



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of May 5, 2014

Report covers from April 26, 2014 to May 2, 2014

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Public Safety Committee Consulting Assistance

At the last meeting, the Board authorized the Chairman of the Public Safety Committee to finalize a contract with the Essex County Fire Chief's Association for assistance with assessing the needs of the Essex Fire Department. The \$4,500 contract will allow the Committee to get professional assistance relative to the evaluation of a variety of elements important to the operation of the Fire Department. Ultimately, along with an analysis of the Police Department that is coming partially through the Department's review for the State certification process, the Committee will issue recommendations for the future operations of police, fire and EMS.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

B. Computer Systems

(1) Replacement of Cable I-Net for Building Interconnection

At the last meeting, the Board authorized me to explore and implement a new solution for interconnecting computer traffic among our various Town buildings. For the past 15 years, the Town has been provided with acceptable (but by no means robust) interconnection capabilities using a system known as the Cable I-Net. The I-Net has always been offered by our cable provider as a means to transmit cable video signals but is also capable of supporting data transmission. However, recently, system performance has become much slower than normal and, despite review by numerous technicians, the situation has only slightly improved. In addition, there will come a day soon when parts for this twenty-plus-year-old system are no longer available. At that point, the Town would be left with an abrupt interconnection problem.

In order to modernize and to avoid what is likely to be a difficult and abrupt failure at some point in the near future, I am working with Edgewater Technology to implement a new interconnection system using Comcast high-speed business drops and secure IP-sec tunnels. This modernization will be key to adequate throughput speeds for our eventual move to virtual desktops in Melrose anyway and therefore will serve multiple purposes. Further, at the signing of the present cable contract, the Town received \$20,000 for I-Net modernization if that were ever needed. I will use that fund to purchase the necessary equipment and pay fees, etc.

Presently, I am working with Comcast to upgrade our existing connection in Town Hall to a higher speed and to have two new, high-speed drops installed in the Fire/Police Headquarters and the Water Filtration Plant.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

C. Personnel

No items.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

No items.

E. Insurance

No items.

F. Facilities

(1) Water System Startup, Centennial Grove Cottage

The water system for the Centennial Grove Cottage was started up for the season by our plumbing contractor during the week of April 28, 2014. The Cottage is therefore ready for use for any special events that may arise during the upcoming season.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Asbestos Assessment Proposals

Our asbestos assessment contractor plans to visit Conomo Point with me on May 7, 2014 to review both of the houses that the Board is interested in demolishing so that accurate asbestos assessment quotations may be produced. After the initial site visit and quote preparation I will execute contracts for the actual assessment work per the Board's recent authorization.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(3) Requests for Determination of Applicability

I have recently had the opportunity to discuss with the Conservation Agent the potential to utilize the Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) process to cover the Conservation Commission's jurisdiction relative to the two house demolitions and new paving work (Cogswell Road Extension) at Conomo Point. The Agent has stated that two of the three projects (the demolition of the house at 103 Conomo Point Road and the paving work) should be applied for under the

RDA process and provided me with the information that the Commission will need to review. However, due to the complexity of the work at 138 Conomo Point Road and its proximity to the Essex River, a full Notice of Intent will be required for that project. I finalized the two RDAs and submitted them to the Commission for review at an upcoming meeting, after they had been signed by Chairman Jones. I also contacted a wetlands scientist to get a proposal for a full Notice of Intent for the project at 138 Conomo Point Road and will meet him at the site when I go out there with the asbestos assessment contractor on May 7, 2014 (see above).

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

G. Fiscal/Budget

No items.

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

(1) Potential Repairs to Route 133 Sidewalk

Over the recent winter, the sidewalk in the area of Woodman's experienced some frost heaving and some cracking. A representative from the MassDOT maintenance division met with a representative from Woodman's and me on April 30, 2014 to review the matter. While we were clearly told that this work will not be a high priority matter, it will be added to the work list and may receive some attention in the future.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

J. Final Judgment

No items.

K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

(1) Annual Town Meeting Motions

I have developed a set of final Annual Town Meeting motions for review by the Board in advance of that meeting.

Recommendation: Final Board review of the Annual Town Meeting motions as per the posted meeting agenda.

(2) Calling of Petitioned Special Town Meeting

At the last meeting, the Board tentatively considered holding a Special Town Meeting on June 5, 2014 in response to a citizens' petition for a zoning bylaw amendment. As requested by the Board, I reviewed that date with the Moderator and he will be out of Town. He is available, however, on June 3 and June 4, but June 4 will conflict with a potential Planning Board public hearing. Also, as requested, I transmitted the text of the petitioned article to the Planning Board on April 29, 2014.

Recommendation: Board selection of a date and time for the Special Town Meeting and votes to call the meeting, open the warrant, include the petitioned article, close the warrant, and sign the warrant, all as shown on the posted meeting agenda.

(3) Posting of Sign Relative to Resident Boat Trailer Parking in Municipal Lot

At the last meeting, the Board, the Superintendent of Public Work, the Chief of Police, and I reviewed the recent change to the Town's municipal parking lot regulations which prohibit parking in the center paved area by vehicles that do not display a resident or transfer station sticker. I have since worked with the Superintendent, the Police Chief, and the Town Clerk on the final design of an appropriate warning sign and the Police Department will be prepared to enforce the new rule upon its posting (within the next few weeks). Penalties may include towing or a \$300 fine.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

L. Legal Issues

(1) Wetlands Protection Act Enforcement Matter, Wood Drive

I attended the Conservation Commission's meeting of April 29, 2014 along with Town Counsel. The meeting featured the Commission's discussion of testimony that had been received at a previous public hearing and recommendations from Counsel relative to next steps. The issue involves drainage and other activities that have been performed in the buffer zone of Chebacco Lake in one particular neighborhood, without the necessary permitting. Ultimately, the Commission decided to review Counsel's final recommendation at the next meeting and expect to issue enforcement orders at that time.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Removal of Personal Property from 138 Conomo Point Road

As part of summary process for evicting former tenants and/or occupants of the Town's property at 138 Conomo Point Road, the Essex County Sheriff's Department arrived on site to begin the removal and storage process for personal property of a former occupant on May 2, 2014. However, the Department was not

able to initiate the moving process and is presently independently assessing next steps (since the process is not a Town function and is the responsibility of the Sheriff's Department).

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

M. Grants

(1) MassGIS Parcel Mapping Enhancements Project

Our Assessors' map contractor, Cartographic Associates, Inc. (CAI), was successful in working on the Town's behalf to secure \$3,000 in State grant funding in the upcoming fiscal year for improving the Town's digital tax map data. The project will make the Town's digital data (which CAI has been working on developing over the past four years) more compatible with State Geographic Information System standards.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

N. Emergency Planning

(1) Cape Ann Emergency Planning Team Meeting

I attended the subject meeting on May 1, 2014 in Essex. The meeting featured a presentation from Dr. David Driscoll of Essex, who usually participates in the medical tent at the Boston Marathon and was present for the bombing incident. He informed the group how planning for the marathon or any other planned event is often the best type of mass casualty training, since injuries of different types are bound to occur, even under the best of circumstances. His insight was very useful to the group, which is always looking to improve training and readiness.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

O. Other Items

No items.

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