



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of July 7, 2014

Report covers from June 14, 2014 to July 4, 2014

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Conservation Commission Review of Cogswell Rd. Extension Paving

As the Board may recall, the Conservation Commission had conducted preliminary review of the Town's Request for Determination of Applicability associated with the potential paving of the Cogswell Road Extension. The DEP had indicated that the project had to meet storm water regulations and we had engaged our consulting engineer to demonstrate that previous work on the site fulfills that requirement. I attended the Commission's meeting on June 17, 2014 and the Commission determined that the project will, indeed, meet the necessary regulations. The DEP had already reviewed our consultant's opinion and had no further comments before the Commission's meeting. As such, the Cogswell Road Extension paving work will be able to be included in the Conomo Point paving project, as planned. Several controls will be required during construction and the Superintendent of Public Works and I will be sure to meet them.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) "Friendly" Taking of Dodge Street Parcel

As reported previously, the Estate of David Choate had been in the process of assembling waivers from all the heirs of a particular property on Dodge Street that Mr. Choate had wanted to gift to the Town of Essex. The parcel is mostly wet and does accommodate drainage from the street. As such, the Board of Public Works is authorized to take the property pursuant to Chapters 79 and 83 of the General Laws and did so with an Order of Taking on June 30, 2014 (which will soon be recorded at the Registry of Deeds). This action was taken knowing that no appeals can or will be filed. The parcel will be maintained in its current state for the foreseeable future but may also provide useful drainage options at some later date.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

B. Computer Systems

No items.

C. Personnel

(1) Safety Committee Meeting

I attended the subject meeting on June 19, 2014 as a member of the Committee. The meeting featured a discussion regarding the status of the Town Hall/Library project, which is aimed at improving health, safety, and the working environment.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Candidates for Part-Time Planner Position

As the Board may recall, we had advertised in a number of ways to attract candidates for the subject position. We received a total of six applications. At the present meeting, the Board will be interviewing one of the candidates.

Recommendation: Interview of candidate as per the posted agenda.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Contract for Conomo Point/Southern Avenue Paving Work (*)

The Superintendent of Public Works and I opened sealed bids for the subject paving work on June 19, 2014. A total of six bidders had submitted bids and the apparent low bidder was Sunshine Paving of Methuen, MA, with a total estimated project cost of \$122,686.20, which is within the available budget. The Southern Avenue paving work will be accomplished exclusively with Chapter 90 funding and the southern Conomo Point work will be 25% accomplished with Chapter 90 funding and 75% accomplished with a recent Town appropriation. The contractor has since submitted the necessary bond and insurance paperwork and has signed the contract documents. The Board of Public Works countersigned the contract on June 30, 2014 and the Selectmen's signature is needed to actually issue a Notice to Proceed. The final cost of the work will be dependent on the actual quantities of materials used and the fluctuating price of liquid asphalt.

The Superintendent of Public Works has already begun preparatory work by chipping exposed ledge from the roadway during the week of June 23, 2014, thereby creating a more even sub-base for paving. Other paving, not related to the subject contract, was completed along a short portion of upper Conomo Point Road in the northern section during the week of June 16, 2014.

***Recommendation:* Board countersignature of the paving contract with Sunshine Paving, which will serve as the Notice to Proceed.**

(2) Completion of Beach Circle Neighborhood Bound Installation

On June 18, 2014, our consulting engineering firm, the Horsley Witten Group, completed the installation of sixteen stone bounds in the Beach Circle area of the Central Conomo Point Subdivision, as required by the subdivision approval. This

work represents another major milestone associated with the anticipated sale of four Beach Circle neighborhood properties.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

E. Insurance

No items.

F. Facilities

(1) Review of Notice of Intent for Demolition of 138 Conomo Point Road (*)

On June 17, 2014, the Essex Conservation Commission reviewed a Notice of Intent associated with the planned demolition of the structures at 138 Conomo Point Road and the subsequent leveling of the property and installation of a gravel surface. I attended the meeting along with our wetlands consultant. The Commission continued the hearing until July 1, 2014 - in part because the Department of Environmental Protection review window had not yet lapsed, and in part because the Commission recommended several changes to the proposal.

Specifically, the Commission asked for the site to be stabilized using loam and seed in the near-term, since that approach might best manage runoff from the site until the Town determines the final use of the property. I asked at the hearing that if the Town's future plan does propose non-grassed features in the future, whether the Board could go back to the Commission with that proposal, which would include a plan for continuing to manage runoff, etc. At the time, the Commission's position was that future plans could be accommodated.

However, between the meeting of June 17 and July 1, our wetlands consultant reviewed the Department of Environmental Protection's current interpretation of the Rivers Protection Act and cautioned that going to a grassed surface as part of the demolition might preclude certain future plans for the site. As such, our consultant wrote the Commission in advance of the meeting and indicated that discussion about that aspect of the Act would be necessary and that the Town's original proposal for a gravel surface may still warrant consideration by the Commission. At the July 1 hearing, the Commission asked our consultant to have a specific discussion about this important issue with DEP officials and continued the hearing until July 15, 2014.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(2) Completion of Energy Efficiency Lighting Retrofit

Our energy supplier, Constellation Energy, completed our energy efficiency lighting retrofit during the week of June 23, 2014 with work in the DPW barn and the Senior Center. This work brought the total buildings upgraded to five

(including the Town Hall, the Fire/Police Headquarters, and the Water Filtration Plant), which had been completed in the past.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

G. Fiscal/Budget

No items.

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

(1) Town Hall Discussion, Chamber of Commerce Essex Division (*)

I attended the subject meeting on June 19, 2014 and updated the group concerning a variety of Town projects and initiatives. The group recommended that the Selectmen consider pulling the Town Building Committee back into an active status since it appears that preparation for the next phase of Town Hall restoration will be necessary. As the Board may recall, the Town Building Committee had recommended that Town Hall be transferred to a third party for some other use. However, it is apparent that Town residents are instead interested in restoring and preserving the building.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to potentially providing updated guidance to the Town Building Committee.**

J. Final Judgment

No items.

K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

No items.

L. Legal Issues

(1) License for Stone Wall Work, 11 Prospect Street

At the last meeting, the Board authorized the countersignature of a temporary construction license for stone wall work at 11 Prospect Street should the property owner elect to offer the Town the license in the form recommended by Town Counsel. The Superintendent of Public Works and I approached the property owner with that proposal during the week of June 16, 2014 and the property owner signed the license during the week of June 30, 2014. The Board can exercise the past vote to countersign at the present meeting and the Superintendent will set up a work plan and schedule with the owner in the near future.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Quarterly Review of Executive Session Minutes

Chairman Jones conducted a review of the Board's executive session minutes as is the case each quarter. He did not identify any minutes that are suitable for release at this time.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

M. Grants

(1) On-Line Civil War Memorial Grant

At the last meeting, the Board signed a grant contract for an on-line Civil War Memorial. Town Clerk Christina Wright had applied for the grant through the Massachusetts Sesquicentennial Commission, a program funded by the Department of Veterans' Services. The grant will allow for the digitization of various Civil War documents that will be made available for public review via the Town's website.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Emergency Generator Grant Notice to Proceed

The subject grant, which is being offered as part of a Federal Hazard Mitigation program, was fully-executed during the week of June 30, 2014 and the Town has been issued a Notice to Proceed. Presently, I am seeking a revised quotation for the necessary equipment via a State Contract vendor. Once I get the procurement of that equipment approved by the grantmaker, I will arrange for the procurement of the necessary electrical contractor services.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

N. Emergency Planning

No items.

O. Other Items

(1) Town Administrator Leave

I was out of the office on vacation leave for the entire week of June 23, 2014.

(2) Independence Day Holiday

The office was closed on July 4, 2014 in observance of the subject holiday.

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