



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of August 24, 2009

Report covers from August 8, 2009 to August 21, 2009

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Essex Council on Aging Annual Luncheon

I attended the subject event at the Essex Senior Center along with Selectman Randall and Chief Silva on August 19, 2009. The event featured a presentation by Congressman Tierney of a flag that was flown over the U.S. Capitol commemorating the opening of the Essex Senior Center.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Town Building Committee Update

I attended the Town Building Committee meeting of August 17, 2009 (the Committee's tenth meeting). The Committee discussed the finalization of its preliminary recommendations to the Board of Selectmen and asked me to pull a draft together. I developed the draft document as requested and it will be circulated by the Chair to all members for discussion at the Committee's meeting of August 31, 2009.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

B. Computer Systems

(1) Transfer Station Sticker Database

I assisted DPW staff with the archiving of last year's transfer station sticker data in order to prepare the database for use in the new sticker year. I also helped to modify the database they have been using to allow the concurrent display of multiple sticker years going forward and to decrease the required level of data input in coming years.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary. Total time – 1.5 hours.

(2) Comcast Service Outage

Comcast Internet service was interrupted on Friday, August 14, 2009. I contacted technical support and the technician needed to dispatch a field service crew. Since service would be down at least through the following Monday, I switched our feed over to our backup DSL connection to provide users connectivity in the interim. Service was restored the following Monday and the system is operating normally.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(3) Setup of Library Printer

The Librarian purchased a new printer for the patrons' computer in the Essex Room and requested my assistance in setting up and configuring the device. I have completed that work and the system is working well.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary. Total time – ½ hour.

(4) Installation of New Network Attached Storage Device

As the Board may recall, I had installed a new network attached storage device in the Town Hall for file backup since the original unit was very old. I have now also replaced the unit in the Water Filtration Plant to ensure the continued quality of backup data. Server data from each building is sent to other buildings overnight as part of our data backup system.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary. Total time – 1.5 hours.

C. Personnel

(1) Town Clerk Search Committee

At the last meeting, the Selectmen, in their present capacity as Personnel Board, approved the new position description for an appointed Town Clerk that had been recommended by the Town Clerk Search Committee. The Selectmen asked the Committee through one of the Committee's members in attendance to develop a matrix that includes the most important job skills to be used in candidate ranking. The Committee presently plans to meet in the near future and will provide a draft document for the Board's review.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Volunteer Driver Physical Examination Policy

The Board approved the subject policy at the last meeting and I provided the new policy to various departments. Any existing volunteer drivers will need to schedule and pass a physical before September 30, 2009 in order to continue operating Town vehicles. Any new volunteers will need to pass the same physical before commencing operation.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(3) Personnel Board Meeting

The next quarterly Personnel Board meeting will occur during the Selectmen's meeting of September 14, 2009 (since the Selectmen are presently acting as the Personnel Board). I have placed a draft agenda in the Board's reading folder. The Town continues to seek candidates interested in serving on the Personnel Board.

Interested parties may contact the Selectmen's Office at (978) 768-6531 or at bzubricki@essexma.org. The Personnel Board meets on a quarterly basis in the early morning and is a great way to get involved with Town Government without making a major commitment.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(4) Safety Committee Meeting

The next Safety Committee meeting will occur on September 16, 2009. I have placed a draft agenda in the Board's reading folder.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Use of Civilian Flaggers

The Board had written a letter to the District Highway Director regarding the use of civilian flaggers on the Route 133 Reconstruction Project and related public safety concerns. The Director recently wrote back to the Board to indicate that flaggers would still be utilized on the project and that periodic meetings between Essex public safety officials and the MassHighway field staff were recommended.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Preliminary Subdivision Plan Application, Southern Conomo Point (*)

At the last meeting, the Board voted to authorize the Chairman to sign the Preliminary Subdivision Plan application for the Southern Conomo Point Subdivision when the final materials and stamped plans were produced and provided by our consultant. We received those materials during the week of August 17, 2009 and the application may now be submitted to the Planning Board for consideration (including a certified abutters' list that I assisted with compiling prior to its certification). According to the Planning Board Clerk, the Planning Board can accommodate this matter at its meeting of September 2, 2009.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to the present status of the application.**

(3) Fire Department Air Pack Lease/Purchase (*)

The Fire Chief provided to me a final quotation for the subject air packs from a vendor on the State Contract and I asked our lease/purchase company to run the numbers at present rates. The \$115,291 cost yields a \$40,475 per year lease/purchase payment over a three-year lease/purchase term and the fiscal year 2010 budget line for this equipment is \$40,545. I have been provided with the necessary lease/purchase paperwork (schedule 6 under our master lease/purchase agreement) and I have it available for the Board's review and signature. The Fire

Department will place an order for the equipment upon approval of the paperwork by the Board.

***Recommendation:* Board review and approval of the lease/purchase agreement for this new equipment.**

(4) Delivery and Installation of Water Filtration Plant Generator

The subject equipment arrived and was installed at the Water Filtration Plant on August 11 and 12, 2009. I provided our lease/purchase company with the necessary paperwork to complete the transaction.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

E. Insurance

No items.

F. Facilities

(1) Fall Beautification Program

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that the Town should purchase some chrysanthemums as part of the Essex Merchants' Group's "Mum's the Word" fall beautification program and promotion. At the request of the Merchants' Group, I also reached out to the construction contractor for the Route 133 Reconstruction Project and the company has agreed to purchase 150 plants. An individual from the Group will contact me when the flowers are available from a local wholesaler and will contact the construction contractor directly.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

G. Fiscal/Budget

(1) Annual Risk Assessment and Monitoring Plan Reassessment

As is the case each September, I host a meeting for major department heads at which we review the current version of the Town's Risk Assessment and Monitoring Plan document. The meeting provides an opportunity for department heads to suggest modifications to the Plan based upon experience over the past year and changes in operations. This year's meeting will occur on September 10, 2009.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

No items.

J. Final Judgment

(1) Essex River Basin Water Quality (*)

At the last meeting, I explained to the Board how water quality in our shellfish harvesting areas has dramatically increased since the construction of the sewer system and how rain closure levels will very likely be adjusted in a year's time or so as a result. However, I explained that, according to the Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF), rainfall closures will likely not be lifted altogether since some pollution does persist upstream in the Essex River. The Board asked that I work with the DMF to compare the Town's present rainfall closure limits and the Town's future proposed limits to limits in place in other communities.

Mr. David Roach of the DMF was very helpful in supplying the data necessary to make the requested comparison and I have that information available for the Board's review and discussion. Mr. Roach also explained that some areas that are always closed will now move into the conditionally-approved (rainfall closure status) along with the increases in allowable rainfall levels in present rainfall closure areas. Further, he indicated that, within one or two months, the line between the inner and outer Essex Bay will move more landward, providing harvesters with a larger area that is rainfall exempt during the winter season. At the same time, the rainfall closure level in the inner Essex Bay will be increased to one inch for winter harvesting (up from 0.75 inches). He recommends getting through the next year or so that the predicted changes can come to fruition and then reassessing the situation once the final new harvesting rules are known.

Recommendation: **Board review of the comparative data.**

K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

No items.

L. Legal Issues

(1) Request for Installation of Underground Electrical Conduit

National Grid recently sent us a petition and a proposed order for the installation of underground electrical conduit beneath the edge of Island Road (to serve a new subdivision). The Selectmen are required to hold a public hearing pursuant to Chapter 166, Section 22 of the General Laws prior to considering the request. I have presented a list of abutters to the Board of Assessors for certification and the hearing will be held at the Board's next meeting on September 14, 2009.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

M. Grants

(1) Waterfront Public Access Project

At the last meeting, the Board approved the submittal of an addendum to the Town's original Seaport Bond Bill application for public access facilities along the Essex River at the Essex causeway. That addendum, which was written by the Salem State Center for Economic Development and Sustainability, has been sent to the Executive Director of the Seaport Advisory Council and both Senator Tarr and Representative Ferrante are aware of the Town's goal.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Conceptual Design

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that two recommended infrastructure improvements near the school should move on to the conceptual design phase under the subject grant program. A reconfiguration of the Winthrop/Story/Western intersection and a safer passage from Prospect Street to the rear entrance of the school will be depicted in more detail by a consulting engineer for the grant program over the coming weeks and the Town will have an opportunity to provide comments at that juncture. The Superintendent of Public Works, the Board of Public Works, and the Chief of Police are also in favor of moving to this next stage.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(3) Clean Energy Choice Funding

At the last meeting, the Board approved an application for two "Big-Belly" solar trash compactors to be purchased using the Town's accrued Clean Energy Choice funding. This funding is a product of electric customers electing to purchase green energy. We have submitted the application and we expect an approval with an associated check within 60 days.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(4) Waterline Construction Grant Program

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that we should work with an engineering firm that is willing to seek grant funding for waterline improvement work at no cost to the Town. The firm will potentially apply for funding through the State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) – but only if an outright grant (as opposed to a loan) is offered via the Federal Stimulus. The Board of Public Works also agrees that the Town should explore this opportunity and the Superintendent of Public Works will propose and focus a scope of work directly with the firm.

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 leave for a portion of August 14, 2009 and for the afternoon of August 17, 2009.

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