progress, including:

- The 2023 Paving program is nearly completed with one additional road to be paved this spring. The following roads were paved last season: Carmichael Street, a portion of Saxon Hollow Drive, Timberlane Drive, and Winterlane Circle. ashaw Drive is planned to be completed this spring.
- Public Works began a new sidewalk rehabilitation initiative 2 years ago. The Department began the task of updating the numerous sidewalk ramps throughout the pedestrian network that are not in compliance with ADA. A total of 24 sidewalk ramps were updated within the Village at Old Stage development last summer. The project consisted of removal of concrete curb and sidewalk ramps, and installation of new concrete ramps that meet current ADA requirements. The same is planned for the Painesville development off of Pinecrest Drive this summer.
- The Fort Ethan Allen water tower project was completed last summer. This project was phase 1 of 3 phases, which was the full restoration of the slate roof, the small exterior windows, and the top platform screening. Many thanks for Essex Community Historical Society with helping to secure up to \$36,000 in grants throughout the years for this work.

- Public Works completed phase 3 of televising old, deteriorated stormwater pipes throughout the Town. A total of 288 assets were televised covering areas located in the Fort, Kellogg Road, Pinewood, Sand Hill Road, and Old Stage Village. Data collected will be used to generate a condition assessment report to be used to create a pipe rehabilitation plan. Aging infrastructure continues to be a primary concern for the Department. Staff will apply for the final phase of televising this year.
- Public Works continues to make progress on the Phosphorus Control Plan (PCP) by upgrading ditches, culverts, and stabilizing eroded outfalls on hydrologically connected road segments and outfalls for compliance with the Town's MS4 Stormwater Permit. In 2023, the Town received funding through the Vtrans' Grants-in-Aid program which was used to replace a failed stormwater pipe and stabilize an eroded outfall on Greenfield Road. Additional upgrades include culvert replacements on Lost Nation Road and at the stormwater ponds at the Essex Experience.
- Public Works received a grant through the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission's (CCRPC) Unified Work Planning Program (UPWP) to develop conceptual plans and updated phosphorus calculations and cost estimates for the top 4 projects identified in the PCP. These conceptual plans will be used to apply for funding to develop the projects through construction.
- Unmetered and unaccounted for water loss is a large expense that can be controlled. The Water and Sewer department completed the final phase of the Town-wide water leak survey that was started three years ago. This project has helped our system operators locate and repair a number of leaks within the Town's system, and plans are in place to pursue new technologies available to help continuously monitor the system for leaks. The sewer department completed two capital upgrade project this past year. Two more pump station control cabinets were upgraded, and the last three pump stations were upgraded with new SCADA.
- Staff applied for a Stormwater Mitigation Grant through VTrans, to update the Town's existing salt storage shed at the Public Works complex. Under this State grant program, updating and replacement of old and leaking salt sheds is an eligible project. The Town's current salt shed is over 40 years old and has a number of structural deficiencies that require replacement with a new structure. The grant funding will be used to offset design and construction costs.

Work Items for 2024

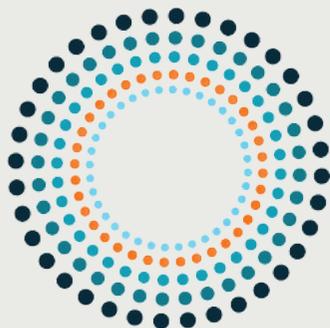
The Department continued with increased pavement rehabilitation, stormwater pipelining and repairs, and has accelerated the sidewalk repair/replacement schedule to continue the process of bringing the existing pedestrian network up to current ADA requirements. In addition to this work, the Department will take on a number of large-scale construction projects and design projects in 2024. The list below outlines a few of the major project's lines up for this year.

- The Department began the design of a new 12-inch watermain, through the Town Center nearly four years ago. Bids were opened for construction of this project in December of last year, and the project has been awarded to DCS. The project will connect the existing water distribution piping at the intersection of Essex Way and Billie Butler Drive with a new 12-inch watermain along the northern / western side of VT RT 15. Construction completion on this line is expected late summer of 2024.
- The final project for the Indian Brook Flow Restoration Plan is the LDS Church project which upgrades 2 existing stormwater ponds into underground storage vaults, one of which is a sand filter providing phosphorus credit under the PCP. The project is scheduled to go to construction in 2024 pending state approval and is being funding by a Vtrans' Highway and Stormwater Mitigation Grant and a DEC MS4 Formula Grant.

- After multiple breaks over the past 2 years on the sewer forcemain on Center Road (VT Route 15), Public Works has decided to replace the existing sewer forcemain. The preliminary design phase was recently completed and funded by the Clean Water State Revolving Fund in the form of a low interest loan. Final plans will be completed this year with construction scheduled for 2025.
- The Public Works Department will continue to apply for grant funding when available to help offset both Capital and Operating costs associated with maintaining the Town's infrastructure. Staff will be applying for a Class 2 paving grant through VTrans to help with the costs of reconditioning and paving Kellogg Road. Other grants like the VTrans Structures Grant program and the CCRPC's UPWP grant program will also be utilized to apply for additional funding.
- The Town received a newly issued MS4 State Stormwater Permit in 2023. In 2024, the Town will be required to apply for coverage under the Permit by submitting a Notice of Intent and updated Stormwater Management Plan, FRPs, and PCP by April 1st.
- The bid for the Summer 2024 Paving program has been drafted and the following streets have been scheduled to receive pavement reconditioning for FY 2025: Abare Avenue, the paved section of Brigham Hill, Kellogg Road, and Old Stage Road. Additional road sections may be paved depending on grant awards from the State.
- The Department will look to begin the design process of a new salt shed. A full structural analysis was completed a year ago. The next step in the design process is to find the best fit for the Department's needs and keep costs within budget. A grant award from VTrans this year would help the Town greatly in offsetting the costs associated with the shed replacement.
- The Department manages sixteen buildings throughout the community. A significant effort was made last year to finalize the upgrade all the building's lighting from florescent bulbs to LED. Staff continues to improve on the rest of the existing facilities while focusing on energy efficient upgrades. The maintenance of the buildings is an ongoing endeavor. As we say, "Small improvements helps keep the big projects to a minimum".
- The last Sewer Capacity study was completed in the Town of Essex in 2018. Staff will work on the next update this year with a consultant to ensure the existing infrastructure has sufficient capacity to serve the community, and the future needs of the system for full build out of the sewer core. This document will be used for planning the future development of the community.



"Small improvements helps keep the big projects to a minimum".



ESSEX COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTER

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phone: 802.876.6791



essexcjc.org



[facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/essexcjc)

The Essex Community Justice Center (CJC) has existed since 2003. It provides restorative justice approaches to crime and conflict in the Essex, Colchester, Milton, Jericho, Underhill, and Westford communities. Most of the funding comes from the VT Department of Corrections (86%) while the Towns of Essex and Colchester have each begun contributing to the operational costs of the CJC for the last 4 years (Essex 7.5% and Colchester 4%). Staff at the CJC became employees of the Town of Essex in 2016.

Restorative justice focuses on repairing harm to individuals and to the greater community impacted by a crime. Relationships are rebuilt and the community is stronger when it has a role in addressing crimes that affect the safety and well-being of its residents. The CJC has 3 part time and two full time staff who train and support community volunteers to provide the majority of the restorative processes in any given year. The following programs are provided by the CJC:

Victim/Affected Party Outreach and Support for Restorative Justice Processes

CJC staff provide outreach and support to community members affected by crimes referred for a Restorative Justice Panel. Affected parties have the opportunity to meet with those who committed the crime, describe the impact, and request action from the offender designed to repair the harm that occurred. In FY23 the CJC was successful in reaching out to provide support and options to 111 out of 114 people harmed by crime.

Essex Victim/Affected Party Outreach

In FY23 the Essex CJC began a program of staff doing outreach to victims of serious crime in Essex. The program services individual victims (not businesses), whether or not an offender is caught. Outreach has focused on victims of the following crimes: Robbery, Larceny, Domestic Violence, Assault, Burglary, and sex offenses. In the coming year we hope to recruit and train volunteers to do this outreach.

Restorative Justice Panels

- The Restorative Justice Panel (RJP) is a group of trained community volunteers who work together with affected parties and offenders in a Panel Process. The Panel Process supports those affected by crime to seek reparations from the offender and in turn helps hold the offender accountable for repairing the harm they have caused. The

majority of cases, youth and adult, come from Direct Referrals from Law Enforcement. They may also come from the State's Attorney's Office or the Department of Corrections. In these cases, the crime can be addressed through restorative approaches. This alternative saves money that would otherwise be spent on additional law enforcement time, court staff, legal fees and supervision by the Department of Corrections. In both of these cases, if the Responsible Party completes their Panel Agreement successfully, they won't have a criminal record. The panel process holds those responsible for crime accountable for their actions and provides an important opportunity for those affected by crime to share their stories and identify needs for repair.

In FY23 the CJC received 113 new referrals and held Panels for a total of 147 cases. The Panels were held by 34 community volunteers who provided 506 hours of service to their community. The Panels saw an 90% successful completion rate.

Restorative Reintegration

CJC staff and trained volunteers work with individuals returning to their community after serving an incarcerative sentence. The goals of the program are to assist participants to reintegrate and connect to the community in a positive way, to help reduce recidivism, and to enhance community safety. This is done through one-on-one reentry support for anyone who wants the support. For those who present a higher level of risk we provide Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSAs). The CoSA Program wraps a circle of trained volunteers around a reentering individual that meets with them weekly for a year. The purpose of CoSA is to ensure that there are no more victims and no more secrets while supporting and connecting the individual to their community, increasing the chances of their success. In FY23 the CJC provided CoSAs for 3 different individuals and one-on-one reentry support to 9 individuals. The CoSA program has 31 trained community volunteers. In FY23 they provided 315 hours of service to their community.

The CJC is informed by a 12-member Community Advisory Board (CAB) that meets quarterly.



"The whole process ...and everyone there helped my son tremendously with changing the path he was on; making better choices, finding better/real friends, and also realizing his self-worth".

-Parent of a youth who completed the RJ Panel Process

Sharon Kelley

Health Officer

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or 802.238.5303



essexvt.org/healthofficer

HEALTH OFFICER

My name is Sharon Kelley. I am the Health Officer for the Town of Essex and Deputy Health Officer for the City of Essex Junction. Upon recommendations from the Selectboard, the VT Department of Health appoints the Health Officer & Deputy Health Officers to each municipality. The Town and the City worked out an arrangement to appoint its Health Officer to serve as Deputy Health Officer for each other's municipality. This arrangement has worked well as it provides continued coverage for both communities.

Some examples of complaints lodged in 2023 were: Mold, mildew, garbage piles, septic backing up into tub, broken toilet, water leaks, electrical issues, improper ventilation, bugs, decaying smells, urine odor in elevator, mice, rats, dogs barking, and dog bites.

I encourage tenants and landowners who are renting or thinking about renting, to secure a handout provided by Vermont Tenants, Inc., call (802) 864-0099 or visit the website at <https://www.cvoeo.org/get-help/vermont-tenants-rights-and-resources> (CVOEO=Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity)

Visit the Health Department website@www.healthvermont.gov which has an abundance of information on many topics, such as Heroin & Opioid Drugs, Child Health Safety, Death with Dignity, Immunizations for Covid, Flu, and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), Oral Health, Outdoor Safety, Teens and Sex, Violence Prevention, and so much more. If you need to contact the Health Department, the number is (800) 464-4343 or (802) 863-7200.

Dial 211. If you are age 60 or older, or have a disability, or have a child under 6 living in your household. If you or someone you know is in crisis (available 24/7), call or text 988 or chat 988LIFELINE.ORG

Complaints on dog bites are required to be initiated with the Police Department by calling (802) 878-8331. Essex PD will initiate a report and the Animal Control Officer (ACO) and/or Health Officer will follow through with the complaint. All dogs need to be quarantined for 10 days if the bite broke the skin. The HO will check the dog upon completion of the 10-day quarantine period. Information is provided to the dog bite victim on how to request a hearing with the Selectboard on 'Vicious Dog' complaints should they feel the situation rises to that level.

All dogs require a yearly registration. This is done at the Town Clerk's office, 81 Main Street.

Changes for 2024 require all rental complaints to be filed with the State of Vermont Department of Public Safety (DPS). Should a complaint be filed with the Health Officer, we will instruct you to file a complaint with DPS online at www.firesafety.vermont.gov. The THO has the authority to assist DPS in these inspections.

Health Officers will continue to investigate all other public safety issues. You can reach Sharon Kelley at (802) 878-1343 or (802) 238-5303 or when I am out of the office call Matthew Smith at 802-878-6944 ext. 1609, Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Wishing you the best for 2024!



essexvt.org/boardscommittees

You Tube Channel
youtube.com/@essexvt

Watch recordings of meetings

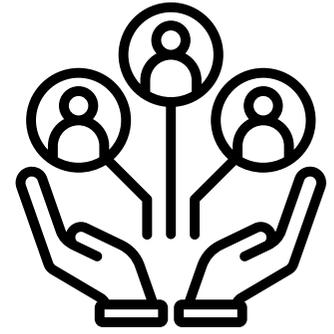


Find Meeting Agendas
essexvt.org/meetings



Apply for vacant seats online
or learn more by contacting
the Town Office at
hello@essex.org or calling
802.878.1341

BOARDS COMMITTEES COMMISSIONS



Board of Civil Authority & Justices of the Peace

The Board of Civil Authority is a quasi-judicial 21 member board consisting of fifteen Justices of the Peace, the Selectboard members and the Town Clerk. The Board's duties are serving as an election official and assisting on Election Day and sitting on tax appeals and serving as a members of the board of tax abatement. Meetings are held on an as needed basis after being duly warned by the clerk.

Cemetery Commission

The Cemetery Commission will provide guidance for a well-maintained setting for the interment and commemoration of the deceased and for the comfort and inspiration of the bereaved and the public. The Commission will strive to accommodate the desires of families and individuals within the Town's and Cemetery's rules adopted for the operation of Mountain View Cemetery. The Commission wishes to provide compassionate and efficient service in a manner that respects human dignity.

Conservation and Trails Committee

The mission of the Conservation & Trails Committee is to inventory and study the natural, historic, educational, cultural, scientific, architectural, or archaeological resources of the town in which the public has an interest; and to preserve, develop and maintain a multi-use trail, sidewalk, and greenway system in the Town of Essex that will link residential neighborhoods to natural areas, schools, parks, businesses, recreational facilities, community centers, and neighboring towns.

Economic Development Commission

The Economic Development Commission is responsible for promoting the quality of life in Essex. The mission of the Commission is to assist with the retention, expansion and development of existing business; assist with the location and development of new industrial and commercial firms to Essex; plan for development to assure economic diversification and to provide the Selectboard with advice to enhance our commercial and industrial base.

Energy Committee

The Essex Energy Committee's mission is to provide leadership to the citizens and is charged with tracking municipal energy use, recommending targets and actions for decreasing use, researching and recommending opportunities to utilize renewable energy sources and the efficient use of energy within town operations, developing and managing energy efficiency educational programs and creating annual reports on energy projects and opportunities.

Essex Free Library Board of Trustees

Library trustees are appointed by the Essex Town Selectboard to guide the library through policy-making and planning.

Housing Commission

The Housing Commission maintains and analyzes the community's demographic and housing stock information and provides periodic updates on housing issues to elected officials. The Commission also works to educate the public on housing topics and develops partnerships with developers, non-profits, state agencies, and social service organizations to advance the community's housing goals.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission helps shape the future of the Town to support a thriving community through a wide range of planning initiatives. These include downtown revitalization, economic development, municipal service delivery, natural resource management, architecture and historic preservation, scenic views, locations of future recreation paths, and so much more.

Police Community Advisory Board

As an independent board, the PCAB's purpose is to facilitate communication between the Essex community and the Essex Police Department (EPD) and provide feedback and support to the EPD on strategies and policy, especially around issues of equity. Central to this stated purpose is an emphasis on ensuring the voices and needs of systemically marginalized, disenfranchised and oppressed members of the community are heard with regards to public safety.

Zoning Board of Adjustment

The purpose of the Zoning Board of Adjustment is to provide a degree of flexibility to an otherwise rigid system of regulation, to safeguard the rights of property owners and to alleviate the need for minor amendments to the ordinance through the exercise of a degree of administrative discretion as specifically authorized by state statutes.

Regional groups with Essex representatives

Appointments to these positions represent Essex on the Chittenden County Communications District, Chittenden Solid Waste District, Green Mountain Transit, Town Meeting TV Board of Trustees, and Winooski Valley Park District.

Volunteering

In the interest of furthering efforts for public engagement and inclusivity, and to encourage community members with diverse backgrounds, experience, opinions, and ideas, the Selectboard advertises seats that have expiring terms. All applicants for upcoming expiring seats will be interviewed by the Selectboard. Volunteers appointed to boards, committees, and commissions may receive a \$50 per meeting stipend to assist with indirect expenses to attend meetings.

Staff Representative

Katherine Sonnick
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essexvt.org/planningcommission

PLANNING COMMISSION

Commission Members

Dustin Bruso, Chair	Georgia Lavigne
Joshua Knox, Vice Chair	Johnathan Schumacher
John Mangan, Clerk	Trefor Williams
Daniel Parsons	Paula Duke, alternate

What does the Planning Commission do?

The Planning Commission performs two main functions: long-range planning and development review. Long-range planning involves updates every eight years to the Town Plan, amendments to the Zoning Regulations and Subdivision Regulations, and special projects that focus on specific areas of planning. This year we both wrote a new Town Plan and revised the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations. Recent examples of special projects include the 2021 ETC NEXT Master Plan and the 2019 Saxon Hill Town Forest Vision Framework. Development review involves site plan reviews and subdivision reviews.

As a part of the visioning process for the 2024 Town Plan, Essex residents and businesspeople came together in early 2023 to offer their thoughts on what the Town of Essex can be, and, true to form, ways in which to continue building a community that is connected, diverse, inclusive, sustainable, and a joy to live in. This became the vision of the 2024 Town Plan. The Plan is on the Town Meeting ballot this year. To learn more about the process of developing the Town Plan and to read the Plan itself, visit the Town Plan webpage: <https://www.essexvt.org/1140/Town-Plan-2024>.

How can you find out about development or subdivision applications, or other work the Planning Commission is doing?

- The Town website contains meeting dates and agendas, plans for development proposals and staff reports about those proposals, and minutes from past Planning Commission meetings. (<https://www.essexvt.org/425/Planning-Commission>).
- Seven Days has legal notices with agendas for upcoming meetings.
- The Town Offices, Post Office, and Essex Free Library have bulletin boards posted with notices and agendas.
- Zoning notices (yellow signs) are displayed on properties that will be under review.
- Mailings are sent to immediate neighbors (aka abutters) of a property that will be under review; the mailings contain an agenda with the date of the hearing for the proposed project.
- Front Porch Forum (www.frontporchforum.com) emails contain information about upcoming meetings.
- Sign up for emails notifying of agendas for upcoming meetings and the posting of minutes through the Town website: <https://www.essexvt.org/136/Town-Notifications>.
- Community Development Department (878-1343) staff can answer questions.
- Talk to your neighbors.

Sharon Kelley

Health Officer

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essexvt.org/zoning

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

The Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) consists of five (5) members and includes a Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary. The hearing is conducted by the Chair or Acting Chair of the Board. In order for a hearing to proceed before the ZBA there must be a minimum of three members present to create a quorum. A minimum of three votes in the affirmative or in the negative is required for a motion to pass or fail.

The current board consists of the following members:

- Nick Martin, Chair, has been a member since October, 2017
- Mike Plageman, Vice-Chair, has been a member since 2018.
- Trefor Williams has been a member since July, 2023; he is also a Planning Commission member.
- Vacancy.

Board Member Tom Yandow resigned in January, 2024. We are in need of a volunteer. The ZBA meets on the 1st Thursday of the month. There must be 3 members present for a meeting to go forward. In 2023, there were no meetings in January, February, March, October, November and December. The ZBA reviews Conditional Use, Variances, Unspecified Uses and Appeal of the Zoning Administrator's decision. The commitment is minor. Meetings start at 6:00 p.m. and are typically less than 1 hour.

Members are paid of stipend of \$50.00 for each meeting attended. Please reach out to Zoning Administrator, Sharon Kelley skelley@essex.org if you are interested in volunteering. We need you!

Over the course of 2023 the ZBA reviewed the following applications:

- 21 Saxon Hill Road, Conditional Use to operate a home business for an agrotourism that would allow for small to medium-sized group events in the barn. Approved.
- 25 Essex Way, Conditional Use to operate a light manufacturing business for cannabis cultivation & processing. Approved.
- 5F David Drive, Conditional Use to operate a light manufacturing business for storage, formulation & packaging of THC products. Approved.
- 6 Carmichael Street, Variance request to return an existing commercial structure to a single-family house. Denied.
- 37 Pinecrest Drive, Variance request to place a shed within the required setback. Denied.
- 40 Stonebrook Circle, Variance request for an addition within the required setback. Denied.

In order to be approved for a variance, you must meet all of the 5 criteria. One of the criteria is that you did not create the non-conformity, thus one of the reasons for the denials above.

Staff Representative

Kent Johnson

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essexvt.org/conservation

CONSERVATION AND TRAILS COMMITTEE

Current Members: Ken Signorello, Chair; Shannon Jackson, Vice Chair; Morgan Kirk, Clerk; Rusty Brink; Bino Cummings; Erin De Vries; Steve Dowd; Betsy Dunn; April Petersen
Staff Support: Kent Johnson; Tree Warden: Chuck Vile

Tree City USA: Our committee led the charge in qualifying Essex Town as a proud part of Tree City USA. Essex received the designation, and two signs were erected at major entry points into our community. Four additional signs are in the process of being installed at all other major points of entry.

Arbor Day Conference: Committee member, Ken Signorello and our staff support, Kent Johnson attended the one-day conference where Essex received the Town's new Tree City USA designation which demonstrates a commitment to preserving and promoting tree cover in our town especially in urban and suburban areas.

Arbor Day Celebration: We held an Arbor Day celebration at Essex Elementary School which included planting a bur oak tree in greenspace at the front of the school. (See Photo)

2024 Town Plan: Our committee was extensively involved with the update of our 2023 Town Plan. Committee members served on a Town Plan Work Group and Act 171 Work Group. Our committee hosted an Act 171 public hearing and helped produce that portion of the Town Plan. Act 171 requires towns to "manage Vermont's forestlands so as to maintain and improve forest blocks and habitat connectors." Members of our committee were instrumental in how public outreach for the input on the Town Plan was conducted and submitted 20 action items that are included in the updated plan.

VOREC Planning Grant for Multi-use Trails: We supported a Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC) grant to plan multi-use paths connecting the town center around Explore Essex and trails at the Saxon Hill Forest Recreation area.

Development reviews: The committee advised the Planning Commission on six development applications within the Town.

Indian Brook Park Clean Up: Our committee hosted a public Fall and Spring cleanup event at Indian Brook Reservoir Park where truckloads of invasive buckthorn and honeysuckle were removed, and trails were maintained. We are enormously grateful for the community support we received for this work.

Explore Essex: Conservation and Trails participated in Explore Essex with a booth distributing material on invasive species, land conservation programs and the trail systems throughout the town.

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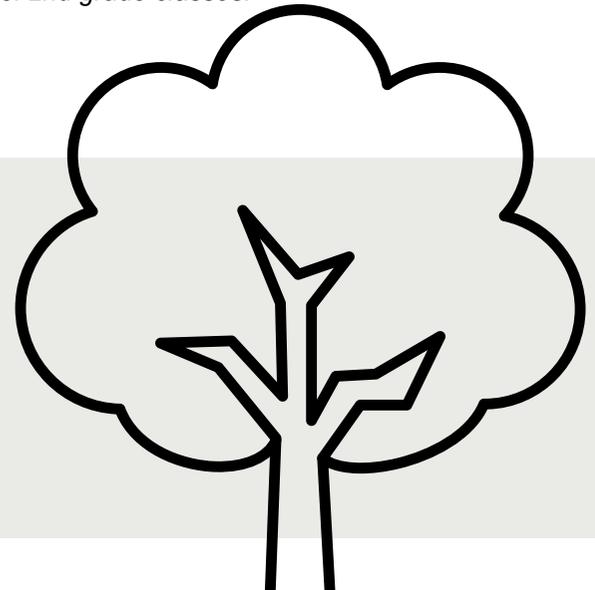
Essex Tree Farm Research: Committee members began investigating a possible location at the Tree Farm recreational area for a Town tree nursery.

Pollinator Garden: A pollinator garden at Prairie Field behind Essex Middle School will be planted in the spring of 2024 with the assistance of Bee the Change and Full Circle Garden.

Conservation Programs: Two members began a consolidation study of the Current Use, Open Lands and Farm programs.



2023 Arbor Day tree planning and celebration. Lauren Gaffney Cohen, Chuck Vile, Irene Wrenner, Steve Dowd, Kitty Tracy, Alan Botula, Anna Meehan, Essex Elementary School 2nd grade classes.



Staff Representative

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essexvt.org/edc

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

The mission of the Commission is to serve as an advisory resource to relevant staff departments, town commissions and committees, and to the governing board(s) of the Essex Community concerning:

- An understanding of the state of the existing businesses community and its contribution to the vitality and future of Essex
- An appreciation for the impact of emerging issues, trends and state or municipal policies on both current and prospective business development
- The importance of nurturing proactive programs, policies and procedures that position Essex as a preferred municipality in the State of VT in which to “Do Business”

Met with Essex businesses to support grant opportunities, to pursue workforce training and recruitment programs.

Support Essex businesses with grant opportunities, workforce recruiting and training programs, van pooling and other transportation issues. The EDC has worked on international trade issues with affected businesses.

Represent Essex on the Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce's Regional Affairs Committee.

Explore Essex business participation is the EDC's contribution to the event.



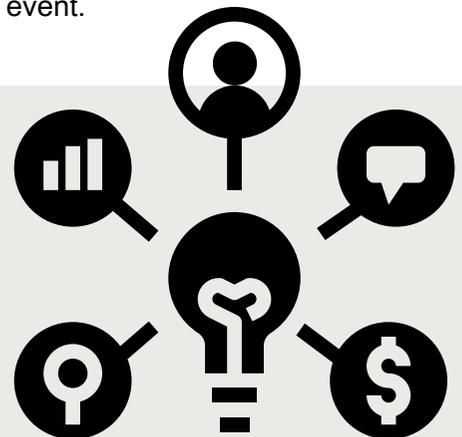
Ken Signorello and Rebecca Robinson from the EDC visit with Phil Murdoch at Chapin Orchard



Representing Myti is Brooke Isabelle (Myti Shopkeeper Care Specialist)

2023 Highlights

- Started “Business of the Month Program” with outreach to local businesses within Essex in September. During the second EDC meeting of each month, the EDC meets with a business at either their location or at the Town Building and learn more about the local business, discuss opportunities or ideas they have for improving being a business in Essex, what they like about doing business in Essex and share any other insight or learnings for the EDC and Town to assess for action. Three businesses included Myti, Chapin Orchards, and Growing with Wonder Daycare. We will continue to evolve this initiative in 2024 to include a communications plan in Town Emails.
- Updated Business distribution list to ensure relevant communications for Essex Business Community.
- Updated EDC Work Plan and Key Action Items for 2024 Town Plan.
- Hosted tours of Essex businesses for:
 - Sen. Sanders, Sen. Welch, Rep. Balint’s State Directors joined by Commerce Commissioner Goldstein, The Greater Burlington Industrial Corp and The Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Initiated a bi-annual luncheon and tour for State legislative delegation from the House and Senate
- House Commerce Committee toured Essex Experience and locally owned businesses. The Committee will return this spring to tour light manufacturing districts in town.
- Treasurer Michael Pieciak visited Saxon Hill’s recreational and light manufacturing sites.
- Individual tours of Essex facilities with The Greater Burlington Industrial Corp. and prospective businesses.
- Support Essex businesses with grant opportunities, workforce recruiting and training programs, van pooling and other transportation issues. The EDC has worked on international trade issues with affected businesses.
- Represent Essex on the Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce’s Regional Affairs Committee.
- Explore Essex business participation is the EDC’s contribution to the event.



Staff Representative

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essexvt.org/energy

ENERGY COMMITTEE

The Essex Energy Committee (EEC) advocates for conservation, efficiency, low emission renewable energy production, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in Essex Town and Essex Junction, Vermont. EEC meetings are generally held on the second Wednesday of each month. Current members at the end of 2023 include: Will Dodge (Chair), Tom Yandow (Town Building Manager) Natalee Braun, David Skopin, and Dorothy Bergendahl. This Annual Report is submitted pursuant to Section 1(e) of the EEC Charter of 05/19/2008.

2023 Achievements Based on Powers and Duties in Charter

Track Municipal Energy Use and Recommend to Selectboard targets and Actions for Decreasing Energy Use (Charter §1(a))

- Essex's Greenhouse Gas ("GHG") Output. Former member Mike Fink and EHS student intern Greg Hurne prepared and presented an estimated total GHG output of Town of Essex: essexvt.org/ghg
- MERP Tracking. The Committee continued to track state incentives for weatherization for the municipality, including through the MERP (Municipal Energy Resilience Program), as well as trying to keep track and update incentives for weatherization work in Essex through multiple presentations and engagement (discussed in the education section below).
- Enhanced Energy Plan. The EEC determined that the Town needs its own Enhanced Energy Plan to better set targets disconnected from those of the City.

Research / Recommend to the Selectboard Opportunities to Utilize Renewable Energy Sources and Increase the Efficient Use of Energy within Town Operations. (Charter §1(b))

- Municipal Buildings. Tom Yandow continued to investigate incentives and feasibility for combination of roof-mounted / ground-mounted solar, heat pumps, and bulb replacement, with assistance from Efficiency VT and others (ongoing).
- Renewable Energy Vermont. The Committee met with representatives of Renewable Energy Vermont to understand and lend support to efforts to improve the overall amount of in-state renewable energy through a revamped Renewable Energy Standard, which will spur additional energy development in Essex Town.
- Energy Coordinator Position. The Committee began exploring the pros and cons of a permanent energy coordinator to be involved with the Planning Commission in ensuring more regular integration of energy considerations into all levels of Town Government.

Research / Recommend to the Selectboard Funding Options for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Projects. (Charter §1(c))

- Revolving Loan Fund Engagement. Through participation in events hosted by the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, the EEC continued its work to explore a municipal revolving loan fund for putting the savings of energy projects to good use (ongoing).
- Net Metering. The Committee explored with at least two providers the possibility of developing solar collectors on Town property in order to use the remaining net metering credits (ongoing).

Develop and Manage Energy Efficiency Educational Programs.(Charter §1(d))

- Champlain Valley Fair Event: The EEC spent a substantial portion of the year organizing a week-long energy incentive table for the Champlain Valley Fair, coordinating with energy committees / coordinators from other Chittenden County municipalities, as well as Efficiency VT, CVOEO, Local Motion, and others, resulting in meaningful interaction with approximately 440 individuals in total.
- Other Weatherization Events: The EEC also organized a Button Up event at the Explore Essex Event, and provided an info table at Town meeting.
- Communications and Awareness Raising: Following a tradition from past years, EEC members engaged in a variety of virtual and “real” campaigns in areas related to energy usage, transportation adoption (including cycling), weatherization, promotion of climate change mitigation, low emission transportation adoption, infrastructure resiliency, and community solar. This included important announcements on Front Porch Forum with positive feedback.
- VECAN Conferences / Workshops: The EEC members attended virtual workshops organized by the Vermont Energy Climate Action Network (VECAN), Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT), and the Energy Committee of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC), and others on a variety of topics throughout the year, and presented back to members.

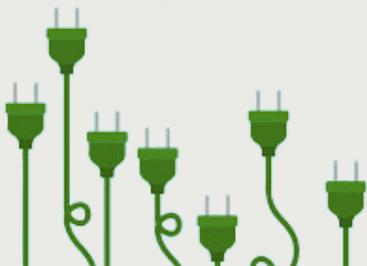
Assist other Town Committees and Commissions in Areas of Related Concern, Including the Energy section of the Town Plan. (Charter §1(f))

- Town Plan Drafting with the Planning Commission. The Committee spent a substantial amount of time in 2023 organizing workshops for input on the 2024 Town Plan, drafting sections of the Energy and Transportation sections of the plan (among others), and working closely with the Community Development Office and the Planning Commission to participate in the drafting process.
- Selectboard Interaction. The EEC met with the Selectboard Chair at a committee volunteer breakfast, as well as in person, to discuss a workplan and to brainstorm improvement of communication with Selectboard members and other Town officials.
- Essex Volunteer Event. The EEC participated and interacted with volunteers from other committees and commissions at the Double EE.

Plans for 2024

Priority goals for 2024 include: (1) establishing a revolving loan fund (priority); (2) implementation of the 2024 Town Plan once adopted (including fostering a new Transportation Committee focused on EVs, bikes, sidewalks, greening up the Town); (3) build upon successes with Champlain Valley event; (4) ensure energy considerations for new Town building and municipal equipment purchases; (5) change EEC Charter to include GHGs; and (6) obtain update on energy items from Legislative Delegation.

We thank the Selectboard, Trustees, and Town /Village officials for their continued support. We thank retiring members Michael Fink and Daniel Parkins for their service on the EEC.



Contests

Kids Carnival

Local
Specials



FUN

Magician

Touch-a-Truck

Music



Open House events

Dancing

Exhibits

Shopping

Dining

www.essexvt.org/explore





For information regarding	Call	Number
Birth & death certificates	Town Clerk	879-0413
Building & zoning permits	Zoning Administrator	878-1343
Burn permits	Police Department	878-1333
Dog complaints	Police Department	879-1333
Elections & voter registration	Town Clerk	879-0413
Health complaints	Health Officer	878-1343
Library	Essex Free Library	879-0313
Licenses (hunting, fishing, marriage, dog)	Town Clerk	879-0413
Park passes	Parks and Recreation	878-1342
Planning & subdivisions	Community Development	878-1343
Senior programs	Parks and Recreation	878-6940
Streets & sidewalks	Public Works Department	878-1344
Tax Maps and assessment	Assessor's Office	878-1345
Water/sewer services	Public Works Department	878-1344



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ESSEX FIRE DEPARTMENT

50 | YEARS
ANNIVERSARY