



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of Sept. 10, 2012

Report covers from August 18, 2012 to September 7, 2012

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Conomo Point Planning Committee Update (*)

The Conomo Point Planning Committee met on September 6, 2012 to continue to discuss the scope of services for waterfront planning and design work. It will be important to get a designer on board soon so that work can be completed in time to inform the zoning bylaw process for the Annual Town Meeting. Chairman Lynch also asked me to review with the Board the potential for a consultant to be hired to assist with the development of the scope of services that designers would be invited to propose on.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(2) Board of Health Consideration of Mosquito-Borne Disease (*)

The recent discovery of mosquitos with Eastern Equine Encephalitis in the Town of Hamilton prompted the Essex Board of Health to review the potential need for spraying in Essex. The Town is not presently part of Northeast Mosquito Control District and cannot therefore have ready access to that service. The Board of Health decided not to restrict outdoor scheduled activities, but to monitor our neighboring communities and to disseminate information on steps individuals should take to protect themselves. The School District is also planning to disseminate information to families and the Board of Health recommended that the School District contact the Mosquito Control District to discuss the possibility of spraying the perimeter of the sports fields in Manchester for major games.

I also recently discussed the topic with the Chairman of the Finance Committee and he was of the opinion that the Committee would likely support funding for joining the Mosquito Control District should the Board of Health and the Selectmen express support in the future.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to fiscal year 2014 planning.**

(3) Essex Cultural District Update (*)

Organizers of the new Essex Cultural District met with State officials on September 5, 2012 to review progress toward the ultimate State designation. Organizers have provided State officials with website and Facebook resources as well as interesting photographs.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

B. Computer Systems

(1) Melrose Datacenter Update

The City of Melrose recently completed its procurement of a Multi-Protocol Label Switching (MPLS) network and Comcast was the successful vendor. MPLS creates a dedicated, fiber optic connection between local networks and has the effect of serving up resources in remote locations just as quickly as if those resources are local. In the coming weeks Comcast will build out the dedicated link to Essex and we will begin to test the connectivity. The end result should be the ability to migrate all users' files to Melrose (just like I did with my files many months ago). Once all files have been migrated, we will turn our attention to actually migrating users' desktops as virtual machines in Melrose.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Server Maintenance

Audits of the Fire/Police server and the Town's Disaster Recovery Server during the week of August 27, 2012 indicated that software and hardware maintenance were required on those machines. I was able to correct the hardware issue and a software vendor assisted to correct the software issue and all systems are functioning normally.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary. Total time – 2 hours.

(3) Assessors' Database Assistance

The Assessors' office was in the process of adding new property information to new records based upon a recent division of a single property. The system locked up and I was able to assist by discussing the matter with the software vendor to get back to the starting point. Subsequently, we worked with the vendor to create the new records that were necessary.

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

(4) Accounting Server Tape Drive Maintenance

The backup tape drive on the Accounting Server became slow and inefficient during the week of August 27, 2012. I contacted the original hardware vendor since the unit is still under warranty. A technician assisted by updating the firmware and running various diagnostic tests. The unit is now working properly.

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

C. Personnel

No items.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Boardwalk Feasibility Study

Our engineer for the subject study has begun to correspond with the Army Corps of Engineers relative to a variety of existing encroachments in the Federal channel in the Essex River. Since the proposed boardwalk project will also infringe on the channel dredge setbacks in a minor way, our engineer is working to see if the Corps will allow that type of design given the many other encroachments that already exist. It is our understanding that the Corps will be responding and perhaps even visiting the Town near the end of September.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Town Hall/Library Health, Safety & Working Environment Design (*)

At Board's meeting of August 20, 2012, the Board voted to sign a contract with Meyer & Meyer to design, specify, bid out, and oversee a variety of work elements in the Town Hall/Library that will improve health, safety, and the working environment in the building. Contract language was finalized during the week of August 20, 2012 and the Board countersigned the contract during the week of August 27, 2012. The designer will be holding conference calls that I will be involved in on September 10, 2012 and I will have more information for the Board by meeting time.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to guiding the project as necessary.**

(3) Southern Conomo Point Road Work

At the last meeting, the Board voted to sign the contract with Earthworks of Rockport outside of a meeting to conduct all necessary Southern Conomo Point road work once the bid was thoroughly vetted and all bonding and insurance requirements had been met. The contractor completed the necessary steps, our engineer checked references, and the Board signed the Notice to Proceed during the week of September 3, 2012. The preconstruction conference involving the contractor, our engineer, the Conservation Agent, and myself will occur on September 11, 2012 and the contractor will complete work no later than October 15, 2012.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(4) Annual Fuel Oil Bid

I have developed and released a request for quotations for the provision of heating oil for the upcoming season. Quotations are due by September 20, 2012 and a contract with the successful bidder will be considered by the Board at the next meeting.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(5) Successor Solid Waste Disposal Agreement

(*)

The successor agreement to the Town's current solid waste disposal agreement with Covanta Haverhill has been reviewed and approved by Town Counsel and all figures have been checked by the Superintendent of Public Works. The Agreement will be effective January 1, 2013. Covanta hopes to have a signed draft to the Town in the near future.

Recommendation: **Board authorization to sign the contract outside of a meeting once it becomes available.**

E. Insurance

No items.

F. Facilities

(1) Town Hall Floor Support Work

At the Board's meeting of August 20, 2012, the Board approved a quotation from a contractor to strengthen certain areas of the floor to support new, fireproof file cabinets for the Treasurer/Collector. That work was completed during the week of September 3, 2012.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Ship's Wheel Monument Positioning

(*)

Mr. William Bradford visited my office during the week of August 27, 2012 to suggest that the subject monument, which is property of the Essex Lions Club, should remain at the Town Landing, close to its present location, if certain other accommodations are made. Specifically, Mr. Bradford would like to see the Town's storage shed moved to another part of the Town Landing and would like to see adequate area set aside for the monument with the monument being moved farther onto Town property. I suggested that it might be appropriate for the Board to conduct a site visit in the near future in order to get a full sense of Mr. Bradford's ideas.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to a potential site visit with Mr. Bradford.**

G. Fiscal/Budget

No items.

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

No items.

J. Final Judgment

No items.

K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

(1) Potential November Special Town Meeting (*)

Sufficient issues exist to consider holding a Special Town Meeting in November. The Moderator is available on November 5, 2012 and that date appears to work for the Selectmen. I have developed a draft list of potential article topics for the Board's preliminary review. In discussing the potential for an article for an easement over Town property at 280 Southern Avenue with that property owner, I learned that his neighbor, who accesses his own property via that same driveway, is also interested in an easement.

***Recommendation:* Board discussion regarding the timing of the potential meeting and preliminary scope discussion.**

(2) Draft Kennel Bylaw (*)

The Dog Officer has developed a draft bylaw that is intended to regulate kennels in the Town. She has shared the document with the Planning Board on an informal basis since the concept includes requiring a Special Permit for any such facility. The draft bylaw should be reviewed by the Board of Health, the Town Clerk, the Planning Board, and Town Counsel if the Selectmen wish to consider it for an upcoming Town Meeting. It is likely that the proposed bylaw will also require a public hearing since it does include zoning type elements.

***Recommendation:* Board discussion relative to the potential review of this proposal.**

L. Legal Issues

(1) Encroachment of Conomo Point Leasehold onto Private Property

At the Board's meeting of August 20, 2012, a private abutter to a Conomo Point leasehold demonstrated to the Board that the leaseholder had created multiple encroachments onto private property. The tenant contacted me the next day and invited me out to the leasehold to view the situation. I informed the tenant that the Board required the encroachments to be eliminated and spoke to the private

property owner by phone while I was on the site. The parties agreed to get together to verify what action was necessary. We all met again on site on August 30, 2012 and used various survey plans to review the extent of the encroachment. All parties agreed upon some simple modifications and those have been completed.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

M. Grants

(1) MIIA Loss Control Grant

Our insurer has awarded us the grant we applied for to assess and manage asbestos in the Fire Station. We have been awarded full funding for the initial assessment and plan and additional funding, up to a total of \$5,000, for post-survey services such as pipe labeling, etc. Town Counsel approved the contract during the week of August 20, 2012 and I am presently making arrangements for the contractor to begin work.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

N. Emergency Planning

(1) Federal Approval of Essex Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has approved the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan. Work on the plan was begun with the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MAPC) several years ago and has been through various stages of public input and review to reach this point. Now that the Town has an approved plan, we are eligible to apply for Federal funding that will assist the Town to eliminate known hazards and reduce known risks. I am informed by officials at the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) that FEMA will be passing through grant funding in the near future and that MEMA will be holding workshops regarding eligible projects. I plan to attend a workshop when announced.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Cape Ann Emergency Planning Team Monthly Meeting

Various Essex officials attended the subject meeting on September 6, 2012 in Manchester. The three Cape Ann communities that are represented by the same legal firm have all signed waivers for joint representation. This will allow Town Counsel to work to develop the necessary Agreement for sharing Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP) securely among the various communities. I will continue to work with the Team to spearhead the COOP sharing Agreement.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

O. Other Items

(1) Town Administrator Leave

I was out of the office on leave all day on August 31, 2012.

(2) Labor Day Holiday

The office was closed on September 3, 2012 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.*