



## Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of May 19, 2014

Report covers from May 3, 2014 to May 16, 2014

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

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### A. Town Department Reports/Requests

#### (1) Essex Fire and EMS Assessment Update

At the Board's meeting of April 28, 2014, the Board authorized the Chairman of the Public Safety Committee to execute a contract with the Essex County Fire Chief's Association for an assessment of the Essex Fire Department and its associated EMS functions. That contract was finalized after the Committee met with representatives of the Association on May 14, 2014 to clarify the scope of work and the final work product is due by the middle of July.

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

### B. Computer Systems

#### (1) Replacement of Cable I-Net with High-Speed Link

As reported previously, I have been working with personnel from Edgewater Technology to develop a high-speed system that will interconnect the three major Town buildings' computer systems. The new system will serve as a replacement to the increasingly-slow Cable I-Net that has been in use for about fifteen years. High-speed Internet drops were installed in the Water Plant and the Fire/Police Headquarters during the week of May 5, 2014 and I ordered and received the necessary firewall/router devices that will securely route the traffic. The system will have two routers in each building for automatic failover should one unit go down. I will work with Edgewater personnel over the coming few weeks to configure the new devices for use on the new drops and get the system up and running. It is possible that the old Cable I-Net can still function in the background as a backup system but that possibility needs to be explored further.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary. Total time – 3 hours.

### C. Personnel

#### (1) Continued Discussion Regarding Part-Time Planner Position Desc. (\*)

The Board discussed with several boards, commissions, and department heads present at the meeting of April 28, 2014 the development of the subject draft position description. To date, we have not received any comments.

*Recommendation:* **Additional Board discussion relative to the draft document.**

## D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

### (1) Third Party Ambulance Billing Successor Agreement (\*)

Our third party ambulance billing contractor, Comstar, has prepared a successor agreement for the coming fiscal year. Comstar has provided the Town with excellent service for several years now.

**Recommendation: Board countersignature of the successor agreement for third party ambulance billing services.**

### (2) Contract for Installation of Stone Property Line Bounds, Beach Circle (\*)

Now that the Town Meeting has voted to authorize the Board to sell four properties in the Beach Circle neighborhood, it is necessary to begin to meet the various conditions set by the Planning Board in the recent subdivision approval. One condition involves the installation of stone property line bounds to mark the right of way within the subdivision (in a fashion similar to the work that was completed in the southern subdivision). Our consulting engineering firm, Horsley Witten, will provide us with a proposal for the necessary work by meeting time.

**Recommendation: Board consideration of a contract with the Horsley Witten Group to install the stone bounds to satisfy that condition of the subdivision approval.**

### (3) Roadway Resurfacing Invitation for Bids

The Superintendent of Public Works plans to use a combination of Town funding and Chapter 90 funding to conduct roadway resurfacing work on Southern Avenue and on Conomo Point during the upcoming summer. We have worked together with the DPW Clerk to develop the necessary Invitation for Bids document, which will be made available to prospective contractors as of May 21, 2014 (when the advertisement will run in the *Central Register* and in the local paper). The bid opening will be held on June 19, 2014 at 11:00 a.m. A contract with the successful bidder will eventually be brought back to the Board for approval.

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

## E. Insurance

### (1) Insurer's Recommendations for Building Improvements (\*)

Our insurer has made a variety of recommendations for the various Town buildings after having conducted a comprehensive inspection process earlier this year. Many of the recommendations concerning Town Hall will be addressed by the ongoing construction project. However, one recommendation is to install an oil spill containment system around the existing heating oil tanks, which is not part of the ongoing project. Given that the Town has decided to keep the Town

offices and the Library in the existing building, this may be a good time to consider converting both heating systems to natural gas and removing the old oil tanks altogether. Another recommendation is to install car wheel stops in the Library parking lot. It is possible that the Department of Public Works can repurpose materials that were once used as speed bumps for this new purpose. Also, our insurer recommended replacement of any rotten wooden components on the exterior of the building (something that will occur if the Town appropriates exterior funding next year).

In other buildings, most of the comments concerned simple housekeeping matters that will be very easy to correct. At the Senior Center, the inspector also recommended the installation of a protective bollard adjacent to the new emergency generator to prevent a vehicle from accidentally striking that equipment.

I have responded to our insurer relative to all of the housekeeping items and items that will be remedied via the ongoing Town Hall project. I will attempt to utilize the Town Property Management budget to handle some of the smaller repairs and have advised our insurer that the Town Hall exterior work and possibly the heating fuel work will require future appropriations. I will track all corrections with the various departments that are affected.

***Recommendation:* Board discussion relative to exploring the option of converting both heating systems from oil to natural gas.**

(2) Monthly Pothole Log

I obtained the pothole log for the month of April from the Department of Public Works and provided it to our insurer as part of the MIA Rewards Program. No potholes were reported during April.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## **F. Facilities**

(1) Lighting Efficiency Retrofit

Our lighting efficiency contractor began work in the Town Hall on May 5, 2014 and replaced and upgraded numerous fixtures. Thereafter, the contractor moved on to the Fire/Police Headquarters and the Water Filtration Plant. The Senior Center and the DPW Barn will also be addressed, as soon as the stock for those two buildings arrives and the contractor will return to the original three buildings to install some equipment that had not yet arrived at the time of the original work.

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

(2) Town Hall/Library Improvement Project Update

The project continues to make important improvements to the Town Hall/Library building and the basement and downspout drainage network is now complete and is discharging as planned toward the wetlands. The server room is mostly complete and we are awaiting the installation of the air conditioning condensing units (outside) and the finish work (inside). The contractor is presently working on the construction of the new, handicapped accessible restroom in the Library and the new basement slab will likely be poured at the end of the week of May 19, 2014.

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

(3) Pre-Demolition Work for 103 Conomo Point Road

I met with an asbestos assessment contractor on May 7, 2014 for him to view the subject property and to develop a cost proposal for a complete, pre-demolition asbestos assessment. That proposal has been completed and the estimated cost for the service is \$1,667. Pursuant to the Board's past vote, I have issued a Notice to Proceed with the work. I have made arrangements with National Grid to remove the aerial service drop and the electric meter from the property and with Verizon and Comcast to remove the phone and cable drops. Further, the Conservation Commission will consider a Request for Determination of Applicability on May 20, 2014 and I have applied to the Board of Health to obtain a septic system abandonment permit.

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

(4) Pre-Demolition Work for 138 Conomo Point Road

I met with an asbestos assessment contractor and a wetlands scientist on May 7, 2014 for them to view the subject property. The asbestos assessment contractor has developed a cost proposal for a complete, pre-demolition asbestos assessment and the cost is estimated at \$2,492. Pursuant to the Board's past vote, I have issued a Notice to Proceed with that work. The wetlands scientist has developed a cost proposal for a Notice of Intent to the Essex Conservation Commission. The Notice of Intent will cover the actual demolition of the structures on the property and the restoration of the site. Site restoration will include the removal of the poured foundation, backfilling of the basement hole, regrading of the site, removal of trees as necessary, and, potentially, the ability to install gravel and stone as an alternative to grass. The wetland scientist's work will not exceed \$2,500 and I have issued a Notice to Proceed.

I have made arrangements with National Grid to remove the aerial service drop and the electric meter from the property and with Verizon and Comcast to remove the phone and cable drops. I have applied to the Board of Health to obtain a septic system abandonment permit and the Conservation Commission Notice of Intent referenced above will be developed and reviewed in the coming weeks.

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

(5) Preparation for Network Systems Move and Office Renovation

On May 30, 2014, our contractor is scheduled to begin the demolition of my office (starting with asbestos removal – in joint compound in walls) so that it can be rebuilt in a soundproof fashion and with a much higher degree of physical security. I have spent considerable time moving items out of my office and I will begin to move the various computer network components into the new server room (which will be completed soon) on May 21, 2014. While my office is being renovated, I plan to utilize a portion of the Selectmen's Assistant's office and the second floor lobby to conduct business from.

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

(6) Essex National Heritage Area Signage

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The Great Marsh Committee has requested permission to place 3-inch by 4-inch aluminum signs in four public locations in Essex as part of a self-guided tour of the Great Marsh (which includes several communities along the north shore). Each sign will feature a QR code that can be scanned using a smart phone so that the tour taker can have access to audio and video recordings. Topics to be covered, depending upon the site, include clamming, green crabs, bird life, phragmites, and anadromous fish. Sites include two areas on Conomo Point, the Apple Street Bridge at the Alewife Brook, and the Town Landing.

***Recommendation:* Board authorization to allow the posting of the signs (with the Alewife Brook sign requiring concurrence from the Board of Public Works).**

**G. Fiscal/Budget**

No items.

**H. Complaints**

No items.

**I. Meetings Attended**

(1) Essex Regional Dispatch Center Monthly Meeting

I attended the monthly meeting as a member of the Finance Advisory Board of the Essex Regional Emergency Communications Center on May 16, 2014. The meeting featured an update regarding the facility and operations by the Center's Executive Director. The permanent antenna has now been fully erected and the Center is preparing to cut over other communities in the near future.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## **J. Final Judgment**

No items.

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

### (1) Notice of Referendum for Community Preservation Act Surcharge Increase

The recent Annual Town Meeting approved an increase in the Community Preservation Act surcharge from 0.5% to 1.0%, contingent upon the successful passage of a referendum at the State Election that will be held on November 4, 2014. Town Counsel has provided the Town Clerk with a notice to the Secretary of the Commonwealth relative to the referendum language that will need to be added to the State election ballot that will be used in the Town of Essex. The Town Clerk has since forwarded the notice to the Secretary.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## **L. Legal Issues**

### (1) Review Police Interagency Mutual Aid Agreement for Essex County

At the last meeting, the Board reviewed a draft mutual aid agreement that formalizes the ability of a police officer from one community to act in another community. The Board desires a Town Counsel opinion on the document prior to final approval and, since multiple communities are represented by Kopelman and Paige in Essex County, the firm will now conduct a disclosure and consent process and will eventually move on to the review.

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

### (3) Preparation of Purchase and Sale Agreements for Beach Circle Properties

The recent Annual Town Meeting authorized the Board to sell four properties in the Beach Circle neighborhood of Central Conomo Point. I am presently working with Town Counsel relative to the development of draft agreements.

*Recommendation:* Board discussion in executive session as per the posted agenda.

## **M. Grants**

### (1) Mass In Motion Municipal Wellness Grant Program Application (\*)

The City of Gloucester has participated in the subject obesity prevention grant program in the past. However, as funding for this type of initiative decreases, the

grantmaker (the Massachusetts Department of Public Health) is increasingly looking to fund regional proposals. As such, the City of Gloucester's Health Department has reached out to the surrounding communities on Cape Ann to solicit participation in a regional grant application. Gloucester is willing to write the grant and provide a major share of the required resources and the other communities would participate through their own health departments. I have discussed this initiative with Essex Board of Health Administrator Elaine Wozny and she is in support.

***Recommendation:* Board approval of a statement supporting this program in Essex as part of a regional application, along with a participation commitment form.**

#### **N. Emergency Planning**

No items.

#### **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.*