



## Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of February 23, 2015

Report covers from February 7, 2015 to February 20, 2015

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

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### A. Town Department Reports/Requests

#### (1) Town Building Committee Meeting (\*)

I attended the Town Building Committee meeting on February 17, 2015 along with Selectman O'Donnell, who chairs the Committee. The meeting featured a discussion relative to the Town's recent hiring of a Project Manager and the Manager's recent choice of an architectural subcontractor to help prepare a detailed exterior renovation cost estimate for Annual Town Meeting in May. The Committee understands that, should the exterior renovation (and related items) project be funded by the Town Meeting, they will have a role in the choice of designers. The Committee discussed a number of important factors relating to the potential passage of the next phase of Town Hall work and asked if the Selectmen could define the Committee's role going forward.

**Recommendation: Board discussion relative to the upcoming Town Hall renovation vote and the role of the Town Building Committee going forward.**

#### (2) Regional Sediment Management Core Group

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) are assembling the subject Group to help guide the future of sediment management in Northeastern Coastal Massachusetts. At the last meeting, the Board appointed Selectman O'Donnell to the Group. I provided that information to DCR and have asked the agency to provide additional information concerning this new effort to Selectman O'Donnell.

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

#### (3) Development of Strategic Planning Committee (\*)

The Board has discussed a transition from the Town's Long Term Planning Committee to a new, Strategic Planning Committee (SPC). The SPC could be comprised of members of various Town boards and committees and could be guided by the Town Planner and, potentially, State technical assistance. Presently, the Long Term Planning Committee is finishing up a project concerning the character-defining resources of the Town and the Town Planner is working to prepare the Town for the Green Community designation. I will have a coordination role in the transition and in the ongoing work of the SPC.

**Recommendation: Board discussion relative to the timing of the transition and the makeup of the new SPC.**

## B. Computer Systems

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

Once all Town Hall users were migrated to the new, virtual desktop platform, I began to work with each user to eliminate any duplicate or unneeded files in order to make the most efficient use of disk space. Subsequently, I began to prepare for user migrations in the Department of Public Works (computer systems at the Water Filtration Plant).

To date, I have migrated 2 other, single-user workstations within the Department of Public Works' offices (for a grand total of twelve workstations and sixteen users). I have temporarily suspended migrations since I want to work with users in the DPW to test the zero-client connection method versus an alternative method. If the alternative method proves to provide a better user experience, we may move to that method for users in the DPW office and in the fire and police offices. Presently, I am awaiting the arrival of alternative hardware. After I complete the DPW migrations (all in the Water Plant), I will move to the Fire and Police Headquarters.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary. Total time – 5 hours.

### (2) Information/Technology Component of Fiscal Year 2014 Audit

As our auditor continues to finalize our fiscal year 2014 audit, an information/technology specialist from the firm asked me to provide various output concerning password policies and user account status/privileges. I provided the requested output and answered a wide variety of IT-related questions during the week of February 16, 2015. The Town Accountant and the Town Treasurer assisted with questions about our vendor-hosted applications.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## C. Personnel

### (1) Further Discussion Relative to Chief of Police's 2015 Goals (\*)

The Chief of Police presented his proposed calendar year 2015 goals to the Board at the last meeting. The Board asked that the topic be placed on the agenda for the present meeting for further discussion (to allow the members to digest and consider that content).

***Recommendation:* Further Board discussion relative to the Chief's calendar year 2016 goals.**

### (2) Town Landing Boat Ramp Attendant

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that an attendant should be posted at the Town Landing on weekends for the upcoming boating season to both direct

launching traffic and to collect a \$20 fee from non-resident users. The work will involve varying hours of service, since launching tends to follow the tidal cycle.

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

(3) Open House Highlighting Elected and Appointed Positions (\*)

As discussed previously, the Board was interested in working with a local organization to offer an open house highlighting the various elected and appointed positions in the community. Participants could learn more about how the Town runs and could contribute new energy and new ideas. If such an event is offered, it will need to occur in advance of the deadline to obtain election papers, which is March 19, 2015.

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

#### **D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects**

(1) Release of RFP for Sale of 5 Beach Circle

The subject RFP was advertised and released on February 18, 2015 and proposals are due no later than noon on March 23, 2015 (the day of a Board meeting). The RFP solicits interest in the purchase of a vacant parcel of land at Conomo Point (5 Beach Circle) for a minimum price of \$385,000. A pre-bid conference will be offered in the Essex Library at 10:00 a.m. on March 4, 2015. All parties are welcome to submit a proposal and can receive the RFP by visiting our office or e-mailing me at [bzubricki@essexma.org](mailto:bzubricki@essexma.org).

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

(2) Northern Conomo Point Design Update / Hiring of Public Affairs Expert(\*)

The Design Subcommittee of the Conomo Point Planning Committee met with Designer Jim Heroux of Copley-Wolff on February 19, 2015. The Subcommittee focused on Mr. Heroux's design work thus far and provided important guidance from the full Committee and the Selectmen from a discussion held on February 11, 2015. At the meeting, Mr. Heroux provided a detailed outline of what his work will entail.

Also, on February 17, 2015, Conomo Point Planning Committee Chairman Mark Lynch and I spoke with Public Affairs Specialist Regina Villa. Ms. Villa could be hired as a resource to help focus the Selectmen's and Planning Committee's message relative to the future for the northern area of Conomo Point. Ms. Villa felt that, if she could be engaged with our designer and with the policy boards during the design process, she would be able to help focus the message. She will provide the Town with a proposal for services by meeting time.

*Recommendation:* **Board discussion relative to progress to date and consideration of Ms. Villa's proposal.**

(3) Draft Essex River Encroachment Elimination Plan

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Our consulting engineer has completed work on the subject draft plan. The plan reviews the various alternatives that the Town considered to eliminate encroachments in the Essex River and highlights the chosen course of a sixty-foot realignment. If the Board is satisfied with the draft document, I can work with our engineer to finalize and submit it to the Army Corps of Engineers for consideration.

**Recommendation: Board vote to finalize the plan and have it submitted to the Army Corps of Engineers.**

(4) Regional Study and Appeal of FEMA Flood Maps

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that we should reach out to surrounding communities to potentially develop a regional effort to study and appeal the FEMA flood maps in our area. I am working with Town Planner Matt Coogan to determine whether the City of Gloucester and the Town of Manchester are interested in this partnership. Presently, it is my understanding that both communities have interest.

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

(5) Request for Qualifications for Design Services Relative to Legion Building

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that I should work with the Essex Historical Society and Shipbuilding Museum to develop a RFQ for design services, pursuant to the Designer Selection Law, for specification of repairs to the Legion Building. The RFQ process will allow the Town to solicit interest in the project and to get a cost proposal from the successful bidder. The bidder will know that they are bidding at their own risk, since no funding is presently available. The cost figure that we get from the process can be used to inform the Community Preservation Committee what the design phase will cost. Presently, the RFQ is scheduled for release on February 25, 2015, with a site visit on March 11, 2015 and a proposal deadline of March 18, 2015. It is possible that a cost estimate from the successful proposer can be provided by early April.

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

(6) Downtown Boardwalk Permitting Update

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Town Counsel has reviewed the potential for the placement of restaurant seating on the proposed boardwalk with permitting officials from the DEP. Since the structure would be new, it is not possible to permit non-water dependent use (restaurant seating) on it. It may be possible, however, to apply for a modification of the necessary Chapter 91 permit after the structure has been constructed and is in use.

**Recommendation: Board discussion as necessary.**

## **E. Insurance**

No items.

## **F. Facilities**

### (1) Town Hall Exterior Renovation Cost Estimate Update

Our Project Manager's architectural subcontractor has not yet had the chance to survey the exterior of the Town Hall/Library building due to the unprecedented snowfall. We hope to have the site cleared for a lift later in February or in March. An architect did visit me on February 12, 2015, however, to survey the interior features of the building. Mechanical and structural engineers had previously visited the building to collect their own data relative to interior features. During the architect's visit, I discussed the major goals of this next phase of renovation work and our Project Manager continues to coordinate the development of the cost estimate. I will meet with our Project Manager and the principal from the subcontracted architectural firm to solidify goals and planning on February 23, 2015.

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

### (2) Town Hall End Wall Instability Repair Project Update

The structural repairs to the east end wall of the Town Hall building had been in a waiting mode until the necessary reinforcing steel members could be custom fabricated and then welded in place. That work was completed during the week of February 9, 2015 and our contractor is presently preparing to install new studs for the construction of a replacement, insulated interior wall. Eventually, the contractor will remove the temporary reinforcement members from the exterior of the building.

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

## **G. Fiscal/Budget**

No items.

## **H. Complaints**

No items.

## **I. Meetings Attended**

No items.

## **J. Final Judgment**

No items.

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

### (1) Draft Annual Town Meeting Warrant (\*)

I have produced a preliminary draft of the Annual Town Meeting Warrant, in accordance with the draft list of topics that have been discussed over the past few meetings.

*Recommendation:* **Board review of this preliminary document.**

### (2) Review of History Concerning Greenhead Fly Trap Boxes (\*)

At the last meeting, a resident inquired as to whether the Board would support an article at the Annual Town Meeting for the acquisition and deployment of new greenhead fly trap boxes. The Board asked me to research the number and geographic distribution of the boxes that the Town had in place in the past.

I learned from long-time Conservation Commission member that, in the distant past, the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife deployed the boxes and used the harvested dead flies to feed trout in fish hatcheries to acclimate the trout to a wild food source prior to release. However, that program was discontinued when staffing was cut. In the 1980's the Essex Lion's Club built new boxes and sold them to private property owners for deployment and self-maintenance. However, the Lion's Club no longer offers that service and has not done so for many years. The boxes are effective but the Town does not have the personnel available to commit to the ongoing deployment and maintenance issues, even if some were purchased.

Further, I contacted the Northeast Massachusetts Mosquito Control District and learned that the District does offer a separate, subsidiary program for greenhead fly control. I am waiting to see if that is a program available to us since we are not a member of the District. The subsidiary is known as the North Shore Greenhead Fly Control Project and I should know by meeting time whether we can participate and generally what the cost might be.

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

## **L. Legal Issues**

No items.

## **M. Grants**

No items.

## **N. Emergency Planning**

### (1) Legislative Breakfast Regarding Regional Dispatch Center Matters

I attended the subject breakfast for legislators (including Senator Tarr and Representative Brad Hill) on February 13, 2015 at the Regional Dispatch Center in Middleton. As the Board may recall, the Center is in need of assistance relative to the pursuit of a permanent waiver of the usual State fringe benefit and indirect cost chargebacks (similar to what other regional centers have enjoyed). The Center is also in need of assistance relative to the provision of the City of Beverly's Cherry Sheet revenue. This revenue is part of the City's contractual obligation to the Center even though the City is not likely going to transition its operations to the Center as originally planned. At the breakfast, the various legislators who were assembled had the chance to ask many questions about the matters at hand, along with general questions concerning the Center. We are hopeful that legislative intervention may be employed to keep the Center in the best possible financial position.

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

### (2) Regional Dispatch Center Finance Advisory Board Meeting

I attended the subject meeting on February 20, 2015 as a member of the Board. In keeping with the rotation of officials chairing the Board, the membership elected me as Chairman for the upcoming calendar year. This role also means that I will now serve on the Executive Board for the Center as well. The Finance Advisory Board held its usual public hearing regarding next fiscal year's operating budget (FY16) and voted to accept a budget that anticipates legislative relief regarding some key factors that will assist with the balancing process. The meeting also featured a discussion relative to the search for a new Executive Director since the former Director, Tom Dubas, recently retired.

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

## **O. Other Items**

### (1) Presidents' Day Holiday

The office was closed on February 16, 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.*