



## Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of June 16, 2008

Report covers from May 31, 2008 to June 13, 2008

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

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### A. Town Department Reports/Requests

#### (1) LTPC Survey and Press Release (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board indicated that it would like to review the LTPC press release and draft resident survey documents together, once both are ready. The Chairman of the LTPC has commented that the LTPC would like to move ahead with some basic questions (a basic survey) at this time with a press release this fall when a comprehensive survey is ready. I assisted Committee members with the final coordination and development of the basic questions. Also, I have learned that our website vendor will be able to provide us with a formal survey tool for the next year for \$700. This tool will make the implementation of the survey much easier once the survey questions are ready and can be used to ask the basic level questions as well.

**Recommendation: Board review of the basic survey questions and approval of the use of the electronic survey tool.**

#### (2) Planning Board Joint Discussion

The Board asked that the Planning Board be invited to a future Selectmen's meeting to discuss overall planning and zoning goals. Planning Board Chair Kim Drake has indicated that the Planning Board will attend the Selectmen's meeting of July 14, 2008.

**Recommendation:** No further action is necessary.

### B. Computer Systems

#### (1) Website Tutorial

I assisted a member of the Open Space Committee with a basic overview of how to edit and update the Committee's portion of the Town website. The Committee was not able to send a member to the training provided by the vendor in the past. As a first step, the member will create a pdf version of the Town's Open Space Plan and will then work to upload that to the Committee's page. Also, I have worked with our vendor to provide the Committee with its own, main level container on the web server since the Committee's content will be expanding.

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

## (2) Information Technology Planning

A computer networking expert visited my office on June 5, 2008 to review the Town's existing network infrastructure and to recommend changes that will make our networks more robust. The expert's services were provided free from a major computer services firm that has been assisting the Town for many years now (firm's CEO is a resident).

The review to this point indicated that we should: consider moving the Domain Name System (DNS) and our Cable I-Net routing to our firewall router device; eliminate the use of Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP) in each of our three domains (something that I am working on currently); and purchasing devices for the Fire Station and Water Filtration Plant networks that will perform I-Net routing instead of the servers. The above recommendations will make our networks simpler – decreasing the potential for component failure. The computer expert will assist me with each step of the above plan over time when he is available. He also provided me with a KVA switch that allowed me to eliminate keyboards and mice associated with the Town Hall servers (one mouse and one keyboard control all three via a switch). I have since installed that KVA unit and it is working well.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as each new action is completed. Total time thus far – 4 hours.

## (3) Event e-mail Address

I assisted the organizers of the upcoming Essex River Day with an e-mail address that will allow event participants to sign up as players in a planned softball game ([riverdaygame@essexma.org](mailto:riverdaygame@essexma.org)). For more information about Essex River Day (June 21, 2008) see [www.essexma.org](http://www.essexma.org).

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## (4) Replacement UPS Battery

The battery in one of our uninterruptible power supplies (UPS) used to protect our servers failed during the week of June 2, 2008. I ordered a replacement and have installed it in the UPS unit. I also ordered and have stored a second replacement battery to have on hand since it is likely that batteries in similar age UPS devices will fail soon.

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

## (5) Website Security Matrix

When our new website was first being developed, our vendor recommended free access to all pages by all users. However, now that the site has been fully established, I have directed the vendor to only allow users to access pages which pertain to their own department or program area. The vendor sent me a

spreadsheet matrix with all web pages listed and I assigned appropriate access rights.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary. Total time – 0.5 hours

(6) Purchase of Additional RAM

As noted in the past, I had been researching the addition of random access memory (RAM) to the Towns client computer systems in order to improve computer speed. The Town's present generation of computers is circa late-2005 and continuous software upgrades since then have taxed system resources. I tested the upgrade with the Selectmen's Assistant's computer system and performance improved dramatically. I have also installed additional RAM in my laptop computer and the performance improvement was just as dramatic. I have now ordered memory additions for each client system and will install when that shipment arrives. The memory upgrades will only cost approximately \$50 per machine but will extend the useful life of the systems for several years.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary. Total time – 1.5 hours.

(7) Installation of BudgetSense Update

Our accounting software vendor released an update to our BudgetSense accounting software during the week of June 9, 2008. I downloaded and installed the update and performed the necessary database maintenance.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

**C. Personnel**

(1) Youth Commission Position Descriptions and Evaluation Tools (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board reviewed the Youth Commission's draft revised position description for the Youth Director along with draft evaluation tools for the Youth Director and the Summer Program Director. A revised Summer Program Director position description was still in the works at the time.

As requested by the Board, I contacted the Commission Chair to pass along various comments relative to the Youth Director documents and asked if the Summer Program Director documents were on the same timeline as the Youth Director documents. The Youth Commission has now completed final drafts of both the Youth Director and Summer Program Director position descriptions. As such, the Personnel Board will consider both at its meeting of June 19, 2008 and the Youth Commission has invited the Board to provide any final comments at this time. The Board's past comments relative to the Youth Director position description have been incorporated into the final draft of that document and the Commission has indicated that a General Fund subsidy for purely administrative

tasks should be considered for fiscal year 2010. The Commission will work further with the Director to recommend the level of that subsidy.

**Recommendation: Board discussion relative to the final drafts and the Commission's feedback relative to administrative funding.**

(2) Dog Officer Appointment (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board discussed determining whether resident Amy Reilly would be interested in the Dog Officer appointment for the upcoming fiscal year since the present Dog Officer will not be continuing due to other commitments. I contacted Ms. Reilly and she is willing to serve in that capacity but cannot begin until September 1, 2008 due to pre-existing plans.

**Recommendation: Board discussion relative to Ms. Reilly's availability.**

#### **D. Procurement**

(1) Road Resurfacing Invitation for Bids

The Superintendent of Public Works put together the subject Invitation for Bids (IFB) based upon last year's IFB and he asked me to review the document prior to advertisement. I conducted that review and found the document to be adequate with some minor changes. Bids will be solicited beginning June 18, 2008 and the Board will be asked to sign the contract with the successful bidder at the meeting of July 14, 2008 since the value of the contract will be over \$50,000.

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

#### **E. Insurance**

No items.

#### **F. Facilities**

(1) Picnic Tables

The Department of Public Works has assembled all of the picnic tables that were purchased at the end of last season. The new tables have been placed in various areas of the Grove for use by the Summer Program, the general public, and special events. I extend my thanks to the Department for this work during this busy time of the year. We will likely purchase additional tables this year.

**Recommendation:** No further action is necessary.

(2) Addition of Sand at Centennial Grove Beach

The Conservation Commission has approved a request I made on behalf of the Board to add beach sand above the high water line at the Centennial Grove Beach.

I have made arrangements with a contractor who has provided material at our beach in the past to bring in the new material. That work will likely be conducted on June 21, a Saturday morning, when the summer camp is not in session and there are no special events scheduled at the Grove.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

(3) Re-use of Hay Bales for In-kind Service

The hay bales used for last fall's soap box derby have been stored in Memorial Park since the event. A local contractor asked if he could take the bales for use in a project and the group that purchased the bales was amenable to that. The Superintendent of Public Works would like the bales removed anyway and the contractor is willing to perform some in-kind carpentry at the Centennial Grove in exchange for the hay. I will coordinate a carpentry project with him in the near future.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

(4) Potential Funding for Additional Sidewalks

Representative Verga's Office has reported that the House will likely support \$50,000 in funding for additional sidewalk construction on Story Street as part of the Transportation Bond Bill. As the Board is aware, the Town funded an initial sidewalk project in the amount of \$75,000. This new potential funding will allow the extension of the sidewalk further up Story Street to improve safe access to the Essex Elementary School. Final House approval and Senate consideration are still necessary. If the funds do become available, I will work with the Superintendent of Public Works to duplicate the design and bid process we used for the first project and apply it to this new funding.

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

(5) Replacement of File Cabinets

The Selectmen's Assistant had ordered two new file cabinets for the Building Inspector to replace two very old units that were in severe disrepair. The new units were five-drawer instead of four-drawer units in order to make more efficient use of the limited available space. I put the new units in place and removed the old units from the building with the help of others. The Selectmen's Assistant transferred all of the files from the old units to the new unit and relabeled the drawers.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

**G. Fiscal/Budget**

No items.

## H. Complaints

### (1) Dog Incident Follow-up

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The Board held a hearing about a dog incident at the last meeting. After testimony was given on both sides of the issue, the Board took the matter under advisement pending the submission of additional information by the dog owner. That information was subsequently provided by the owner and the owner's attorney and the Board indicated that it will be reviewed at the present meeting.

*Recommendation:* **Board review of the additional information in preparation for final disposition of the issue.**

## I. Meetings Attended

No items.

## J. Final Judgment

### (1) Quarterly Report

(\*)

I have completed the Quarterly Report due July 1, 2008. As noted previously, all required sewer connections have now been made.

*Recommendation:* **Board approval to transmit the subject report.**

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

No items.

## L. Legal Issues

### (1) VanWyck 10-Acre Parcel Revised Conservation Restriction

The Board signed the subject revised document at the last meeting. The Secretary of Environmental Affairs had inserted some more restrictive language into the first draft that had been signed and the Grantor (Mr. VanWyck) assented to that language. The document next went to the Conservation Commission and the Commission took it under advisement on June 3, 2008. I have provided the Commission with additional background and history on the matter as requested by the member who was assigned the lead on this issue. It is my understanding that the Commission will vote on the revised document at their next meeting on June 17, 2008. If signed by the Commission, our office will return the document to Mr. VanWyck's attorney and it will be forwarded to the Secretary for final signature. We will receive a copy of the fully-executed, recorded instrument thereafter.

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

## M. Grants

No items.

## N. Emergency Planning

### (1) Emergency Planning MOUs (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board discussed two draft agreements (one relative to an emergency dispensing site at the school and one relative to solidifying access to supplies from vendors during an emergency). The Board asked that I pose several questions to the Board of Health Administrator before the Administrator's request for Town Counsel review could be considered further. Specifically, the Board was interested in the organization that was indicating the need for the agreements, the potential to have the agreements reviewed by one attorney for the benefit of all member communities, and the possibility of the school district sub-group of the Cape Ann Emergency Planning Coalition reviewing the issues first.

The Board of Health Administrator has commented that the coordinating group is the North Shore Emergency Planning Coalition, of which the Cape Ann Emergency Planning Coalition is a member. Plans for document review presently vary by community and the Cape Ann Coalition is interested in exploring their own local coordination role. It is possible that the Interim City Solicitor for the City of Gloucester will be opining on the documents and that the school district sub-group will handle the dispensing site issue.

***Recommendation:* Board discussion relative to the next steps given the recent feedback provided by the Board of Health Administrator.**

## O. Other Items

### (1) Essex River Day Bonfire

Selectman Lynch and I coordinated the final details relative to the planned bonfire that will occur at the end of Essex River Day on June 21. A local mill is donating wood waste for the core of the bonfire and pallets will be used on the outer edges. The organizers will utilize a contractor's magnet to pick up any nails that collect in the burn area from the burning of the pallets. Volunteers will build the bonfire using techniques that we learned about from the Town of Rockport.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

*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.*