

**PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES OF MEETING
Essex Junction Recreation and Parks
75 Maple Street, Essex Junction, Vt.
February 16, 2016**

PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE: Michael Smith (Chair); Marla Durham, Tim Kemerer, Jason DiRosa.

ADMINISTRATION: Judith DeNova, Unified School District Superintendent; Patrick Scheidel, Municipal Manager.

OTHERS PRESENT: Village Board of Trustees (George Tyler, Dan Kerin, Elaine Sopchak, Andrew Brown, Lori Houghton), Essex Selectboard (Max Levy, Irene Wrenner, Andy Watts, Mike Plageman), EJRP Director (Brad Luck), Essex Rec Director (Ally Vile), Wes McClellan, Diane Clemens, Colin Flanders, Judith DeNova, Liam Haggerty, Robert Haggerty, Aaron Potvin, Sue Cook Brian Roy, Adam Sollace, Kim Gleason, Bridget Meyer.

1. CALL TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Michael Smith called the special meeting to order at 7 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. JOINT MEETING: Essex Selectboard, Prudential Committee, and Board of Trustees to Discuss Next Steps for Town and Village Recreation Departments

1. Plan of Action

George Tyler explained with the municipal shared services initiative it was not expected to discuss the recreation programs at this time, but the school unification advanced the issue. Presently, the Prudential Committee provides governance for EJRP and the town operates the town's recreation program. Plans of action include:

- Consolidating the village rec program into the town program;
- Consolidating the town rec program into the village program;
- Having the village rec program under the new unified school district;
- Creating an independent rec district.

A deadline is needed for the decision which perhaps could be by budget development time in the fall. A committee should be appointed to evaluate the options and provide a recommendation to the three boards.

Max Levy confirmed the Essex Selectboard wants to be part of the solution and feels all options should be reviewed, a timeline laid out, and an end date set. The unified union school district board at this point is at its inception and not prepared to assume the rec program at this time.

Tim Kemerer stated the Prudential Committee will still exist to be voting on the EJRP budget for another year. The Prudential Committee will overlap the unified union school

district board for a period of time. Judith DeNova added the charter will be dissolved for the Prudential Committee, but initial conversations can begin on the willingness and interest in the rec program and once the board gets grounded an opinion can be issued based on legal counsel.

2. Composition of the Committee

There was discussion of the composition of the committee to review options and provide recommendations, and agreement change will occur at the top without noticeable changes at the service level. Pat Scheidel said staff will be available to provide information to the committee. Legal questions will be referred to the municipal attorneys. The village will pay for legal services from the Village Attorney. The town will pay for legal services from the Town Attorney. The school district will pay for legal services from the school district's attorney. The recreation committee, once formed, will decide if a facilitator is needed for their work. Brad Luck pointed out state statute requires an equal number of representatives from each municipality serving on the committee.

Brad Luck review his memo, dated 2/10/16, on the joint municipal survey committee, stressing the need to follow statute with the composition of the committee. Documents for the committee should be vetted by the Attorney General, state legislature, and the respective municipal boards. It is recommended the committee look at all options with the rec program, choose a direction and then pursue the transition.

There was mention of the committee including members from the Trustees, Selectboard, Prudential Committee, and public at-large. Marla Durham pointed out any Prudential Committee members appointed to the committee will be representing the village as well as the Prudential Committee. There was discussion of having alternates to cover absent members and in order to remain current on discussions having the alternates attend all meetings regardless of the regular member being present.

Michael Smith and Jason DiRosa from the Prudential Committee, and Lori Houghton and Dan Kerin from the Trustees volunteered for the committee. The Selectboard will appoint two members after the election on March 1st, 2016. Advertisement will be done for the public at-large members. The Trustees will appoint the individuals from the village and the Selectboard will appoint the individuals from the town outside the village.

3. Process

The process to be followed by the appointed committee will be as outlined in the memo from Brad Luck, dated 2/10/16. Essentially, the committee will review all options and provide recommendations. The respective boards (village, town, school) will be kept informed.

Tim Kemerer urged giving the committee the guidance that there is a philosophy being embraced of consolidation. Marla Durham said to keep in mind EJRP managed by Brad Luck and staff is successful because the department operates with its own budget independent of the general budget for the community. Max Levy stated the goal is to maintain and even improve the level of service. There is opportunity to look at both rec

departments and structure them in such a way that other items could be included, such as cultural services and the Senior Center. George Tyler spoke in support of both rec departments being independent of the municipal budgets. There was concurrence that a unified and shared rec department between the village and town is the right direction to take.

Marla Durham thanked the leadership of the Trustees and Selectboard that helped the RED group be able to do what was done (i.e. unified school district).

4. Timeline

Brad Luck suggested the committee be finalized by March and the committee work proceed through April, May, and June with the goal of having a recommendation by July, 2016 leaving approximately 12 months to complete the transition. George Tyler noted Ally Vile (Essex Rec Director) and Brad Luck (EJRP Director) will be regular attendees at the committee meetings as a resource and guide.

5. Name of Committee

Following discussion there was agreement the name of the committee will be “Recreation Governance Study Committee”.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Kim Gleason, Sydney Drive, commented the communication provided by the RED Study Committee was very helpful. The RED committee had one board member and an alternate and community members. George Tyler stated the rec committee will keep minutes from the committee meetings which will be available. Marla Durham added rec departments by their nature are great points of communication.

Sue Cook, Cedar Court, suggested advertising for the at-large committee members now. Lori Houghton mentioned having more community members than board members on the committee. Marla Durham noted it takes time for committee members to get to know one another and get up to speed on the rec departments, and this should be kept in mind in light of the short timeline for the committee to complete its work.

Bridget Meyer, Pleasant Street, spoke in support of having three community members from each community (total of six members from the public at-large) to involve the public and spread the word. There is a learning curve, but with good instruction and guidance people can get up to speed. Andrew Brown suggested advertising for the openings and making a decision on the at-large number after seeing the response.

There were no further comments.

MOTION by Tim Kemerer, SECOND by Marla Durham, that the Prudential Committee agrees to form a committee named “Recreation Governance Study Committee” which is a joint municipal survey committee to study recreation and to explore all various options for potential restructure of the village and town

recreation departments as outlined in the memo from Brad Luck, dated 2/10/16, and further, the composition of the committee is as follows:

- **Three members from the public at large from the town outside the village selected by the Town of Essex Selectboard;**
- **Three members from the public at large from the Village of Essex Junction selected by the Essex Junction Board of Trustees;**
- **Two members from the Prudential Committee;**
- **Two members from the Essex Junction Board of Trustees one of which is an alternate;**
- **Two members from the Essex Selectboard one of which is an alternate.**

VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

3. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business and without objection the meeting was adjourned at 8:31 PM.

RScty: M.E.Riordan