



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of May 4, 2009

Report covers from April 25, 2009 to May 1, 2009

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Coordination of Summer Program

I have been working with the Youth Director to prepare for the use of the Essex Elementary School by the Summer Program this coming summer. I prepared a school use protocol document for review by the school principal after an initial meeting with him and he has agreed that the document fairly represents our discussion. As such, all parties will use that protocol document as a guide to operations and it may be modified as necessary by mutual agreement. I also received permission from the principal to bring a portable storage unit onto school grounds as of May 4, 2009. The unit will be placed adjacent to the exterior of the gym and the modular classroom and will be kept locked at all times.

When camp begins, older participants will be spending time both at the school and at Memorial Park. The Youth Director and Summer Program staff will implement a safe system of walking between venues. Younger participants will remain at the school for the entire program day. Each Tuesday, the participants will board buses for field trips to a variety of beaches and recreational areas.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Community Preservation Coalition

Mr. Stuart Saginor of the Community Preservation Coalition has offered to attend a future Community Preservation Committee meeting to provide the Committee with an overall perspective regarding the Community Preservation Act. As the Board may recall, Town Counsel has already provided the Committee with a legal seminar regarding the Act and the Coalition's presentation will complement that presentation. The Coalition is presently coordinating a meeting date with the Committee and I will provide the final arrangements to the Board and other boards, commissions, and officials once they have been made in the event others wish to attend.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

B. Computer Systems

(1) High-Speed Cable Internet Connection

Comcast technicians installed the new, high-speed cable Internet connection in Town Hall on April 30, 2009. I assisted them with wiring paths and familiarized

them with our system. Internet service in Town Hall is still shared out to our other municipal buildings via the Cable I-Net system but the speed is at least thirty times faster with better bandwidth. The real advantage of the new connection is that we will be able to begin streaming our backup jobs to our disaster recovery server in Manchester, NH (our old DSL connection would not allow for that). This new connection will be paid for using the cable rate-funded Town Technology Fund and we will keep our DSL connection active as a backup.

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

(2) Water Filtration Plant Server Tape Drive Issue

The tape drive in the file server at the Water Filtration Plant experienced a corrupt driver issue during the week of April 27, 2009. This issue rendered the drive inoperative and caused a high fan speed problem. I was able to reinstall the driver package to correct the problem.

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

(3) New Merchants' Website

The Essex Merchants' Group has gone live with its new website and I have worked with our web support team to add a custom button to our homepage and have redirected the "Visiting Essex" button on our navigation bar to the new site (<http://www.visitessexma.com>).

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

C. Personnel

(1) Essex National Heritage Commission Corridor Advisory Group

At the last meeting, the Board reviewed a letter from the Essex National Heritage Commission asking for a representative of the Town to serve on the Commission's Corridor Advisory Group. This individual would assist the Commission with the implementation of the Corridor Management Plan for the Essex Heritage Scenic Byway. I presented the opportunity to both the Planning Board and the Historical Commission and I am awaiting a response.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

D. Procurement

No items.

E. Insurance

(1) OccHealth Connect Status Report

In January and May of each year I provide the subject report to our insurer as part of the MIIA Rewards Program. The report indicates whether we have experienced work-related injuries and whether any of those cases were treated by our preferred occupational health provider, Quadrant. Fortunately, no work-related injuries were experienced during this reporting period. I finalized the report and sent it to our provider for signature. Thereafter, I will file the report with our insurer.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

F. Facilities

(1) Field of Dreams Fence Covering

Just prior to the last meeting, the Superintendent of Public Works asked about a request from the Manchester Essex Little League to install protective covering material on the top of the chain link fence along both baselines at the Field of Dreams. At the last meeting, the Board indicated that the protective material should be purchased using the Grove Revolving Fund and I have since passed that information along to the Superintendent and the league for implementation.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Wind Turbine Power Generation

(*)

At the last meeting, I introduced to the Board the concept of potentially working toward the construction of a wind turbine on Town land that could generate all necessary Town government power and, eventually, create revenue from surplus power generation. The Board was in favor of taking the first steps necessary to explore the prospect further and I have since been provided with an outline of how we would proceed. The process will involve a feasibility study that is mostly grant-funded. Also, discussions with the Board of Public Works should be initiated relative to the potential re-use of the landfill property for this purpose.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to specific first steps, necessary funding, and Board of Public Works input.**

(3) Sewer Contract 3 Digital As-Built Plans

Presently, the Town has a set of hand-drafted as-built plans for the sewer work done in the contract 3 area. Our Consulting Engineer, Kelly Whalen, had been looking into the completion of the digital copy and I have again asked him about that status. I will continue to work with the Superintendent of Public Works and Mr. Whalen to acquire the digital as-built plans.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(4) Route 133 Reconstruction Project Pre-Construction Conference

MassHighway has announced that the subject conference will occur in Arlington on May 7, 2009. I will attend the conference along with Superintendent of Public Works Goodwin and, possibly, Police Chief Silva.

I have spoken to the Project Manager about the conference and about the project in general. He has indicated that we will meet each of the major players from MassHighway and the construction contractor at the meeting and we will learn about the anticipated schedule and construction protocols. The contractor will have a superintendent on the job site each day and MassHighway will have a resident engineer on site each day as well. I also will be provided with a copy of the as-bid plans and specifications for the project after the meeting.

Relative to the two major requests of the business community (the installation of conduits for future lighting and an increase in roadbed elevation in one area), the Project Manager has indicated that MassHighway is still considering both. In fact, during the week of May 4, 2009, MassHighway personnel will likely make a field visit to study the roadbed elevation issue further. If the proposal to elevate the roadbed further is feasible, MassHighway will likely implement that work via field change directives or via formal change order. The installation of lighting conduits will be considered for implementation via change order and will likely be limited to the causeway area to the extent that complex utility crossings allow.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

G. Fiscal/Budget

(1) Work Plan for North Shore HOME Consortium Funds

The North Shore HOME Consortium recently contacted us to indicate that they needed detailed information regarding the Town's planned affordable housing projects that will utilize that funding. The Town has consistently allocated our annual HOME funds to Help for Abused Women and Children (HAWC) and I referred the Consortium to HAWC's work plan.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

H. Complaints

(1) Dog Complaint Decision

At the last meeting, the Board determined that two dogs owned by a Rocky Hill Road family should be banished from the Town. I worked with Counsel on the appropriate letter informing the owners of the Board's decision and that letter was sent by the Chairman on April 30, 2009.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

I. Meetings Attended

(1) Town Building Committee

I hosted a building tour of the Town Hall and Library before the Selectmen's meeting on April 27, 2009. The Building Committee is becoming familiar with the structures that they are studying and the Fire and Police station were toured in the past. The Building Committee went on to convene a regular meeting after the tour. The next Building Committee meeting will occur on May 11, 2009.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Manchester Essex Rotary Meeting

I attended the subject meeting as the Rotary's guest speaker on April 29, 2009. The Rotary invites me in once each year to provide its membership with an update on Essex projects, initiatives, and other issues.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(3) Conomo Point Subdivision Public Forum

(*)

I attended the subject forum hosted by our planning consultants from the Horsley Witten Group on April 30, 2009 along with the Selectmen and various members of the Conomo Point Planning Committee, other public officials, and members of the public. Our consultants presented to the public three conceptual design plans associated with the potential subdivision of the land south of Robbins Island Road at Conomo Point – completing Task II of their scope of work. At the meeting, a number of those in attendance asked if our consultant's PowerPoint presentation could be made available on the Town's website and I subsequently uploaded the program as a pdf document and provided a link at the Town's homepage (www.essexma.org). Our consultant will now begin work on Task III, the preparation of a preliminary subdivision plan for the chosen concept.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to providing guidance to our consultant for the next task.**

J. Final Judgment

No items.

K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

(1) Annual Town Meeting Warrant Cable Television Preview (Cape Ann Report)

I participated in the subject cable television program along with Chairman Randall and Finance Committee Chairman Soulard on April 29, 2009. We reviewed each of the articles with host Sinikka Nogelo for the benefit of the public in preparation for the Annual Town Meeting on May 4, 2009.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Final Annual Town Meeting Motions

I have prepared the final Annual Town Meeting motions in accordance with the Board's past guidance and with my understanding of who will be reading various motions on behalf of other boards and committees. I will provide each motion reader with a written motion at the meeting.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

L. Legal Issues

No items.

M. Grants

(1) Waterfront Access Feasibility Study, Seaport Bond Bill

At the last meeting, I explained to the Board that the Executive Director of the Seaport Bond Council met with Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante and me to discuss how our riverfront public access project might get started. The Board agreed that we should approach Salem State College for assistance with writing a grant application to the Council for a feasibility study that, if funded, would be undertaken by the College. Representative Ferrante will be working to connect me with individuals who have arranged for this type of cooperative arrangement in the past. I will make contact with Salem State through those channels once established.

Also, Long Term Planning Committee Member Robert Coviello provided me with information on a Federal grant program that provides funding for the same sort of coastal access project (the Boating Infrastructure Grant Program – "BIG"). That program requires matching funds but does not prohibit State funding as the match. It is possible that we could use both the BIG program and the Bond Bill to fund the actual construction of our project in the future.

Recommendation: I will update that Board as necessary.

N. Emergency Planning

No items.

O. Other Items

(1) Potential Small Business Administration Funding

Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante recently suggested that we explore the potential for SBA funding for businesses within the Route 133 Reconstruction Project area since construction may soon discourage patronage in that area. The Representative will be working to connect me with individuals who can help us explore that funding.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

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