



2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT



DEDICATED TO THE MEN AND WOMEN WHOSE EXTRAORDINARY EFFORTS KEPT
ESSEX STRONG DURING THE PANDEMIC.

- ♦ ESSEX AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION
- ♦ ESSEX ESSENTIAL WORKERS
- ♦ ESSEX FIRE ENGINE CO. #1
- ♦ ESSEX POLICE
- ♦ ESSEX TOWN HALL EMPLOYEES
- ♦ TOWN OF ESSEX VOLUNTEERS

DEDICATION

ESSEX AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION, ESSEX ESSENTIAL WORKERS, ESSEX FIRE ENGINE CO. #1, ESSEX POLICE, TOWN HALL EMPLOYEES, & TOWN VOLUNTEERS

This year we are dedicating the 2020-2021 Annual Report to the Essex Ambulance Association, Essex Essential Workers, Essex Fire Engine Co. #1, Essex Police, Town Hall Employees, and Town Volunteers. Their extraordinary efforts, selflessness, and commitment kept the Town's essential services fully operational during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- ♦ Essex Ambulance Association responded to 774 calls
- ♦ Essex Fire Engine Co. #1 responded to 542 calls
- ♦ Essex Police responded to 9,972 calls
- ♦ Essex Town Hall, along with Nutmeg Pharmacy, hosted several vaccine clinics between January and April, vaccinating more than 1,000 individuals

This dedication is an expression of our admiration and our gratitude.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!



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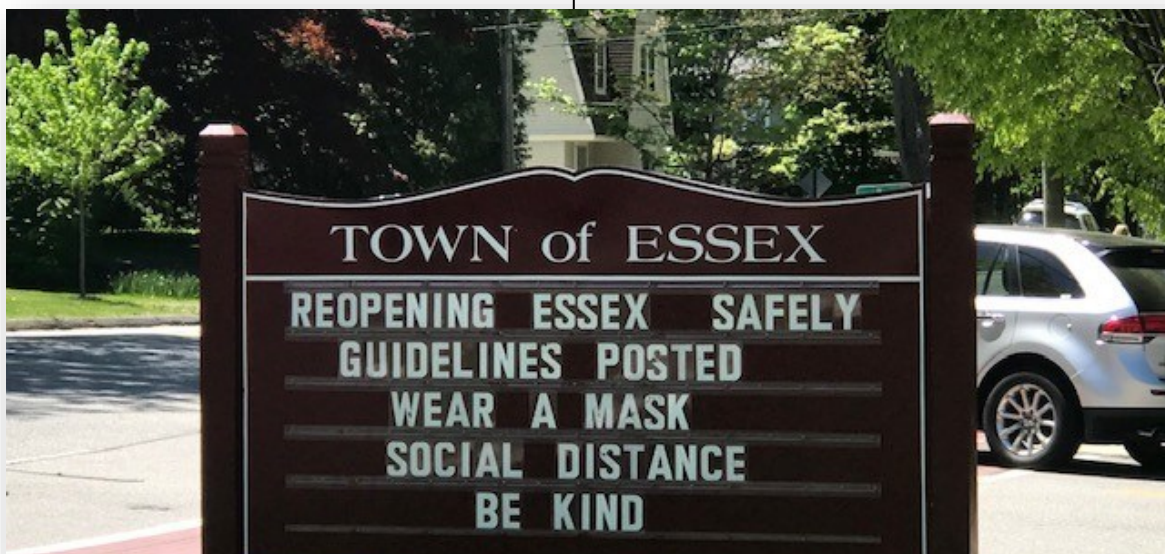
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FIRST SELECTMAN'S MESSAGE



Dear Friends and
Neighbors,

Closing out this fiscal year we resumed some of our regular activities while still adhering to CDC guidelines. We encouraged and facilitated vaccinations to those eligible to do our part in preventing severe illness and death. The public was frequently updated through social media, signage, and direct emails. We were deeply

saddened by the lives lost and encouraged by those saved through vaccination. Our heartfelt condolences go out to those who lost the battle against the COVID-19 virus. Over 70 percent of Essex residents, all ages, received at least one vaccine dose.

The Town Hall was open to the public with safety procedures in place. A greeter was at the parking lot entrance to sign visitors in and out, communicate with staff for visitor coordination, and provide masks if needed. Plexiglass was installed in all departments, directional signage kept foot traffic flowing safely, and masks, social distancing, and hand sanitizer were required.

The Essex Health Department, Fire Department, Public Works Department, and other Town Hall staff along with Nutmeg Pharmacy made the vaccination clinics a success. But it couldn't have been done without the strong participation from residents. I want to express my deep appreciation to all those working at and attending the vaccination clinics. Vaccination is the way through this.

I would like to thank chairperson, Mary Ellen Barnes and all those on the Re-Open Essex Advisory Committee who met regularly and kept us updated on community response and needs during the pandemic.

Restaurants and businesses were hit hard by the restrictions but came up with creative solutions to remain viable despite the hardship. Government grants were made available to help many stay afloat. Sadly, some businesses were not able to recover. Those that reopened



had great support from residents and visitors.

I'm pleased to report that Lisa Fasulo, Essex Health Director, was appointed the new Director of Emergency Management. William Buckridge will remain the Emergency Management Director Emeritus. Lisa has done an outstanding job navigating residents and businesses throughout the pandemic.

Our Emergency Management, Police, Fire, and Public Works Departments were out in full force preparing for, responding to, and cleaning up after two major storms this fiscal year. The first, Tropical Storm Isaias, brought down trees and wires. Connecticut was hit harder than any other state with respect to trees downed by the storm. The February nor'easter dumped a foot of snow and our dedicated Public Works crew was out cleaning up the streets for safe passage.

The Planning Commission and Zoning Commission were combined into one Planning and Zoning Commission to create a more efficient and expedient process for residents. A new Land Use official, Carey Duques, was brought in to oversee the department and the newly formed commission.

This has been a most difficult year for all of us. Our police, fire, first responders and the Town Hall staff have truly held the line. I am deeply appreciative of their professionalism and commitment. We look to a brighter year ahead.

Onward together,

Norm

HISTORY OF ESSEX

The lower Connecticut River Valley was originally occupied by semi-agricultural indigenous people who enjoyed the bounty of the land and the Connecticut River. The area we call Essex today was referred to as Potapoug originally and for the first two hundred years or so of its history. Although the earliest colonists arrived from Old Saybrook to farm what is today known as Essex village, the earliest English population actually grew in Centerbrook. Centerbrook possessed two attractive features which captured the attention of settlers, a natural waterfall along the Falls River (ideal for the construction of several mills) and the richest farmland in the area. Hence, the construction of the first meetinghouse (1722) can be found in this section of town along Main Street.

As the seventeenth century passed, however, riverfront activity increased in importance. It was during this time that shipbuilding began to dominate the local economy. Ancient maps reveal a ropewalk, several blacksmiths, wharves and other businesses associated with the construction of ships. During the American Revolution, Essex's Captain Uriah Hayden constructed the State's first battleship, the "Oliver Cromwell" which went on to see significant action during the war. Shortly thereafter Essex developed into a regional leader in the construction of sailing vessels, building over 600 ships over the next century. Not surprisingly, Essex became a British target during the War of

1812 for its association with privateering. While the Town was spared, the burning of the fleet (a total of 28 vessels) on April 8, 1814, ranks among the most costly defeats of the entire war.

The nineteenth century brought about substantial changes to the already ancient town. While steamboat technology mounted a growing challenge to the traditional wooden sailing ships constructed along the riverfront, other industrial innovations led to the rise of a third village in the small town. The interior of Essex, marked by the steep hills threaded by the Falls River, proved ideal for the construction of mill ponds for water power. Under the innovative and entrepreneurial mind of Samuel M. Comstock, who later partnered with George A. Cheney, the village of Ivoryton grew into a national leader in the manufacture of piano actions and keyboards (among other ivory products). As the employer of thousands of immigrants, Ivoryton developed into a prototypical "company town". World War II allowed the factory to escape the throes of the Great Depression; however the decline in popularity of the piano shortly thereafter began the passing of yet another era. Since the departure of piano manufacture, Essex has in essence made its long history the center of its economy. The natural beauty of the land and water, coupled with the architecture and stories of the past have led to the development of Essex as a popular tourist destination in the State.



ELECTED OFFICIALS

TOWN OF ESSEX

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Norman M. Needleman, First Selectman
Stacia R. Libby, Selectman
Bruce M. Glowac, Selectman

TOWN CLERK

Joel Marzi

TREASURER

James D. Francis

TAX COLLECTOR

Megan D. Haskins

BOARD OF FINANCE

Keith M. Crehan, Chair
W. Campbell Hudson, Vice Chair
Ethan Goller
Mary-Louise Polo
Vincent Pacileo, III
Edward A. Tedeschi

BOARD OF EDUCATION—ESSEX ELEMENTARY

Lon J. Seidman, Chair
Don G. Fitton, Jr., Vice-Chair
Mark Watson
Loretta T. McCluskey
Cassandra Sweet
Nancy Johnston

BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS

Keith Russell, Chair
Mark Bombaci
George Wendell

BOARD OF EDUCATION—REGION #4

Jennifer A. Clark
Katelyn Sandmann
Don G. Fitton, Jr.

JUDGE OF PROBATE

Jeannine Lewis

REGISTRARS OF VOTERS

Caitlin Riley
Barbara Ryan

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

GOVERNOR

Ned Lamont

LT. GOVERNOR

Susan Bysiewicz

STATE COMPTROLLER

Kevin Lembo

STATE TREASURER

Shawn T. Wooden

ATTORNEY GENERAL

William Tong

SECRETARY OF STATE

Denise W. Merrill

SENATOR 33RD DISTRICT

Norman M. Needleman

REPRESENTATIVE 36TH DISTRICT

Christine Palm

FEDERAL

PRESIDENT

Joseph R. Biden

UNITED STATES SENATE

Richard Blumenthal
Christopher S. Murphy

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE

Joseph D. Courtney



TOWN OFFICIALS AND SERVICES

ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICE

Harry Plaut
Matthew Carroll

ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

Jessica Sypher, Assessor
Betsy D'Amico, Assistant to the Assessor

AUDITORS

Mahoney Sabol & Company, LLP

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

David DeLeeuw, Building Official

CENTRAL REGIONAL TOURISM DISTRICT

Jacqueline Hubbard

COMCAST CABLE T.V. ADVISORY BOARD

Richard Stebbins

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Kathleen Tucker, Chair
Jeffrey Lovelace
Adrienne Forrest
Frank Hall
Richard Helmecki
James O'Brien
Mark Reeves
Roger Field, alternate

CONNECTICUT RIVER GATEWAY COMMISSION

Claire Matthews
Misha Semenov, alternate

CONSULTING ENGINEER

Robert Doane, Jr., Doane Engineering

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Janet Peckinpaugh, Chair
Betsy D'Amico
Peter Decker
Brian Weinstein
Thomas Nichols
Susan Malan

EDUCATION—REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 4 ADMINISTRATION

Brian J. White, Superintendent of Schools
Kristina Martineau, Asst Superintendent
Sarah Smalley, Director of Pupil Services
Kim Allen, Business Manager
Pam Murphy, Director of Technology

ESSEX ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Jennifer Tousignant, Principal

JOHN WINTHROP JR. HIGH SCHOOL

Matthew Espinosa, Principal
Peter Foxen, Associate Principal

VALLEY REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

Mike Barile, Principal
Carolyn Gbunblee, Associate Principal

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Lisa Fasulo, Director
William Buckridge, Emeritus
Maria Lucarelli, Support Staff

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES COUNCIL

Judith Reynolds

ESSEX AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION

Judith Reynolds

ESSEX FIRE ENGINE COMPANY #1

Andrew Kressley, Chief

ESSEX HOUSING AUTHORITY

Janice M. Atkeson, Chair
Yolanda Lowe
Gary Arnhold
Richard W. Stebbins
Barbara Rutigliano

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Tracey Celentano, Finance Director
Dana Novorio, Asst to the Finance Director

FIRE MARSHAL

John Planas, Fire Marshal

HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

Jeffrey Going, Chair
Terry Stewart
John Senning
Earl Fowler
Eugene C. Schellens
Susan Malan, alternate

HARBOR MASTER

Paul Riggio, Harbor Master
David Fasulo, Deputy Harbor Master

HEALTH DIRECTOR / SANITARIAN

Lisa Fasulo

INLAND WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES COMMISSION

Fred Szufnarowski, Chair
Daniel Lapman
Ernest Cook
Jim Leo
Andre Roussel
Michael Furgueson, alternate
David Kirsch, alternate

TOWN OFFICIALS AND SERVICES

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

Philip Beckman.....860-767-9755
Thomas Bellos860-767-2741
Mary Bowers.....860-575-9619
Heather K Chamberlain.....860-552-9529
Peter Decker.....860-767-9516
Ann S. Dixon.....860-767-1339
Keith Foster.....860-373-0043
Earl Fowler.....860-767-2764
Larry Freundlich.....860-767-2773
Donna M. Hyde.....860-767-0061
Louisa R. Ketron.....860-767-7473
Shelley H. Mack.....860-581-3675
Philip J. Miller.....860-767-7837
Norman M. Needleman.....860-767-9176
Stephen L. Phillips.....860-581-8130
John C. Stannard.....860-767-8051
Daniel J. Stypa.....860-767-2075
Kathleen McKinney Tucker.....860-767-0397
William P. Veillette.....860-767-8519

LAND USE—ADMINISTRATIVE

Darcy Roper
Kerry Berardinelli

LANDFILL/RECYCLING CENTER

Wilbur Armstead

LIBRARIES

ESSEX LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Deborah Smith, Library Director

IVORYTON LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Elizabeth Alvord, Library Director

LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Alan Kerr
Sandra Childress, alternate

LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING COMMITTEE

Lisa Fasulo
John Planas
Judith Reynolds

MUNICIPAL AGENT FOR THE ELDERLY

Mary Ellen Barnes

PARK AND RECREATION

Mary Ellen Barnes, Park & Recreation Director
Tim Lachance, Recreation Aide

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Brette Fitton, Chair
John J. Bean Jr.
Anthony Mosa
Virginia Willetts
Daniel Needleman
Carolyn Field

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Russell Smith, Chair
Ralph Monaco
Erin Borruso
Mark Reeves
Gary Riggio
Jane Siris
Robert L. Day III
Thomas Carroll, alternate
Jeffrey Lovelace, alternate

PUBLIC WORKS

Ryan Welch, Director
Richard Gallacher
David Martin
Dwight Massey
Paul Mackenzie

REGIONAL MENTAL HEALTH BOARD

Winifred Olson

REGISTRARS OF VOTERS

Caitlin Riley
Barbara Ryan

RESIDENT STATE TROOPER & ESSEX POLICE

Mark Roberts, Resident State Trooper
James Paul Kenefick, Corporal
Todd Belcourt, Corporal
Christopher McCarthy, Police Officer
Karen Reilly, Police Officer (PT)
Robert Hart, Police Officer (PT)
Judson Howes, Police Officer (PT)

CROSSING GUARD

William Westerman

HARBOR PATROL

William Rochette, Boat Operator
Mark Walter, Boat Operator
Richard Varricchio, Boat Operator
Wayne Vetre, Jr. Boat Operator

RETIREMENT BOARD

Peter Decker, Chair
Ethan Goller
Stacia Libby
Mary-Louise Polo
Kelly Sterner

SELECTMEN'S OFFICE

Norman M. Needleman, First Selectman
Stacia R. Libby, Selectman
Bruce M. Glowac, Selectman
Maria Lucarelli, Assistant to Selectmen
Betsy D'Amico, Administrative Assistant
Alyson Finnegan, Administrative Assistant

TOWN OFFICIALS AND SERVICES

SOCIAL SERVICES

Mary Ellen Barnes

TAX COLLECTOR'S OFFICE

Megan D. Haskins, Tax Collector
Lynne Skinner, Assistant to the Tax Collector

TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Joel Marzi, Town Clerk
Yvonne Roziak, Assistant Town Clerk

TOWN COUNSEL

David M. Royston, Esquire
Sylvia K. Rutkowska, Esquire

TOWN HALL OPERATIONS

Andrew Harrington, Building & Grounds
Superintendent
Kimberly Fair
Brian Harrington
April Lucarelli
Marion Martin

TREASURER

James Francis

TREE COMMITTEE

Kenneth Bombaci
Nancy Hudson
Susan Malan
John Molloy
Mark Pratt

TREE WARDEN

August Pampel

VETERANS SERVICES

Doug Haynes

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

William Timothy Furgueson, Chair
Barbara Sarrantonio
Phillip Schaller
Philip Schaller
Philip Beckman
Ward Feirer
Richard Rybak, alternate
George Wendell, alternate

ZONING ENFORCEMENT

Carey Duques, Zoning/Wetlands
Enforcement Agent

SECTION II—DEPARTMENTS, BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER

The Animal Control Office is staffed by an Animal Control Officer and an Assistant Animal Control Officer that serve the Tri-Town community. Most of the calls for service to the Animal Control Office regard wildlife. As always, please be mindful of wildlife and keep your distance. If you see wildlife acting strangely, such as walking in circles, walking into things, stumbling, acting overly aggressive or overly friendly, or dragging its hind end, please call our office at 860-767-4340 x 160 or the CT State Police Troop F in Westbrook at 860-399-2100. If you are experiencing an issue with nuisance wildlife, please call the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) at 860-424-3333. You can also call a local Nuisance Wildlife Control Officer who is equipped and trained to deal with nuisance wildlife. If your concern is regarding orphaned wildlife young, please call the DEEP or a DEEP licensed wildlife rehabber. Please note that it is illegal to rehabilitate adult Rabies Vector Species (fox, raccoon, skunk). It is also illegal in the State of Connecticut to relocate any Rabies Vector Species under CT General Statutes sections 26-47 (b) and 26-57.

Please remember to get your dogs licensed every June! Connecticut state law dictates that dogs over 6 months in age must be licensed in the town they reside and all dogs and cats over the age of 3 months must be vaccinated against rabies.

The Animal Control Office has received many calls regarding roaming dogs and dogs running into the road after pedestrians. Be advised that it is the owner's responsibility to keep their dog under their control at all times or an infraction ticket may be issued.

Please be courteous and clean up after your pet when out in public. There are numerous pet waste bag stations and trash bins provided by the Essex Parks and Recreation Department in our parks. There should be no reason to leave your pet's waste behind and there is a Town Ordinance against doing so that is enforceable with an infraction ticket.

The Animal Control Office promotes responsible pet ownership by encouraging everyone to spay and neuter their pets. There is an enormous cat overpopulation in Connecticut, even here in Essex. Spaying and neutering also prevents unwanted health issues later in life.

If you have any questions, please contact the office at 860-767-4340 x160. As a reminder, the following is a list of possible infractions along with their associated fees:

Failure to License a Dog: \$75	Impound Fee/Day: \$15
Failure to Redeem: \$75	Failure to Clean Up After Your Pet: \$35
Roaming Dog: \$92	Nuisance Dog: \$75
	Failure to Vaccinate: \$136

BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS

The Board of Assessment Appeals is composed of three elected citizens of Essex: currently, Keith Russell, Chair; Mark Bombaci and George Wendell, who hear and consider appeals of assessment valuations. The Board meets during the month of March to hear appeals on the Grand List of the prior October 1, i.e. appeals of the October 1, 2020 Grand List were heard in March of 2021. March hearings are for appeals of real estate, personal property and for motor vehicles on the Supplemental List (vehicles billed in January). Appeal applications are available at the Assessor's Office and, for March hearings, must be submitted by February 20.

Motor vehicles on the regular list (vehicles registered on the previous October 1 and billed in July) may be appealed at the Board's September meeting, after the July billing period.

The Board scheduled five hearings during the month of March 2021. All of these were real estate appeals. Three assessments were adjusted and 2 were unchanged.

Keith Russell
Chair

BOARD OF FINANCE

The Essex Board of Finance operates as set forth in the State of Connecticut General Statutes. Responsibilities of the Board include the annual budget of the Town, as well as necessary budget transfers and other supplemental appropriations, setting the mill rate and publication of the Annual Town Report. Additionally, the board selects independent auditors, arranges the annual municipal audit and works closely with the Board of Selectmen, the Town Treasurer and Finance Director, the Essex Board of Education and the Region 4 Board of Education in financial matters. Monthly financial reports are available on the Town website under the Finance Department.

The Board of Finance is comprised of six members, each of whom holds office for a 6-year term. Terms are staggered with two members elected at each biennial municipal election. No more than four of the board's members may be of the same political party. The current Board consists of W. Campbell Hudson, Vice Chair and Mary-Louise Polo, whose terms expire in November 2025, Keith Crehan, Chair, and Ethan Goller, whose terms expire in November 2023, and Vincent Pacileo, III and Edward Tedeschi, whose terms expire in November 2021. Regular meetings of the Board of Finance are held the third Thursday of each month at the Town Hall. Meetings are open to the public.

Keith Crehan
Chair



Hearts went up on doors and windows throughout town during the lockdown to show support for essential workers.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

The Essex Board of Selectmen forms the executive branch of Town government. The Board is comprised of three members who are each elected for concurrent two-year terms. As of fiscal year end 2021, the members include First Selectman, Norman M. Needleman, Selectmen Stacia R. Libby, and Bruce M. Glowac. The First Selectman serves as the full time chief executive and administrative officer of the Town. The board works collaboratively to provide the services the residents of all three villages expect from our municipal government while maintaining a fiscally responsible environment.

The purpose of the Board of Selectmen is to oversee policy, operations, and management of Town government, appointments to commissions, and shaping the Town budget. Some government decisions are forwarded to Board of Finance, Town Meetings or referendums, where citizens have more direct input.

The Board meets twice monthly on the first Wednesday at 5:00 p.m. and the third Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. These meetings are open to the public and an opportunity for public participation is scheduled for each meeting. In addition, the Board may meet for a special meeting as required to consider Town business.

For the fiscal year 2020-2021, the Board of Selectmen met for twenty regular meetings and eight special meetings. The minutes of these meetings are available on the Town website at www.essexct.gov and are on file in the Town Clerk's Office.

The Board also sponsored multiple budget workshops in preparation of the annual town budget and held several public hearings on topics relevant to Town business and interests of our citizens.

Respectfully,
Norman M. Needleman, First Selectman
Stacia R. Libby, Selectman
Bruce M. Glowac, Selectman



Town Hall Halloween

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Building permits are required for all new construction, foundations, additions, swimming pools, demolition, woodstove installation, structural alterations and/or renovations to existing buildings as well as for any change of use of a structure (i.e. retail to restaurant, office to retail, residence to office).

Building permits are also required for plumbing, heating/air conditioning, solar panels, electrical and mechanical work done to both new and existing residential and commercial buildings. Driveway Approach permits are required for new and/or relocated driveways. Note that building permits are not required for such improvements as painting, shelving, and decorating.

If applicable, all required Zoning and Health Department permits should be obtained prior to applying for a building permit.

In order to obtain a building permit, visit www.essexct.gov, click Online Services, click Online Permitting, and follow the instructions in Permit Link software.

You may either attach electronically in Permit Link or provide paper copies delivered to our office of:

- * (1) Electronic set or (2) paper sets of blueprints (for new buildings, additions, interior renovations)
- * Proof of contractor licensure
- * Proof of contractor worker's compensation coverage or appropriate State of Connecticut waiver form if applicable
- * Permit fee (fees are based upon estimated value of labor plus materials: current fee is \$30 for the first \$1,000 plus \$10 for each additional \$1,000 or any part thereof). Payment may be made by credit card in Permit Link.

The Building Official reviews all submitted building plans to ensure compliance with current state building codes. If paper plans are provided, they will be marked with pertinent code information, dated with the review date and signed by the Building Official. One set of plans is returned to the applicant with the Building Permit and one set is retained in the Building permit file. If plans are submitted electronically, any comments made during the review process will be saved as part of the permit in our Permit Link system.

Once all permits have been obtained and construction has begun, there are a number of inspections required during construction. A list of required inspections is available in the Building Department and on our website at www.essexct.gov under Building/Required Inspections.

The Building Department issues a Certificate of Occupancy or Approval once all construction is completed, inspection requirements are met, and all required documents are received by the Health, Zoning and Building Departments.

From July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021, a total of 880 building permits were issued for an estimated construction value of \$18,084,529.81. The number of permits issued is up just slightly from the 868 permits

issued last year. The total fees collected by the building department were \$189,793.88. Ten permits were issued for new single family residential construction.

David R. DeLeeuw
Building Official

CENTRAL SERVICES TOWN HALL OPERATIONS

During the 2020-2021 fiscal year the Town Hall Maintenance Custodial staff has cleaned, set-up and broken down the meeting rooms in the Town Hall and cared for the civic campus grounds, always maintaining a high standard of cleanliness that the employees and residents have come to expect. The staff consists of one full time maintenance custodian and four part-time custodians. With the continued threat of Covid-19, the staff installed plexiglass dividers in all the offices and hand sanitizer dispensers throughout the building.

While the maintenance staff is always managing the interior of the Town Hall, the exterior must be maintained as well. Maintenance continued repointing and sealing the brick exterior walls. Each year a section of the building will be repointed and sealed until the preservation has been completed. The custodial staff also maintains the Main Street restrooms which are open year-round for the visitors to Main Street and the park. The dedicated staff will continue to strive towards a safer and more efficient Town Hall facility. Citizen suggestions are always welcome.

Andrew Harrington
Building & Grounds Superintendent



CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Despite a pandemic, a curtailed Town Hall and “Zoomed” meetings, the Essex Conservation Commission continued to cut, clear and maintain trails in Bushy Hill, Canfield Meadow Woods and Viney Hill Brook, the three Town-owned preserves, for the increased number of hikers who frequented them this fiscal year due to COVID-19.

In Bushy Hill Preserve, with Inland/Wetlands approval, the Commission cleared access to the man-made pond for better viewing. Wheelbarrow by wheelbarrow, commissioners spread 2 tons of crushed stone along the rutted, eroded entrance path; kept the 107 acres of trails free from up-rooted trees; and had a circular path cut around the open space meadow abutting the pond. The remainder of the preserve is wooded forest. The Commission is seeking solutions to the overcrowded parking lot due to the increase in trail usage.

Canfield Meadow Woods, where over 1,000 paper trail maps are distributed annually, is the most heavily used of the three preserves. Volunteers from the Essex Land Trust helped remove multiple downed trees, then added new trail signage and 2 new benches. Boy Scout Alexander Gato initiated the extraction of invasive bittersweet and mustard garlic.

At Viney Hill Brook Preserve, 8 pounds of special northeast wildflower mix was hand cast prior to the first frost of last fall. The hand casting technique was “like feeding chickens”. The wildflower meadow was previously created over an 18” concrete foundation and once housed fuel tanks and heavy equipment for Wollock’s quarry operation prior to the Town’s acquisition of the preserve.

In an effort to be good neighbors, Commissioners site-walked the surveyed boundary lines and reviewed with several new adjacent property owners where their respective property lines abut the town preserves.

Descriptions of the three preserves were rewritten for the Town website to make them more reader friendly. Nine additional bog bridges were built and distributed in the various preserves. The Commission has been alerted to a devastating disease that affects beech trees causing new leaf growth to turn brown and shrivel. There is no known treatment. There have been wildlife sightings of bobcat, beaver and horned owls at Viney Hill Brook and a black bear at Bushy Hill.

Commission members are: Roger Field (alternate), Adrienne Forrest, Frank Hall, Richard Helmecki, Jeffrey Lovelace, Jim O’Brien, Mark Reeves and Kay Tucker. The Commission meets the second Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m..

Kay Tucker
Chair



Kay Tucker and Mark Reeves
on a bog bridge.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

The Economic Development Commission, EDC, is chaired by Janet Peckinpaugh. Our additional commissioners are Betsy D’Amico, Brian Weinstein, Peter Decker, Susan Malan and Tom Nichols. Robert Day, III is our Zoning liaison.

In this past year we have been visiting local businesses to encourage them to give us their email addresses. We are keeping a shared database that can also be accessed by Zoning and Land Use. This is helpful if we have important information to pass on to business owners in Essex.

Land Use Officer Carey Duques has invited Chair Janet Peckinpaugh to meet with several new business owners or people hoping to open businesses in Essex. The Selectmen gave us the go ahead to work with Ryan Welch, Director of Public Works, to set up a temporary pedestrian walkway on Ferry Street. That has been shelved until Geoff Paul from the Griswold Inn extends the sidewalk from Main Street onto Ferry Street by 175 feet. Once the sidewalk is finished, the EDC will go forward with it’s plan.

We always invite the public to participate in our monthly meetings. The meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 4pm. When the weather is good, we hold our meetings at a local business. If you would like to attend our meetings or host one, please contact jpeckinpaugh@wpsir.com or call 860-985-3659. Our meeting agendas and minutes can be found online at www.essexct.gov.

Janet Peckinpaugh
Chair



EDUCATION OUR MISSION

We, the schools of Chester, Deep River, Essex and Region 4, engage all students in a rigorous challenging and cohesive educational program. As a community of learners, we foster individual student achievement and empower students to excel in an environment of collaboration, responsibility and mutual respect. We prepare our students to be knowledgeable, involved citizens in a rapidly changing world.

EDUCATION OUR VISION STATEMENT

Our schools endeavor to develop an educational program of excellence where all students achieve at high levels and best instructional strategies are pursued in an environment of inquiry, collaboration, support and trust.

EDUCATION ESSEX ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Essex Elementary School serves students from kindergarten through grade six who reside in Essex and houses the Collaborative Preschool for Chester, Deep River, and Essex.

EES is a school with high expectations for all. The focus on student learning and growth is a direct result of the district's efforts to enhance instruction by focusing on the individual needs of its students. In addition to focusing on the academic needs of students, we offer programming to enrich our students' elementary experience. PE, art, music, library and Spanish are among the classes offered. Chorus, instrumental music, and ensemble are offered for students in the intermediate grades. These programs are beneficial to the development of the whole child.

Technology integration has been a focus. Students have access to a wide variety of technological tools. Each student in grades K-6 has his own Chromebook providing a 1:1 environment. Innovative and engaging computer applications are infused into the curriculum

to enhance twenty-first century learning. Due to Covid-19, we had students who learned remotely so the technology integration was essential to their academic programming. All students and staff engaged in online learning and teaching at some point over the course of the school year.

We have an active PTO providing enrichment experiences for students through cultural arts, field trips, and opportunities for family involvement. Support from this organization is an integral part of the overall climate of the school community.

Our students have access to many extra-curricular activities. These offerings help to teach important life-long academic and social skills outside of the typical classroom.

The EES Foundation generously provides grants to teachers to support enrichment opportunities for our students. Two of the most instrumental programs funded through the Foundation this past year were our scientist in residence program with the Audubon Society and our historian in residence program with the Essex Historical Society.

Our Social Development program promotes a culture, climate, and curriculum that enhances the social, emotional, and behavioral development of students. Our focus for the 2020-21 year was Choose Love through which students learned how to recognize and self-regulate their emotions through the use of the Choose Love curriculum.

EES strives to provide outstanding programs creating a positive environment that fosters a lifelong love of learning and sense of community.

Jennifer Tousignant
Principal



EDUCATION

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

We are proud to offer a wide range of learning experiences for the students of Chester, Deep River, Essex, and Region 4 Schools. It is our purpose to ensure that at the culmination of their K-12 education, every Region 4 graduate is college and career ready, and well prepared to successfully embrace the opportunities and challenges that await them in our ever-changing world.

We are very proud of our award winning schools in our region. We celebrate the many accomplishments of our students and staff alike, in the areas of academics, the visual and performing arts, athletics and citizenship.

Our schools have continued their focus on the development of curriculum and instructional practices that match national and state standards across content areas, with a particular focus on the Next Generation Science Standards.

We recognize that our excellent schools are part of the fabric of our communities, and attract families to our region. We continue to develop strong productive relationships with the towns we serve, and partner with those towns to provide innovative educational programming that ultimately has a positive impact on the regional economy. On behalf of our schools, administration, staff, and students, we thank you for your support and partnership in developing our students to become the citizens of tomorrow.

Brian J. White, Superintendent of Chester, Deep River, Essex, and Region 4 Schools



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The Emergency Management Department took a supportive role during the *Civil Preparedness & Public Health Emergency* issued in March 2020 by procuring personal protective equipment and capital expense equipment for town hall, preparing and distributing pandemic-related signage to local businesses, procuring capital equipment & consumables for vaccination clinics, working with the Health Department to arrange vaccinations for our vulnerable population and working with the Town's Finance Department on applications for FEMA reimbursements.

This department procured an ultra-low temperature freezer in October 2020 and delivered it to CT River Area Health District (CRAHD) for the regional drive-thru COVID-19 Mass Vaccination clinics which began in December 2020. As soon as the vaccine received FDA's Emergency Use Authorization, CRAHD offered COVID-19 vaccinations to our essential workforce (EMS, FIRE, Police) and continued to provide vaccinations for any resident of Connecticut throughout the phased rollout process. This ultra-low temperature freezer is an essential asset which continues to be on loan to CRAHD to receive and store COVID-19 vaccines in anticipation of FDA approval to administer 3rd doses (COVID-19 booster vaccines) in autumn 2021.

Storms and severe weather also occurred in Essex in 2020-2021. Tropical Storm Isaias arrived on Aug 4, 2020 and caused significant power outages in Essex, Deep River, and Chester. A Declaration of Emergency was issued, and the regional shelter was activated at John Winthrop Middle School for charging electronics, distribution of food and water, and showering. Due to the pandemic, the shelter was not open for overnight sheltering operations in an effort to mitigate virus transmission. The Essex Fire Department opened their facility for showers and water distribution. The storm did not cause widespread damage to homes, so residents were able to shelter in place or find alternate accommodations.

The Essex Emergency Management Department continues to stress the importance of always being prepared to shelter in place and to care for yourself and your family for a minimum of 3 days. The [Emergency Preparedness Guidebook](#) is located on the Town website www.essexct.gov.

Lisa Fasulo
Director

Emergency Management Director Lisa Fasulo and Fire Marshal John Planas at one of the many Covid-19 vaccine clinics.

ESSEX HOUSING AUTHORITY

Essex Court is an affordable public housing complex for elder and disabled residents under the responsibility of the Essex Housing Authority (EHA). Our campus is located at 16 Main Street, Centerbrook. Each resident enjoys one of our 36 garden style apartments which allow easy access to the outdoors. Our Resident Services Coordinator (RSC) hosts weekly lunches, monthly bingo and other social events in the campus community room or on campus grounds. Gatherings are open to all residents.

The community room at Essex Court is fully backed by a generator in the event of any power outage. Residents have complete access to the community room at all times, but in case of a power outage, the community room is easily accessible for all and may provide access to heat and food.

Community organizations continue to generously support residents of Essex Court. Each year, the Essex Rotary Club in conjunction with Dr. Tobin, provide holiday meals for residents. Essex Coldwell Banker and the Essex Community Fund contribute funds each year. These funds are used to sponsor social events and entertainment for residents. This year, we secured a HASIP grant through CHFA. This grant allows us to offer more diverse activities and events to residents. We also received a HASIP pantry grant which provided essential food items to each resident. Residents are most appreciative for all these services.

Essex Housing Authority and the site manager, DeMarco Management Company, strive to make Essex Court a desirable place to live for all residents. We offer a high quality, financially viable, housing opportunity for elders and disabled individuals in the community. Applications are available and the wait list is currently open.

Mary Mansour
Property Manager

FIRE MARSHAL

The Essex Office of the Fire Marshal is responsible for the enforcement of many of the sections found in Chapter 541 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as well as numerous codes that are promulgated under the provision of these statutes. The Essex Fire Marshal is required to annually inspect all buildings and facilities of public service and occupancies regulated by the Connecticut State Fire Prevention Code. The State Fire Prevention Code covers all occupancies except one and two family dwellings. One and two family dwellings may be inspected upon a complaint relating to life safety hazards.

Additional duties performed by The Office of the Fire Marshal include:

- Investigate the cause, origin and circumstance of all fires within the jurisdiction, and report to the State Fire Marshal's office.
- Issue permits for the use, transportation and storage

of explosives in compliance with State Explosives Regulations.

- Investigate complaints concerning explosives, inspect explosive storage magazines, and spot-check all job sites where explosives are being used.
- Enforce statute regulating the installation and use of space heaters and inspect all flammable and combustible liquid storage tank installations for compliance with Connecticut Flammable and Combustible Liquids codes.
- Inspect and enforce the Connecticut Regulations concerning storage, use and transportation of liquefied petroleum gas and liquefied natural gas.
- Conduct site inspection of all fireworks and special effects displays for compliance with applicable State legislation and make the determination of the amount of fire protection and extinguishing equipment to be on site.
- Inspect all tents and portable structures for compliance with the Connecticut Fire Safety Regulations.
- Conduct review of plans and specifications for various occupancies and facilities being proposed within the town for compliance with the Connecticut Fire Safety code.
- Attend schools and seminars to keep abreast of the codes, regulations and new technology.
- Provide safety tips and give advice to the general public relating to fire safety and prevention.
- Upon receiving a complaint, inspect one and two family dwellings to assure the statutory requirements regarding smoke detection and warning equipment are satisfied.
- Perform annual inspections for all establishments requiring initial or renewal liquor license permits.
- Approve and manage all fire department keyed access control systems in town.
- Utilize primary Licensed 107 Drone pilot for emergency incidents.
- Perform required National Fire Incident Data management and emergency response data collection and submittals.
- Update and code National Fire Incident reporting data and submit to State and National agencies.
- Evaluate and generate pre-plan data for occupancies located in town. Pre-plan data is utilized by responding emergency personnel to aid in the mitigation of emergencies by providing important details about the occupancy and hazard contents.
- Work closely together with Emergency Management Director to establish and support Emergency Preparedness procedures and operations.
- Research and prepare grant opportunities for public safety training and equipment.

The Essex Office of the Fire Marshal requires permits for the following:

- Removal and installation of underground fuel storage tanks: There is a \$30.00 fee associated with this permit and may be obtained in the Fire Marshal's office. An

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FIRE MARSHAL

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inspection is required for the installation and removal of underground fuel storage tanks. July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021 there were 8 underground fuel tank removal permits/inspections.

-Tent/event permit requirements: There is a \$30.00 fee associated with each tent/event permit. The Fire Marshal inspects tents prior to the event and also determines the extent of fire protection needed based on the size of the tent and occupancy. July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021 there were 8 tent permits/inspections completed.

-Explosives permits: There is a \$60.00 fee for a blasting permit. Blasting permits may be obtained at the Fire Marshal's office as well as guidelines for submitting applications. July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021 there was one blasting permit issued.

-Open burning permits: There is no charge for open burn permits. Permits may be obtained at the Office of the Fire Marshal. Open burning is limited to the burning of brush only, on residential property upon which the permittee resides. Only brush (defined as shrubs, vegetation or prunings, the diameter of which is not greater than three inches at the widest point) may be burned. Burning on property not zoned as residential is prohibited. Further regulations are detailed on the permit. July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021 there were 36 burn permits issued. Total revenue for permits issued by the Office of the Fire Marshal from July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021 was \$540.00.

For additional information please contact Darcy Roper or Kerry Berardinelli in the Fire Marshal's Office.

John A. Planas
Fire Marshal

HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

The Commission's primary focus is managing the two Federal anchorage areas in the river: the Main Anchorage off the village and the Meadows Anchorage off the Great Meadows. There is a continuously changing array of boats that need care in placement. Our Harbor Master, Paul Riggio, and his Deputy, Dave Fasulo, manage mooring positioning to have similar vessels together.

The Commission works with them while maintaining the marker buoys that designate the Federal anchorage, allowing boats to anchor without requiring anchor lights at night. Additionally, we mark the two derelict rock piers at the southern end of Thatchbed Island.

HMC also manages the Bushnell Street small vessel storage area. Vessels may be stored here from April

through November with an annual permit. There is a limit of 75 vessels between the three racks.

HMC utilizes the OnLine Mooring web and mobile based harbor management software, onlinemooring.com, to process mooring, small vessel, and wait list applications. Wait lists can be found on the HMC website at www.essexct.gov.

Essex has 11 Public Access points — not necessarily for boat access. Public Access comes in different forms. The foot of Main provides a boat launch along with temporary docking at the Town Dock. Bushnell Access provides small boat launching and storage with an observation platform. Mack Lane and Main Street Park have ramps and floats. Little Point Street, Collins Lane, Nott Lane, Scholes Lane, Novelty Lane, Ferry Street and the Turtle Creek Sanctuary offer visual and limited physical access. Parking is very limited at most points.

A key 2021-2022 goal for the HMC is updating the Essex Harbor Management Plan to address evolving needs of the Essex boating and waterfront community.

Annual expenses and other operating costs are paid through user fees from Mooring Permits, Bushnell storage permits and rarely, occasional DEEP regulatory fines (dedicated funds for environmental expenses).

Regular meetings of the HMC are held on the 4th Thursday of each month and are open to the public.

Terry Stewart
Chair

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to keep the Essex Health Department exceptionally busy. The Governor's *Declaration of Civil Preparedness and Public Health Emergency* issued in March 2020 is still in effect as of June 30, 2021; there are now 111 subsequent Executive Orders related to this Emergency and all affect Local Health Department roles & responsibilities.

In July 2020, DECD Sector Rules authorized this department & the Essex Re-Opening Committee to oversee the gradual, phased reopening of businesses but continued to limit the size of social gatherings & outdoor events. Many team sports were suspended, park & recreational activities, club, social events & even Essex parades were cancelled for the summer in an effort to "flatten the curve" and slow the spread of the virus in our community.

At the same time, this department increased contact tracing efforts - especially for sports-related disease outbreaks, worked with Region 4 Schools on distance learning & reopening strategies, provided guidance for youth athletic programs on policies & procedures focused on protecting the health & wellbeing of our community and getting kids safely back into schools for in-person learning in Oct 2020. All this was done while meeting the increased demands

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HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Continued from previous page

of environmental health-associated inspections & permitting triggered by increased residential home sales.

By Fall 2020 the Health Department's duty shifted into high gear as we transitioned to mass vaccination planning. There were many logistical difficulties to work through: planning for receipt, ultra-low storage & administration of vaccine which was not yet available, managing phased vaccinations by age, scheduling & tracking two doses per person set weeks apart, establishing clinics & administering vaccines outdoors in the winter or indoors with appropriate social distancing, etc. Finally, in Dec 2020, two COVID-19 vaccines were granted Emergency Use Authorization by the FDA and Mass Vaccination in Essex began in Jan 2021. Mass Vaccination clinics from January - April 2021 at Essex Town Hall was made possible by the invaluable partnership with Nutmeg Pharmacy, Essex Ambulance, Essex Fire Dept and Town Hall staff.

Throughout this pandemic, the Health Department worked intensely with approximately 53 different local & State entities including: Office of the Governor, DPH, DECD, VAMS, ContaCT Tracing team & epidemiologists, Social Services, Emergency Management and Homeland Security, Public Safety, Essex Fire Dept & EMS, SDE, Region 4 Schools, private sports programs, local & district health departments from across the state, State vaccination program staff, pharmacies, long-term care facilities and home health agencies, local businesses, municipal leaders (*the list goes on*). The State's Contact Tracing software was revised 23 times by Jun 2021 to capture new information & track virus transmission. Managing this pandemic has been a Herculean effort by many, many, people on the state and local level who continue to work to ensure the health & safety of our residents.

We are now in the 4th wave of the pandemic. Schools are preparing to reopen in late August & the Delta Variant of the SARS-COV2 virus is more transmissible than the original strain. We continue to work through many new challenges associated with the pandemic.

From Jan 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021, there have been 413 cases of COVID-19 and 13 fatalities in Essex.

The day-to-day work of the Health Dept also continued: 9 new septic systems; 177 plan reviews; 54 septic system repairs; 48 soil tests, 12 new well drilling permits. The 42 restaurants in town each required re-opening inspections plus the routine health inspections. The 6 public pools were closed during summer of 2020.

Lisa Fasulo
Director of Health

INLAND WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES COMMISSION

The Essex Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission is chaired by Fred Szufnarowski, Andy Roussel Vice-Chairman, Dan Lapman, Ernest "Bill" Cook, and Michael Furgueson as regular members and David Kirsch and Noreen Brennan-Rowe as alternates. Regular member Jim Leo stepped down this year after serving 9 years on the Commission.

The Commission regulates all proposed activities within a wetland or watercourse and on lands within 100 feet of wetlands. In accordance with CT General Statutes the Town developed Regulations involving activities in these areas. Using a 'best practices' approach, the Commission along with its Enforcement Officer, administers the regulations to protect the Town's resources and helps owners enjoy the use of their property. The Commission meets the second Tuesday of the month at 7pm in the Town Hall.

During the 2020-2021 fiscal year, the Commission conducted one site inspection, issued 12 inland wetland permits, and granted two permit extensions. The IWWC held two show cause hearings for Cease and Desists Orders that were issued. The Inland Wetlands Officer issued 12 administrative approvals for activities within upland review areas. Four referrals were made to the Zoning Board of Appeals for variances requested for work within 100 feet of the coastal jurisdiction line of the Connecticut River.

In November 2020 Bob Doane was appointed as the Wetlands Enforcement Officer. Carey Duques was hired as the Land Use Official in February 2021. Both attend the IWWC meetings and work with the Commission to carry out its mission. Specific activities include reviewing applications, inspecting sites, enforcing the regulations, and issuing permits.



Vaccine clinic volunteers.



Nutmeg Pharmacist Chris Olender gives our very own Tree Warden, Augie Pampel, his first vaccine shot.

PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT/COMMISSION

The Essex Park and Recreation Department, working under the direction of the Park and Recreation Commission, strives to provide safe and aesthetically pleasing parks to the residents and visitors of Essex, as well as enriching recreational programs for youth and adults. Residents and visitors are offered approximately 90 acres of parkland that includes: 9 park areas, a state-of-the-art playground, eco-friendly restrooms, 3 park shelters, a walking path, 2 fishing piers, basketball court, tennis court, 3 baseball and softball fields, a dog park, and a swimming hole. We also accomplished many park improvement projects this past year. Most notable, the Sunset Pond picnic area was upgraded thanks to a generous donation from the Essex Police Union.

The department provides many recreation programs for people of all ages. These programs are offered in a wide range of interests including Youth Sports, Youth Camps, Adult Sports, Fitness, Special Interest, and After School Enrichment. In addition, activities are also provided by the department indirectly through partnerships with various organizations (Essex Little League Baseball, Valley Soccer Club, Ticks Lacrosse, Essex Land Trust, Essex Board of Trade, Ivoryton Alliance, and many other community groups). Furthermore, many local organizations are scheduled and issued Park Use Permits for various park and facility use each year.

A further priority of the department is bringing to the community a variety of special events. Sadly, the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to cancel our parades, programs, camps and events such as Essex Eggstravaganza and the Essex Go Bragh Irish Parade. However, with the CDC Guidelines adjusted for outdoor recreation we were able to host the 4th of July Parade, Summer Concerts and planning has begun for the 2021 Ivoryton Village Pumpkin Festival.

The Park and Recreation Commission meets quarterly at Essex Town Hall. We welcome hearing from the public with questions or concerns on our operations and how we may assist you. Friend us on [Facebook](#)! During the past fiscal year, we achieved our goal of quality parks and programs and continually strive to make Essex a great place to live, work, and play.

Mary Ellen Barnes
Park & Recreation Director



Summer concert
Series at Main Street
Park, Essex

PLANNING COMMISSION

Prior to the merger of the Planning & Zoning Commissions, the Essex Planning Commission approved one two-lot subdivision, reviewed and provided guidance on several potential amendments to the Zoning Regulations, and continued work on implementation of the 2015-2025 Plan of Conservation & Development. Specifically, the Planning Commission sought and received a grant to assist with the nomination of the Village of Essex to the National Register of Historic Places, as well as preparing and proposing several Special Development District/Overlay Zones to encourage increased activity in key development nodes.

Adopted by Ordinance at a Town Meeting on November 16, 2020, Essex's previously separate Planning Commission and Zoning Commission combined, forming the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Carey Duques, Certified Zoning Enforcement Official
John Guskowski, Consulting Planner

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Adopted by Ordinance at a Town Meeting on November 16, 2020, Essex's Planning Commission and Zoning Commission combined forming the Planning and Zoning Commission. The Commission is comprised of seven regular members and three alternates. The following people were appointed to the Planning and Zoning Commission: Russ Smith Chairman, Jane Siris Vice Chair, Ralph Monaco, Mark Reeves, Erin Borruso, Robert Day, Gary Riggio as Regular Members, and Jeffrey Lovelace, Thomas Carroll and David Rosengren as Alternate Members. Larry Shipman serves as legal counsel to the PZC. The Commission meets the first Tuesday of each month at 7 pm at Essex Town Hall.

In February 2021 the Land Use Department completed further reorganization by hiring Carey Duques, CZEO, AICP as the Land Use Official and appointing her as the Zoning Enforcement Official. Ms. Duques staffs the Planning and Zoning Commission and works with John Guskowski, the Town's Consulting Planner, on land use projects including text amendments to the zoning regulations, subdivisions, grant applications, and Town plans.

Since November 2020 the Planning and Zoning Commission has approved three Special Exceptions and two modifications site plans. The PZC approved a text amendment to the Zoning Regulations to allowance of self-storage facilities within existing buildings in the Limited Industrial District.

Implementation of the actions in the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) is ongoing.

Carey Duques, Certified Zoning Enforcement Official
John Guskowski, Consulting Planner

PROBATE COURT SAYBROOK DISTRICT

The Saybrook District Probate Court serves the nine towns of Chester, Clinton, Deep River, Essex, Haddam, Killingworth, Lyme, Old Saybrook, and Westbrook, which have a combined population of approximately 62,000. Judge Jeannine Lewis presides over hearings, and is supported by six staff including Sharon Tiezzi, Chief Clerk, Marge Calltharp, Stella Caione (fka Beaudoin), Helene Yates, Jackie Craco, and Rose Nolin. Former Assistant Clerk, Margaret (Peggy) Schroeder, retired on June 30, 2021, after 29 years of service in the probate system, and is enjoying retirement by boating with her husband.

The court is located on the second floor of the Old Saybrook Town Hall, 302 Main Street, Old Saybrook, and is open from 8:30am-4:30 pm Monday through Friday. Paperwork for children's matters can be filed in the Old Saybrook location, however, all hearings for children's matters, with the exception of name changes, are heard by Judge Lewis at the Connecticut Children's Regional Probate Court located at 1501 East Main Street, Meriden. Utilizing this court location enables families to benefit from the services of two full time social workers, called Family Specialists, who assist in developing custody and visitation arrangements that provide healthier outcomes for children and their families. Additionally, the judge travels to the homes or residences of persons who are unable to appear in court due to infirmity or disability. During the reporting year, the Saybrook District Probate Court administered matters with respect to the following areas of the law: 2,371 decedent's estates; 493 conservatorships; 173 trusts; 204 guardianships of the intellectually disabled; 107 children's matters including termination of parental rights, temporary custody appointments, and guardianships; 49 name changes; 46 compromise of claims/appointments of a guardian of the estate of a minor; 11 adoptions; and 27 custody of the remains applications. The court also performs many administrative functions and processed 87 fee waivers for indigent individuals to allow full access to its services regardless of ability to pay.

Despite COVID-19 restrictions, the court continued to operate continuously throughout the pandemic by utilizing the Webex video conferencing platform which allowed all hearings to take place as scheduled. In addition to the daily work of the court, Judge Lewis authored a short piece for the Events Magazine on the topic of the management of finances for a protected person, she spoke on the topic of disclaimers and fiduciary disclaimers to the Probate Assembly on May 4, 2021, and was interviewed by Mary Polchaninoff on June 24, 2021, along with Judge Marino from the Middletown Probate Court, for the Valley Shore Community Television local access program *Shore Things* on the topic of probate.

PUBLIC WORKS

The Department of Public Works maintains the Town's infrastructure including its roads, right-of-ways, and properties. Keeping our streets and properties safe is our top priority but we also understand the importance of keeping our Town clean and attractive. Safety includes responding to weather-related incidents such as, snow and ice control, roadway storm clean-up, residents' concerns, and special event support.

With every season our crew is kept busy with tasks ranging from drainage maintenance and repair, road preservation and reconstruction, sidewalk maintenance and reconstruction, street sweeping, snow plowing, tree trimming and mowing of town parks and road edges. The Town contains 42 miles of road, which can be challenging for our small crew, so we thank and appreciate all those who maintain their frontage. Your pride is evident and encouraging to us and your neighbors.

This year's focus was on drainage and road repaving. Before a road is paved the Town makes necessary repairs and improvements to the drainage infrastructure. Many new catch basins and drainage pipes were replaced and added. In the summer of 2020, Gates Rd, Essex Plaza Dr, Clark Ln, and Dump Rd were all redone. These new roads total 0.6 tenths of a mile. Having a paving program to support and fund our capital road plan lead to a historic year for road repaving and drainage improvements in Essex. In the sidewalk department we were able to replace close to 1,000 feet of sidewalk. This amount keeps us on pace to maintain our 10 miles of sidewalk. We were very pleased to see many walkers and joggers using these walks during the pandemic. With the increase of pedestrian traffic some people are walking out into the road to social distance. Please be very careful and alert to traffic if you must walk in the roadway. Wearing bright colored clothing is a significant help with visibility.

In the past several years we've continued to make vast gains to our infrastructure. Our responsible budgeting allows us to accomplish much at a relatively low cost. Our Public Works crew has expanded its range of skills and new equipment has made us more efficient. We value our aging equipment and have a proactive maintenance plan to increase longevity.

It is our job to continually monitor and assess the condition of our infrastructure. We must also be prepared for harsh unpredictable weather conditions. These weather scenarios are dangerous and abusive to our roads and utilities. Please be cautious during storm events, stay home or find a safe location where you are least likely to become a liability. If you need to go outside, make yourself visible and communicate with friends and family.

Please bring any concerns to our attention as they are very important to us and we will respond with courteous service and action.

Ryan Welch
Director of Public Works

PUMPOUT BOAT PROGRAM

The Town of Essex manages the Pumpout Boat Program for the Lower Connecticut River.

The 2020-2021 Pumpout Boat season has been a very busy time for our pumpout boats. Boaters have “flocked” to their boats because boating is considered a safe social distancing practice during this Covid pandemic and boating is considered one of the safest, most enjoyable, thing you can do during the summer.

Due to the pandemic, there has been a huge demand for our boats to pump out waste tanks.

The pumpout boats operate and cover the area from the East Haddam Bridge to Long Island Sound, but not into the Sound. The offload sites range from Deep River to Old Saybrook and the DEEP Dock in Old Lyme. The gallonage collection was significant and the Town of Essex has received another accolade from the State of Connecticut for the efforts in keeping the Connecticut River clean this season. First Selectman Norman Needleman received recognition from the State of Connecticut for the great job Essex is doing in keeping the waters clean from waste.

Joel P. Severance
Pumpout Boat Program Manager

REGISTRARS OF VOTERS

On January 5, 2021, John Heiser stepped down as the Republican Registrar of Voters, a vitally important role he played for our community for the past twelve years.

In John's place, we are happy to welcome Barbara Ryan as the new Republican Registrar. John has graciously agreed to serve as Barbara's Deputy as she gets started, so we will continue to benefit from John's years of experience.

During the 2020 Presidential election, the State of Connecticut began using Absentee Ballot Drop Boxes. Each municipality has an Absentee Ballot Drop Box to be used for dropping off your absentee application, as well as your absentee ballot.

The Office of the Registrar is a state-mandated, elected position. The two elected registrars, Republican and Democratic, update Essex's official voter registration list throughout the year. They are also responsible for preparing for and managing federal, state, and municipal elections.

The registrars conduct an annual canvass of all registered voters in Essex to update residents and mailing address changes. Please notify the Registrar's office if your address has changed. The registrars are provided with certification training and ongoing professional seminars each year.

Barbara Ryan and Caitlin Riley
Registrars of Voters

RESIDENT STATE TROOPER/ ESSEX POLICE

Policing and public safety in the Town of Essex is the responsibility of the Essex Resident State Trooper's office. The Resident State Trooper's office is located in the Essex Town Hall and consists of three full-time Essex Police Officers and three part-time Essex Police Officers. Supervision of police personnel is the responsibility of the Resident State Trooper. The Resident State Trooper is provided to the Town under contract with the State of Connecticut. In addition to the Resident Trooper and his patrol vehicle, the Town of Essex benefits from the use of the State Police infrastructure, radio system, reporting and filing systems, as well as many other law enforcement support services. The tri-town animal control officers also fall under the supervision of the Resident State Trooper.

In addition to the police and animal control officers, there are four part-time Harbor Patrol boat operators. The police boat can be found patrolling the Connecticut River, coves, and marinas on a regular, seasonal basis. When in operation on the river, the police boat can be reached on Channel 16 of the Maritime radio or via State Police Troop F in Westbrook.

For the reporting year 2020-2021, the Resident State Trooper and Essex Police Officers have been responsible for investigating an array of different criminal and motor vehicle complaints. In addition, they have responded to a variety of miscellaneous calls for service. Though the pandemic shut down the community in so many ways, it is always a priority of the Essex Police to maintain an active role in the community, providing police personnel for public events such as parades, road races, and organized town events. The Essex Police also participated in multiple car

Statistic	Total
Total Calls for Service	9,972
Total Nonreportable Events	9,168
Total Criminal Complaints	95
Total Stolen Motor Vehicles	10
Total Accidents with Report	56
Total Accidents without Report	4
Total Fatal Accidents	0
Total OUI's	10
Total Onsite OUI's	7
Total Accident OUI's	3
Total Motorist Assists	77
Total Citations Primary Charge	180
Total Warnings Primary Charge	450
Total Seatbelt Citations	13
Total Seatbelt Warnings	54
Total Marine/Boating Enforcement	90

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RESIDENT STATE TROOPER/ ESSEX POLICE

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parades celebrating our residents. The Resident State Trooper and Essex Police Officers assisted the community through the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent early stages of reopening.

The Resident State Trooper and Essex Police Officers have taken part in the 4 Wellness program for Essex Elementary School 6th Graders (in partnership with Tri Town Youth Services) in the past, as well as coordinated safety presentations, and participated in several in-person and video-based community meetings.

For this reporting year, the Resident State Trooper's Office, Essex Police Officers, and State Troopers have responded to 9,972 calls for service. It should be noted that activity levels vary from year-to-year for various reasons, most significantly this reporting year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Essex Resident State Trooper's Office is committed to addressing public safety issues and police-related concerns as quickly as possible, thereby keeping Essex a safe community in which to live, work, and play.

TFC Mark Roberts
Resident State Trooper

RETIREMENT BOARD

The Essex Retirement Board (ERB) acts as the fiduciary and administrator of the Town's three retirement benefit assets: Town of Essex Retirement Plan, Town of Essex Police Retirement Plan, Town of Essex Merit Service Retirement Plan (a LOSAP plan) for Volunteer Firefighters, and the Other Post Employment Benefit Plan (OPEB.) The role of the ERB is to primarily perform a fiduciary and oversight function over the Town's retirement and merit service plans in order to ensure effective and fair oversight of the plans, their investments, funding, procedures and distribution of benefits to eligible employees and volunteer participants. The ERB is authorized under terms consistent with the plans; to consist of at least three (3) members but not more than five (5) and members are appointed by the First Selectman for the purpose of administering the Plans. The current Chairperson is Peter J. Decker, term expiration November 2021. Current at large members are: Ethan Goller, term expiration November 2021; Stacia Libby and Mary-Louise Polo, term expiration November 2023; Kelly Sterner, term expiration November 2025. The ERB meets monthly, generally on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at the Town Hall at 6pm. The 2020-2021 annual schedule, agendas and minutes are posted on the Town's website. The fund balances at the close of the 2020-2021 fiscal year were: \$7,133,369 for the Defined Benefits Retirement

Plans for Town Employees and Police, \$1,510,574 for the Merit Service Retirement Plan, and \$102,928 for the Other Post Employment Benefit Plan.

Peter J. Decker
Chair

SOCIAL SERVICES

The Town of Essex Department of Social Services mission is to enhance the quality of life and self-sufficiency of people in need of financial and social services. We provide leadership, advocacy, planning and delivery of many services in partnership with public and private organizations.

Essex Social Services provides services with respect, compassion and accountability, committing to not only the delivery of integrated social services but focusing on meeting basic human needs and promoting services that foster self-sufficiency and economic independence. We serve as your bridge. We connect you to the essential resources of the community. These resources provide the support you may need, such as food, shelter, educational and employment opportunities, personal safety and access to health care services. The available services are diverse and support all ages.

Essex Social Services has a long-standing tradition of collaborating with community partners to enhance services to town residents. Our partners, along with many others, include the Shoreline Soup Kitchen, The Community Renewal Team, The Salvation Army, The Estuary Council, FISH, Child and Family Services, Visiting Nurses of the Lower Valley, Operation Fuel, along with the Essex Community Fund, who is a major donor to our Essex Emergency Assistance Fund, which assists local residents with fuel, food, shelter and other emergency services.

In addition, we coordinate the many generous efforts and contributions of our local churches, civic organizations, businesses, and individuals on behalf of the children and families of this community with our CHANGE FOR CHANGE drive that supports our Holiday Gift Card Program.

The Department of Social Services will continue to strive to seek out new ways to improve and enhance operations and to expand activities to better meet the needs of the community while maintaining a positive, compassionate, and cost-efficient environment.

Mary Ellen Barnes
Social Services Representative



SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

The Sustainable Essex Committee initiated several significant projects during 2021 that supported our community's goals for reducing our carbon footprint, providing proactive stewardship of our rivers and watersheds, and keeping abreast of key climate change drivers and impacts – all while ensuring that “our municipal processes be more inclusive, cohesive, and representative of all community members, now and in the future”.¹

On April 5th, Sustainable Essex, in partnership with the Town of Essex, launched the Essex Food Scrap Collection Program. This program redirects food scraps dropped off at the Essex Transfer Station to the Biopower Anaerobic Digester for conversion into compost and energy producing gases – reducing the amount of Carbon Dioxide and Methane greenhouse gases emitted from our landfills. Thanks to the commitment and dedication of our Town of Essex citizens, we have collected over 11,900 pounds, and since June 1st we have averaged over 625 pounds per week.

During 2021 we have hosted a new series of our Sustainable Essex Environmental Discussions (“SEED”). For this second season, we have continued to offer programs focused on the climate change and sustainability issues critical to our region and we will also be expanding our programs to include talks by authors writing on environmental topics and presentations by artists whose works are inspired by the CT River Valley and Long Island Sound. Through August we have hosted five SEED events and at least three more are planned for the Fall.

To realize our goal for direct engagement in the stewardship of our rivers and watersheds we are coordinating the first annual Essex 3 Villages Source to Sea Cleanup Day with The Connecticut River Conservancy, The Essex Land Trust, and The Essex Fire Engine Company #1. This will be a town-wide event scheduled for Saturday, October 2nd, 2021, from 8:30 am to 12:00 Noon.

The Committee has initiated other projects or is partnering with other organizations to meet our overall goals. We have worked to ensure that our initiatives equitably reach and enhance the lives of all of the residents of the Town of Essex. We are looking forward to achieving Silver certification by the end of the year.



Mike Long
Co-Chair

Food Scrap Collection at the
Transfer Station .

¹ Equity objective – Sustainable Connecticut

TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

This past fiscal year the Town of Essex held the following meetings: Twelve Town Meetings, one Public Hearing, One Presidential Election and one Regional District #4 Budget Vote.

The following is a list of recordings for the 2020-2021 fiscal year in the Town of Essex including Centerbrook and Ivoryton:

Birth Certificates:	40
Death Certificates:	83
Discharges:	6
Dog Licenses:	572
Land Records:	1,877
Marriage Licenses:	48
Maps & Surveys:	16
Trade Names:	26

Monies disbursed by Town Clerk to the State of Connecticut:

Sports License Fees:	\$ 1,166
Marriage Surcharge Fees:	\$ 1,632
Dog Fees:	\$ 3,965
Preservation Fees – State Library:	\$ 5,024
Land Records – State Treasurer:	\$117,460

Monies to the General Fund:

Conveyance Tax:	\$333,777
Town Clerk Fees:	\$227,744

The land records are on our public computers in the Town Clerk's office for your search as well as being able to print the documents out. You can also subscribe to the Connecticut Town Clerks Portal which is open 24/7 at <https://connecticut-townclerks-records.com>. You can also access a new search engine entitled RecordHub at <https://recordhub.cottsystems.com>.

We issue annual stickers (every December) and punch cards (anytime) to the Town Transfer Station.

Don't forget, when you reach the age of 65 you are entitled to receive a FREE Sports License annually.

VETERANS...Please note that by September 30th you can file your DD214 (Discharge) with this office in order to receive the Veteran's Exemption.

Our office is open daily from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm and as always, we thank you for your support.

Joel Marzi, Town Clerk
Yvonne Roziak, Assistant
Town Clerk



TOWN COUNSEL

During the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2021, this office handled the many miscellaneous matters customary for Town operation, such as Town Meeting calls, interpretation of statutes, Freedom of Information Act requests and the like. However, during the last Fiscal Year many of these matters continued to be affected by the COVID 19 pandemic.

Executive Order powers were extended and often involved updated or new protocols for governmental operations, particularly matters involving public participation in governmental functions such as Town Meetings and meetings of various Boards and Commissions. This office monitored the various Executive Orders for the purpose of advising Town officials as required.

The national election which took place in November, 2020 presented numerous questions with respect to election day protocols. First, the Registrars needed to assure participation at the Town Hall voting site complied with Health and Fire Department protocols.

Also, the Board of Selectmen under its general statutory powers concerning public property, adopted a Resolution limited to Town Hall property prohibiting the carrying of firearms onto Town Hall property except for law enforcement officers and legal firearms carried in a motor vehicle and parked during regular Town Hall hours. The Resolution, of course, applied to the Town Hall voting site. No incidents involving the Resolution occurred during the national election.

The dispute regarding whether the westerly end of Evans Lane is a public highway continued through the Fiscal Year since all Court trials were continued until further notice. The Town continued to plow and maintain the roadway under an earlier pre-trial agreement of the parties. In the interim, efforts to settle the dispute as amicably as possible have continued. The case is likely to be settled before autumn and a trial will be unnecessary.

This year saw the merger of the Zoning Commission and the Planning Commission into a seven member Planning and Zoning Commission. With the able assistance of Town staff and now Commission Counsel Larry Shipman, all business continued without interruption or delay.

Sylvia K. Rutkowska, Esq.
David M. Royston, Esq.
Town Counsel



John and Judy Heiser at the Town Hall on the day of John's retirement as Registrar.

TREE COMMITTEE

The Essex Tree Committee was established in 1990 to inventory, preserve, and replace our priceless resource of street trees. Funding for the plantings comes from the Town and private donations. During the period of 2020-2021 we have planted 9 trees bringing our total of trees planted since 1993 to 310.

The type and location are as follows: One "October Glory" Maple (*Acer Rubrum*) in front of Historical Society on West Avenue, One "Red Sunset Maple" (*Acer Rubrum*) in front of #8 Comstock Avenue, one Swamp White Oak (*Quercus bicolor*) at #2 Gates Road, one Little Leaf Linden (*Tilia cordata*) at corner of Grove Street and High Street, one Swamp White Oak (*Quercus bicolor*) at 67 Ingham Hill Road, one Dogwood at Sunset Pond, one Eastern Redbud (*Cercis Canadensis*) at 56 Walnut Street, one Dogwood at corner of Old Denison Road and Denison Road, one Kwanzan Cherry (*Prunus serrulata*) at #20 Blake Street.

The Essex Tree Committee is composed of the Town Tree Warden as an ex-officio member and a minimum of two to a maximum of six members appointed by the Board of Selectman to serve without pay for terms of three years duration. The Essex Tree Committee has six meetings per year.

Augie Pampel
Chair/Tree Warden

WORKSITE SAFETY AND HEALTH COMMITTEE

The Safety and Health Committee is composed of members from Region 4, Essex Elementary School, Essex Town Hall, Transfer Station, Park and Recreation, Public Works, Police, Fire Marshal, Health, and the Fire Department who meet quarterly in order to promote health and safety in places of employment.

The purpose of this committee is to bring employers and employees together in a non-adversarial, cooperative and effective effort to promote safety and health at each worksite.

The duties of the committee include sharing ideas on anything safety related and discussing any accidents and preventative and training programs in order to reduce hazards in the workplace.



ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

The Essex Zoning Board of Appeals is chaired by Mr. Tim Furgueson. With Mr. Furgueson are Barbara Sarrantonio, Ward Feirer, Brian Weinstein (resigned March 17, 2021) Philip Schaller, and Phil Beckman (appointed as a regular member March 2021). Alternate Members are Richard Rybak, George Wendell, and Susan Feaster (appointed June 2021). Attorney Sylvia Rutkowska serves as legal counsel for the Board.

There are times when residents would like to complete activities such as building expansion, shed placement, pool location or uses of buildings that do not comply with the zoning regulations. The Zoning Board of Appeals has the authority to grant variances to those regulations. The applicant is asked to provide a true land-based hardship that would make development in full accordance with the zoning regulations extremely difficult.

During the 2020-2021 fiscal year there were a total of 35 public hearings held before the ZBA. The Board granted thirty-two variances and denied three.

ZONING COMMISSION

The Zoning Commission is chaired by Larry Shipman and has eight seats. With Mr. Shipman are William Reichenbach, Jim Hill, Russ Smith, and Mark Reeves as regular members with Jeff Lovelace, Robert Day III, and Tom Carroll serving as alternates. The Commission meets on the third Monday evening of each month.

The Zoning Commission is responsible for the continuous review, updates and administration of the Essex Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps. Revision updates to the Zoning regulations are made periodically to conform to State Statutes and to changing concerns regarding development in Essex. In addition, the Commission reviews applications for Special Exceptions and various site plan reviews. The Commission can also modify past approvals.

During the 2020-2021 fiscal year the Commission held 7 public hearings. It approved 1 Special Exception. Also 4 petitions to amend the zoning regulations to allow; business and professional offices in the Village Residence District as a Special Principal use; add definitions to the regulations; addition of accessory items to list of items that need zoning permits; and implementation of a referral to the IWWC when there is a variance request within the Gateway Buffer Area (100 feet of the coastal jurisdiction line). The Commission denied one text amendment relating to lots partly in different districts.

Adopted by Ordinance at a Town Meeting on November 16, 2020, Essex's Planning Commission and Zoning Commission combined forming the Planning and Zoning Commission. In February 2021, Carey Duques was hired as the Land Use Official and Zoning Enforcement Officer for the Town of

Essex. See the Planning and Zoning Commission Section for a summary of events that occurred between November 2020 and June 30, 2021.

ZONING ENFORCEMENT

The Zoning Enforcement Officer (ZEO) carries out a multi-faceted position within the Land Use Department. With the zoning regulations as guidance this individual administers the daily activities that pertain to the applicable land use boards and commissions in Town. The ZEO works with residents to answer questions about their proposed development and how to maneuver the application process.

The ZEO performs inspections, investigations, enforcement and administrative duties to assure that residential, commercial, industrial and other properties comply with the Town's zoning and wetland regulations. The ZEO serves as a conduit to the land use boards and commissions. There is also coordination with the other departments in the Land Use Office including, Health, Engineering, Building, Public Works and Fire to ensure compliance with all local regulations. Staff will guide all applicants through the process of getting their plans and ideas heard in hopes of getting the necessary approvals. Supervision is given to administrative staff as necessary.

During the 2020– 2021 fiscal year the Zoning Official approved 186 zoning permits and 12 administrative wetland permits. In November 2020, Bob Doane was appointed as the Interim Wetlands Enforcement Officer. In February 2021 Carey Duques was hired as the Land Use Official and Zoning Enforcement Officer. Ms. Duques staffs the Planning and Zoning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals and Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission along with Mr. Doane.

Carey Duques
Certified Zoning Enforcement Official



Ugly sweater day at the Town Hall.

SECTION III—COMMUNITY & SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

ANCIENT ORDER OF WEEDERS

Since its founding by Robert Swain as a non-profit organization in 1981, the Ancient Order of Essex Weeders has devoted its time and energy to the beautification and maintenance of the gateway into Essex. Our group plants, waters and maintains the flowers and shrubs that mark the intersections of Routes 153 and 154. We also care for the flowers planted by the Garden Club around the “silent policeman” at the top of Main Street in Essex Village.

In the past several years we have continued to enhance the garden beds. We installed eight hardy low spreading Blue Junipers, plus a large new grouping of Roses with Carex and Hakonechloa Grasses to replace several overgrown and damaged shrubs. We have also added clusters of shade and drought tolerant Yuccas, dwarf Hydrangeas, and Agastache adding more color to the gateway intersection leading into town. In addition, we are caring for two large new beds of summer blooming perennials planted by Eric Sullivan for the Essex Foundation.

We are also a social organization. After our work on Thursday mornings, we enjoy meeting for coffee in the Town Park, and at indoor coffee shops during the off-season. Each year we have a “summer party”, recently at the Essex Pettipaug Yacht Club, and a holiday party at one of our member homes.

The Essex Weeders has always benefitted from the generosity of several individuals and civic organizations who enable our work to continue. The Essex Garden Club provides us with many annuals each year and mulch has been generously donated by our good friends the Bombacis. Recently Herb Clark installed a spigot near the south island beds specifically for our use in keeping the plants watered. Discounts have been provided by Riggio’s Garden Center and Scott’s Farm. Traffic cones, and safety vests have been provided to us by the Town. Private donations from generous individuals and local service clubs are also integral to our efforts. It is only through their help that we are able to water, buy fertilizer and replace plants and shrubs, as needed.

We are always happy to welcome new members, male and female. Please visit our website at <https://essexweeders.weebly.com/>.

Richard Levene
Treasurer

CHILD & FAMILY AGENCY OF SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT

Established in 1972, Child and Family Agency of Southeastern CT, Inc (CFA) provides behavioral and physical health care services, childcare, and family resources to children, families, and adults across southern and eastern CT.

CFA provides outpatient behavioral health through our three outpatient clinics located in Essex, New London, and Groton, CT. CFA’s Essex based clinic provides a wide range of mental health services including individual, family, and group therapy. Additionally, the Essex clinic offers two alternative therapeutic spaces geared toward calming the senses to make therapy more effective. Clients may work with their therapist on our outdoor swing and can explore different ways to calm their visual and tactile senses in our indoor sensory room.

CFA’s Essex clinic offers in-person and telehealth appointments. Open access appointments are available for first-time clients. Services are available for all residents of Middlesex County over the age of 3.

CFA’s Essex Auxiliary, an Essex-based volunteer group supporting CFA, recently held a virtual fundraiser to support CFA. The “Let’s Eat Out” Raffle event involved gift cards to local restaurants. The Essex Auxiliary is currently accepting new members. Please contact Carly at eganc@childandfamilyagency.org for more information.

Elizabeth Lambert
Advancement & Marketing Manager



The Essex Weeders

CONNECTICUT RIVER GATEWAY COMMISSION

The Lower Connecticut River Valley was recognized by the Connecticut General Assembly in 1973 as one of the State's most important natural, recreational and scenic areas. In 1974, the Commission was established and became operational with membership from eight towns, two regional agencies and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. The Gateway Conservation Zone is 30 miles long and includes portions of its eight member towns (Chester, Deep River, East Haddam, Essex, Haddam, Lyme, Old Lyme and Old Saybrook, including the Borough of Fenwick) within view of the river. The Nature Conservancy has designated the lower Connecticut River as one of its "Last Great Places"; the river's tidelands were recognized as an "internationally significant" habitat for waterfowl under the terms of the international Ramsar Convention; the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Interior has recognized the Lower Connecticut River Valley as "one of the most important ecological landscapes" in the United States; and in 1999, the River was designated as one of 14 American Heritage Rivers by the President of the United States.

The Gateway Commission concentrates much of its attention on the protection of the valley's scenic qualities. Since its inception, the Commission has worked with others to acquire over 1,100 acres of land through purchase or donation of scenic easements, development rights and fee simple titles.

The Commission is also empowered to adopt common zoning standards for height, setback and lot coverage, which member towns adopt and enforce within the Gateway Conservation Zone. The Commission reviews and acts on zone changes, regulation changes and variance applications affecting land within the Conservation Zone referred to it by local boards and commissions. No zone change or change in regulations affecting land within the Conservation Zone can become effective without the Commission's approval.

Members as of June 30, 2021 included: Jenny Kitsen and Tom Brelsford of Chester; Jerry Roberts of Deep River; Cray Brownell of East Haddam; Claire Matthews and Misha Semenov of Essex; Susan R. Bement and Mike Farina of Haddam, J. Melvin Woody and Wendy Hill of Lyme; Suzanne Thompson and Greg Futoma of Old Lyme; Bill Webb of Old Saybrook; Raul Debrigard and Marilyn Gleeson of RiverCOG; and David Blatt of the Connecticut DEEP (Commissioner's Representative). Fenwick Borough has been designated an ad hoc member and is periodically represented by Borough Warden Newt Brainard.

For more information, contact River COG Deputy Director and Gateway staff J. H. Torrance Downes at (860) 581-8554 or at tdownes@rivercog.org. Contact information can also be found on the web at www.ctrivergateway.org.

J. H. Torrance Downes
Deputy Director

CONNECTICUT RIVER MUSEUM

Fiscal year 2020-2021 started positively, with the museum reopened after several months closure due to the COVID shutdown. Guests flocked to our lawns to hear live music – a rare treat in 2020 - at our Shanties and Sails and Thursdays on the Dock music series sponsored by Privé-Swiss Wellness. Although summer camp was canceled due to pandemic concerns, the museum consistently offered free children's activities and prizes at the front desk. Public sails and private charters aboard the *Onrust* were extremely popular and often sold out.

On August 4, 2020, the museum welcomed Jennifer L. Carlson as its new Executive Director, just as Tropical Storm Isaias made its mark on the State of Connecticut. But even a tropical storm couldn't stop the 4th Annual Conquer the Current paddlers' regatta on August 8. Over 70 paddlers raced down the Connecticut River from Eagle Landing in Haddam to the dock at the CT River Museum.

In preparation for fall, the museum's education department worked tirelessly to provide educational resources on the museum website, to create online versions of popular school programs, and to develop homeschool programs onsite. A popular online lecture series, CRM Talks, was developed to feature many notable speakers from the New England region and beyond, including Andy Fisk of the CT River Conservancy, Chad Floyd of Centerbrook Architects, Eric Hintz of the Smithsonian, Neil Pederson of Harvard University Forest, and Stacey Close of Eastern Connecticut University.

The beloved 27th Annual Train Show opened right after Thanksgiving and was well attended through February. The limit to the number of guests on the floor at the same time actually provided many guests a more intimate experience with the model trains and with the multi-talented designer and artist, Steven Cryan.

Our December fundraiser, Mistletoe and Martinis, was an online event featuring videos created by CRM staff, to be viewed while enjoying a scrumptious meal provided by Carlson's Landing restaurant via curbside pickup.



Canoe on the CT River.

Continued on next page

CONNECTICUT RIVER MUSEUM

Continued from previous page

In March 2021, the museum opened a new exhibit, *Hands on the Land: Art and the Environment in the Connecticut River Valley*. A collaboration with the Lyme Art Association and juried by Dick Shriver of Estuary Magazine, this exhibit showcased 40 works of art that speak to human impact on the land of the CT River Valley.

The fiscal year ended with a bang with RiverFare held in person under the tent on June 3rd. It was a glorious evening filled with hugs and warm wishes for a brighter year!

Jennifer L. Carlson
Executive Director



ESSEX AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION

The members of the Essex Ambulance Board of Directors and Corps would like to thank our residents and local businesses for your continued support. Our members are committed to the health and safety of our community.

Our crews would like to send a special thanks to our community for their many acts of kindness. We had so many people drop off cleaning supplies, masks, notes of encouragement and thanks and some really great homemade treats. We had several members of the community assist us with building a special room to store our personal protective equipment and decontamination supplies in, which has been invaluable. Words cannot express how grateful we are.

The pandemic impacted the types of calls we responded to this year and added to safety concerns for the welfare of our crews and patients. We experienced a drop in calls for traumatic injuries and accidents and an increase in calls for critically ill



patients. Every call required adherence to strict decontamination and personal protection procedures to assure everyone's safety.

Funding is acquired through donations, memorial gifts and billing. We are grateful for the Town's assistance with our insurance coverages and their efforts to help us acquire funding for a new ambulance. We currently have three ambulances ranging in age from 11 to 26 years. Maintenance costs due to their age have been increasing and we hope to be able to replace the oldest vehicle in the near future. The support of our town residents will be critical in helping us reach our goal.

We are looking for exceptional people to join our Corps. If you are a certified EMT or EMR and are interested in learning more about how you can serve your community contact us at our headquarters or ask one of our members for information. If you are not certified but think you may be interested come and meet us.

Thank you for your continued support and please be safe.

Judi Reynolds EMT/EMSI
Chief of Service

ESSEX BOARD OF TRADE

The Essex Board of Trade is a local business organization comprised of members from manufacturing, banking/wealth management, real estate, legal, food/beverage, lodging and retail, as well as various professional services. A number of our members represent our local tourist attractions, notably the Ivoryton Playhouse, the Essex Steam Train, the Essex Art Association, and the Connecticut River Museum.

From our inception, first as the "Essex Merchants Group", then incorporated in the mid 1990's as the EBOT, our primary mission was to promote our members businesses, as well as our non-profit organizations, all while fostering unity between each of the three villages of Centerbrook, Essex, and Ivoryton.

Many people are often surprised to learn that the Board of Trade is NOT in fact an "arm" of our town government. Our members pay annual dues for the chance to be involved in networking opportunities, group advertising promotions, as well as the ability to market themselves on the EBOT website, www.experienceessex.com.

When one sees the "Essex Ed Parade" in February, the American flags on lamp posts in the summer, the "Scarecrow Festifall" in October, as well as the lamp post garlands and "Holiday Stroll" in December, it is due to the funding and volunteer manpower of our membership.

Like many organizations, we have had to resort to an Annual Appeal the past couple of years to help fund our seasonal projects. Not surprising, the response from our residents (of all three villages) was overwhelming!

Continued on next page

ESSEX BOARD OF TRADE

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Our special events committee meets monthly to plan our seasonal events as well as at our "Business After Hours" held at our member's businesses. It is through the promotion of our seasonal events and our group advertising, in conjunction with our social media campaigns, that we strive to build greater "brand awareness" of the Town of Essex throughout New England.

It has always been our goal to present a clear picture of small town life with its history and traditions, all while hopefully enticing our guests to perhaps move to our town, establish new businesses, and add to our local culture. After all... we are "One Town, Three Villages".

Jim D'Alessio
Vice President

ESSEX COMMUNITY FUND

Essex Community Fund (ECF) has a long and rich history of positive impact and commitment to our community as evidenced by almost seven decades of consistent community-based support and service. While we support a broad range of locally based non-profits, our primary focus has always been on the health of our residents and youth and adult enrichment programs, in addition to addressing emerging needs that our residents face.

All annual donations (100%) that ECF receives from our donors stay within our community to serve the residents of our three villages. ECF continuously identifies, brings awareness to and gathers additional financial and volunteer support for emerging community needs. With the help of ECF's volunteer Board and others, we work in partnership with local non-profit organizations, churches, companies and the Town of Essex. Through these collaborations, ECF is able to support existing or new programming that addresses the issues confronting our citizens.

The impact of COVID-19 on the local non-profits that serve our community has substantially increased the need for the services our non-profits provide. Our support of their work is critically important as they continue to negotiate the challenges the pandemic has inflicted. Many of our donors contribute year after year. They endorse ECF's stewardship of their donations, whatever the size, and entrust ECF to ensure that their donations provide our local non-profits with the support they need to best serve the residents of Essex, Ivoryton and Centerbrook. ECF would like to thank our donors, for without your support, this vital work would not be possible.

For more information on Essex Community Fund please visit our website at www.essexcommunityfund.org.

Jean Schneider
Treasurer

ESSEX FIRE ENGINE CO. #1

After working through a very different year with the COVID pandemic, we emerged with a newfound sense of returning to a normalcy, only to find that the virus issues have started to accelerate again and cause us to return to a very cautious lifestyle. This constantly changing environment has kept the Essex Fire Engine Co. #1 on our toes, to say the least. Our members have risen to the challenges and changes in the way we have had to train and respond to both fire and EMS calls throughout the town. We responded to over 540 calls for assistance throughout the 2020 - 2021 financial year. This included structure and building fires, automobile and water rescues, hazardous material incidents, mutual aid calls to our neighboring towns, and EMS or medical calls. Our firefighters have continued to advance their educations in the fire service by completing certifications in Fire Fighter 1 & 2, EMT, and Fire Service Instructor classes.

The pandemic caused a lengthy delay in the delivery of our new fireboat that was built across the border in Canada. We finally took delivery of the 28 foot, twin engine, MetalCraft Marine, all aluminum vessel in May 2021. This craft was purpose built as a fireboat with a 1500 gallon per minute fire pump and an array of electronics designed for search and rescue operations on the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound. The boat was christened the *Joseph H*, in honor of past member Joe Heller, who was instrumental in developing our marine program over the past 40 years. Many of our members have spent countless hours training on the operation and maintenance of this vessel, along with coordinated training with the US Coast Guard and other area fireboats. The vessel was partially funded by a Port Security grant obtained from the federal government.

We look forward to another exciting year of providing emergency services to the Town of Essex, and we are always looking to expand our ranks with new members. If you would like to consider membership in the department, please visit our membership page www.essexctfire.org/membership/ for additional information. As always, you can keep track of events, training, and emergency operations on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/essexctfire/> or on our Instagram page <https://www.instagram.com/essexctfd/>. We are also available on Wednesday evenings at the firehouse when we have our weekly worknights and trainings. Feel free to stop in and see what is going on.

Andy Kressley
Chief of Department
Essex Fire Engine Co. #1

ESSEX GARDEN CLUB

The Essex Garden Club is a nonprofit organization whose goals are to promote civic improvement and beautification of our town, to offer education programs to benefit both the membership and the broader public and to develop partnerships with community organizations which share similar missions. We are currently an organization of 104 members. We welcome new members, both women and men, living in the villages of Essex, Centerbrook and Ivoryton, who are interested in gardening and working in the community.

Due to Covid -19, May Market was unfortunately cancelled this year. The proceeds from May Market are always used to support the club's civic projects, to provide education programs in the elementary school, horticultural programs in the middle and high schools, camperships for children, and scholarships for high school graduates and college students pursuing studies in environmental sciences. In addition, the garden club provides resources for adult and children's programs at the Essex and Ivoryton Libraries. All of these programs will be reviewed as we move forward.

Our civic projects focus on garden club members actively participating in beautifying and maintaining spaces in our town including the Essex Town Park, Dickinson Park, along with three traffic islands; the Foot of Main, the Silent Policeman, and at South Main Street. In addition, the members gathered greens at holiday time to decorate the merchants window boxes, and planters in all three villages of Essex. Annual plants were purchased and delivered to various places in the villages, including the Essex Fire Department, the Centerbrook Post Office, the Ivoryton Village Gardeners, and the Ancient Order of Weeders.

Members also planted and maintained containers at Town Hall, around the Silent Policeman, and at the Town Park. The Essex Garden Club awarded 1 scholarship this year. In addition, the Garden Club provided camperships to help 54 children from the Essex communities attend area environmental camps. These camp programs are offered by the Essex Park and Recreation Department and the Incarnation Center.

The proceeds from the club's annual May Market make these scholarships possible. This year, due to Covid restrictions, the scaled-back May flower sale and generous donations received provided much of the funding.

Pam Peters
President



Essex Garden Club expanded the Pollinator Garden behind EHS's Pratt House.

ESSEX HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Essex Historical Society's Board of Directors, volunteers and staff continue our active, collaborative approach to history with in-person as well as virtual programming. Essex's only historic house museum, Pratt House (19 West Ave.), safely opened to the public on Sunday afternoons this summer. EHS's offices and library at the Hills Academy History Center (22 Prospect Street) stayed open year round, fielding research questions and requests for information, almost exclusively online. In-person programming required creative alternatives, such as providing a fun Drive-Thru Annual Meeting in Centerbrook last fall and a successful Holiday Food Drive at Pratt House.

We expanded our online presence with a Facebook and Instagram quiz, "Find It Friday", featuring period photographs of mystery locations in the three villages nearly every weekend. We moved our popular Lecture Series to an online format, addressing the history of African Americans in the Lower Connecticut River Valley. We collaborated with the Chester and Deep River Historical Societies for an online photo series, "Celebrating 100 Years of Women's Achievements".



EHS with their giant model of the Centerbrook Meeting House .

Support from Guilford Savings Bank allowed us to complete Pratt House's Pollinator Garden. Managed by the Essex Garden Club, as well as Pratt House's Historic Kitchen Gardens, the expanded garden joined the Pollinator Pathway Northeast in support of environmental sustainability.

We continue the second chapter in our Follow the Falls program "Celebrating Centerbrook", a collaboration with Essex Land Trust (ELT) addressing the historical and environmental significance of the Falls River. Our richly illustrated booklet and 3-D flyover of the town's oldest village add depth to our understanding of this 'crossroad to innovation', with the support of collaborative sponsors, Overabove and Centerbrook Architects. In 2021, EHS and ELT began the research phase to address the Ivoryton story.

In response to the school system's need for social studies enrichment during the pandemic, EHS provided a series of live, online lessons in grades 4, 5 and 6 serving 150 students monthly, supported by the Essex Elementary School Foundation. Using inquiry-

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ESSEX HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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based learning with objects, documents and images from EHS collections, we complemented the social studies curriculum while developing hands-on activities through distance learning. The program culminated with walking tours of Centerbrook for all three grades, using personal audio devices. These devices proved essential for social distancing during our adult walking tours, supported in part by the Community Foundation of Middlesex County.

Please visit www.essexhistory.org to learn how we can bring history to you.



Essex Historical Society sponsored a Holiday Food Drive at Pratt House in support of Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries.

Melissa Josefiak
Director

ESSEX LAND TRUST

The Essex Land Trust completed its 52nd year of ongoing operations in 2020. The year was significantly impacted by the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic. Events were curtailed or cancelled as the country was required to quarantine and limit gatherings. Being outdoors was one of few sanctioned activities, resulting in a significant increase of visitors to land trust preserves.

Total membership by the end of 2020 reached 450, including 24 corporate supporters. Donations and dues from 42 new members amounted to over \$6,000, an important addition to the Land Trust's resources and its ability to maintain its 650 acres of land. Total revenue for the year came in ahead of a tight expense budget, thereby allowing the land trust to start off the new fiscal year with a positive cash balance.

During the year, the Board of Directors updated the Land Trust's Mission, Vision, and Values statements. Also, the *Thatchbed Island and Its Ospreys* booklet was published and distributed to all members. A description of the island with particular focus on the restoration of native Osprey, the booklet featured a detailed description of Osprey's annual cycle as seen through photos taken by the Land Trust OspreyCam.

Volunteers contributed more than 3,000 hours of their time annually in multiple areas and projects such



Land Trust board meeting.

as: clean ups, invasive clearing events, caring for the Cross Lots Pollinator Garden and Diz Callender's Perennial Garden at Osage Trails, and supporting the Pollinator Garden at the Essex Historical Society's Pratt House.

Stewardship is a major focus of Land Trust resources and could not be carried out without the more than 30 property stewards who have taken on this responsibility. Over the past year, the stewardship team accomplished the following: built and distributed 10 new benches across multiple preserves, created a new seating area at Osage Trails, continued efforts to revitalize the dogwood field at Cross Lots by eradicating the anthracnose that prevented any blooms in 2019, appointed a bird steward working across preserves to assess and place appropriate bird housing, completed installation of a new bridge at the Millrace, created new trails at the Platt Preserve, connected to Bushy Hill Preserve, funded ongoing efforts to control invasive Phragmites on Great Meadow and Falls River Cove, established a Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) composed of experts to consult with stewards on various conservation and environmental issues, and developed a Stewardship Steering Committee to provide ongoing support and direction to stewards.

Jim Denham
Communications Chair

ESSEX LIONS CLUB

The Essex Lions Club is proud to have served the Town of Essex for over 71 years. During this past year, and in keeping within the Covid-19 restrictions, the Lions were still able to support their vision-related organizations. Contributions were made to the CT Lions Eye Research Center, Fidelco Guide Dog Foundation, and the CT Low Vision Center. We also paid for eye exams and eyeglasses for Essex residents who could not afford them. Although we did not have our annual "Night of Giving", the Club still made donations to various organizations including the Essex and Ivoryton Libraries, the Essex Fire Department, and the Essex Ambulance Association, as well as donations to the Shoreline Soup Kitchen and the Tri-Town Service Bureau.

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ESSEX LIONS CLUB

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During the year we would normally hold multiple fundraisers. The ever popular Essex Lions Lobster Bake is held on the first Saturday in August. We have our annual Thomas the Tank Engine food concession at the Valley Railroad. At the Ivoryton Pumpkin Festival we serve free hotdogs and at the Ivoryton Illuminations we have a concession stand. In the coming year we hope to be able to hold the majority of our fundraising events. Our Eye Charities Letter will go out to the community in November and we hope to get an excellent response. This year the club is accepting vehicle donations as an additional charity fundraising endeavor. The Club looks forward to another year of service, and thanks to all who generously donate in many ways to help us in our continued efforts to support our community.

The Essex Lions Club meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month at 6:00 p.m. The Club does not meet during the months of July and August. The public is welcome to join us at any time. For further information e-mail lionsevents@bogaertconstruction.com.

Bruce Lawrence
Treasurer

THE ESTUARY COUNCIL OF SENIORS, INC.

The Estuary Council of Seniors, Inc. (ECSI) is a non-profit regional senior center located at 220 Main Street in Old Saybrook with café sites in Killingworth, Lyme/Old Lyme and Old Saybrook. Since 1974, the ECSI's mission has been to promote senior's quality of life, community involvement, and independent living. Last year the ECSI provided over 80,000 nutritious meals including nearly 54,000 home delivered Meals On Wheels, and over 27,000 congregate meals, and 542 rides to medical outpatient appointments outside the nine-town Estuary Region. Moreover, 1,802 individuals received free preventative health screenings and participated in social and exercise programs too numerous to count. Our "Choices" senior counseling position that helps seniors connect with other services available to them in the community as well as navigate the Medicare/Medicaid and Prescription Drug programs has been busier than ever especially at open enrollment time.

ECSI has a lovely, large facility that welcomes residents of the Estuary region 50 years old or better. From July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 we had over 110,000 visits to our center for meals, activities, support and fun. ECSI is a fun place for residents to exercise, play cards, get a massage or facial, hear an interesting lecture, attend an art exhibit, take a painting class, join a book club or writers group, volunteer, shop at the Thrift Shop, use our fitness center, or just sit and enjoy our beautiful view.

During the reporting period for the Town of Essex, the Estuary served 45 residents a total of 5,400 home delivered meals and an additional 67 residents joined us for 1,500 congregate meals. Our Emergency Medical Outpatient Transportation provided 9 individuals with 72 rides to medical appointments. A total of 905 Essex residents made 12,000 visits to the center.

ECSI is funded in part by contributions from the generosity of the nine towns in the Estuary Region, Senior Resources Agency on Aging with Title III funds made available under the Older Americans Act, grants, donations, and fund raising efforts. I would like to thank the Town of Essex for your continued support of our programs. For information and schedules of our services and programs, please call 388-1611 weekdays from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. or visit our website at www.ecsenior.org. If you do not already receive our monthly newsletter, please call us and we'll be happy to add you to our mailing list. The newsletter is also posted on the website. We are pleased to continue to serve the residents of Essex and be an integral part of services for seniors in the Estuary Region.

Stan Mingione
Executive Director

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT

The Estuary Transit District (ETD) was formed in 1981 by the nine towns of the Connecticut River Estuary region. The nine towns include Clinton, Chester, Deep River, Essex, Killingworth, Lyme, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook, and Westbrook. ETD's mission is to provide local, coordinated public transportation for all residents of the area. To meet this goal, ETD operates public transit under the name 9 Town Transit (9TT) and XtraMile.

The ETD is governed by a board of directors. Each member town appoints one representative who serves in a voluntary capacity to adopt policy, set budgets and conduct long term planning for the district. Regular board meetings are held on the third Friday of every other month at 9:30 a.m. at the Estuary Transit District. All meetings are open to the public.

ETD's five routes serve the main corridors of the region and provide connections to public transit providers serving the surrounding regions. Door-to-door service is provided throughout all nine towns of the Estuary region as well as the towns of Durham, East Haddam, and Haddam through its Dial-A-Ride service. ETD also provides a taxi voucher program to provide half price taxi trips to seniors and people with disabilities and is the operator of the Clinton Trolley.

ETD's services are subsidized by federal, state and local funding. This allows for inexpensive fares of \$1.75 for deviated fixed routes, \$.85 for people with disabilities, and \$3.50 for Dial-A-Ride. Students of participating state colleges and universities may ride

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ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT

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any route for free with a UPass. ETD also receives a Title III grant through the area agency on aging which allows area senior citizens to ride any ETD service on a donation basis in lieu of the fare.

ETD continued to be severely impacted by COVID-19 during the year. Ridership on most of ETD's services were significantly lower than prior years, though all services remained in operation. By year end, ridership was increasing, but still below pre-COVID levels, except on the XtraMile service, which has surpassed prior years. While the district did incur substantial expenses and revenue loss, the federal CARES Act provided federal funds that filled this gap.

The Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments completed a study of the countywide transit needs and determined the best model for providing public transit in the 17 town region going forward. The study provided many service improvement suggestions including expanding the span of service hours, new Sunday service, increasing frequencies and improving transfers between routes. ETD will begin implementing the suggestions over the next two to three years, pending availability of funding.

The study also recommended combining the Estuary and Middletown Transit Districts. The two districts are working with the Connecticut Department of Transportation on a plan to fund and implement this expansion over the next year.

Joseph Comerford
Executive Director

FISH (FRIENDS IN SERVICE HERE)

FISH was founded in Essex in 1970 to provide free rides to medical appointments for residents of Essex, Deep River and Chester. Residents of our three towns wanting rides and having no other means of transportation may call 860-388-2693 up to noon the day before their appointment (Friday noon for a Monday ride) to schedule a ride for the following day. The destinations are within the triangle of Middletown to the north, Guilford to the west and New London to the east.

With the onset of the Coronavirus, and after much reflection and discussion, the FISH Board decided to suspend driving starting in March 2020. We plan to restart driving September 2021 with our riders and drivers being vaccinated and wearing masks. FISH is complying with CT State and local health laws and the health departments of Essex, Deep River and Chester.

Our Officers and Directors for 2021 are: Henry May, President, Stuart Warner, Vice President, Mary Samburg, Secretary, and Barbara Ryan, Treasurer. In addition, Jack Frost is a Director working with new drivers. John Heiser and Tony

Carrano are our Dispatchers as well as Assistant Secretaries.

In normal times, the modest budget for FISH is funded by grants from the Essex Community Fund, the Community Foundation of Middlesex County, the Essex Rotary, the Essex Savings Bank, the Town of Essex, the Deep River Community Health Committee, the Town of Chester and other organizations, as well as by contributions from our drivers and riders.

Henry May
Driver and President

IVORYTON PLAYHOUSE

The Ivoryton Playhouse was dark for the period of June 2020 to June 2021. It is the first time since WWII that the Playhouse has had to close its doors for such an extended period.

Though we were unable to produce shows, there was plenty of work to be done and when we came back after the first lockdown, we rolled up our sleeves and began the mammoth task of sorting through over 100 years of archival material. Everything is now scanned and organized and we hope to have it available on line before the end of the year.

We ran a very successful campaign to "Keep the Playhouse Afloat" and sold over 500 T-shirts to our amazing supporters. We

also sold around 300 copies of a children's book, "Ella Capella and the Pink Umbrella". We were also the very grateful recipients of funding from the state and federal government. It was certainly a time to be thankful for our community that has never failed to step up when needed.

After an on-site consultation with Sten Vermund, MD, PhD, Dean, Yale School of Public Health, we made a lot of changes in the way the Playhouse operates. We socially distanced our seats, reducing the number from 283 to 98 (now at 140); we developed a digital Playbill which is accessed on a smartphone via QR code; we introduced a paperless ticketing system; and our HVAC system has been upgraded to include 40% outdoor air. In addition, four REME HALO in-duct air purifiers have been installed that are capable of purifying every cubic inch of air that our air conditioning system reaches.

With the help of local gardeners and the wonderful Essex Lions Club, we were able to get the building in shape to finally reopen in July 2021.

Our heartfelt thanks to everyone that supported the Ivoryton Playhouse in 2020 and we look forward to seeing you all in a healthier and happier 2021.

Jacqueline Hubbard
Artistic/Executive Director



Friends In Service Here

ESSEX LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Having adapted our service model due to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, Essex Library operated smoothly and continuously during 2020-21. The library worked in compliance with local and state public health mandates, acquiring personal protective equipment which quickly enabled us to offer curbside pickup. In August 2020, we launched an appointment service. By September 2020 we fully re-opened for in-person visits, hosting 16,633 visits to the building over the year.

In August and September 2020 we welcomed new staffers Christina Carpino (Children's & Teen Librarian) and Susan Skaza (Outreach Librarian) to our team. We also continued to partner with Valley Regional High School and Connecticut Coastal Academy, providing employment to four area teens during the year. Staff worked adroitly to offer programs and services in-person, virtually, and in hybrid formats. Adult programs during the year included author talks, book discussions, and the Centerbrook Architects lecture series, plus sessions on digital photos, calligraphy, propagating native plants, naturalism, astronomy, virology, and how chemistry affects our ecosystems. Many of our Zoom programs attracted more than 100 attendees. Programs for Children & Teens included weekly virtual story times, creative movement, trivia nights, outdoor story times, and a stuffed animal sleepover. In October we designed a Harry Potter scarecrow and hosted a special Drive-In Trick or Treat, with staff costumed as "Hogwarts Library Books." In February we celebrated *Take the Library to Your Child Day*, offering projects and activities that could be completed at home.

Our weekly Children's Take-and-Make Craft kits were popular with old and young; in May 2021 we expanded the service to include monthly craft kits for adults. In the spring, students at Connecticut Coastal Academy designed and built a Little Free Library for the library's grounds. The structure, which replicates the library's architecture, was dedicated on Founder's Day, June 12th. In 2021 we joined the Community Webs Archivist program. As part of this initiative, we collect and preserve digital information from area organizations as a service to the community. This year we also added new database resources for veterans and job seekers.

Our service focus in 2020-21 emphasized the economic impact of the pandemic and income inequality. In January, we launched a Library of Things to loan less frequently used equipment and bridge the digital divide. Our collection includes Wi-Fi hot spots, tools, interview accessories, fishing gear, and games. In October and February we collected canned goods for Shoreline Soup Kitchen & Pantries. In the winter, we held a series of financial literacy talks on *Preparing for Life's Financial Storms*, *Managing Your Money in Challenging Times*, and *Creating and Following a*

Spending Plan. In January, we received a \$3,000 American Library Association grant for a six-part discussion on income inequality. The series culminated with a special Q&A in May with Deborah & James Fallows, authors of *Our Towns: A 100,000 Mile Journey Into the Heart of America*.

In the spring, we re-launched Strategic Planning, which had been on hiatus due to the pandemic. Our survey of residents about the library received more than 250 responses. We held three focus groups and conducted extensive demographic and industry assessment. The Board of Trustees then drafted new mission, values, and vision statements during a two-part retreat. The final strategic plan will come up for a board vote in fall 2021. Thank you to the planning committee, our consultant, and residents for your engagement.

Deborah Smith
Executive Director



IVORYTON LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

What if we threw a birthday party and nobody came? This last year would have seen most of the events we had planned to celebrate our 150th anniversary. Instead, we cancelled some and postponed others, hoping to hold them before the end of 2021, our 150th anniversary year. Like the rest of the world, the pandemic changed everything. And, like the rest of the world, we made do and made the best of it, although sometimes it seemed like we made it up as we went along.

The staff of the Ivoryton Library is proud that we have been open since June 2020, although everything was far from normal. Programs, meetings, classes and book clubs went virtual. The silver lining was that presenters joined us from North Carolina, Maryland and Boston. In the winter, book club members jumped on Zoom with us from Florida and other points south. Even board meetings brought together trustees from various vacation spots, although that made the rest of us a bit jealous.

Physical circulation was down but online downloads skyrocketed! Patrons learned to embrace the convenience of instantly checking out eBooks, audiobooks, movies and more from our digital resources.

In the Children's Room, one lone ray of light persisted: outdoor storytime continued year-round. Whether the sun was hot or snow covered the ground, we read books aloud, outside. Otherwise, while we were

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IVORYTON LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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so happy to welcome our smallest patrons to the library for browsing, all the other children's programming was virtual. This did, however, allow us to add cooking programs. Since we do not have the facilities at the library, we Zoomed into our children's librarian's kitchen! We anticipate keeping aspects of virtual programming, moving forward.

Traditional fundraising was curtailed during this time but we were able to supplement our budget with our brick campaign (selling inscribed bricks to expand our outdoor patio), seeking grants and one round of the Paycheck Protection Program. We are always so grateful to our members, who help us yearly.

Thank you to the Ivoryton Library staff: Elizabeth Alvord, Director; Elizabeth Bartlett, Assistant Director and Children's Librarian; Stephanie Gatto and Rosalie Zonder, Librarians.

Elizabeth Alvord
Director

LITERACY VOLUNTEERS— VALLEY SHORE, CT INC.

Literacy Volunteers Valley Shore is a 501(c) 3 non-profit agency dedicated to tutoring area residents to read, write and speak English to help them improve their life and work skills. This year we tutored 9 students from Essex and benefitted from the good work of 32 volunteers from the town including 24 tutors. Overall, LVVS tutored more than 241 students, spending 10,776 hours of instruction.

COVID-19 has had an impact on the ability of our tutors to meet with their student to teach English skills. We have all been challenged with how to help our students navigate through the pandemic and continue to improve the proficiency of their English. In response, five Initiatives were launched.

- Developed a facilitated, virtual new tutor training program.
- Expanded information and support to tutors on how to conduct tutoring sessions virtually.
- Developed a systemic method to increase the number of hours a student is exposed to English beyond time with the tutor including submission of student independent study hours.
- Updated the LVVS website to better support tutors and students. We will continue to examine how to develop a direct LVVS relationship with students and consider conducting group sessions.
- Obtained a National Book Fund Grant through which LVVS obtained free ESL workbooks for students.

The support of our area towns means we can help build more success stories each year. Yet we have a great deal of distance to make up in our goal to eradicate illiteracy. A 2013 assessment by the American

Institute for Research shows over 9,000 adults between the ages of 18 and 64 who lack basic literacy skills in the valley shore area – including over 410 in Essex, Centerbrook and Ivoryton alone.

Joanne Argersinger
Office Manager

LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT

RiverCOG, one of Connecticut's Councils of Governments, is governed by the chief elected / executive officials of its 17-member towns: Chester, Clinton, Cromwell, Deep River, Durham, East Haddam, East Hampton, Essex, Haddam, Killingworth, Lyme, Middlefield, Middletown, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook, Portland & Westbrook.

Major projects for the 2020-2021 fiscal year included:

- Creation of the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development (for adoption in FY22),
- Update of the Regional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan for 15 municipalities,
- Upheld our legacy of legislative engagement, providing more bill testimony than ever, aided by remote session access,
- Reviewed 39 land use referrals through the Regional Planning Committee for our region and adjacent towns,
- Continued to host the non-profit Gateway Commission which serves the 8 lower river towns as the guardian of the ecological and visual values of the Lower Connecticut River region,
- Education, abatement and monitoring of invasive species in the Connecticut River,
- Helped begin securing of federal funding for creation of a Connecticut River Watershed Program to address Hydrilla in the river,
- Acted as the fiduciary for Region 2 of the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security through grants provided by the federal government,
- Hosting of the non-profit Lower Connecticut River Land Trust while it participates in a Land Trust Advancement initiative through the Connecticut Land Conservation Council,
- Held household hazardous waste collections and paper shredding events while navigating new COVID safety protocols,
- Hosted Connecticut's only Regional Agriculture Council, responding to zoning issues and applying for farm grants,
- Served as the area's Metropolitan Planning Organization, involved in transportation-related projects through State and Federal funding. The Route 66 Corridor Study and a regional transit study were

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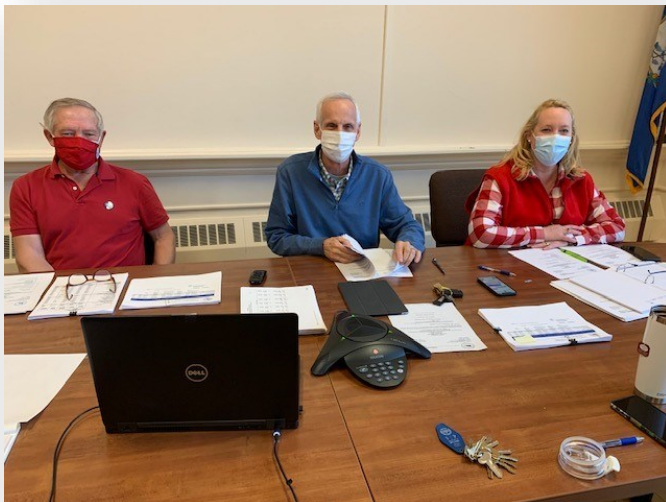
LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT

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completed, along with MPO quadrennial certification review with commendations. Transportation improvement, public participation, and unified planning work programs were adopted. Work began on completing the region's bike and pedestrian plan and draft regional transportation safety and locally coordinated human services transportation plans were created,

- Continued working with CT DOT on funding for local road projects via LOTCIP and funding for other transportation projects such as a new shared maintenance facility for regional bus transit operations,
- Began work on a Regional Housing Plan that will serve 13 municipalities and provide compliance with CT General Statute Section 830-j,
- Hosted compost bin/rain barrel sales, and composting and recycling virtual workshops.

Samuel S. Gold
Executive Director



Selectmen Bruce Glowac, Norm Needleman, and Stacia Rice at a Board of Selectmen Meeting.

ROTARY CLUB OF ESSEX

Rotary International has a broad and diverse global reach with 1.2 million Rotarians belonging to more than 35,000 clubs in over 200 countries. We have partnered with Rotary Clubs in the U.S. and the Rotary Foundation in a worldwide campaign to raise funds for fighting disease, provide clean drinking water, expanding access to quality medical care and sanitation, supporting education, and growing local economies. To learn more about Rotary International, go to the [About Rotary | Rotary International](#) website.

The Rotary Club of Essex was chartered in 1955. We are one of 35,000 clubs in Rotary International, a service organization founded in 1905. Through Rotary International, we are dedicated to causes that build international relationships, improve lives, support peace efforts, and create a better world.

We are also committed to providing support for local needs. During this last year, The Rotary Club of Essex Scholarship Foundation provided approximately \$28,000 in scholarships. Qualified applicants are members of non-Rotarian families, living in Centerbrook, Essex or Ivoryton. The application can be downloaded from our website, www.essexrotary.com or can be obtained directly from any of our members. We have also given \$10,000 to the Essex Fire Department to purchase four defibrillators.

Money for our mission is raised primarily from our widely anticipated annual Shad Bake, which has been held for 61 years. Unfortunately, this event was cancelled in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We successfully hosted an on-line version this year that proved very successful thanks to donations from individuals and businesses, many of whom have been regular supporters of our efforts. We are hopefully looking forward to having our 2022 Shad Bake again at the River Museum.

We meet every Tuesday at 6:15 pm at Scotch Plains Tavern. The fellowship created through spending time together locally and visiting other clubs around the world, strengthens our organization and expands the reach of the services we provide.

If you are interested in learning more about Rotary, or would like to join us at a meeting, go to our website, www.essexrotary.com or visit the Rotary International website at <https://www.rotary.org/> or email rlevine2@comcast.net. We are always looking for individuals who will help us improve our world and be inspired by our Rotary motto, "Service above Self".

Richard Levene
Executive Secretary

SHORELINE SOUP KITCHENS AND PANTRIES

Founded 32 years ago in Essex, the mission of Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries (SSKP) is to provide food and fellowship to those in need and to educate our community about hunger and poverty.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have modified our food pantries so that any resident of Essex may come to a safe contactless curbside free grocery distribution once a week at any one of our 5 food pantries. All residents of Essex are also welcome to free prepared meals at our 7 meal sites serving contactless “grab & go” meals. Three of these meal sites are in Essex (The First Baptist Church in Essex, St. John's Episcopal Church in Essex, and Trinity Lutheran Church in Centerbrook). Serving 11 shoreline towns, including Essex, all of SSKP's sites are hosted by local faith communities. We employ only a small staff, operating with the assistance of committed and hard-working community volunteers.

In 2020 we shared 1.6 million pounds of food through our pantries – much more than ever before. The total number of people served at our pantries in 2020 was 159,555 - a 60% increase over the previous year. SSKP provided enough food for over 1.4 million meals in 2020. This was a 55% increase over 2019. This year we continue to see many more guests than in pre-pandemic years.

Our pantries offer fresh meat, bread, fresh fruits and vegetables, eggs, dairy and canned and packaged foods. Those who come are not required to prove they are in need; all those in our 11-town service area can simply come and safely receive food.

Many residents in Essex continue to need help. By the end of July 2021 we have registered 212 Essex residents at one of our pantries this year - 65 Essex residents, 45 Centerbrook residents, and 102 Ivoryton residents.

Your support makes a real difference in the lives of your neighbors in need in Essex. Your annual funding of \$6,000 provides much-needed food for Essex families who are struggling, especially during the current crisis. On behalf of all the residents of Essex we serve, we are truly grateful for this generous support.

More information about SSKP, how we accomplish our mission, and how you can give help or get help is available on our website shorelinesoupkitchens.org. You can also find us on Facebook or call us at (860) 388-1988.

Claire Bellerjeau
Director of Development



Westbrook Shoreline Soup Kitchen.



Old Saybrook Food Drive at St. John's December 2020.



Trinity Lutheran Church reopening.

THE ESSEX FOUNDATION

The Essex Foundation was very active this year, continuing its community stewardship through financial support of several initiatives that benefit all Essex residents. Last fall, a \$1,257 grant was awarded to the Sustainable Essex committee to help purchase and install an electric vehicle charging station in the parking lot next to the Essex Main Street Park and post office. In the spring, The Essex Foundation answered a call for support from the Essex Fire Engine Company #1. A \$10,000 grant was awarded to help fund the replacement of 12 automated external defibrillator (AED) units and two Lucas chest compression systems needed to respond to heart attacks and other cardiac events that happen each year in Essex.

The Foundation's beautification efforts also continued with the fall planting and spring bloom of 5,000 daffodil bulbs on the 7,500 square foot grassy hill owned by First Congregational Church in Essex Village. Funding for the bulb purchase and planting services came from a bequest to The Essex Foundation by the late Elizabeth Callender, with additional support provided by The Paul Foundation, Centerbrook Properties, and individual donors. Ms. Callender's bequest also seeds educational opportunities for Essex residents.

The Elizabeth Barnes Callender and Mary Francis Barnes Annual Scholarship was presented to 2021 Valley Regional High School graduate Nathan Hill. The \$3000 scholarship is awarded to one Valley Regional High School graduating senior or graduate or an Essex resident who is pursuing studies related to land conservation and preservation at a college, a technical school, or graduate school, or taking accredited courses in biology, botany, agronomy, ecology, horticulture, floriculture, forestry, landscape design, or environmental science. Other funding was provided for the ongoing operation and maintenance of the Bumpy Warner Youth House on Bushnell Street used by the Boy Scouts, as well as other scout-related projects.

The Essex Foundation is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to making a difference in the lives of Essex residents. It is funded through donations from the community and strives to fill needs not met by other organizations or sources. In general, funds are granted for special purposes that usually require quick action and have an immediate impact, such as buildings, equipment, land, and programs, but not to recurring expenses. More information can be found online at www.theessexfoundation.org or by emailing contact@theessexfoundation.org.

Bruce Glowac
President



Mark de Jongh (left) of the Sustainable Essex Committee accepts a ceremonial check from Jay Tonks of The Essex Foundation for the purchase and installation of an electric vehicle charging station in the parking lot adjacent to the town green in Essex Village.



(From left to right) Robert Parkerson and Ethan Goller of the Essex Fire Dept. demonstrate the use of the Lucas chest compression system to Strick Hyde and Judy Bombaci of The Essex Foundation.



TRI-TOWN YOUTH SERVICES

From July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021 Tri-Town Youth Services provided Direct Services to 122 youth: JW Youth in Action (13); Valley Peer Advocates (22); Girls' Circles Virtual (28 elementary girls and high school mentors); Council for Boys Virtual (7 elementary boys); babysitter training or Job Bank (36). TTYSB's Clinical Department provided in-person case management to school avoidant youth (6); youth referred to the Juvenile Review Board (9) and counseling services that addressed anxiety, depression and school-related issues (9). Tri-Town's highest priority was addressing the mental health needs of local youth, helping process the impact of COVID-19 on everyday life. We taught coping strategies to support health and well-being. Key highlights included:

4 Wellness 6th Grade Prevention Program: 130 students educated

All 6th graders from Chester, Deep River and Essex participated from October 2020 to May 2021. Bi-weekly live virtual lessons were facilitated by Prevention Coordinator Portia Pendleton, LCSW and guest presenters from the CT State Police and Local Police Departments. The curricula included the Choose Love Program's "*Brave New World*" lessons about school reintegration after COVID-19, and topics of personal wellness, stress and coping, internet safety and cyber responsibility, peer pressure, bullying, healthy relationships and introductions to alcohol, vaping and marijuana.

Vaping Education Campaign: over 12,000 people engaged

A community-wide, multi-media Anti-Vaping Campaign included: a postcard mailing to 8,295 households and businesses; a series of educational emails to 400 subscribers; social media posts with resources for quitting that reached 4,251 youth; and 3 billboards with coordinated mobile ads celebrating that teen vaping use was down during COVID-19 and encouraging parents to "keep it that way" which logged 125,000 booked impressions.

Peer Advocates Training Program: 22 Valley students trained

Peer Advocates was facilitated by Clinical Director, Melanie Meyer, LMFT and School Social Worker, Brad Pitman. Students completed year-long curriculum consisting of lessons on human development, mental health, coping strategies, support networks, listening and communication skills and suicide prevention. Students were trained to be accessible sources of support and encouragement to their peers throughout the school year.

4 What's Next Suicide Prevention Program: 134 Valley Seniors engaged, virtually

Tri-Town trained a team of 10 facilitators to host [4 What's Next](#), a Jordan Porco Foundation Suicide Prevention Program. A series of 6 weekly lessons focused on: stress and mental health, self-reflection, identifying internal strengths and sources of calm,

identifying external support systems, and applying the lessons to real life scenarios from seniors.

John Winthrop Wellness Day: 132 students participated, in-person

JW invited Tri-Town to participate in a full-day, in-person Wellness Day on May 21 that included breakout lessons for the entire student body. Staff presented: 1) Vaping 101; 2) Anxiety + Cyber Citizenship and 3) Healthy Body/Healthy Food. Tri-Town's Youth in Action club organized a school-wide walk-a-thon to conclude the day, with fun games and prizes to promote health, positivity, school spirit and fitness.

Tri-Town would not be able to provide these programs and services for local youth and families if it were not for the commitment from the Town of Essex and the generosity of the donors and volunteers in this community. Thank you for supporting Tri-Town and the children, teens and parents we serve.

Allison Abramson
Executive Director



St. Patrick's Day 2021 at the Essex Town Hall.

VETERAN'S MEMORIAL HALL

The members of the Essex Veteran's Memorial Hall have had the pleasure of meeting in this beautiful old schoolhouse in Centerbrook for many years. We strive to maintain and retain the beauty and character of this historic building while making renovations when needed to ensure that the local and state regulations and safety codes are met.

Our members are involved in a variety of events in the community. One of the most notable events that the Essex Veterans run is the Town's Memorial Day Parade. We also put out over 700 flags on the graves of Essex veterans. Over the years we have provided some financial assistance to local veterans in need and their families. Sometimes it is just a matter of helping them out with odd jobs around the house.

We offer our meeting room to any civic group whenever it is available.

In the past we have enjoyed making dinner and serving our Essex seniors at the senior citizens housing complex. I think we enjoyed it as much as the seniors.

When financially feasible we provide scholarships to the sons and daughters of local veterans who are graduating from high school. We were heavily impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic but hope to rebound in the coming year.

We are constantly seeking ways to be a good neighbor and lend a hand to the residents of Essex whenever possible. Any veteran looking for a friendly place to visit or to bring a guest, please stop by.

Arthur Davies
President



VISITING NURSES OF THE LOWER VALLEY

Visiting Nurses of the Lower Valley is a non-profit organization dedicated to home and community-based health care. In FY 2020-2021, we received 328 referrals for home care in our service area; 29 % of those home visits were to patients in Essex, Centerbrook, and Ivoryton. Despite the pandemic, home health clinicians still provide the exceptional care that patients and their families expect, allowing them to remain in the comfort of their homes while they heal. We continue to assist our patients in developing emergency preparedness plans in the event they need to evacuate or shelter in place. Flu shot clinics were held by appointment at our location as part of our wellness program. We distribute monthly health promotion newsletters via email and health messages via Facebook. Although we have faced many challenges during the Covid -19 pandemic, we continue to value our community and provide the services needed to keep individuals and families in their homes.

We are the parent organization of Lower Valley Care Advocates whose staff provides private care services for surgical recovery, caregiver respite, and home management. Special programs are designed to help the frail, elderly, terminally ill, disabled, and clients with dementia remain in the comfort of their own homes. All of the staff are carefully screened, trained and bonded, and are expert at determining just what services are needed to achieve optimum health and safety at home. Please call 860-767-2695 for more information.

Our staff wishes to acknowledge the commitment of our volunteer board of directors: Judy Heiser and Mary Frost from Essex; Ted Heiser and Peg Lieberman from Chester; Reuben Manning, President, from Scotland, Bob Sampson, from Mystic; and Claire Walsh from Killingworth. And, a special thank you to all Essex, Ivoryton and Centerbrook residents who support the work of VNLV.

Please visit our website www.visitingnurses.org or call us at 860-767-0186 for service information or flu clinic dates and locations.

Susan Maxwell, MSN, RN, C-COS
Executive Director



SECTION IV— TOWN MEETING MINUTES

Town of Essex
Special Town Meeting
October 7, 2020
Town Hall Auditorium

First Selectman, Norman Needleman called the Town Meeting to order at 4:34 PM. Selectmen Libby and Glowac were also in attendance. Bruce Glowac was elected Moderator. The Town Clerk read the call of the meeting. There were approximately fourteen (14) people in attendance.

RESOLVED: That the Town adopt an Ordinance Repealing prior ordinances establishing the Essex Zoning Commission and Essex Planning Commission and establishing in place thereof a combined Planning and Zoning Commission. Copy of said Ordinance is on file in the Town Clerk's office.

There was a question raised on the role of the Town Planner on the new P&Z Commission. Norman Needleman responded that currently the position is that of a consultant only. The Board of Selectmen will be reviewing the needed staffing for the new Board. Bruce Glowac indicated that these staff positions are contained and outlined in the various job descriptions.

Another question was raised on how a planner and zoning enforcement agent would function at a meeting. Norman Needleman pointed out that the Board of Selectmen would be reviewing Those functions.

There was a question about intra board referrals and bylaws. There was also a question about membership. The Board of Selectmen will be reviewing membership and have it in place for the Annual Town Meeting.

SECONDED: Stacia Libby
Yea 10 Nay 0

RESOLVED: That the Town adopt Amendment to the Ordinance Providing Tax Relief for Elderly or Disabled Homeowners and Gold Star Parents and Spouses. Copy of said Ordinance is on file in the Town Clerk's office.

SECONDED: Stacia Libby
Yea 11 Nay 0

MOTION TO CLOSE: Stacia Libby
SECONDED: George Sexton

Meeting adjourned at 4:53 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Joel Marzi
Town Clerk

Town of Essex
Special Town Meeting
November 4, 2020
Town Hall Auditorium

First Selectman, Norman Needleman called the Town Meeting to order at 4:30 PM. Bruce Glowac was elected Moderator. Selectmen Libby was in also attendance along with Tracey Celentano. The Town Clerk read the call of the meeting. There were approximately six (6) people in attendance.

Bruce Glowac introduced a motion to consolidate the first ten items into a single vote.

SECONDED: Norman Needleman
Yea 5 Nay 0

RESOLVED: To consent and approve a supplemental appropriation to the 2019-2020 Town of Essex budget in the amount of \$23,559 for the Finance Department as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve a supplemental appropriation to the 2019-2020 Town of Essex budget in the amount of \$41,685 for the Town Clerk Department as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve a supplemental appropriation to the 2019-2020 Town of Essex budget in the amount of \$22,586 for the Police Services Department as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve a supplemental appropriation to the 2019-2020 Town of Essex budget in the amount of \$61,070 for Fringe Benefits – Medical & Dental Insurance as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

TOWN MEETING MINUTES

RESOLVED: To consent and approve a supplemental appropriation to the 2019-2020 Town of Essex budget in the amount of \$28,278 for the Public Works & Highway Department as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$150,000 to the Fringe Benefits – Retirement for the Police Pension Plan budget for the fiscal year 2019-2020 as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$50,000 to the Fringe Benefits – Retirement for the Merit Service Pension Plan budget for the fiscal year 2019-2020 as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$75,000 to the Fringe Benefits – Retirement for the Town Pension Plan budget for the fiscal year 2019-2020 as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$50,000 to the Public Works & Highway Department Budget Grounds Maintenance and Repair for the fiscal year 2019-2020 as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve a special appropriation in the amount of \$100,000 to the Capital & Sinking Funds – Sidewalk Installation/ Reconstruction budget for the fiscal year 2019-2020 as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

SECONDED: Stacia Libby
Yea 5 **Nay** 0

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the First Selectman of David Kirsch as an alternate member to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission, term to run from the date of this meeting until December 2021.

SECONDED: Stacia Libby
Yea 5 **Nay** 0

MOTION TO CLOSE: Norman Needleman
SECONDED: Stacia Libby

Meeting adjourned at 4:37 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Joel Marzi
Town Clerk

Town of Essex
Annual Town Meeting
November 16, 2020
Town Hall Auditorium

First Selectman Norman Needleman called the Annual Town Meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Jim Francis was elected Moderator. Stacia Libby and Bruce Glowac were in attendance as well as Board of Finance chair Keith Crehan, Finance Director Tracey Celentano, and Treasurer James Francis. Town Clerk, Joel Marzi, read the call of the meeting. There were approximately fourteen (14) people in attendance along with ten (10) viewers on zoom meeting.

The following Resolutions were Read, Seconded and VOTED:

RESOLVED: To accept the Statement of Town Accounts, report of the Town Treasurer and the report of the Superintendent of Schools, as printed in the 2019-2020 Annual Town Report.

Second: Stacia Libby **ALL IN FAVOR**

It was decided to consolidate the nominations of all appointments into a single vote rather than by individual approvals. This would be done after the call of each candidate followed by any discussion.

Second: Norman Needleman **ALL IN FAVOR**

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of **Earl Fowler** as a regular member to the Harbor Management Commission. Term to run from December 1, 2020 to December 1, 2023.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of **Eugene C. Schellens** as an alternate member to the Harbor Management Commission. Term to run from December 1, 2020 to December 1, 2023.

TOWN MEETING MINUTES

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of **Anthony Mosa** as a regular member to the Park and Recreation Commission. Term to run from December 1, 2020 to December 1, 2023.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of **Brette Fitton** as a regular member to the Park and Recreation Commission. Term to run from December 1, 2020 to December 1, 2023.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of **Daniel Needleman** as a regular member to the Park and Recreation Commission. Term to run from December 1, 2020 to December 1, 2023.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of **Philip Schaller** as a regular member to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Term to run from December 1, 2020 to December 1, 2023.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of **Phil Beckman** as an alternate member to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Term to run from December 1, 2020 to December 1, 2023.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of **George Wendell** as an alternate member to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Term to run from December 1, 2020 to December 1, 2023.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of **Gary Riggio** as a regular member to the Planning & Zoning Commission. Term to run from the date of this meeting to November 30, 2022.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of **Russell Smith** as a regular member to the Planning & Zoning Commission. Term to run from the date of this meeting to November 30, 2023.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of **Jane Siris** as a regular member to the Planning & Zoning Commission. Term to run from the date of this meeting to November 30, 2022.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of **Ralph Monaco** as a regular member to the Planning & Zoning Commission. Term to run from the date of this meeting to November 30, 2021.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of **Erin Bogan** as a regular member to the Planning & Zoning Commission. Term to run from the date of this meeting to November 30, 2023.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of **Mark Reeves** as a regular member to the Planning & Zoning Commission. Term to run from the date of this meeting to November 30, 2023.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of **Robert L. Day III** as a regular member to the Planning & Zoning Commission. Term to run from the date of this meeting to November 30, 2021.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of **Jeffrey Lovelace** as an alternate member to the Planning & Zoning Commission. Term to run from December 1, 2020 to November 30, 2022.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of **Thomas Carroll** as an alternate member to the Planning & Zoning Commission. Term to run from December 1, 2020 to November 30, 2022.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the First Selectman of **James O'Brien** as a regular member to the Conservation Commission. Term to run from December 1, 2020 to December 1, 2023.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the First Selectman of **Mark Reeves** as a regular member to the Conservation Commission. Term to run from December 1, 2020 to December 1, 2023.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the First Selectman of **Janet Peckinpugh** as a regular member to the Economic Development Commission. Term to run from December 1, 2020 to December 1, 2022.

TOWN MEETING MINUTES

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the First Selectman of **Fred Szufnarowski** as a regular member to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission. Term to run from December 1, 2020 to December 1, 2023.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the First Selectman of **Ernest Cook** as a regular member to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission. Term to run from December 1, 2020 to December 1, 2023.

Second: Bruce Glowac **ALL IN FAVOR**

Upon the motion of **Norman Needleman**, seconded by **Bruce Glowac**, meeting adjourned at 7:14 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joel Marzi
Town Clerk

Town of Essex
Special Town Meeting
January 20, 2021
Meeting Room A

Selectman, Norman Needleman called the Town Meeting to order at 6:53 PM. Selectmen Libby and Glowac were in attendance. Bruce Glowac was elected Moderator. The Town Clerk read the call of the meeting. There were approximately five (5) people in attendance.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the First Selectman of Steven Babjak to fill an unexpired term as a regular member to the Economic Development Commission. Term to run from the date of this meeting to December 2022.

SECONDED: Stacia Libby
Yea 4 **Nay 0**

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the First Selectman of Thomas Nichols to fill an unexpired term as a regular member to the Economic Development Commission. Term to run from the date of this meeting to December 2022.

SECONDED: Norman Needleman
Yea 4 **Nay 0**

MOTION TO CLOSE: Norman Needleman
SECONDED: Stacia Libby

Meeting adjourned at 6:57 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Joel Marzi
Town Clerk

Town of Essex
Special Town Meeting
February 17, 2021
Meeting Room A

Selectman, Norman Needleman called the Town Meeting to order at 6:55 PM. Selectmen Libby and Glowac were in attendance. Finance Director Tracey Celentano was also in attendance. Kelly Sterner was elected Moderator. The Town Clerk read the call of the meeting. There were approximately eight (8) people in attendance.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve a supplemental appropriation to the 2020-2021 Town of Essex Budget in the amount of \$50,000 for the Bridge/Infrastructure Sinking Fund as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

SECONDED: Stacia Libby
Yea 6 **Nay 0**

RESOLVED: To consent and approve a supplemental appropriation to the 2020-2021 Town of Essex Budget in the amount of \$10,000 for the Ambulance Sinking Fund as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

SECONDED: Stacia Libby
Yea 6 **Nay 0**

RESOLVED: To consent and approve a supplemental appropriation to the 2020-2021 Town of Essex Budget in the amount of \$35,000 for the Police Sinking Fund as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

SECONDED: Stacia Libby
Yea 6 **Nay 0**

TOWN MEETING MINUTES

RESOLVED: To consent and approve a supplemental appropriation to the 2020-2021 Town of Essex Budget in the amount of \$100,000 for the Fire Department Sinking Fund as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

SECONDED: Stacia Libby
Yea 6 Nay 0

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Eugene C. Schellens as a regular member to the Harbor Management Commission. Term to run from the date of this meeting to December 2022.

SECONDED: Bruce Glowac
Yea 6 Nay 0
MOTION TO CLOSE: Norman Needleman
SECONDED: Stacia Libby

Meeting adjourned at 6:58 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joel Marzi
Town Clerk

Town of Essex
Special Town Meeting
March 3, 2021
Meeting Room A

Selectman, Norman Needleman called the Town Meeting to order at 5:05 PM. Selectmen Libby and Glowac were in attendance. Finance Director Tracey Celentano was also in attendance. Kelly Sterner was elected Moderator. The Town Clerk read the call of the meeting. There were approximately eight (8) people in attendance both in person and via Zoom.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the First Selectman of Susan Malan as a regular member to the Economic Development Commission. Term to run from the date of this meeting to December 2022.

SECONDED: Stacia Libby
Yea 5 Nay 0

MOTION TO CLOSE: Bruce Glowac

SECONDED: Stacia Libby
All in favor

Meeting adjourned at 5:08 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Joel Marzi
Town Clerk

Town of Essex
Special Town Meeting
April 7, 2021
Meeting Room A

Selectman, Norman Needleman called the Town Meeting to order at 4:56 PM. Selectmen Libby and Glowac were in attendance. Finance Director Tracey Celentano was also in attendance. Kelly Sterner was elected Moderator. The Town Clerk read the call of the meeting. There were approximately eight (8) people in attendance both in person and via Zoom.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectman of Philip Beckman as a regular member to the Essex Zoning Board of Appeals. Term to run from the date of this meeting to December 2021.

SECONDED: Stacia Libby
Yea 6 Nay 0

RESOLVED: To consent and approve an appropriation in an amount not to exceed \$35,000 from the Municipal Property Sinking Fund for the renovations to the Finance Office as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

SECONDED: Bruce Glowac
Yea 6 Nay 0

MOTION TO CLOSE: Bruce Glowac
SECONDED: Stacia Libby

All in favor

Meeting adjourned at 5:01 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Joel Marzi
Town Clerk

TOWN MEETING MINUTES

Town of Essex
Special Town Meeting
May 5, 2021
Meeting Room A

First Selectman, Norman Needleman called the Town Meeting to order at 4:55 PM. Selectmen Libby and Glowac were in attendance. Finance Director Tracey Celentano was also in attendance. Kelly Sterner was elected Moderator. The Town Clerk read the call of the meeting. There were approximately seven (7) people in attendance both in person and via Zoom.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectman of William Herlihy as an alternate member to the Essex Harbor Commission. Term to run from the date of this meeting to December 2023.

SECONDED: Kelly Sterner
Yea 6 Nay 0

RESOLVED: To consent and approve an appropriation in an amount of \$76,677 from the School Capital Sinking Fund for capital and security projects at the Essex Elementary School as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

SECONDED: Bruce Glowac
Yea 6 Nay 0

MOTION TO CLOSE: Norman Needleman
SECONDED: Stacia Libby

All in favor

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Joel Marzi
Town Clerk

Town of Essex
Special Town Meeting
May 19, 2021
Meeting Room A

Selectman Norman Needleman called the Town Meeting to order at 6:57 PM. Stacia Libby was elected Moderator. Selectmen Libby and Glowac were in attendance along with Finance Director Tracey Celentano. The Town Clerk read the call of the meeting. There were approximately eight (8) people in attendance.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of David Rosengren to fill an unexpired term as an alternate member to the Planning and Zoning Commission. Term to run from the date of this meeting to December 2022.

SECONDED: Kelly Sterner
Yea 5 Nay 0

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Susan Feaster to fill an unexpired term as an alternate member to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Term to run from the date of this meeting to December 2023.

SECONDED: Kelly Sterner
Yea 5 Nay 0

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the First Selectman of Michael Furgueson to fill an unexpired term as a regular member to the Inland Wetlands Commission. Term to run from the date of this meeting to December 2021.

SECONDED: Kelly Sterner
Yea 5 Nay 0

MOTION TO CLOSE: Kelly Sterner
SECONDED: Bruce Glowac

Meeting adjourned at 7:01 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Joel Marzi
Town Clerk

TOWN MEETING MINUTES

Town of Essex
Special Town Meeting
June 2, 2021
Meeting Room A

Selectman, Norman Needleman called the Town Meeting to order at 5:01 PM. Selectmen Libby and Glowac were in attendance. Finance Director Tracey Celentano was also in attendance. Kelly Sterner was elected Moderator. The Town Clerk read the call of the meeting. There were approximately six in person plus three zoom (9) people in attendance.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the First Selectman of Noreen Brennan Rowe as an alternate member to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission. Term to run from the date of this meeting to December 2022.

SECONDED: Stacia Libby
Yea 5 Nay 0

MOTION TO CLOSE: Stacia Libby
SECONDED: Bruce Glowac

Meeting adjourned at 5:03 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Joel Marzi
Town Clerk

Town of Essex
Special Town Meeting
June 16, 2021
Meeting Room A

Selectman Norman Needleman called the Town Meeting to order at 6:57 PM. Kelly Sterner was elected Moderator. Selectmen Libby and Glowac were in attendance along with Finance Director Tracey Celentano. The Town Clerk read the call of the meeting. There were approximately eight (8) people in attendance.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve an appropriation in an amount not to exceed 65,000 from the Police Cruiser Sinking Fund for the purchase of a new police vehicle and all necessary equipment as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

SECONDED: Bruce Glowac
Yea 5 Nay 0

MOTION TO CLOSE: Norman Needleman
SECONDED: Stacia Libby

Meeting adjourned at 6:59 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Joel Marzi
Town Clerk

SECTION V - Financial Information

Town of Essex 2020-2021 Annual Report

Finance Report

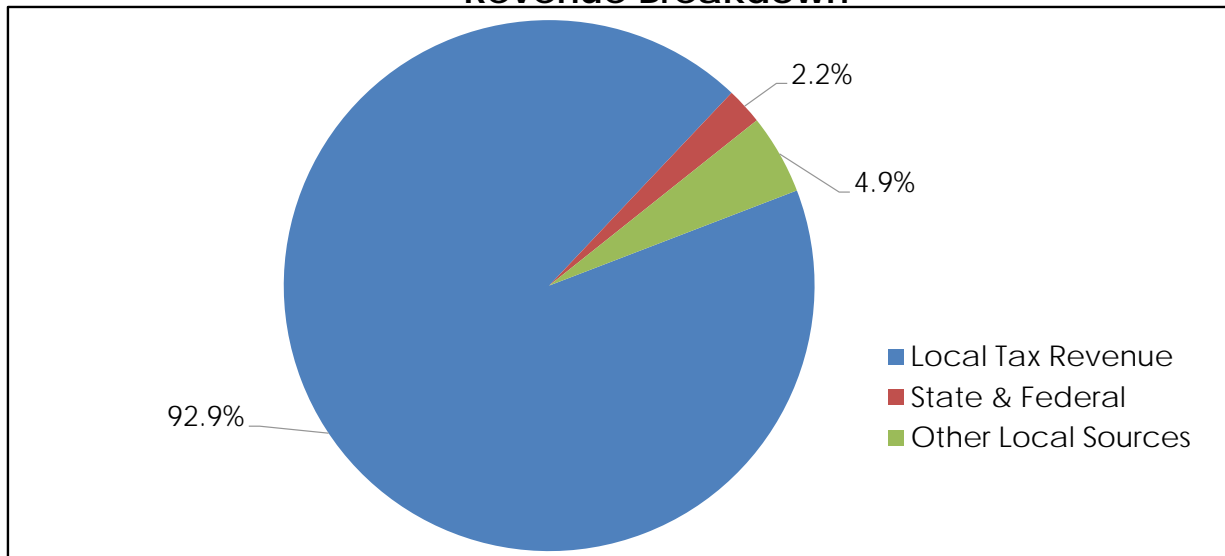
Historical Data - Revenue

(figures are actual unless otherwise noted)

Fiscal Year	Assessor and Tax Collector						Other Revenue		Total Revenue
	Grand List		Adjusted Tax Levy				State & Federal	Local Sources	
	Net Taxable \$	Annual Incr. %	Amount \$	Annual Incr. %	Collected On Time %	Tax Rate Mills			
2021-22*	1,083,003,798	0.99	24,251,775	2.91	100.00	22.43	483,746	627,200	25,362,721
2020-21	1,072,369,339	0.91	23,567,069	1.44	99.06	21.81	568,372	1,233,309	25,368,750
2019-20	1,062,738,700	1.05	23,232,129	0.28	99.00	21.65	452,638	925,276	24,610,043
2018-19	1,051,675,920	0.67	23,168,279	(0.05)	98.90	21.85	449,653	965,451	24,583,383
2017-18	1,044,700,428	0.41	23,179,381	3.02	99.05	21.96	468,951	988,362	24,636,694
2016-17	1,040,470,701	0.35	22,498,997	2.15	98.89	21.58	560,049	818,718	23,877,764
2015-16	1,036,820,170	0.51	22,025,102	1.36	99.05	21.08	714,155	689,425	23,428,682
2014-15	1,031,550,311	(7.93)	21,730,417	1.89	99.04	20.99	792,404	688,487	23,211,308
2013-14	1,120,431,426	0.02	21,326,486	2.72	98.69	18.99	827,756	747,553	22,901,795
2012-13	1,120,189,036	0.33	20,761,480	3.05	98.97	18.47	894,632	785,568	22,441,680
2011-12	1,116,538,776	0.57	20,147,562	2.35	99.02	17.98	741,531	581,334	21,470,427
2010-11	1,110,265,319	(0.31)	19,684,655	4.10	99.16	17.63	802,863	503,727	20,991,245
2009-10	1,113,762,454	8.16	18,908,813	4.50	98.80	16.95	897,178	542,978	20,348,969
2008-09	1,029,770,435	1.41	18,093,950	4.96	98.72	17.60	1,127,338	743,094	19,964,382
2007-08	1,015,492,968	1.67	17,239,184	11.44	98.91	16.90	919,922	1,277,775	19,436,881

* Budgeted figures

**FY 2020-2021
Revenue Breakdown**



Town of Essex 2020-2021 Annual Report

Finance Report

Historical Data - Expenditures

(figures are actual unless otherwise noted)

Fiscal Year	Selectmen's Expenditures			Education Expenditures				Total Essex Expend.	% Increase
	Town Admin.	% Increase	Debt Pmt (P & I)	Elementary School	Regional District 4	Total Education	% Increase		
2021-22*	7,577,939	(3.25)	1,253,663	7,861,407	8,960,506	16,821,913	5.83	25,653,515	2.69
2020-21†	7,832,830	3.19	1,253,878	7,582,124	8,312,696	15,894,820	2.50	24,981,528	2.76
2019-20†	7,590,655	1.09	1,211,612	7,173,247	8,334,539	15,507,786	(2.16)	24,310,053	(0.45)
2018-19†	7,508,460	3.22	1,060,151	7,200,903	8,650,035	15,850,938	(1.86)	24,419,549	(0.17)
2017-18†	7,274,090	7.13	1,036,483	7,430,471	8,721,064	16,151,535	1.21	24,462,108	3.14
2016-17†	6,790,149	1.66	968,896	7,503,288	8,454,525	15,957,813	1.12	23,716,858	1.49
2015-16	6,679,061	3.50	908,881	7,588,815	8,192,147	15,780,962	0.41	23,368,904	1.50
2014-15†	6,453,373	2.61	854,369	7,603,406	8,112,489	15,715,895	0.53	23,023,637	1.22
2013-14†	6,289,526	2.13	824,579	7,551,034	8,081,772	15,632,806	2.60	22,746,911	2.17
2012-13†	6,158,576	4.25	869,741	7,534,205	7,701,887	15,236,092	2.91	22,264,409	3.04
2011-12	5,907,651	7.14	895,238	7,400,069	7,405,135	14,805,204	3.91	21,608,093	4.49
2010-11	5,513,713	(1.36)	917,916	7,109,503	7,138,437	14,247,940	2.09	20,679,569	2.13
2009-10	5,589,745	(6.56)	701,808	7,074,443	6,882,305	13,956,748	3.32	20,248,301	0.21
2008-09†	5,981,962	8.42	716,198	6,783,586	6,724,040	13,507,626	5.92	20,205,786	6.25
2007-08	5,517,313	(2.57)	747,662	6,316,505	6,435,906	12,752,411	6.30	19,017,386	7.89

* - Budgeted figures

† - Includes STEAP Grants &/or Special Appropriations

Pension Trust Funds

Town Employees, Volunteer Fire Department & Police Department

	Defined Benefits Retirement Plan for Town Employees/ Plan for Police	Merit Service Retirement Plan for Volunteer Fire Responders
Fund Balance at Beginning of Fiscal Year (market value)	\$ 5,447,513	\$ 1,186,706
Contributions:		
From General Fund and Members	656,225	117,372
Income:		
Net Investment Income/(Loss)	151,791	32,681
Investments Market Value - Gain/(Loss)	1,309,868	286,460
Total Beginning Balance, Contributions & Income	\$ 7,565,397	\$ 1,623,219
Operating Expenses		
Retirement Benefits Paid	423,961	103,217
Administration	8,067	9,427
Total Operating Expenses	432,028	112,645
Fund Balance at End of Fiscal Year (market value)	\$ 7,133,369	\$ 1,510,574

Town of Essex 2020-2021 Annual Report

Finance Report

Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Revenues

REVENUE SOURCE	FY 2019-2020 Actual	Fiscal Year 2020-2021			FY 2021-2022 Budget
		Budget	Actual	Variance	
TAX COLLECTION					
Property Taxes	\$ 23,115,275	\$23,288,508	\$23,469,404	\$ 180,896	\$ 24,201,775
Interest and Lien Fees	116,854	50,000	97,665	47,665	50,000
Total Tax Collection	23,232,129	23,338,508	23,567,069	228,561	24,251,775
STATE & FEDERAL					
Veterans' Tax Relief	3,258	3,962	3,370	(592)	3,962
Education Cost Sharing Grant	103,927	103,926	105,087	1,161	103,926
Town Aid Road Grant	214,767	214,767	215,735	968	215,735
LOCIP	40,765	40,493	40,921	428	40,765
PILOT Grant	10,393	10,393	10,393	-	10,393
Municipal Revenue Sharing	74,547	74,547	74,547	-	105,617
Misc. State and Federal	4,982	3,348	118,319	114,971	3,348
Total State & Federal	452,638	451,436	568,372	116,936	483,746
LOCAL REVENUES					
Interest Income	87,515	85,000	4,005	(80,995)	25,000
Miscellaneous Permits	3,381	3,500	6,757	3,257	3,500
Phone "Access Line" Tax Share	19,670	25,000	20,650	(4,350)	20,000
Transfer Station Fees	83,881	80,000	77,507	(2,493)	80,000
Building Permit Fees	212,828	125,000	201,676	76,676	125,000
Circuit Court Fines	1,866	4,000	790	(3,211)	4,000
Zoning Permits	14,738	7,100	12,192	5,092	7,100
Zoning Board of Appeals	3,549	2,160	4,300	2,140	2,160
Planning Commission Receipts	0	2,500	1,310	(1,190)	2,500
Conveyance Tax	172,624	110,000	333,607	223,607	110,000
Park and Recreation	0	4,500	0	(4,500)	2,000
Miscellaneous Receipts	30,295	25,000	264,144	239,144	25,000
Town Clerk Fees	162,691	115,000	218,933	103,933	115,000
Inland Wetlands Permits	2,480	1,440	3,000	1,560	1,440
Regional Recycling Fees	66,655	62,000	49,722	(12,278)	62,000
Health Department Fees	9,642	7,500	13,645	6,145	7,500
Local PILOT	53,460	35,000	21,071	(13,929)	35,000
Total Local Revenues	925,276	694,700	1,233,309	538,609	627,200
TOTAL REVENUE ALL SOURCES	\$ 24,610,043	\$ 24,484,644	\$ 25,368,750	\$ 884,106	\$ 25,362,721

Town of Essex 2020-2021 Annual Report

Finance Report

Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Expenditures

DESCRIPTION	FY 2019-2020	Fiscal Year 2020-2021			FY 2021-2022
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Variance	Budget
GENERAL GOVERNMENT					
Selectmen	\$ 150,224	\$ 232,388	\$ 175,310	\$ (57,078)	\$ 249,862
Assessor	119,835	125,439	125,123	(316)	127,155
Central Services	237,105	220,189	207,846	(12,343)	229,223
Elections	34,943	52,640	52,640	0	48,065
Probate Court	3,460	3,460	3,166	(295)	3,460
Tax Collector	116,669	124,997	123,817	(1,180)	129,450
Town Clerk	216,937	253,440	253,440	(0)	182,212
Finance	212,066	218,315	205,626	(12,689)	229,323
Zoning Enforcement Agent	70,416	80,552	80,552	0	-
Fringe Benefits	1,373,963	1,139,361	1,139,361	(0)	1,164,176
General Insurance	156,812	185,144	165,746	(19,398)	196,650
Legal Services	82,427	77,943	77,943	(0)	69,500
Public Restroom Facilities	16,557	18,750	13,050	(5,700)	14,250
Technology	233,911	239,333	239,450	117	244,841
Board of Assessment Appeals	807	1,330	586	(744)	1,330
Board of Finance	34,188	36,142	31,027	(5,115)	108,300
Conservation Commission	13,048	13,250	11,207	(2,043)	12,125
Economic Development Comm.	9,552	13,100	7,266	(5,834)	1,850
IWWC Commission	5,778	21,308	21,308	0	1,590
Land Use Administrative	105,171	147,865	147,865	-	287,234
Park & Recreation	182,659	195,504	195,504	0	189,430
Park & Recreation Comm.	283	1,100	450	(650)	1,100
Planning Commission	66,289	72,163	66,952	(5,211)	1,350
Tree Committee	6,967	7,278	7,278	(0)	7,000
Zoning Board of Appeals	5,861	6,993	6,993	(0)	5,450
Zoning Commission	12,259	13,139	13,139	(0)	-
Total General Government	3,468,188	3,501,123	3,372,644	(128,479)	3,504,926
PUBLIC SAFETY					
Ambulance Association	18,343	23,700	14,269	(9,431)	31,700
Animal Control	10,000	10,000	10,000	-	12,500
Building Department	80,191	80,981	79,334	(1,647)	81,598
Emergency Management	17,542	21,400	10,673	(10,727)	19,700
Emergency 911	120,761	123,567	123,567	(0)	123,649
Fire Department	364,112	377,076	371,518	(5,558)	384,938
Fire Marshal	49,579	50,987	50,987	0	51,413
Harbor Patrol	36,051	36,982	36,982	0	29,800
Police Services	417,986	449,029	449,029	0	441,454
Resident State Trooper	175,041	179,020	171,960	(7,060)	175,500
Water	170,144	198,770	180,950	(17,820)	190,000
Total Public Safety	1,459,750	1,551,512	1,499,269	(52,243)	1,542,252

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Town of Essex 2020-2021 Annual Report

Finance Report

Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Expenditures *(continued)*

DESCRIPTION	FY 2019-2020 Actual	Fiscal Year 2020-2021			FY 2021-2022 Budget
		Budget	Actual	Variance	
HEALTH AND WELFARE					
Estuary Transit	\$ 20,015	\$ 20,415	\$ 20,415	\$ -	\$ 20,825
Health Department	129,280	179,661	179,661	(0)	160,057
Transfer Station	278,035	283,656	254,277	(29,379)	255,180
Social Services	106,373	114,760	114,760	0	101,949
Visiting Nurses	66,850	70,218	70,218	-	68,546
Water Pollution Control	549	-	-	-	-
Total Health and Welfare	601,102	668,710	639,331	(29,379)	606,557
LIBRARIES	412,434	423,776	423,776	-	432,252
HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION	1,006,682	980,570	921,066	(59,504)	934,452
DEBT SERVICE					
Principal Payments	910,000	985,000	985,000	-	1,015,000
Interest and Finance Charges	301,612	268,878	268,878	-	238,663
Total Debt Service	1,211,612	1,253,878	1,253,878	-	1,253,663
CAPITAL AND SINKING FUNDS	642,500	977,500	976,743	(757)	557,500
TOTAL BOARD OF SELECTMEN	8,802,268	9,357,069	9,086,708	(281,194)	8,831,602
EDUCATION					
Elementary School	5,143,412	5,455,269	5,320,331	(134,938)	5,614,415
Reg. School Operating	7,732,416	7,700,914	7,700,916	2	8,339,652
Reg. Supervision District	2,029,838	2,253,163	2,261,793	8,630	2,246,992
Reg. Bond & Interest	602,119	611,780	611,780	-	620,854
Total Education	15,507,786	16,021,126	15,894,820	(126,306)	16,821,913
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 24,310,053	\$ 25,378,195	\$ 24,981,528	\$ (407,500)	\$ 25,653,515

Fiscal Year End Revenue Excess/(Deficit)

DESCRIPTION	FY 2019-2020 Actual	Fiscal Year 2020-2021			FY 2021-2022 Budget
		Budget	Actual	Variance	
Total Revenue	\$ 24,610,043	\$ 24,484,644	\$ 25,368,750	\$ 884,106	\$ 25,362,721
Total Expenditures	24,310,053	25,378,195	24,981,528	\$ (407,500)	25,653,515
Excess (Deficit) of Revenues over Expenditures	\$ 299,990	\$ (893,551)	\$ 387,223	\$ 1,291,606	\$ (290,794)

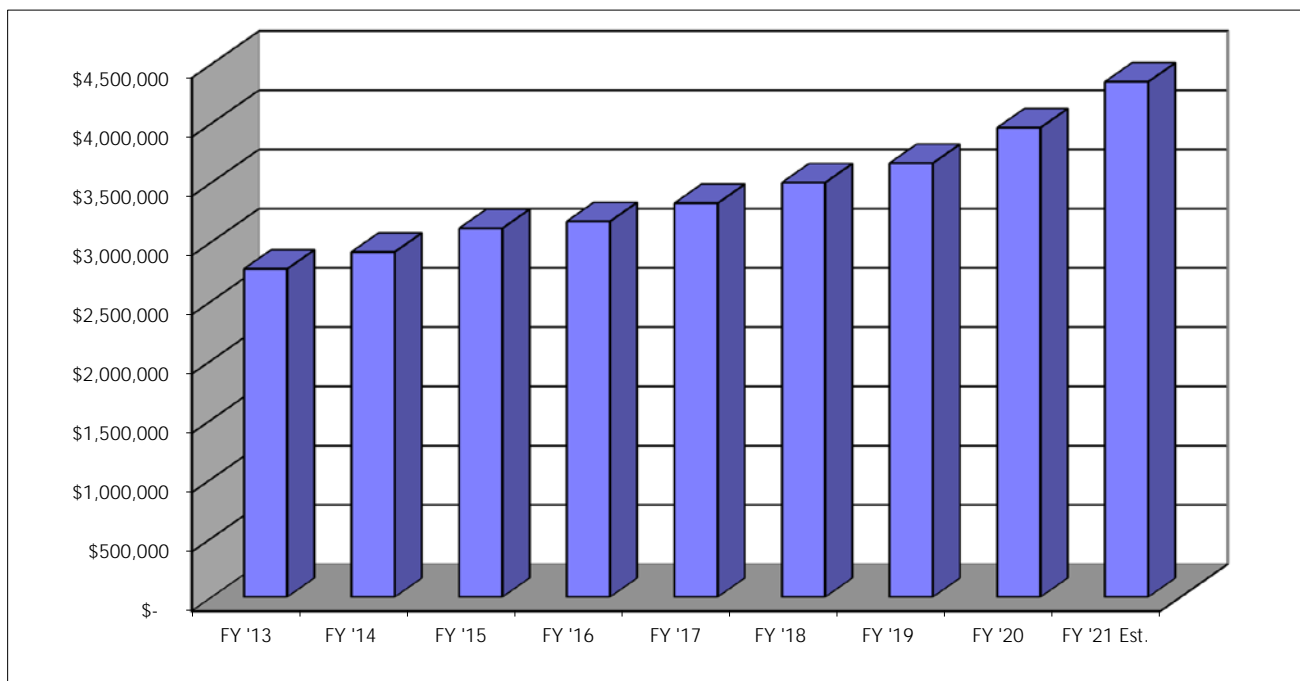
Town of Essex 2020-2021 Annual Report

Finance Report

Capital Project Sinking Fund Balances

Fund Name	Beginning Balance at 7/1/2020	From General Fund	Interest Rec'd. /Other	Expenditures	Ending Balance at 6/30/2021
Fire Truck	\$ 735,863	\$ 295,000	\$ 329	\$ -	\$ 1,031,192
Trucks & Equip.	2,910	-	1		2,911
Police Vehicles	93,631	50,000	28	56,522	87,137
Assessor Revaluation	108,186	15,000	-		123,186
Wastewater Study	130,539	-	42		130,581
Harbor Patrol Boat	55,139	5,000	19		60,158
Park & Recreation	175,705	25,000	64		200,769
Municipal Property	195,456	20,000	69		215,525
Open Space	150,127	15,000	53		165,180
EES Capital Improv.	297,616	60,000	82	102,402	255,296
Harbor Management	44,817	7,500	-		52,317
Infrastructure/Bridges	126,989	70,000	63		197,052
Ambulance Assoc.	48,365	25,000	23		73,388
Totals	\$ 2,165,343	\$ 587,500	\$ 772	\$ 158,924	\$ 2,594,692

Unassigned Fund Ending Balance by Fiscal Year



Town of Essex 2020-2021 Annual Report

Finance Report

School Enrollment

Student Count on Oct. 1st	For Budget Year	Essex Elementary			Regional School District #4				
		K - 3	4 - 6	Total	Junior High	High School	Total*	Essex Share	% of Total
2020	2021-22	144	131	275	249	562	811	353	41.38%
2019	2020-21	146	134	280	244	597	841	345	39.75%
2018	2019-20	146	152	298	260	598	929	381	41.01%
2017	2018-19	150	149	299	289	608	946	418	43.68%
2016	2017-18	152	158	310	327	597	969	432	44.58%
2015	2016-17	183	148	331	335	617	946	420	44.40%
2014	2015-16	184	193	377	332	631	988	438	44.33%
2013	2014-15	194	213	407	357	617	994	446	44.87%
2012	2013-14	214	237	451	366	623	1007	465	46.18%
2011	2012-13	245	232	477	338	618	973	434	44.60%
2010	2011-12	275	244	519	364	608	982	425	43.28%
2009	2010-11	297	251	548	354	618	985	419	42.54%
2008	2009-10	312	247	559	332	617	962	403	41.89%
2007	2008-09	322	235	557	341	620	961	397	41.31%
2006	2007-08	309	241	550	358	597	955	392	41.05%
2005	2006-07	317	246	563	350	598	948	381	40.19%
2004	2005-06	306	238	544	326	538	864	343	39.70%
2003	2004-05	316	240	556	342	549	891	356	39.96%

*Total includes Magnet school and out of district placements

Regional School District #4 Budget History

	Budgeted 2017-2018	Budgeted 2018-2019	Budgeted 2019-2020	Budgeted 2020-2021	Adopted 2020-2021
Region. School District 4 Expenses	\$16,534,060	\$16,597,818	\$17,102,304	\$17,349,183	\$18,130,600
Supervision District Expenses	<u>1,787,731</u>	<u>1,771,488</u>	<u>2,002,146</u>	<u>2,275,358</u>	<u>2,307,272</u>
Total Operating Expenses	18,321,791	18,369,306	19,104,450	19,624,541	20,437,872
Revenue	500,338	249,487	249,487	249,487	285,681
Debt Service	<u>1,741,275</u>	<u>1,683,375</u>	<u>1,468,225</u>	<u>1,539,200</u>	<u>1,500,250</u>
Total Billings - Region-wide	19,562,728	19,803,194	20,323,188	20,914,254	21,652,441
Total Billings-Essex Share	8,721,064	8,650,035	8,334,539	8,312,693	8,960,506
Increase from Prior Year (\$) - Region	521,006	240,466	519,994	591,066	738,187
Increase from Prior Year (\$) - Essex	266,539	(71,029)	(315,496)	(21,846)	647,813
Increase from Prior Year (%) - Region	2.74%	1.23%	2.63%	2.91%	3.53%
Increase from Prior Year (%) - Essex	-54.20%	-0.81%	-3.65%	-0.26%	7.79%
Number of Students	969	946	929	868	811
Total Operating Exp / Student**	\$ 18,908	\$ 19,418	\$ 20,565	\$ 22,609	\$ 25,201

**This number does not represent the Net Current Expenses per Pupil (NCEP) reported by the CT Department of Education which excludes Special Education and other costs

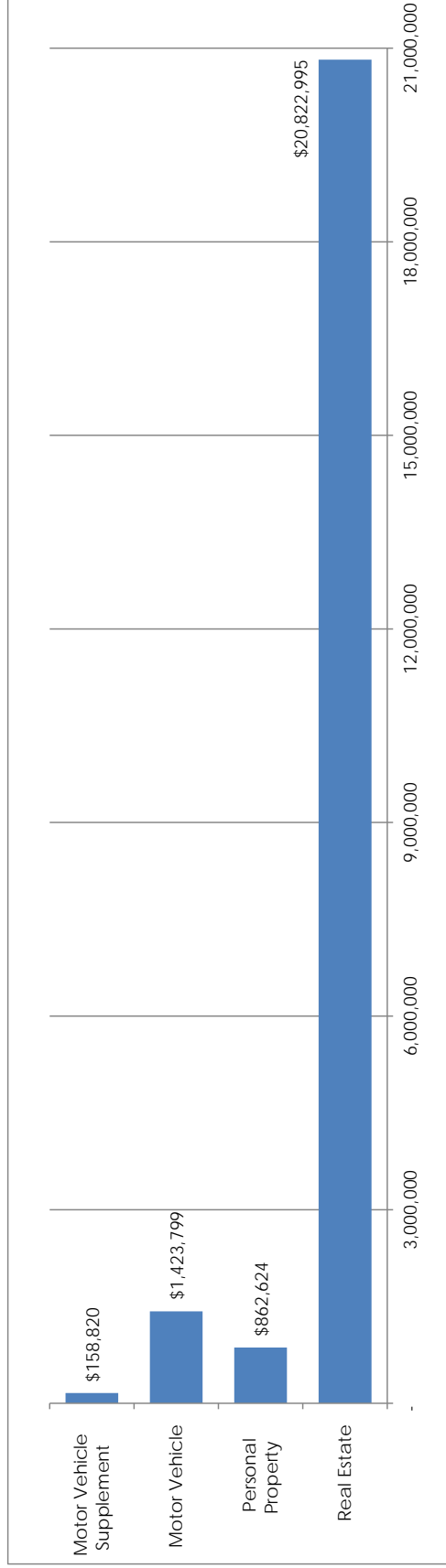
Town of Essex 2020-2021 Annual Report

Tax Collector's Report

Schedule of Property Taxes by Grand List Year June 30, 2021

GRAND LIST YEAR	UNCOLLECTED TAXES 6/30/2020	CURRENT YEAR LEVY	Lawful Additions	Corrections Deductions	Transfers To Suspense	Balance To Be Collected	TAXES	COLLECTIONS INTEREST	LIEN FEES	TOTAL	UNCOLLECTED TAXES 6/30/2021
2019	-	23,479,034	39,798	28,771	-	23,490,061	23,268,239	34,577	72	23,302,888	221,822
2018	233,530.44	-	15,850	4,009	-	245,371	122,373	25,393	432	148,198	122,998
2017	119,153	-	10,003	73	48,639	80,443	26,575	9,343	144	36,062	53,868
2016	48,186	-	-	-	-	48,186	5,066	870	96	6,032	43,121
2015	33,376	-	-	-	-	33,376	24	8,871	24	8,919	33,352
2014	19,490	-	-	-	-	19,490	4,354	652	48	5,054	15,135
2013	13,259	-	-	-	-	13,259	-	6,510	-	-	13,259
2012	9,428	-	-	-	-	9,428	5,209	1,917	24	7,150	4,219
2011	5,286	-	-	-	-	5,286	-	-	-	-	5,286
2010	3,357	-	-	-	-	3,357	-	-	-	-	3,357
2009	3,247	-	-	-	-	3,247	-	-	-	-	3,247
2008	4,990	-	-	-	-	4,990	-	-	-	-	4,990
2007	3,137	-	-	-	-	3,137	-	-	-	-	3,137
Total	496,441	23,479,034	65,651	32,853	48,639	23,959,633	23,431,840	88,132	840	23,514,302	527,793

FY 2021 Collections for Grand List 10/1/19 by Type



Town of Essex 2020-2021 Annual Report

Assessor's Report

2020 Grand List Annual Report

	REAL ESTATE	
	Grand List Year 2019	Grand List Year 2020
Gross	\$ 966,130,290	\$ 970,259,830
Exemptions:		
Veterans'	\$ 949,500	\$ 949,500
Veterans' Additional	141,000	90,000
Vet. Add. Reimb.*	439,500	452,250
Disability	15,000	14,000
Blind	6,000	6,000
Other	-	-
Net	\$ 964,579,290	\$ 968,748,080

	PERSONAL PROPERTY	
	Grand List Year 2019	Grand List Year 2020
Gross	\$ 58,858,960	\$ 63,032,150
Exemptions:		
Farm & Mechanics	\$ 10,611	\$ 36,351
Manufacturers*	19,369,180	20,479,270
Misc.	-	1
Solar Energy/Pollution Control	-	-
Net	\$ 39,479,169	\$ 42,516,528

	MOTOR VEHICLES	
	Grand List Year 2019	Grand List Year 2020
Gross	\$ 74,243,210	\$ 76,959,090
Exemptions:		
Veterans'	\$ 242,620	\$ 212,650
Veterans' Additional	79,990	85,720
Disability Reimb.	2,000	1,000
Disability	24,570	21,990
Other	-	-
Manuf. Truck Reimb.*	5,583,150	4,898,540
Net	\$ 68,310,880	\$ 71,739,190

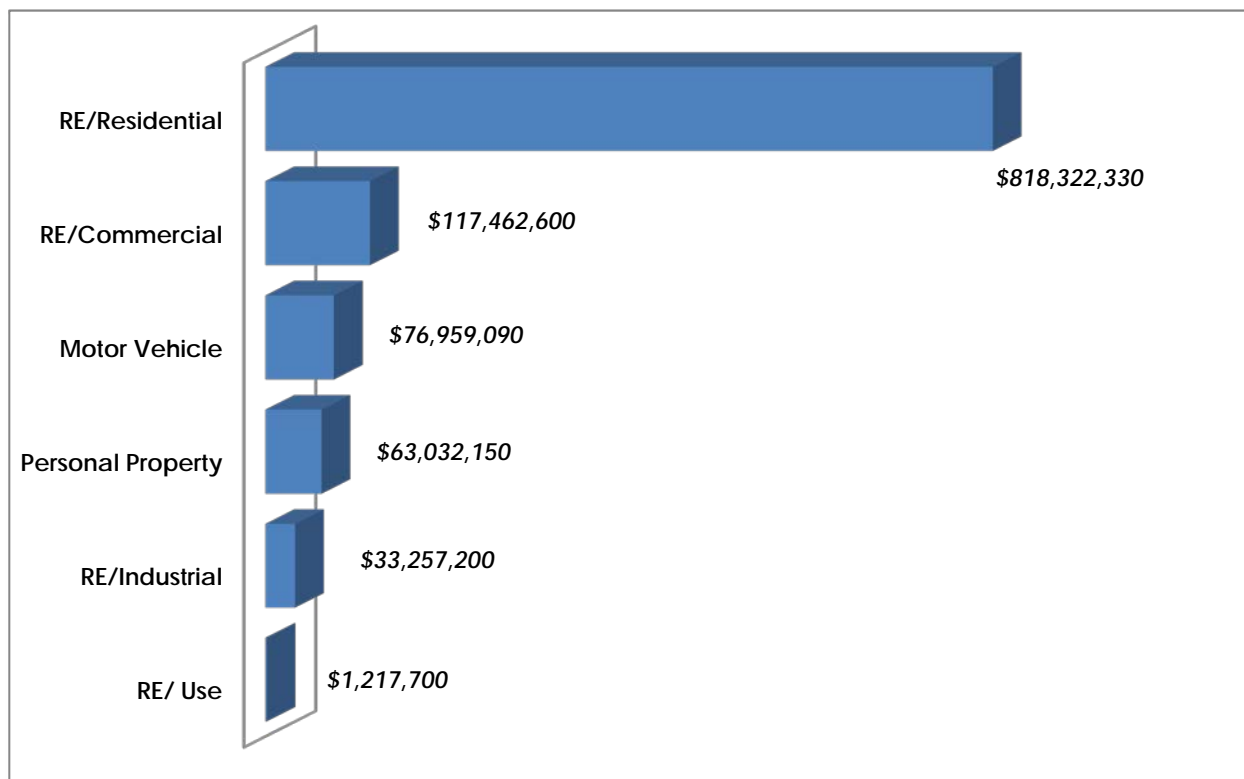
	TOTALS	
	Grand List Year 2019	Grand List Year 2020
Gross	\$ 1,099,232,460	\$ 1,110,251,070
Exemptions:		
Veterans'	\$ 1,192,120	\$ 1,162,150
Veterans' Additional	141,000	90,000
Vet. Add. Reimb.*	519,490	537,970
Blind	6,000	6,000
Disability	41,570	36,990
Other	10,611	36,352
Manufacturer & Truck*	24,952,330	25,377,810
Net	\$ 1,072,369,339	\$ 1,083,003,798

*No longer being reimbursed by State of Connecticut

Town of Essex 2020-2021 Annual Report

Assessor's Report

Grand List 2020 Assessment by Category



Comparative Grand Lists - Net Taxable

Item	Grand List Year 2019	Grand List Year 2020	Increase/ (Decrease)
Real Estate	\$ 964,579,290	\$ 968,748,080	\$ 4,168,790
Personal Property	\$ 39,479,169	\$ 42,516,528	\$ 3,037,359
Motor Vehicle	\$ 68,310,880	\$ 71,739,190	\$ 3,428,310
Total	\$ 1,072,369,339	\$ 1,083,003,798	\$ 10,634,459

Tax Revenue Comparison

	Grand List Year 2019	Grand List Year 2020
Net List	\$ 1,072,369,339	\$ 1,083,003,798
Mill Rate	21.81	22.43
Grand List Tax Revenue	\$ 23,388,375	\$ 24,291,775

Town of Essex 2020-2021 Annual Report

Assessor's Report

Gross Top Ten Taxpayer Accounts

#	Taxpayer	Primary Activities	10/1/2020 Assessed Value	# of accts
1	LCS Essex Meadows, Inc	Health Care Living Facility	\$ 24,960,660	11
2	Conn Light & Power Co.	Public Utility	11,138,610	1
3	Lee Company	Manufacturing	7,958,620	4
4	SHM Dauntless LLC	Marina	5,312,210	7
5	Essex Savings Bank	Financial Services	4,455,030	10
6	Griswold Inn LLC	Inn & Restaurant	3,552,900	5
7	Chester & Suzanne Kitchings	Real Estate	3,371,900	3
8	Stephen R. Cline Successor	Real Estate Development	3,360,500	5
9	Carlson Landing I LLC	Restaurant	3,272,700	3
10	Macbeth Ventures LLC	Real Estate Development	2,779,400	2
Total			\$ 70,162,530	

Historical Mill Rates	
Grand List Year	Mill Rate
2020	22.43
2019	21.81
2018*	21.65
2017	21.85
2016	21.96
2015	21.58
2014	21.08
2013*	20.99
2012	18.99
2011	18.47
2010	17.98
2009	17.63
2008*	16.95
2007	17.60
2006	16.90
2005	16.20
2004	15.50
2003*	14.90
2002	20.00
2001	18.25
2000	16.75
1999*	16.75
1998	14.50
1997	14.00
1996	13.50
*Revaluation	

Important Annual Dates for the Assessor's Office		
February	1	We begin accepting applications for the Elderly Homeowner/Circuit Breaker Program and Additional Veterans' Benefits.
May	15	Deadline to file for the Elderly Homeowner/Circuit Breaker Tax Benefit Program and local options.
June	1	Deadline for all commercial property owners to file the annual income and expense forms.
September	1	The filing period for PA 490 land, farm, forest and local option open space begins
October	1	Deadline by which Veterans must file their DD214, honorable discharge. (Only needs to be done once)
October	1	Deadline for low-income Veterans to file for their additional exemption.
November	1	All business Personal Property Declarations must be filed or postmarked by this date to avoid the 25% penalty.

Essex Town Department Directory

Telephone Number 860-767-4340 (unless otherwise noted)

Selectmen's Office

Norman M. Needleman—First Selectman, x114.....nneedleman@essexct.gov
Maria Lucarelli, x112.....mlucarelli@essexct.gov
Alyson Finnegan, x145.....afinnegan@essexct.gov

Animal Control Officers

Harry Plaut, x160.....hplaut@essexct.gov
Matthew Carroll, x160.....mcarroll@essexct.gov

Assessor

Jessica Sypher—Assessor, x124.....jsypher@essexct.gov
Betsy D'Amico, x123.....bdamico@essexct.gov

Building Department and Fire Marshal

David DeLeeuw—Building Official, x117.....ddeeleeuw@essexct.gov
John Planas—Fire Marshal, x146.....jplanas@essexct.gov

Finance and Treasurer

Tracey Celentano—Finance Director, x122.....tcelentano@essexct.gov
Dana Novorio, x116.....dnovorio@essexct.gov
James Francis—Treasurer.....jfrancis@essexct.gov

Health Department

Lisa Fasulo—Health Director, x118.....lfasulo@essexct.gov
Don Mitchell, x151.....dmitchell@essexct.gov

Land Use—Administrative

Darcy Roper, x144.....droper@essexct.gov
Kerry Berardinelli, x119.....kberardinelli@essexct.gov

Landfill/Recycling Center—860-767-1926

Wilbur Armstead, x163.....barmstead@essexct.gov

Park and Recreation

Mary Ellen Barnes—Director x110.....mbarnes@essexct.gov
Tim LaChance, x148.....tlachance@essexct.gov

Public Works—860-767-0715

Ryan Welch—Director, x161.....rwelch@essexct.gov
Richard Gallacher, David Martin, Dwight Massey, Paul Mackenzie

Registrars of Voters

Caitlin Riley, x142.....criley@essexct.gov
Barbara Ryan, x142.....bryan@essexct.gov

Resident State Trooper and Essex Police—860-767-1054

Mark Roberts—Resident State Trooper, x130.....mroberts@essexct.gov
James Paul Kenefick—Corporal.....jkenefick@essexct.gov
Todd Belcourt—Corporal.....tbelcourt@essexct.gov
Christopher McCarthy—Officer.....cmccarthy@essexct.gov
Karen Reilly—Officer.....kreilly@essexct.gov
Robert Hart—Officer.....rhart@essexct.gov
Judson Howes - Officer.....jhowes@essexct.gov

Social Services

Mary Ellen Barnes, x201.....mbarnes@essexct.gov

Tax Collector

Megan Haskins—Tax Collector, x120.....mhaskins@essexct.gov
Lynne Skinner, x121.....lskinner@essexct.gov

Town Clerk

Joel Marzi—Town Clerk, x129.....jmarzi@essexct.gov
Yvonne Roziak, x128.....yroziak@essexct.gov

Town Hall Operations

Andrew Harrington, x136.....aharrington@essexct.gov

Tree Warden—860-388-7209

Augie Pampel.....apampel@essexct.gov

Zoning Enforcement

Carrie Duques—Enforcement Agent, x115.....cduques@essexct.gov

www.essexct.gov

Town of Essex
29 West Avenue
Essex, CT 06426
www.essexct.gov

Middlesex County
2nd Congressional District
33rd Senatorial District
36th Assembly District

Hours of Operation
Town Hall
Monday-Friday, 9 am to 4 pm

Transfer Station & Recycling Center
Monday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, 7 am to 3 pm