



## Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of January 26, 2015

Report covers from January 10, 2015 to January 23, 2015

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

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### A. Town Department Reports/Requests

#### (1) First Meeting of the Bicentennial Committee

I recently reached out to all thirteen members of the new Bicentennial Committee to suggest that they start planning for an initial meeting. After the group had arrived at a date and time (January 28, 2015), Committee Member Symmes developed an initial agenda and provided it to the Town Clerk for posting. I also learned that David Gabor will serve as the Committee's representative for the Essex Historical Society. Since he was originally appointed as a separate member, the total membership is now twelve.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary.

#### (2) Request for Determination of Applicability, 1 Robbins Island Road

The Conservation Commission had initially taken up the Town's Request for Determination of Applicability regarding the proposed demolition of the structure at 1 Robbins Island Road on January 6, 2015. At that time, the Commission asked that I prepare a detailed summary of the steps that we take to prepare for and conduct a typical demolition, along with the regulations that we work under. I provided the Commission with that information in advance of their January 20, 2015 meeting and attended that meeting to discuss the Town's application further. Should the Commission vote to issue a negative determination, the project can proceed in the spring without further wetlands permitting. The usual environmental controls must be put in place and any conditions must be followed when the work is underway.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary.

### B. Computer Systems

#### (1) Continued Migration of Users to Virtual Desktop Environment

After I migrated the last two users of the Town Hall Foyer computer system to the new, virtual desktop platform, I moved on to other systems in Town Hall. To date, I have migrated three other, single-user workstations within the Town Clerk's and the Treasurer/Collector's offices (for a total of six workstations and nine users). I will continue with Town Hall migrations and will then move to the Water Filtration Plant. The planned migration of the Planning Board Clerk required me to purchase a new monitor with speakers, since the system she will be coming from is a laptop.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary. Total time – 9 hours.

(2) Setup of Computer System for New Council on Aging Director

The Council on Aging had purchased several new computer systems in the past and, now that a Director has been hired, has provided one of the systems to her. The system had not been set up for initial use and I was able to configure the system, install Office, antivirus, and other software prior to her first day.

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

**C. Personnel**

No items.

**D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects**

(1) Northern Conomo Point Planning Update (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board signed a contract with Copley-Wolff for final planning assistance concerning the northern area of Conomo Point. The Chairman of the Conomo Point Planning Committee (CPPC) was subsequently in touch with Consulting Planner Jim Heroux about the overall approach to this assignment and Mr. Heroux met with the CPPC and the CPPC Design Subcommittee on January 22, 2015.

*Recommendation:* **Board discussion as necessary.**

(2) Additional Change Order for Town Hall/Library Project

Recently, one component of the new fire alarm system has been creating a fault in the system due to its placement in the bell tower, which is an area that can get very windy and cold. At the last meeting, the Board agreed that the issue should be fixed right away and asked whether the recommended solution of locating the equipment remotely, in a heated space was the only solution (as opposed to perhaps finding equipment that is rated for outdoor use). I have learned from our architect and our contractor, with the consent of the Fire Chief, that the components in question are not actually required in that area (since it is not occupied). As such, our electrician will simply remove the equipment for an amount less than what would have been required for the remote solution.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

(3) Town Hall Exterior Renovation Cost Estimate Update (\*)

Project Manager Dave Lager of NETCO has retained the services of McGinley Kalsow Associates as the architectural subcontractor that will assist NETCO with the development of a detailed cost estimate for the next round of Town Hall work. In order to deliver an accurate cost estimate, it will be important for a trained

professional to carefully review the condition of the building's exterior. It is quite possible that renovation work will be required in areas that cannot be directly observed and a lift will be used for the architect to closely investigate siding, trim, roofing, flashing, and other members. The goal is to anticipate issues that may be lurking behind the facade so that the cost to deal with such things is figured into the original cost estimate. Presently, I expect that the architect will be bringing in a lift and conducting his investigation during the week of January 26, 2015.

*Recommendation:* **Board discussion as necessary.**

## **E. Insurance**

### (1) MIIA Rewards Program Webinar

I participated in the subject webinar on January 14, 2015. The presenter described the various ways to earn insurance premium credits as part of the MIIA Rewards Program. I will cover various program aspects with applicable department heads and will encourage as much participation as possible.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

### (2) Annual Boiler Inspections

Our insurer's boiler inspector inspected both the Town Hall steam boiler and the boiler at the Fire/Police Headquarters on January 21, 2015. The inspector found an issue with a component of the Town Hall steam boiler and indicated that he would not prompt the State to issue a new certificate until repaired. I contacted our heating contractor that same day and the repair will be made in the near future.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## **F. Facilities**

### (1) Town Hall/Library Generator Load Test

Our electrician and our generator vendor load tested the new Town Hall/Library backup generator on January 23, 2015 (after the printing of this report). Should any issues have arisen, I will report those to the Board. Otherwise, the generator is ready for permanent operation and will automatically start and provide power in the event of a power outage. It took just shy of two years from the time of application for the Federal grant that defrayed much of the cost for this piece of equipment to the time it was placed into operation (due to the grant selection process taking more than a year).

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary at this time.

## G. Fiscal/Budget

### (1) Potential Increase to Town Planner's Wage Budget (\*)

Given that the Town Planner will be very active in the Town's strategic planning effort should that effort commence in earnest during FY16, the process would benefit from the Planner having more hours to work. Presently, his position is budgeted for 5 hours per week. I have discussed this possibility with the Planner and he feels that he could take on two or three additional hours per week without creating any issues for his schedule.

**Recommendation: Board discussion relative to whether a budget addendum should be submitted to the Finance Committee asking for additional Town Planner hours in the fiscal year 2016 budget.**

### (2) School Budget Discussion Group Meeting (\*)

I attended the subject meeting along with officials from Manchester and the Regional School District on January 21, 2015. The purpose of the meeting was to prepare for the final FY16 School District operating public hearing to be held January 27, 2015. Both boards of selectmen, both finance committees, and the Regional School Committee will be in attendance and the School Committee plans to vote on the final budget at a subsequent meeting on February 3, 2015. Generally, the group agreed that a total 1.65M increase to the town assessments is necessary to correct a structural deficit related to sharp enrollment increases in recent years.

**Recommendation: Board discussion as necessary.**

### (3) Requested Increase to Fire Engineers' Annual Stipend (\*)

As the Board is aware, the Town has three Fire Engineers, one of which serves as the Fire Chief. The Fire Chief receives a larger annual stipend than the two other Engineers, who each make \$1,180 as of this fiscal year. The Fire Department has requested an increase to \$1,400 each for fiscal year 2016.

**Recommendation: Board vote, acting in its capacity as the Personnel Board, to approve the increase to \$1,400 as of July 1, 2015.**

## H. Complaints

No items.

## I. Meetings Attended

### (1) Informal Department Heads Meeting

I hosted the subject meeting on January 22, 2015 as I do from time to time. The meeting featured updates from various department heads regarding ongoing issues

and initiatives. The group was able to welcome our new Council on Aging Director, Kristin Crockett.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

(2) Massachusetts Municipal Association Annual Meeting

I attended the subject meeting along with Selectmen O'Donnell and Coviello on January 23 and 24, 2015 in Boston. The meeting featured a variety of useful presentations and workshops, along with excellent networking opportunities that provide perspective about what other communities are undertaking with respect to areas of common interest.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

**J. Final Judgment**

No items.

**K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations**

(1) Review of Potential Topics for Annual Town Meeting (\*)

Now that the budget has been submitted for review, it will be useful to begin discussion relative to potential Annual Town Meeting article topics. The Board has a preliminary list that will serve as a good starting point.

*Recommendation:* **Board discussion relative to the preliminary list of topics.**

**L. Legal Issues**

No items.

**M. Grants**

(1) Regional Substance Abuse Prevention Grant Application

At the last meeting, the Board signed a Memorandum of Understanding among the City of Gloucester, the City of Beverly, the Town of Rockport, the Town of Manchester, and the Manchester Essex Regional School District pledging collaboration with respect to the subject grant. If the grant is awarded to the group by the Department of Public Health, it will be focused on preventing substance abuse among youth in the various communities.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) District Local Technical Assistance Grant

At the last meeting, the Board discussed with others a recent application to the subject grant program that is administered by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). If funded, the grant would provide technical assistance to the Town regarding the process for developing a strategic plan. We expect to hear back from MAPC relative to funding status in the coming weeks.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary.

**N. Emergency Planning**

(1) Regional Dispatch Center Finance Advisory Board Meeting

I attended the subject meeting on January 16, 2015 as a member of the Finance Advisory Board. Executive Director Tom Dubas has announced that he will be retiring at the end of January. The Center's Deputy Director, Chris Ryan, will run the Center until a replacement is found. The Center's Finance Director presented a draft, fiscal year 2016 operating budget proposal and will have a revised proposal for a public hearing at the Board's February meeting. The budget will be built with the expectation that the City of Beverly's contractual obligation must be honored (the City has decided not to move operations to the Center) and that pending legislation will provide relief from several State chargebacks.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary.

**O. Other Items**

(1) Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

The office was closed on January 19, 2015 in observance of the subject holiday.

*This report is available at [www.essexma.org](http://www.essexma.org) on the morning after any regularly scheduled Essex Board of Selectmen's Meeting.*