



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of January 11, 2016

Report covers from December 19, 2015 to January 8, 2016

Items requiring Board vote or discussion are noted with an asterisk (*)

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Conomo Point Planning Committee Waterfront Access Planning

The Conomo Point Planning Committee plans to meet soon to discuss the best location and scope of work to commence public waterfront access improvements at Conomo Point. At the last meeting, the Board agreed that the Committee should have access to Landscape Architect James Heroux with a fee not to exceed \$5,000.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

B. Computer Systems

(2) Relocation of Town Hall User Terminals

During the course of the week of January 4, 2016, all Town Hall personnel moved from 30 Martin Street to our temporary quarters at 74 Martin Street. Each move required that each user's computer terminal needed to be set up and configured at the new site to get back to the server room in Town Hall using a new VPN connection. Since all of our data and user desktops are stored in the City of Melrose datacenter, our system is tremendously portable. All systems were returned to service rapidly.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary. Total time – 7 hours.

C. Personnel

(1) Annual Motor Vehicle Records Checks

Each year at this time, I request that the Chief of Police conduct records checks on all employees who commonly operate Town vehicles. All drivers are checked for a valid license and any recent violations of a serious nature.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Collective Bargaining for Essex Police Benevolent Assoc. Successor Contract

The management team engaged the EPBA in continued collective bargaining for a successor contract on January 7, 2016.

Recommendation: Board discussion in executive session per the posted agenda.

(3) Collective Bargaining for AFSCME Successor Contract

I received a request from the AFSCME bargaining agent on January 4, 2016 to commence bargaining for a successor contract. I am working with the agent to arrive at an initial bargaining session date.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(4) Town Administrator Goals for Calendar Year 2016 (*)

At the last meeting, the Board continued discussion relative to the specific goals I had recommended for calendar year 2016. The Board asked that this topic be brought up again at the present meeting so that my list of goals may be finalized.

Recommendation: **Board finalization of my 2016 goals.**

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Affirmative Marketing Program Quarterly Report

I completed the subject report in my capacity as the Town's Affirmative Marketing Construction Officer (AMCO) for the quarter ending December 31, 2015 and have submitted it to the State. The report is designed to detail the Town's utilization of women and minority-owned business entities on State-funded building projects. No such utilization occurred this quarter.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Site Visit for Interested Town Hall/Library Bidders and Sub-Bidders

Our architects, our Project Manager, and I hosted a site visit for bidders and sub-bidders interested in the upcoming Town Hall/Library renovation project. A total of about 30 bidders and sub-bidders attended the event to become familiar with the project and the building. A detailed project description was offered by our architect and a tour of all areas was provided. A second site visit was offered on January 11, 2016 to allow prospective bidders to follow-up with any questions or inspections.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(3) Extension for Filed Sub-bids, Town Hall/Library Renovation Project

As the Board is aware, large, municipal construction projects require that some building trades be represented by sub-bidders in those trades. Those sub-bidders file their own pricing for each trade and the General Contractor ultimately selects sub-bidders to perform certain aspects of the project. The deadline for filed sub-bids was originally January 6, 2016. However, our Project Manager and our architect recommended a slight extension, through January 12, 2016, in order to undertake certain activities and bid spec updates that will allow sub-bidders to

make more decisive (and hopefully less costly) bids. The general bid deadline has also been extended accordingly, until January 26, 2016.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(4) Contract for Long-Term Lease Value Appraisals, Conomo Point (*)

As the Board may recall, a Request for Quotations for conducting long-term lease value appraisals in the northern area of Conomo Point was released on December 22, 2015. Three quotations were solicited and only one vendor, Tyburski Appraisal Services, chose to submit a quotation, in the amount of \$23,300. The appraisal procurement package included a sample copy of a long-term lease which was also shared with the President of the Conomo Point Association, as a courtesy.

Recommendation: **Board vote to approve the contract for long-term lease appraisal quotations with Tyburski Appraisal Services.**

(5) Draft Request for Proposals for Management of Centennial Grove (*)

At the last meeting, the Board began to review a draft Request for Proposals (RFP) for entities potentially desiring to enter into a management contract at the Centennial Grove. The entity would serve to enforce potential residents-only rules and provide general upkeep in exchange for private event marketing rights. The entity would also pay a fee to the Town in addition to their management services for this marketing privilege. The Board reviewed an initial list of specifications at the last meeting and agreed that we can begin to move into rating criteria after the present meeting, as specifications are expected to be wrapped up.

Recommendation: **Board finalization of specifications for this management contract RFP.**

(6) Submission of Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) Application

At the last meeting, the Board authorized the Chairman to sign the final version of the LOMR for various aspects of the recently-released FEMA coastal flood maps. As discussed at the meeting, the application seeks to make major changes in the areal extent of flood areas (reducing these) and the Base Flood Elevations (increasing these) in several regions of the Town. These changes will ultimately remove some properties from flood zones and will reduce the insurance premiums for others. Our contractor provided the Town of Ipswich with certain paperwork for approval since one of our coastal flood panels straddles the Town line. Ipswich signed that paperwork and we have submitted it to FEMA along with the Town's own application package.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(7) Sale Value Appraisals, Robbins Island

At the last meeting, the Board signed a contract with Tyburski Appraisal Corporation for the valuation of the properties on Robbins Island, for purposes of potential sale. To date, our appraiser has begun to assemble data in preparation for his work.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(8) Application for Definitive Subdivision, Robbins Island (*)

At the last meeting, the Board authorized the Chairman to sign the Definitive Subdivision Application for Robbins Island, once our engineering firm had finalized the subdivision plan. The plan was near completion late during the week of January 4, 2016 and I am preparing the actual application for the Chairman's signature (which will include forms for the notification of abutters). We do not have details regarding the timing of the necessary public hearing as of the printing of this report.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to the final application and plans for the public hearing.**

E. Insurance

(1) Quarterly Building Self-Inspection Reports

I completed the checklists for both the Town Hall and the Senior Center during the week of January 4, 2016 as part of the MIIA Rewards Program. The checklists are designed to identify safety hazards in buildings so that corrective action can be taken. No new hazards were identified and the Town Hall report noted that the building will soon be taken over by our renovation contractor.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Monthly Pothole Log

I obtained the pothole log for the month of December from the Department of Public Works and forwarded it to our insurer as part of the MIIA Rewards Program. No potholes were reported during December.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(3) Purchase of Builder's Risk Insurance Policy (*)

As reported previously, we have been working with our insurer to acquire a Builder's Risk Insurance Policy from a third-party provider. Our insurer filed an application with a major provider (the Seneca Companies) on our behalf and the provider is still reviewing our application. I may have additional information available by meeting time.

Recommendation: **Board vote to sign the contract for the necessary policy, either at the meeting or when it becomes available.**

F. Facilities

(1) Annual Fire Alarm Testing

I am working with the Superintendent of Public Works to find a contractor to test the alarm systems at the Water Filtration Plant and the DPW Barn. Fire alarm systems at the Town Hall and at the Senior Center are under regular maintenance or monitoring contracts with separate vendors.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Use of Prison Work Teams to Empty Town Hall Basement

Prison work teams visited the Town Hall on December 22 and 23, 2015 to move the contents of the Town Hall basement into storage containers on the Town Hall property. Work proceeded smoothly and the basement is now essentially empty, allowing the successful renovation contractor to freely move around in that space to accomplish tasks such as sprinkler installation, elevator installation, and structural steel work.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(3) Move from 30 Martin Street to Temporary Quarters

The Town Offices operated normally through December 31, 2015. As of January 4, 2016, I began assisting each office by sequentially moving each staff person, their computer, and their immediate desk and file needs into the temporary quarters at 74 Martin Street. All personnel were in the new facility by the end of the week and I had previously worked to make phone lines and a computer network operational in that space, with final testing occurring during the week of December 28, 2015. As of January 11, 2016, we have begun working with a professional moving company to bring Town Hall items to the new facility, to storage, or to disposal. Town offices remained open for the personnel moves and will close as necessary when the major items are delivered during the week of January 11, 2016. Town offices will be available by telephone during normal business hours even in the building itself is not open to the public.

The Library operated normally through January 9, 2016. During the week of January 11, 2016, the Library will work with a professional library moving service to move the contents of the Library to the temporary facility at 245 Western Avenue. The Library is closed until the move is complete, which, at the latest, will take until January 19, 2016. The entire building at 30 Martin Street will be empty by January 15, 2016 and the Town will have unrestricted access through January 31, 2016 (after which point the construction contractor will take over the building). I assisted the Library by arranging for the relocation of their phone and

fax lines and by bringing those lines from the exterior interface box into the temporary library office and providing interior phone jacks.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(4) Removal of Spruce Trees in Front of 30 Martin Street

Both of the large spruce trees in front of the Town Hall/Library building at 30 Martin Street will be removed by a tree contractor in the near future. As the Board may recall, the requisite tree removal hearing was held on December 15, 2015 and no comments were received regarding that pending project.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(5) Proposed Signage for Town Landing and Municipal Parking Lot (*)

At the last meeting, the Board agreed on a certain set of new parking and related signs to replace the existing signage at the Town Landing and the Municipal Parking Lot, based upon recent revisions to the regulations for both areas. The Board asked that I get input from the Chief of Police, the Parking Clerk, and the Superintendent of Public Works before proceeding further. All three officials have reviewed the proposed signage plan and offered no further comments. As such, I can begin working with the Superintendent to place the necessary order.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

G. Fiscal/Budget

(1) Enrollment in the Agricultural/Technical School District vs. Ability to Pay (*)

As discussed at the last meeting, Essex students have been competing very well for freshman seats at the Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical High School in Middleton. This level of achievement is excellent for students who desire to attend this state-of-the-art facility but represents a challenge for the Town's ability to pay. The District Agreement does not cap participation from any one community and, instead, relies upon competitive enrollment. The Board asked me to reach out to both Senator Tarr (who I have been working with since last season) and George Harvey (the Town's representative to the Regional School Committee) for assistance with strategies that could address the Town's ability to pay issue.

To date, I have learned from Mr. Harvey that he does plan to bring this matter up to the Committee for discussion in the near future. Also, Senator Tarr's office has been updated on the issue and will review it against the possibility that other communities in the same or other districts are facing the same challenges.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(2) FY17 Board of Selectmen Operating Budget Request (*)
I have revised the subject budget request per the Board's comments from the last meeting and it is in final form for approval by the Board.

Recommendation: Board vote to approve and transmit to the Finance Committee the fiscal year 2017 budget request package.

(3) FY17 Board of Selectmen Capital/Personnel Plan Update (*)
I have revised the subject capital/personnel plan per the Board's comments from the last meeting and it is in its final form for approval by the Board.

Recommendation: Board vote to approve and transmit to the Finance Committee the fiscal year 2017 capital/personnel plan update.

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

No items.

J. Final Judgment

No items.

K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

(1) Special Town Meeting, February 1, 2016
At the request of the Board, I have developed a warrant for a Special Town Meeting to be held on February 1, 2016, concerning necessary repairs to the Water Filtration Plant.

Recommendation: Board vote to approve and sign the warrant per the posted agenda.

(2) Preliminary Draft List of Potential Topics for 2016 Annual Town Meeting (*)
I distributed to the Board at the last meeting a list of possible topics for articles on the 2016 Annual Town Meeting Warrant as a companion to the budget review process.

Recommendation: Continued Board review of the draft list.

(3) Personnel Board and Youth Commission Annual Report Sections

I have written the Personnel Board and Youth Commission sections of the Town Annual Report on behalf of the Board (which serves in both capacities).

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

L. Legal Issues

(1) Quarterly Review and Release of Executive Session Minutes

I have reviewed the executive session minutes over the past quarter with the Chairman and she has determined that no additional minutes are ready for release.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Memoranda of Understanding with Emergency Resources (*)

The Cape Ann Emergency Planning Team has encouraged the various participating municipalities (Essex, Gloucester, Manchester, Rockport, and Ipswich) to develop Memoranda of Understanding with various local facilities and service providers to ensure availability during an emergency. The City of Gloucester has already completed this exercise and was willing to share its templates for coordination with the Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association (CAARA), the Cape Ann Transportation Authority (CATA), the School Department, the School Transportation Department, and various vendors. These documents may be adapted for use in Essex so that pre-existing expectations can be developed that may be relied upon should the Town need assistance from various resources.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to setting up Memoranda of Understanding with various facilities and resources.**

(3) Status Review Concerning Sale of Southern Avenue Property

Town Counsel, the Building Inspector, a Licensed Site Professional representing a third party (the prospective property buyer), and I recently discussed the status of a plan for the buyer to purchase the Allen property on Southern Avenue and to begin modifying the property for future commercial or other use. Town Counsel is presently working with the court-appointed Receiver regarding the disposition of the barn on the property, since crews will need to demolish a portion of it to remove an underground fuel storage tank beneath the structure.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(4) Gloucester Clammer Parking Stickers and Clammers' Beach Ramp

At the last meeting, the Board agreed to offer a Conomo Point parking sticker for Gloucester clambers between October 15 and April 15, each season, for a fee of \$150. The Selectmen's Assistant and I have notified Gloucester officials and

Gloucester officials plan to inform all Gloucester commercial clammers of this development. We were also asked about a retaining wall that broke up in a storm last winter that is partially blocking access along the Clammers' Beach boat ramp. I contacted the Conservation Agent about the possibility of moving the debris and I should have additional information by meeting time.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

M. Grants

(1) Downtown Boardwalk Feasibility Grant Quarterly Report

I completed the subject report to the State for the quarter ending December 31, 2015 and have submitted it to the State. The report explains that we are still waiting on the release of funding by the Governor relative to the Legislature's past authorization of \$1.5M in final planning and construction funding for the project.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Coastal Resiliency Community Outreach Grant Monthly Report

I acquired from the National Wildlife Federation and the Ipswich River Watershed Association during the week of December 21, 2015 the monthly report of activities associated with the subject Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management (CZM) grant. I have provided the report to CZM and it mostly details ongoing basic public outreach efforts. In the coming months, more focused input sessions and work products will be developed.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(3) Green Community Designation Grant Paperwork (*)

Through the work of Town Planner Matt Coogan, the Town has now been named by the State as a "Green Community". This designation brings with it an initial grant of approximately \$130,000 that the Town will use to defray a portion of the ongoing Town Hall/Library renovation project. The Town Planner prepared a formal application relative to the use of this grant funding and submitted the application to the State after Chairman O'Donnell signed it. We are told that moving along on this schedule will potentially allow State officials to declare the effective eligibility date for grant reimbursements as February 1, 2016 (the start date of the Town Hall/Library Renovation project).

Recommendation: **Board vote to ratify the Chairman's signature of the Green Communities Grant application.**

N. Emergency Planning

No items.

O. Other Items

(1) Christmas Holiday

The office was closed on December 25, 2015, in observance of the subject holiday.

(2) New Year's Day Holiday

The office was closed on January 1, 2016, in observance of the subject holiday.

(3) Town Administrator Leave

I was out of the office on leave for a portion of the day on December 23, 24, 29, 30, and 31, 2015.

This report is available at www.essexma.org on the morning after any regularly scheduled Essex Board of Selectmen's Meeting.