



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of June 1, 2015

Report covers from May 16, 2015 to May 29, 2015

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Collaboration with Conomo Point Planning Committee on Northern CP

At the last meeting, the Board asked that I pass along to the Chairman of the Conomo Point Planning Committee that the Board is interested in collaborating with the Committee concerning the prospect of northern long-term leases. The Sense of the Meeting vote at the recent Annual Town Meeting supported the concept of long-term leases in the northern area beginning in January of 2017 and lease development and appraisal work will be required in advance of the 2016 Annual Town Meeting. As such, the Selectmen would like to work toward public information and input sessions regarding these topics along with any other elements that the Committee feels are important. The Chairman thanks the Board for this invitation and will be in touch as necessary as events unfold.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

B. Computer Systems

(1) Test Migrations of Police Users to Virtual Platform

As noted in the past, I had positioned the police and fire departments at the end of our overall plan to migrate all users from local server/client architecture to our virtual platform in Melrose. This sequencing is necessary since the police department has the most complex collection of software and specific connection requirements. City of Melrose personnel have now created a virtual server that will be dedicated to public safety and I will begin by testing the new system with two officers who occupy the detectives' office.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

C. Personnel

(1) Informal Department Heads Meeting

I hosted the subject meeting as I do from time to time in my office on May 21, 2015. The meeting featured a discussion regarding some of the items approved at the Annual Town Meeting and the upcoming Town Hall/Library Renovation project.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Request for Quotations for Promotion of Town Resources (*)

In fiscal year 2016, the Town Meeting approved a total of \$20,000 for the promotion of Town resources. As the Board may recall, the Essex Merchants' Group was the successful vendor for these promotional services with respect to both a past, special appropriation for \$5,000 and a fiscal year 2015 line item appropriation of \$10,000. Given that the amount of funding has increased, it will be necessary to solicit at least three quotes for promotional services in this next round of funding. Actual promotional work cannot begin until after July 1.

Recommendation: Board discussion relative to my solicitation of quotes for promotional services. The scope of services can be taken from the combination of scopes from the two past rounds of funding.

(2) Continued Consideration of FEMA Flood Map Review Process (*)

At the last meeting, Mr. Roland Adams provided the Board with his opinion on the level of technical review necessary to result in favorable changes to the 2014 FEMA coastal flood map panels for Essex. As the Board may recall, we had solicited proposals from three different engineering firms and the proposed level of services and cost varied widely. Mr. Adams suggested that a fairly basic level of review (at a relatively low cost) would be sufficient to make appreciable changes. In addition, he recommended that we seek a fourth proposal, from Applied Coastal Research and Engineering, which I have done.

Subsequent to the meeting, I consulted with Town Planner Matt Coogan and Mr. Peter Phippen of the Merrimack Valley Planning Council. Mr. Phippen agreed generally with what Mr. Adams had offered at the last meeting, further solidifying that a fairly basic review process will yield favorable results. Mr. Coogan and Mr. Phippen are continuing to review the actual proposals. Applied Coastal Research has made initial contact but has not yet engaged a project manager to inquire about the nature of our needs. At this point, I recommend that we return to all four consulting firms with a defined scope of services to give each firm an opportunity to propose on a level playing field. That scope may include a public outreach component, since the process may not be beneficial to all properties with specific building elevation issues and those property owners may still have to apply for their own, property-specific revisions. After that, the Board can review the final proposals and can make a selection.

Recommendation: Board discussion relative to choosing a level of technical review and relative to the potential for new proposals from all four firms.

(3) Procurement Associated with Town Hall/Library Renovation Work (*)

At the last meeting, the Board asked that I explore with Town Counsel the potential for the use of a design-build procurement model and perhaps a Project

Manager at risk model for the procurement and implementation of the next phase of Town Hall/Library work. I confirmed my understanding with Town Counsel that design-build does not apply to building work and that Project (Construction) Manager at Risk is only available for building projects of at least \$5M.

As such, as authorized by the Board, I authorized our Project Manager to proceed with the standard project management tasks that were outlined in his proposal for services to be provided between the present time (designer selection) and the end of the project. We have collaborated on the development of the necessary Request for Qualifications that will be used to solicit proposals from project designers and that RFQ will be released on June 3, 2015. A tour of the building for designers will occur on June 11, 2015 and proposals will be due on June 23, 2015. Thereafter, the Town Building Committee can meet on June 30, 2015 to review proposal packages and to agree on the top three. On July 9, 2015, after interviewing the top three designers, the Committee can rank the proposals and pass the matter to the Selectmen for price negotiation and contract award.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(4) Solicitation of Quotations for Northern Conomo Point Appraisals

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that we should make an early start on the development of the procurement documents that will solicit interest from appraisers relative to the appraisal of the northern area of Conomo Point for long-term lease purposes. To that end, I am presently working with Town Counsel regarding the formulation of those documents.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

E. Insurance

(1) MIIA Rewards Program Fiscal Year Wrap-up

As usual at this time of year, I assemble all of the initiatives that are eligible for credit under our insurer's loss control program, known as the MIIA Rewards Program. This year, the list is topped by such accomplishments as the Essex Police Department's attainment of certification and the completion of the health, safety, and working environment project for the Town Hall and Library. We normally earn several thousand dollars in insurance premium credits due to these various efforts. I also reviewed recommendations from an insurance inspector that highlighted items noted when our buildings were inspected over the winter. All recommendations were minor and all have been complied with (or will be as part of the upcoming Town Hall/Library project).

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

F. Facilities

(1) Demolition at 1 Robbins Island Road

Our demolition contractor demolished the structure at 1 Robbins Island Road on May 21, 2015. As has been the case with past demolitions, all of the debris was loaded directly into waiting roll-off dumpsters and continuously hauled away. The Essex Fire Department was on site to suppress dust with fire hoses and the Essex Conservation Agent monitored the activity. The entire process was completed within a day and the Department of Public Works plans to return to the site to place crushed stone in the crawl space footprint and to re-seed any disturbed areas.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) National Grid Survey of Street Light State of Repair

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that I should request National Grid to take stock of all street lights in Essex to survey each light's state of repair. I have learned that the utility will undertake this activity in the coming weeks and will report back the number of lights that are being billed and working, the number of lights that are being billed but not currently working, and the number of lights that are not being billed (bulbs were removed years ago at the request of the Town).

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

G. Fiscal/Budget

No items.

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

(1) Massachusetts Municipal Management Association Spring Conference

I attended the subject conference on May 28 and 29, 2015. The conference featured a variety of useful presentations and workshops including a labor law update from the Association's attorney and a legislative update from the Executive Director of the Massachusetts Municipal Association.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

J. Final Judgment

No items.

K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

No items.

L. Legal Issues

No items.

M. Grants

(1) Coastal Resiliency Grant Funding (*)

At the last meeting, I began to discuss with the Board the potential to work with the National Wildlife Federation (NWF), which is presently evaluating Essex as part of the Super Storm Sandy (SSS) grant program, on a grant that could actually begin to protect against the effects of sea level rise and coastal storms. In the current project, NWF hopes to recommend both “green” (natural) and “gray” (constructed infrastructure) to best position the Town to adapt to sea level rise and increasingly-violent coastal storms. The natural progression from the present, evaluative grant would be a grant that would actually start to implement some of the recommendations.

To that end, Chairman O’Donnell, Town Planner Matt Coogan, and I discussed on May 19, 2015 with NWF personnel what NWF feels would be the best grant program and specific project would be to focus on at this time. Since the SSS grant work is presently just beginning, we don’t yet have enough information to recommend specific implementation project. As such, NWF suggested that we could apply to the Coastal Community Resilience Grant Program, which seeks to “advance local efforts to increase awareness of climate impacts, identify vulnerabilities, and implement measures to increase communities’ ability to withstand coast storms, erosion, flooding, and sea level rise.” Chairman O’Donnell will discuss the need for a local cost match with CZM Director Bruce Carlisle, since our only way to comply with that requirement would be via the SSS grant funds. Otherwise, an application would be ruled incomplete.

Further, after the last meeting, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced two, other, major coastal resiliency grant programs that would benefit the communities that are part of the Great Marsh (the area NWF is now studying using the SSS grant funds. It is very possible that NWF will work with the Great Marsh communities to develop and submit a grant application to one of the NOAA programs that will complement the work that is being done as part of their current work.

***Recommendation:* Board discussion relative to whether the SSS grant funds may be used as a cost match for the CZM grant programs and Board authorization to sign both a CZM grant application (if feasible) and a NOAA**

grant application outside of a meeting, when final materials are presented by NWF.

N. Emergency Planning

(1) Cape Ann Regional Emergency Sheltering Drill

I participated in the subject drill at Cruiseport in Gloucester on May 20, 2015, along with other Essex officials and personnel from Gloucester, Manchester, Rockport, and Ipswich. The drill was coordinated through the Cape Ann Emergency Planning Team, which Essex has been participating on since 2008. Although this event was not intended to take place in an actual emergency shelter location, it was designed to simulate many of the considerations that must be taken into account whenever the decision is made to open a shelter. Generally, the drill highlighted some areas that need more preparation and planning and the Team hopes to run a drill in an actual shelter location in the future.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

O. Other Items

(1) Study Regarding Potential New Interchange on Route 128

The City of Gloucester plans to undertake a study relative to whether a new 128 interchange serving a potentially new industrial park in Gloucester is something that will be feasible. The State legislature approved funding for this study about eight years ago and the funding may soon be released. At present, the focus is on the interchange, since this must be feasible if the prospect of an industrial park in that area is to be studied further. Even if the interchange is feasible, any development in that area, which borders both Essex and Manchester, is likely a decade away.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Town Administrator Leave

I was out of the office on vacation leave on May 22, 2015.

(3) Memorial Day Holiday

The office was closed in observance of the subject holiday on May 25, 2015.

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