



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of January 30, 2012

Report covers from January 7, 2012 to January 27, 2012

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Appointment of Shellfish Constable to Shellfish Advisory Comm. (*)

At the Board's meeting of January 9, 2012 meeting, the Board asked me to review whether the Shellfish Constable was eligible to be appointed to the Shellfish Advisory Commission. I reviewed the bylaw and found nothing limiting the makeup of the members of the Commission.

Recommendation: Board vote to appoint William Knovak to the Shellfish Advisory Commission.

(2) Community Preservation Committee Considerations

As the Board may recall, the Community Preservation Committee will be receiving a "refresher" presentation from Town Counsel on January 31, 2012. A number of specific questions have arisen that Counsel will also help to address. Specifically, Counsel will school the Committee on the requirement and timeline for a referendum vote (in addition to a Town Meeting vote) should the Committee recommend an increase in the Community Preservation Act surcharge percentage (we have confirmed that a referendum *is* required). Also, Counsel will cover how Community Preservation Act funding may be used for affordable housing purposes at Conomo Point. If such a use is desired, it would likely come in the form of a purchase of a permanent affordable housing restriction under certain terms and conditions.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

B. Computer Systems

(1) Police Incident System Revisions

The Chief of Police wanted to add some incident and action codes to the subject system, which was developed by a private software vendor in Microsoft Access some years ago. I was able to find the necessary tables and I made the requested changes.

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

C. Personnel

(1) Informal Department Heads Meeting

I coordinated the subject meeting in my office on January 18, 2012. From time to time, the various department heads have been getting together to coordinate various activities and initiatives. The meeting featured discussion regarding the ongoing need for improved Town buildings and our present investigation of hosted IT services, among other items.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Comments Regarding Draft Final Town Building Feasibility Study Report

As the Board may recall, the Town Building Committee had been working on compiling final comments regarding the subject draft report. Final comments were transmitted to our consultant during the week of January 9, 2012 and we are presently awaiting the final document.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Next Steps Regarding Northern Conomo Point Subdivision Planning (*)

At the Board's meeting of January 9, 2012 meeting, the Board agreed that a joint meeting should be held on January 26, 2012 with the Conomo Point Planning Committee to develop guidance for our subdivision planning consultant, the Horsley Witten Group. The meeting occurred as planned with Horsley Witten in attendance to present the results of task 1 (the existing conditions report).

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(3) Consideration of Southern Conomo Point Subdivision Requirements (*)

Now that the appeals period regarding the recent approval of the Southern Conomo Point Subdivision has expired without appeal, it is necessary to review the various requirements and conditions expressed in the Planning Board's written decision. To that end, I have received a proposal that would provide a cost estimate for all aspects of the required physical alterations to the area. The Board is considering an article at the Annual Town Meeting to potentially fund these alterations.

Recommendation: **Board discussion regarding the various requirements and next steps, including potential funding for the necessary cost estimation work.**

(4) Second Year YMCA Summer Camp Contract

The YMCA is already working to develop and advertise a summer camp program for the summer of 2012 and the Board voted back in October to enter into a contract for a second year. As such, I produced a second year contract that is identical to the first year contract with the exception of the dates. The YMCA provided two originals for the Board to countersign and the contract has now been fully executed. Soon, we will be posting a link on the Town's homepage directing interested parties to the YMCA's site for information and registration.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(5) Quotations for Update of Southern Conomo Point Values (*)

At the Board's meeting of January 9, 2012, the Board agreed that I should solicit quotations for the update of the land and land plus improvement appraisal values of all of the properties in the southern Conomo Point subdivision. This action is being taken in preparation for the Town Meeting's consideration of the potential sale of the properties in May and the Board desires a mid-April delivery date. Requests for Quotations were released to three vendors on January 12, 2012 and the deadline for quotations was January 26, 2012. A fourth vendor coincidentally requested the Town to keep his firm on our vendors list the day of the release and I offered the Request for Quotations to him as well. We received a total of two responses, with the lowest price (\$16,400) being offered by Tyburski Appraisal Corporation. I have developed a contract for the Board's consideration and signature.

Recommendation: **Signature of contract with Tyburski Appraisal Corporation.**

(6) Successor Solid Waste Contract

The Superintendent of Public Works and I have begun to work on the potential for a successor solid waste disposal contract with Covanta with an eye toward necessary Annual Town Meeting votes and an effective contract date of January 1, 2013. Thus far, we have reviewed the contract that exists today and the Superintendent has reached out to Covanta to firm up pricing. The Town will keep its favorable rate through next December and the jump to new pricing will therefore occur in the middle of fiscal year 2013. It is likely that a formal contract will be put together later this year, after Town Meeting considers granting authority to enter into an extended agreement.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(7) Permanent Pole Moves, Essex Causeway

As the Board may recall, National Grid had planned to permanently relocate several utility poles opposite the new seawall by mid-December, 2011 (poles are moving slightly, into permanent positions). However, due to a recent

restructuring within the company, the work was not completed on schedule. I have been in contact with the new project manager and he is presently considering the new schedule and will report back to me.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

E. Insurance

(1) Marine Insurance Coverage

At the Board's meeting of January 9, 2012, the Board approved an application to our insurer for an analysis and quotation regarding a marine insurance policy (coverage that our standard policy does not include). Our insurer is presently working on a quotation.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

F. Facilities

(1) Short-Term Steam Boiler Recommendation

(*)

Our consulting mechanical engineer has specified an appropriate steam boiler replacement if the Town is going to replace the existing Town Hall boiler outright versus tearing down the existing boiler and rebuilding it. He suggested that the cost to replace is roughly double the cost to repair. However, the repair would be to a very old boiler which may experience other problems after the repair. I asked our heating oil provider for "ballpark" pricing on both options. Since our engineer and our provider both agree that other sections should be replaced as a precaution if the system is torn down, the cost for tear down would likely only be \$3,000 to \$4,000 less than outright replacement. Under the energy conservation statutes, we are allowed to have our provider conduct whichever option is chosen.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to the preferred choice of remedial action.**

(2) Fire Alarm System Inspection and Testing

Our fire alarm testing contractor tested the systems in the Town Hall, the DPW Barn, and the Water Filtration Plant during the week of January 16, 2012. The only issue that was reported was that of a faulty hand-pull station at the DPW Barn. The DPW is aware of the problem and will have the station replaced.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(3) Senior Center Elevator Problem

The Chairman of the Council on Aging informed me during the week of January 16, 2012 that the elevator in the Senior Center was moving up and down to each of its two stops but that the doors were not opening at either stop. As such, I

contacted our elevator contractor and the problem was found to be a cold machine room (it had recently been very cold). If the temperature drops too low in the machine room, the hydraulic oil does not perform as it should. I will review the matter with the Chairman of the Council on Aging and we will implement a solution for the future (which may just include better air circulation in extremely cold weather).

Recommendation: No further action is necessary at this time.

G. Fiscal/Budget

(1) Regional School District Budget Discussion

(*)

Selectman Coviello, Finance Committee Chairman Souldard, and I met with Manchester and Regional School District officials on January 13, 2012 to further discuss the FY13 School District budget. The group discussed each entity's budget status and major issues in addition to discussing how efficiencies such as regional information/technology sharing might be arrived at among the entities. I have introduced both the Town of Manchester and the Regional School District to the director of the Melrose datacenter in the event that the center might provide such opportunity.

Also, a community forum regarding the budget was held on January 24, 2012 at the Essex Elementary School and featured reports from each of the two towns and the Regional School District relative to major budget issues facing each entity.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(2) Budget for Printed Materials for Historical Promotion/Interpretation

At the Board's meeting of January 9, 2012 meeting, the Board reviewed a request from a group to help fund a brochure that would promote and interpret historical sites in the Town. The Board offered \$100 at this time and asked me to coordinate with the Historical Commission on whether the Commission favored a \$1,000 budget line for FY13. That budget would allow the Commission to produce or to collaborate on the production of printed materials that would help to promote and interpret the Town's historic resources for the public. The Chairman of the Historical Commission agreed that such a budget would be a very welcome tool. As such, I provided the Chairman of the Finance Committee and the Town Accountant with a request for that funding, along with a request for administrative funding to cover expenses associated with the new Demolition Delay Bylaw.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(3) Review of Draft Fiscal Year 2011 Audit

The Town Accountant and I reviewed the draft audit after its release during the week of January 9, 2012. I provided some very minor comments reflecting our

presently-expected bridge lease tallies and the Town Accountant will work with appropriate personnel to respond to several recommendations made in the draft Management Letter. No material findings were made. The final audit document will be made available in the near future.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

H. Complaints

(1) Configuration of Village Corner Streetscape

The owner of a commercial building abutting the Village corner area of Martin Street was not satisfied with the final slopes adjacent to the building due to safe access concerns. As such, MassDOT was willing to attend a meeting involving Selectman O'Donnell and myself along with the building owner and another abutter on January 11, 2012. The group discussed a variety of issues that converge in that area that make it difficult to correct any one issue without adversely affecting others. Selectman O'Donnell and I met with MassDOT officials, the project's design engineer, and the Building Inspector on January 27, 2012 to review compliance matters further. We plan to invite two abutters to another meeting in the near future to explain what we have learned before any further action is taken.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

I. Meetings Attended

(1) Final Interviews for Director of New Regional Dispatch Center

I attended the subject interviews for two final candidates along with Chief Silva and Chief Doucette on January 9, 2012. All three Regional Emergency Communications Center (RECC) boards were convened for the occasion (I serve on the Finance Advisory Board, Chief Silva serves on the Police Advisory Board, and Chief Doucette serves on the Fire Advisory Board). After the interviews, the members of the various boards provided input as a group and each individual board will meet to arrive at individual recommendations.

The Executive Board (comprised of the chairs of the three above-mentioned boards) voted to hire Mr. Thomas Dubas at a meeting held on January 19, 2012. Mr. Dubas managed the construction of a successful center in Pennsylvania and has been the director of that center for many years. The group was also informed that construction of the new building is moving along on schedule due to the mild winter that we have been experiencing and that framing steel has arrived on the site.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Massachusetts Municipal Association Annual Meeting and Trade Show

I attended the subject event in Boston from January 20-23, 2012 along with Selectman O'Donnell. The event featured many useful presentations and networking opportunities relevant to municipal management, including interaction with various attorneys from Town Counsel and with various representatives of some of our current vendors.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

J. Final Judgment

No items.

K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

(1) Conomo Point Public Forum

I attended the subject forum along with the Board of Selectmen, the Finance Committee, and the Conomo Point Planning Committee on January 17, 2011. The forum featured presentations regarding the Selectmen's Comprehensive Statement on Conomo Point, the Conomo Point Consolidated Calendar, and Public Access Planning. The forum concluded with a question and answer period and was run by the Town Moderator.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Revised Draft of Annual Town Meeting Warrant (*)

I have revised the draft Annual Town Meeting Warrant based upon guidance provided by the Board at its meeting of January 9, 2012 and, concerning the Town's Flood Plain Bylaw, based upon guidance from Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) staff. The Flood Plain Bylaw changes are necessary due to the anticipated release of new FEMA flood maps and I have provided the recommended language to the Planning Board for inclusion in an upcoming public hearing.

Recommendation: **Further Board discussion relative to the revised draft.**

L. Legal Issues

(1) Quarterly Review of Executive Session Minutes

Chairman Jones and I conducted the subject review during the week of January 16, 2012. One set of minutes was suitable for public release at this time.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

M. Grants

(1) Boardwalk Feasibility Study Update

(*)

Since the Board's meeting of January 9, 2012, Salem State University has been approved by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) as a subcontractor to the Town's Seaport Bond Bill grant concerning the proposed boardwalk. We have also received a detailed engineering proposal from Vine Engineering and I am in the process of getting Vine approved as an additional subcontractor to the project. Representatives from Salem State and Vine Engineering toured the site of the boardwalk on January 13, 2012 to continue planning the execution of the project.

The Vine proposal has been shared with the Long Term Planning Committee and I will soon provide the proposal to DCR to begin the process of getting Vine approved for work as a subcontractor to the Town.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(2) Community Innovation Challenge Grant

At the Board's meeting of January 9, 2012, the Board approved a local support form for the Town of Melrose's application for a Community Innovation Challenge (CIC). CIC grants are offered by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Administration and Finance and may carry sizeable awards since the program intends to set up models and systems with State-wide implications. Melrose is applying for \$500,000 to increase the capacity and redundancy of their municipal data center, which they hope to increasingly offer to smaller communities to host information/technology functions. I have reached out to Senator Tarr and Representative Ferrante relative to the benefits of this funding to Essex.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

N. Emergency Planning

(1) Update to Essex Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)

(*)

Given our ever-changing environment with respect to information/technology planning, it was necessary to update the Town's COOP by incorporating recent developments.

Recommendation: **Board approval of the revised COOP.**

O. Other Items

(1) Town Administrator Leave

I was out of the office on vacation leave on January 23, 24, and 25, 2012.

(2) Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

The office was closed on January 16, 2012 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.*