



## Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of May 17, 2010

Report covers from May 1, 2010 to May 14, 2010

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

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### A. Town Department Reports/Requests

No items.

### B. Computer Systems

#### (1) Completion of Workstation Migrations

I have now concluded the migrations of the computer systems of the Treasurer/Collector and her assistant into the new Town-wide domain. Now, all users in both the Fire and Police Headquarters and the Town Hall are using the new domain – as is the disaster recovery server. The Water Filtration Plant network will be migrated into the new domain once sufficient funds are available to replace the server at that location. I will also be working to make the disaster recovery server a domain controller for active directory redundancy.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary. Total time – 6 hours.

#### (2) Replacement of Network Cable

The Selectmen's Assistant experienced a problem with connectivity to the Town Hall network. I reviewed the matter and found that the cable connecting her system to the network switch was faulty somewhere along its length (replacing the plug at both ends did not work). I ran a new cable above the ceiling and this corrected the problem.

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

### C. Personnel

#### (1) Teamsters Collective Bargaining (\*)

The management team engaged the Teamsters in continued collective bargaining on May 14, 2010.

*Recommendation:* **Board discussion in executive session.**

### D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

#### (1) Main/Martin Parking Design (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board approved a draft letter to be sent to Congressman Tierney regarding the potential for a parking design change in the vicinity of the

Main Street/Martin Street intersection since the project involves Federal funding and design standards. With the Board's concurrence, I reviewed the draft letter with MassDOT in order that the agency could be aware of and could appreciate the request in advance of the Congressman's potential involvement. MassDOT has asked that the Town first address the same text to the District Director so that the agency can do one, final review of the request, from the top down, before the Congressman is involved.

***Recommendation:* Board discussion relative to first addressing the letter to the MassDOT District Director.**

(2) Pocket Park Planning and Design Proposal (\*)

At the recent Annual Town Meeting, \$7,500 in funding was secured for the planning and design of several pocket parks in the downtown area. This amount of funding is less than what will be required to complete all planning and design tasks outlined in our designer's original draft proposal but will be sufficient to complete a pared-down design. I asked the designer to contact the Chairman of the Long Term Planning Committee to get the LTPC's input and a draft, revised proposal may be reviewed by the LTPC at their next meeting. The Board may wish to discuss whether a detailed treatment of just some of the sites is desired in contrast to a higher-level study that includes all of the sites (the present proposal). Whatever is decided, the study should at least determine whether any key timing aspects exist for all four sites in relation to the ongoing Route 133 Reconstruction work.

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

(3) Future Boardwalk Support Design (\*)

I have spoken further to a DEP employee about permitting requirements for setting pilings in place for a future boardwalk. I had previously sent him copies of the design plans and a list of the permits held by MassDOT on the causeway job. He has commented to me that our proposed project will require a Chapter 91 permit (even for just the setting of pilings) and that nothing that MassDOT presently holds will accelerate that process. A "fast track" for Chapter 91 permitting is 3-4 months according to this employee.

Also, I have discussed an alternative means of boardwalk support with Selectman O'Donnell. She has been discussing the potential use of steel brackets affixed to the new seawall with MassDOT engineers. I broached this topic with the same DEP employee and he commented that even the notion of installing steel supports on the seawall, if they would break the plane of mean high water, would require a Chapter 91 permit. However, installing anchor points on the wall now for future steel brackets would not require any permitting.

**Recommendation: Pursuit of the necessary seawall structural integrity and anchor points for the future installation of the boardwalk.**

(4) Utility Pole Relocations, Route 133 Project

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Recently, I had a conference call with National Grid representatives regarding the need to coordinate both routine pole moves and the proposed, permanent relocation of causeway poles with the construction contractor for the Route 133 Reconstruction Project.

Regarding the routine pole moves, I learned that planning for four final poles that needed additional survey marks has been completed and that the whole plan for routine poles moves is now in National Grid's Central Design office. Once Central Design has completed their review and design work, the Operations Group will conduct a site walk and plans/designs will be finalized. Thereafter, the actual pole moves will be scheduled in a coordinated fashion with the reconstruction contractor's work plan.

Regarding the permanent relocation effort, I learned that the prospect of permanent relocation looks very feasible. Additional guy wires will need to be installed and that will translate to the need for some easements from private abutters in order to keep the final pole locations behind the back of the new sidewalk. If easements cannot be obtained, poles would have to be moved to the front of the sidewalk and the job would not be as aesthetically pleasing. The design group will have a final package detailing all necessary equipment and easement locations within two to three weeks. At that time, the Selectmen could ask the Chamber of Commerce and the Merchants' Group to assist in approaching the private abutters in an effort to obtain the necessary easements.

**Recommendation: Board discussion as necessary.**

(5) Route 133 Reconstruction Project Schedule Update

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The Resident Engineer has commented that the contractor that is conducting the Route 133 Reconstruction Project will soon contact me to set up a meeting regarding what to expect for work elements in the coming season. When he is in touch with me, I plan to arrange for the Route 133 Task Force members to be present as well.

**Recommendation: Board discussion as necessary.**

(6) Roadbed Elevation Update

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The Resident Engineer for the Route 133 Reconstruction Project has indicated that the Town's proposal to elevate one section of the causeway roadbed higher than the present design height has been favorably received within MassDOT. It is likely that a final design change will be made but may be contingent upon abutters executing the necessary hold-harmless agreements and agreeing to provide labor

and materials on their property in order to meet the grading and ramping requirements of the higher roadbed elevation.

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

(7) Town Building Feasibility Study Cost Proposal (\*)

The first-ranked design firm in the selection process for the subject study has provided the Town with a cost proposal to complete the scope of work that is required by the Building Committee's Request for Qualifications. The proposal breaks down the various work elements and totals \$47,500.

*Recommendation:* **Board consideration relative to the acceptance of the proposal.**

## **E. Insurance**

(1) Monthly Pothole Log

I received from the DPW the pothole log for the month of April and forwarded that to our insurer as part of the MIIA Rewards Program. Submission of logs to our insurer will resume in the fall/winter.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

(2) OccHealth Connect Semiannual Report

I have completed the subject report in conjunction with our occupational health contractor and will soon submit it to our insurer as part of the MIIA Rewards Program. Fortunately, we have not had any work-related injuries requiring these services since the last reporting period. The report also outlines for our insurer our overall usage of our contractor for pre-employment drug and medical screenings.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## **F. Facilities**

(1) Summer Program Physical Audit

As the Board may recall, the Youth Director and I worked with consultant Rusty Harnish last season to complete an administrative audit of the Summer Program. This season, the plan is to complete an audit of the physical facilities. Mr. Harnish will meet with us at the Grove on May 25, 2010 to review the Summer Program facilities and make recommendations for improvements and/or alterations as necessary.

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

## (2) Basement Locker Room, Fire and Police Headquarters

The Town Safety Committee has been steadily assessing a water problem in the subject locker room. The problem is still present and employees are concerned about the possibility of mold affecting air quality in other parts of the building. The room in question was actually referenced by the Division of Occupational Safety (DOS) when they visited the building in 2007 to perform a comprehensive air quality audit centered around diesel exhaust management. At the time, DOS recommended that any standing water in the room be removed as rapidly as possible.

I contacted the DOS technician that handled the 2007 work and she recommended the following: a) installation of a dehumidifier, b) removing any porous materials from the floor, and c) repairing any foundation cracks (I had noted that a crack had just been found when a set of lockers were moved). She is also forwarding along to me a new DOS brochure regarding mold, its risks, and the best way to manage it. She commented that concrete is not generally a good substrate for mold growth and that the locker room is not necessarily a major air quality factor for the rest of the building. In any event, I plan to work with the Police and Fire Chiefs to implement these best practices to eliminate the locker room as a potential source of the problem.

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

## (3) Installation of Lightning Protection System, Folsom Pavilion

The new lightning protection system was installed on the Folsom Pavilion on May 10, 2010. The system is designed to take any lightning strike that hits the building and to channel it to the ground.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## (4) Centennial Grove Seasonal Preparation

The Selectmen's Assistant has coordinated the placement of two, portable toilets in the upper Grove area for the upcoming season. Also, I have begun to work with the Superintendent of Public Works regarding the deployment of the fishing docks and the new swim float. Between Town staff and the use of volunteers, we will work to cover both fishing docks in outdoor carpet and to assemble the new swim float (the float was delivered prior to last season but was never used since the movie production occupied the property last season).

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## (5) Treasurer/Collector's Office Phone Line

For many years now, the Treasurer/Collector's Office has shared a phone line with the Town Clerk's Office. However, the volume of calls to these two departments has steadily increased and a second line is necessary. The new Town Clerk will

keep the traditional Clerk's number (978-768-7111) and I was able to feed the line that carries our backup Internet signal (via DSL) to both the Treasurer/Collector and her assistant by rewiring their connections to the main phone board in the Town Hall basement. As such, the Treasurer/Collector's Office will now use that line instead (978-768-4519). The line carrying DSL is a line we pay for anyway for emergency preparedness capability and it may also be used for voice simultaneously.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

(6) Field of Dreams Maintenance

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The Manchester Essex Little League (MELL) has purchased two sets of aluminum bleachers that have been assembled and deployed. Since the new bleachers are so light, MELL proposes to mount skids on them to be able to move them around for various types of sporting events (including providing outfield seating for major games at the primary field). Usually, the new bleachers will be situated as seating for the secondary field. In addition, MELL proposes to replace all of the planks on the existing, much heavier bleachers at the primary field.

Also, the Town usually uses the baseball user fees to pay for annual fields maintenance. This year, MELL contracted for those services directly and has asked if the league can simply deduct those costs from the user fees owed for the present season.

Further, MELL is willing to purchase the materials necessary to electrify the equipment shed and the Field of Dreams concession. The labor will be donated by a licensed electrician and the Department of Public Works will dig the short trenches that are necessary. The group will coordinate these efforts in the near future.

*Recommendation:* **Board discussion relative to the bleacher plans and relative to the request to deduct field prep costs from user fees owed.**

**G. Fiscal/Budget**

(1) Proposed Finance Committee Survey

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The Finance Committee has developed a draft survey that will help them focus a public input campaign that they would like to undertake over the next year in preparation for the fiscal year 2012 budget process.

*Recommendation:* **Board review and discussion concerning the draft survey.**

(2) Baseball/Softball Field User Fees

I have contacted the Manchester Essex Little League regarding their participant enrollment in baseball and softball for the present season. The Town assesses a

\$10 per participant field use fee each season. The organization is presently tallying enrollment and will tender payment to the Town in the near future. Also see item F5, above.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

#### **H. Complaints**

No items.

#### **I. Meetings Attended**

No items.

#### **J. Final Judgment**

No items.

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

##### (1) Revision to Shellfish Regulations (\*)

The Shellfish Advisory Commission reviewed proposed shellfish regulation changes at its meeting of May 4, 2010. The Commission commented that they endorse the proposed changes. Other, minor changes should also be made at this time to clean up some typographical issues.

*Recommendation:* **Board vote to revise the regulations, effective May 21, 2010.**

##### (2) State Public Beach Regulations Compliance

At the last meeting, the Board authorized me to complete and file the necessary applications for the operation of public beaches with the Board of Health, pursuant to the new State Regulations concerning public beaches. I developed language for required signage, had that approved by the Board of Health Administrator, and asked the Superintendent of Public Works to have the signs produced. The signs will be posted at each beach, once delivered.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

#### **L. Legal Issues**

##### (1) Joint Legal Review of Regional Dispatch Center Agreement (\*)

As the Board may recall, I had been working with several towns regarding the subject joint legal review to be performed by Kopelman and Paige. However, I have now learned that the Sheriff's Office has also contacted the firm and has

offered to pay for the review on behalf of the various communities. The firm has sent the Town a disclosure notice relative to the joint representation that the Board will be asked to approve. Also, it is possible that the communities involved may develop a Memorandum of Understanding that will seek to coordinate the legal review to address all questions and concerns.

***Recommendation:* Board signature of the disclosure paperwork and discussion of a future MOU.**

(2) License for Pocket Park

The owner of private property that abuts the Essex River bridge on the causeway has offered to license that property to the Town for eventual improvement and use as a pocket park. We are presently awaiting the execution of proposed documents. Actual improvements will be undertaken after a design is completed using funds approved at the recent Annual Town Meeting and after any and all permitting requirements are satisfied. I am awaiting a reply from the Chairman of the Essex Conservation Commission regarding whether site mowing and brush cutting falls within the Town's blanket Order of Conditions.

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

(3) Hydrant Easement, Cogswell Court

As the Board may recall, I had been working with a property owner to develop the necessary legal documents to allow the Board of Public Works to accept an easement for a hydrant on said owner's private property. The final language and easement plan have now been worked out and the owner is expected to sign the Easement Agreement shortly. Thereafter, the Board of Public Works will sign an Acceptance document and all of the paperwork will be recorded at the Registry of Deeds.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

**M. Grants**

No items.

**N. Emergency Planning**

(1) Emergency Generator for Essex Elementary School

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The Essex Fire Chief discussed with the School District Superintendent the possibility of installing the generator that served the old high school building (now in storage) at the Essex Elementary School. This work would benefit both the School District (relative to their own operations) and the Town (relative to the school's status as our primary emergency shelter) and the transport and installation of the unit would cost approximately \$20,000. The School District is

potentially willing cost share this installation cost and the unit itself is worth approximately \$200,000. The District would like to undertake the work during the upcoming summer, when school is out of session and building improvements generally take place. It is possible that the Reserve Fund could be utilized, depending on the final cost.

***Recommendation:* Board discussion relative to securing the necessary funding to proceed.**

(2) Continued Development of CEMP Supplement

I have organized a meeting of the Police, Fire, Health, and Public Works department heads on May 26, 2010 to review the first iteration of the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan Supplement that we put together after this winter's windstorm. Several ideas have been proposed and several resources have been identified since the first iteration was written and we hope to create a second draft after the subject meeting.

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

**O. Other Items**

No items.

*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.*