



## Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of April 7, 2014

Report covers from March 22, 2014 to April 4, 2014

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

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### A. Town Department Reports/Requests

#### (1) Beach Circle Site Visit and Joint Meeting with Conomo Pt. Plng. Comm.

At the last meeting, the Board asked that I set up a site visit at Beach Circle on Conomo Point on Saturday, April 12, 2014 at 9:00 a.m. The Selectmen and the members of the Conomo Point Planning Committee (CPPC) intend to walk the area so that they can later deliberate on the appropriate future of the area (sales versus Town use) at the Selectmen's meeting of April 14, 2014. The Chairman of the CPPC has confirmed both engagements.

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

#### (2) Conservation Commission Hearing

I attended a Conservation Commission hearing with Town Counsel on April 1, 2014 relative to complaints that had been filed for various drainage activities in the buffer zone in a neighborhood adjacent to Chebacco Lake. The Commission had requested our assistance with this complex matter. At the hearing, Town Counsel assisted with framing the issues and taking orderly testimony from several area property owners. The Commission ultimately voted to continue the proceeding until April 29, 2014 to allow time for each member to digest the hearing testimony and to allow Town Counsel to formulate specific recommendations. I anticipate returning to that future meeting with Town Counsel to assist with coordination of the matter.

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

### B. Computer Systems

#### (1) Installation of Spillman Software for Fire Chief

As the Board is aware, the Police Department has been connecting to the Regional Dispatch Center using the Spillman software for some time now. The Police Department has access to both the Computer Aided Dispatch system and the Records Management System on both office and mobile computers. The Fire Chief recently received approval from the Center to test a text messaging system as the first use of the Spillman system by the Fire Department. As such, I installed the Spillman client software on the Chief's office computer and tested the connection. The Chief will work directly with the Center relative to the text messaging system and other fire features as they become available.

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

(2) Renewal of Antivirus Client Licenses

A portion of our client licenses for our antivirus software expire in early May. As such, I ordered and will install the license key for renewals when they arrive.

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

(3) Failure and Replacement of UPS Unit

One of our older uninterruptible power supply units powering a server and some other equipment failed completely (the unit itself, not just the battery) during the week of March 31, 2014. I had a spare complete unit and put that into service. I have ordered a replacement spare and an additional unit that will be used when we move to the new server room.

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

(4) Network Speed and Connectivity Problems

Computer users at the police and fire headquarters complained of slow computers and Internet/e-mail connectivity issues on April 2, 2014. I investigated the matter and found that the Cable I-Net router that connects that building with Town Hall had experienced some type of fault. After rebooting that device, the problem was resolved. The following day, users in that building and the Water Filtration Plant reported similar problems. I contacted a technician from Comcast and he checked equipment at the system's head-end in Gloucester, which restored normal service once again.

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

(5) Installation of ID Printer for Fire Department

The Fire Department purchased a new identification card printer to provide members of the Department with new and improved identification cards. The Department asked for my assistance with the installation of the device. I worked with the Fire Chief on April 3, 2014 to install and configure the new printer and it is working well.

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

**C. Personnel**

No items.

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

### (1) Quarterly Affirmative Marketing Report

I prepared and filed the subject report for the quarter ending March 31, 2014 with the State during the week of March 31, 2014 in my capacity as the Town's Affirmative Marketing Construction Officer (AMCO). The report is intended to document the Town's utilization of women and minority business entities on State-funded projects. No such utilization occurred during the past quarter.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

### (2) Constellation Energy Future Rates and Products

I met with Christine Creager of Constellation Energy on March 31, 2014 to discuss a variety of ongoing issues. Ms. Creager will be in attendance at the present meeting to elaborate. Generally, we discussed potential issues associated with including two additional buildings in the Town's energy efficiency retrofit project; the adoption of a strategy to lock electricity rates for future years; and potential enrollment into a program that could help the Town reduce peak capacity charges.

*Recommendation:* Discussion of these various matters with Ms. Creager at the present meeting.

## **E. Insurance**

### (1) Quarterly Building Self-Inspection Forms

I completed the subject forms during the week of March 31, 2014 for the Town Hall and the Senior Center. The forms are completed to determine if any new safety concerns have arisen in the buildings and any findings are discussed by the Safety Committee. I did not find any new concerns this quarter beyond the Town Hall being under construction and needing appropriate precautions maintained.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

### (2) MIIA Spring Conference

The Chief of Police and I attended the subject conference sponsored by our insurer on March 27, 2014. The conference covered a variety of topics including prevention of workplace violence, threat assessment, and workplace security.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

### (3) Freeze-up Prevention Logs

As the Board is aware, the Department of Public Works and the Police Department have been conducting weekend freeze-up prevention checks in each of the Town buildings over the past winter season. The monitoring program

ended March 31, 2014 and I have provided the logs to our insurer as part of the MIIA Rewards Program.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

(4) Monthly Pothole Log

I obtained the pothole log from the DPW and provided it to our insurer as part of the MIIA Rewards Program. A single pothole was reported during the month of March and was filled right away.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

**F. Facilities**

(1) Potential Installation of Parking Kiosk for Non-Resident Trailer Parking (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board asked me to investigate the possibility of installing a single, automated parking kiosk near the dirt parking lot behind the tennis courts in Memorial Park. The kiosk would accept parking fees from non-residents desiring to park vehicles with boat trailers attached.

I learned from the vendor that the City of Gloucester recently used for its new kiosks that the cost of a single kiosk would be between \$12,000 and \$14,000. The unit is available with solar power and, if credit cards are to be processed (as opposed to just cash), a cellular fee of approximately \$50 per month is also required. Further, I confirmed with Town Counsel that an appreciable parking fine could be charged for violations (detering a scenario where someone is willing to just pay the parking ticket as a proxy for a parking fee). Since the Town adopted a certain towing statute back in 1977, towing is also available as a deterrent. As such, the start-up cost for such an undertaking may be prohibitive, as compared with the payment of an hourly rate to a lot attendant during the morning launch period, or using a drop box system.

The Superintendent of Public Works is bringing this matter to the Board of Public Works on April 7, 2014 for their input, since that Board has authority over the Park. The Chief of Police has indicated that, if the Town does install a unit or otherwise regulate this type of parking, his officers will be able to patrol both the paved lot (which would be reserved for residents only) and the dirt lot (which could be used by both residents – for no fee – and non-residents – for a fee).

***Recommendation:* Board discussion relative to a variety of options available to assure that additional resident parking will become available.**

(2) Seasonal Opening of Memorial Park Restrooms

The Memorial Park restrooms opened for the season on April 1, 2014. Hours are 8:30 a.m. through 8:00 p.m., seven days, until September 30, 2014. I have informed the Chief of Police about the opening.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

**G. Fiscal/Budget**

(1) Finance Committee Final FY15 Budget Recommendation (\*)

The Finance Committee finalized its FY15 budget recommendation during the week of March 31, 2014 and it will soon be included in the Town Meeting Booklet, which will go out for printing this week. As is the case each year, it is necessary for the Selectmen to vote to recommend the budgets for both the Sewer Enterprise Fund and the Water Enterprise Fund. Also, the Committee recommends reducing the fiscal year 2015 Conomo Point Legal budget line from \$250,000 to \$200,000.

*Recommendation:* **Board vote to recommend both the Sewer Enterprise Fund and the Water Enterprise Fund budgets for fiscal year 2015 and approval of the reduction of the Conomo Point Legal budget line item.**

(2) Constellation Energy Electricity Supply Trend Webinar

I participated in the subject webinar on March 26, 2014. The webinar featured a presentation from our energy supplier relative to recent and expected trends in the underlying natural gas market that is the major driver of electricity supply prices. That market fluctuates with weather-related demands and many other factors.

Subsequently, on March 31, 2014, I met with our representative from Constellation, Christine Creager, to review the final preparations for our lighting retrofit project and to discuss the state of the supply market further. Presently, we are waiting for market prices to decrease substantially before we consider locking in supply rates that will become effective at the end of 2015.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

**H. Complaints**

No items.

**I. Meetings Attended**

(1) Meeting with Area Town Administrators/Managers

I met with various town administrators and managers in Manchester on March 25, 2014. The Manchester Town Administrator hosted the gathering in an effort to

compare and discuss various initiatives in the various communities and learn from each other's experiences. The exchange was very helpful and we plan on additional meetings in the future.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## **J. Final Judgment**

No items.

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

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

I have begun to prepare draft motions for potential use at the upcoming Annual Town Meeting on May 5, 2014.

*Recommendation:* **Preliminary Board review of the draft motions.**

## **L. Legal Issues**

### (1) Easement, Maintenance Agmt., and Restrictive Covenant, Symmes Property (\*)

As the Board may recall, the Town Meeting had in the past granted the Board the authority to grant an easement to and accept a restrictive covenant from the owners of property adjacent to Centennial Grove Road (the Symmes) who need access over a narrow parcel of Town property between the road and their own property. The property is already developed and the owners are hopeful that the Planning Board will grant an "Approval Not Required" finding on the division of the land after rights have been obtained from the Town, which will put existing structures onto separate lots.

Town Counsel has taken the Planning Board's input for limiting further development and ongoing road maintenance and is incorporating that into the necessary documents. The Symmes' attorney is also presently working with Town Counsel relative to final wording and documents will likely be available for the Selectmen's meeting of April 14, 2014. The Selectmen will be considering granting the easement and accepting the covenant and the Planning Board will be considering accepting the maintenance agreement.

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

### (2) "Friendly" Taking of Dodge Street Parcel by Eminent Domain (\*)

As the Board may recall, a past Town Meeting had granted the Board the authority to accept a small parcel adjacent to Dodge Street by gift. However, the donor passed away before that could happen and, after many years, the matter has emerged from probate. His estate has indicated that the old Town Meeting vote to

accept by gift will no longer allow the parcel to transfer in an expeditious manner due to other probate considerations and is willing to enter into a “friendly taking” by eminent domain. In this case, since the small parcel accepts drainage from public streets, no further Town Meeting involvement is necessary. Town Counsel is presently working with the Estate to get voluntary waivers from all parties who could object to the taking and either the Selectmen or the Board of Public Works will be asked to sign an order of taking at the appropriate time.

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

## **M. Grants**

### (1) Seaport Grant Quarterly Report

I prepared and submitted the quarterly report for the period ending March 31, 2014 for the Town’s downtown boardwalk feasibility study grant during the week of March 31, 2014. As the Board is aware, that project is on hold until a source for construction funding can be identified at the State level.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## **N. Emergency Planning**

### (1) Upgrade to New Version of Code Red

Our mass notification system vendor (Code Red) has created a new and improved interface on which we will create and manage new messages and notifications. I participated in training on the new system on March 31, 2014 and the system will be cut over on April 9, 2014. I will work with our vendor to post a new link at our website and to participate in testing and troubleshooting during and after the cutover.

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

## **O. Other Items**

### (1) Town Administrator Leave

I was out of the office on vacation leave on April 1, 2014.

*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.*