



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of January 12, 2015

Report covers from December 13, 2014 to January 9, 2015

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Annual Reports for Personnel Board and Youth Commission

Since the Selectmen continue to serve as the Personnel Board and the Youth Commission, I produced annual report sections for both functions. I have placed the reports sections in the Board's reading folder.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Discussion of Cable Renewal Process with Regional Representative (*)

I discussed the Cape Ann Regional Cable Advisory Committee's overall approach to cable contract renewals with Essex Representative Barry O'Brien on December 18, 2014. Mr. O'Brien reported on the initial meeting that he had attended and generally indicated that the Committee plans to host two public forums as part of the ascertainment process (spring and fall of 2015). We also reviewed the concept of the Cable I-Net, which is a system that the Town no longer uses for data transmission. The system is, however, set up for video transmission and Comcast will need to keep it or a more modern replacement available as we approach the next contract. It is possible that Comcast will agree to a newer, digital solution. Other goals include potential increases in the local programming (Cape Ann TV) and Town technology surcharges. Further, the school system might benefit from better local access equipment, broadcasting capabilities, and training opportunities for interested students.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(3) Town Building Committee Meeting

The Town Building Committee will meet on February 2, 2015 to review the recent Town Hall/Library health, safety, and the working environment improvement project and to begin discussion relative to the next step, a complete exterior renovation.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

B. Computer Systems

(1) Setup of Computer System for New Public Health Nurse

Our new Public Health Nurse, Lianne Cook, reported for work during the week of December 15, 2014 and I set up her network logon, file storage, and e-mail capabilities.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary. Total time – ½ hour.

(2) Migration of Police Users to New Computer System

As the Board may recall, I had set up a new computer system in the Police Department to replace the function of an older system and had already migrated the system's primary user. Other officers also use that work area and I migrated three additional users over during the weeks of December 15 and December 29, 2014. The old system has been taken out of service and the new system is functioning well.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary. Total time – 3 hours.

(3) Repair of Operating System After System Shutdown

A Town Hall computer system was powered down during a Windows update, which created fatal errors on the next startup attempt. After reviewing the error codes, I was able to find a way to modify the file that had been damaged (a pending action file) and the system has been restored to normal operation.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary. Total time – 2 hours.

(4) Preparation and Migration of Users to Melrose Virtual Platform

Now that our backup generator has been set on site, I am beginning to migrate users to the virtual desktop platform in Melrose. Each migration is completed by setting up a new zero-client device with its own monitor, keyboard, and mouse next to the user's PC so that both systems are available until the migration is complete. I have begun the process with a shared workstation in the Town Hall second floor foyer that is used by the Conservation Commission Clerk, the Conservation Agent, the Town Planner, the Public Health Nurse, and the Building Inspector's Clerk. To date, I have migrated three users to the new platform.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary. Total time – 4 hours.

(5) Setup of New Printers in Police Offices

The Police Department purchased two new printers for use in the detectives' office and in the clerks' office during the weeks of December 29, 2014 and January 5, 2015. I set up and configured both printers.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary. Total time – 1 hour.

C. Personnel

(1) Town Administrator's Calendar Year 2015 Goals (*)

At the last meeting, I provided the Board with a list of draft goals for the upcoming calendar year. Presently, it would be helpful to review those items in more detail and to arrive at a final plan for the upcoming calendar year.

Recommendation: **Board review and approval of 2015 goals.**

(2) Safety Committee Meeting

I attended the subject meeting on December 17, 2014 as a member of the Committee. The meeting featured a discussion relative to the two, recently-awarded MIA loss control grants and the upcoming work proposed for the Town Hall.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(3) Motor Vehicle Records Checks

At this time each year, the Chief of Police conducts motor vehicle record checks on all employees who commonly operate Town vehicles to ensure that no pattern of moving violations exists. The Chief will conduct this work during January.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Revised Proposal and Contract for Northern Conomo Point Final Planning(*)

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that I should work with Conomo Point Planning Committee Chairman Mark Lynch to suggest minor revisions to James Heroux's recent preliminary proposal for Northern Conomo Point final planning. After discussing the scope of changes, we provided Mr. Heroux of the Copley Wolff Design Group with our suggestions. Mr. Heroux has provided a revised proposal for the Board's consideration and approval and the firm has assented to the Town's standard contract for designer services. The Committee plans to visit the Selectmen again in February to review planning progress and to potentially go over Conomo Point-related draft Annual Town Meeting warrant articles.

Recommendation: **Board approval of the revised proposal and entry into a standard designer services contract with the firm.**

(2) Development of Encroachment Elimination Plan

At the last meeting, the Board voted to instruct our consulting engineer to base our Encroachment Elimination Plan (to be written for the Army Corps of Engineers) upon a 60-foot-wide, realigned channel, with particular attention to minimizing the amount of "improvement" dredging that will be required. Our

engineer has therefore begun the process by running the realigned boundary through the areas that are the deepest today, where possible. After optimization, he will begin work on the written portion of the Plan.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(3) Affirmative Marketing Program Quarterly Report

I filed the subject report with the State during the week of January 5, 2015 in my capacity at the Town's Affirmative Marketing Construction Officer (AMCO). The report is intended to identify the use of any women or minority-owned companies on projects that include State funding. We had no such utilization over the past quarter.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

E. Insurance

(1) Monthly Pothole Log

I obtained the subject log for the month of December from the DPW during the week of January 5, 2015 and provided it to our insurer as part of the MIIA Rewards Program.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

F. Facilities

(1) Preliminary Preparation for the Demolition of 1 Robbins Island Road

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that, over the coming year, the structure at 1 Robbins Island Road should be demolished. As such, I have begun preliminary preparations by filing a Request for Determination of Applicability with the Essex Conservation Commission and by asking our asbestos testing consultant to provide us with a proposal for asbestos identification. Our testing consultant met me on site on January 9, 2015 to review the structure for proposal purposes and he will provide a quotation and projected start date in the coming weeks. The Essex Conservation Commission reviewed the RDA on January 6, 2015. The Commission asked that I provide them with a detailed list of steps involved when conducting a demolition (which I have provided) and that I attend their meeting of January 20, 2015 to discuss our application further (which I plan to do).

Also, I have secured the necessary septic system abandonment permit from the Board of Health, I have asked the Historical Commission to start its review pertaining to our Demolition Delay Bylaw, National Grid has disconnected the old electrical service line and has removed the meter, and Verizon has removed the telephone service line and network interface box.

Recommendation: I will continue to make necessary preparations and will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Meeting to Present Program for Potential Conversion of Streetlights to LEDs

At the last meeting, the Board reviewed a package from National Grid that inventoried the various streetlights in Essex that are owned by that utility and that provided a cost for the Town to purchase those facilities. The Board agreed that our energy supplier, Constellation, should bring its experts to a February meeting to break the process down and to answer questions concerning future maintenance and liability. I have confirmed that representatives of Constellation will be in attendance at the Board's meeting of February 23, 2015.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(3) Quarterly Building Self-Inspections

I completed reports for quarterly building self-inspections as part of the MIA Rewards Program during the week of January 5, 2015. The inspections are intended to highlight any safety issues that have emerged with respect to a particular building. No new items were noted. However, in the Town Hall report, I did highlight the recent work associated with the stabilization of the east wall and the care that has been taken by our contractor to prevent injury to employees or the public during the project.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(4) Additional Conomo Point Property Under Town's Full Control

An additional Conomo Point tenant relinquished her former leasehold as of January 1, 2015. As such, I visited the property at 92 Conomo Point Road during the week of January 5, 2014 to change the locks. The property has been secured with new locks and it may be included in a spring auction of various southern properties.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

G. Fiscal/Budget

(1) Auditor's Analysis of Accrued Paid Absence Liability

As is the case each year, our Auditor recently asked me to sum up the amount of accrued vacation and sick time our benefits-eligible employees had as of June 30, 2014. Our Auditor is presently working on the fiscal year 2014 audit. After receiving the various rates of pay in place at the time from the Town Accountant, I provided the figures to our Auditor.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Fiscal Year 2016 Operating and Capital Budget Request Packages (*)

At the last meeting, the Board began to review the operating and capital request documents that I had provided. At this juncture, if the Board has any modifications or additions in mind, I can incorporate those into a final package, which will be transmitted to the Finance Committee through the Town Accountant on January 13, 2015.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

No items.

J. Final Judgment

No items.

K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

No items.

L. Legal Issues

(1) Permitting Associated with Proposed Downtown Boardwalk (*)

As the Board may recall, the owner of the building that houses the CK Pearl Restaurant has been carefully considering whether he desires to grant an easement to allow a proposed downtown boardwalk to run between the rear of his building and the Essex River. Recently, working with our design engineer, our permitting expert, and Town Counsel, we have determined that the property could benefit in two key ways: 1) the potential inclusion of an area where restaurant seating could be allowed directly adjacent to the boardwalk, and 2) the review and modernization of the property's Chapter 91 License; both using project funds. However, it is presently my understanding that having restaurant tables on the boardwalk may complicate permitting. Further communication between Town Counsel and the DEP will be necessary to determine how much more complex permitting might be.

Recommendation: Board discussion as necessary.

(2) Quarterly Review of Executive Session Minutes

The Chairman recently conducted his quarterly review of executive session minutes and did not find any new minutes suitable for release.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

M. Grants

(1) Grant Application for Strategic Planning Assistance

As the Board may recall, our Planner had looked into the use of a MAPC grant to assist the Town with the development of a Strategic Plan. Initially, he had been told that the focus of the grant program this year would not allow for that type of assistance. As an alternative, our Planner had suggested that the Town consider developing an application for technical assistance around the issue of various potential zoning districts. However, he has now learned that the MAPC will consider the original strategic planning concept and he has submitted an application. Our Planner, the Chair of the Planning Board, the Chair of the Open Space Committee, and representatives of the Long Term Planning Committee will be in attendance at the present meeting to discuss both future zoning possibilities and the application for strategic planning assistance.

Recommendation: Board discussion of this concept at the present meeting.

(2) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Grant (*)

Similar to the Mass in Motion regional grant that we are cooperating with the other Cape Ann Communities on, an opportunity to combat substance abuse on a regional basis has arisen that also requires a regional cluster of applicants. I will have more information by meeting time concerning the scope of the project and the required paperwork.

Recommendation: **Board discussion and potential approval of the Town's participation in the grant program.**

(3) Seaport Advisory Council Quarterly Report

I filed the subject report relative to the downtown boardwalk during the week of January 5, 2014. The report highlights how we are awaiting the announcement of construction funding from the new administration.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(4) Generator Grant Update

The concrete generator slab and the new, Town Hall backup generator were both delivered and set on December 24, 2014. The tank was filled with diesel during the week of December 29, 2014. Our electrician returned to the site during the week of January 5, 2015 and has almost completed the wiring. Load testing by

the vendor should occur within the next two weeks and the unit will be fully operational. I will continue to file the necessary reports with the grantmaker (MEMA) and will apply for reimbursement of all eligible costs.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

N. Emergency Planning

(1) Regional Dispatch Center Finance Advisory Board Meetings

I attended two meetings (December 19 and 29, 2014) as a member of the Essex Regional Communications Center Finance Advisory Board. The first meeting was a regular, monthly update meeting. Senator Bruce Tarr was in attendance at the second meeting to offer his assistance concerning two financial matters facing the Center (failure of the State to waive the usual fringe benefit and indirect costs paid by other State agencies and the unilateral reduction of Cherry Sheet revenue that should have been paid to the Center on behalf of the City of Beverly).

Relative to the fringe and indirect cost matter, since legislative precedent does exist for a waiver, the Board had asserted that the Essex Center should be treated in the same fashion. Relative to the Cherry Sheet matter, the Board had asserted that the process cannot be unilaterally altered, especially with certain legislation and an intermunicipal agreement in place. The Senator commented that he is interested in assisting the Center on both fronts and will be in touch with the Sheriff and the Board as necessary as the process unfolds.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Cape Ann Emergency Planning Team Meeting

I attended the subject meeting in Manchester on January 8, 2015. The meeting featured a discussion regarding an emergency drill that is planned in Gloucester for the early summer.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

O. Other Items

(1) Town Administrator Vacation Leave

I was out of the office on vacation leave for part of the day on December 23, 2014 and all day on December 24, 2014. I was also out of the office all day on January 5 and 6, 2015.

(2) Christmas Holiday

The office was closed on December 25, 2014 in observance of the subject holiday.

(3) New Year's Holiday

The office was closed on January 1, 2015 in observance of the subject holiday.

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