



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of Sept. 12, 2016

Report covers from August 27, 2016 to September 9, 2016

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Town Building Committee Meeting

I have determined with Chairman O'Donnell that the Town Building Committee will re-assemble (after a recent hiatus) on September 19, 2016. At that time, the Committee can begin to formulate a plan for assessing public safety building future options and some new members could be sought as necessary.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

B. Computer Systems

(1) Set-up and Configuration of New Servers

The new Primary Domain Controller (PDC) and Assessors' application servers arrived during the week of August 29, 2016. Each unit will be deployed in the new server room, once the transition to that room has occurred (cutover is scheduled for September 20, 2016). Until then, the current PDC and Assessors' server will continue to function. After the cutover, I will work with Patriot Properties to migrate the Assessors' database software to the new Assessors' server and I will work with Melrose IT personnel to migrate from the old PDC to the new PDC.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Launch of Cloud-Based Voice Over IP (VOIP) Phone System

Our new phone system went live for outgoing calls as of September 1, 2016. Employees began to make calls in order to test the system prior to the phone number port date of September 7, 2016. On the 7th, our carrier officially changed from Verizon to ShoreTel and all incoming calls began being received on the new system. The transition went well and employees are continuing to learn more about the system. I have already worked with our IT consultant to configure the router at 30 Martin Street to be able to accept this new VOIP phone system directly when users return to the renovated building in the spring. Due to the cloud-hosted nature of the system, users will only need to plug their phones into dedicated voice jacks. We will not incur any costs associated with moving copper lines back to 30 Martin Street, since those have already been ported over to ShoreTel, on the cloud.

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

(3) Continued Review of Cyber Security Analysis Proposal

(*)

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that I should review a recent cyber security analysis proposal received from INS against other potential firms and should determine what other communities are paying for similar services. As the Board may recall, the INS proposal for external network penetration testing services, including full analysis, would cost \$5,400 - \$8,100. A proposal from a similar company that our insurer works with, Net Diligence, came in within that same price range. Further, after discussing this topic with many municipal IT professionals via Town Administrators and Managers from around the State, I found that: a) many communities, particularly smaller ones, have never conducted this type of testing, b) those communities that have conducted the testing have found it to be just as expensive, c) only some auditing firms include a module regarding IT security, and d) many IT directors place equal emphasis on user training to avoid threats that arrive by e-mail than any other security area.

In a follow-up conference call with IT professionals from our consultant, Edgewater Technology, a couple of alternative, but complementary paths emerged: a) conduct penetration testing on Town sites this year and then alternate testing on only one or two particular sites each year thereafter; or b) focus efforts on social engineering training and testing for users, so that we can mitigate the many types of e-mail threats that are presented on a daily basis. Edgewater recommended working with INS to produce a hybrid proposal that makes ground in both areas, simultaneously. INS has produced a revised proposal that caps penetration testing and analysis at \$7,200 (down from \$8,100) and that caps social engineering phone calls and e-mail phishing simulations at \$5,100, for a total possible outlay of \$12,300. Further, after these items are accomplished, and the total cost is known, the Town can opt to offer web-based user training at \$200 per user.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to the preferred course of action.**

C. Personnel

(1) Informal Staff Meeting, Risk Assessment and Monitoring Plan

I will host the next informal staff meeting on September 29, 2016. The meeting will feature our annual discussion relative to updating the Town's Risk Assessment and Monitoring Plan, which is intended to mitigate financial risks (including adaptations to new functions and policies).

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Volunteer and Employee of the Year Awards

I have circulated an announcement that the Selectmen are considering nominations for the Essex Volunteer of the Year and Employee of the Year awards. These awards are presented during the Fall Town Meeting and the

nomination period runs through September 30, 2016. At the last Fall Town Meeting, the Town also presented years of service awards. This year, no one is arriving at a new, 20-year or more, five-year milestone service award.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Town Hall/Library Renovation Project Weekly Construction Meetings

I attended the subject meetings on August 31 and September 7, 2016. Our general contractor is presently focusing on exterior siding, and the new back staircase. Subcontractors have been steadily working on the job and the rough-in for all systems is nearly complete. The contractor is looking to insulate all open walls and to hang new wallboard during the week of September 12, 2016.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) General Contractor Change Order Proposal for Library Built-in Furniture (*)

As the Board may recall, we are pricing various Library pieces such as Librarian desks and custom-curved seating and computer stations both as stand-alone furniture pieces and as built-in pieces. Our general contractor reports that we should have a price proposal for this custom, built-in construction work by meeting time.

The Library is also pricing these pieces from local craftsmen as stand-alone, custom furniture and the Board of Library Trustees has asked to be on the Selectmen's agenda concerning that topic at the next meeting on September 26, 2016. Also, we will include these pieces in the general furniture bid when that bid is released, later this fall. All three of the options may be compared once we have all of the information.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to the custom Library pieces, if the contractor's price proposal is available by meeting time.**

(3) Authorization of Chairman to Approve Plaster Repair Decisions (*)

The base Town Hall/Library construction contract includes the repair of a large amount of existing plaster. In some cases, the contractor may elect to simply replace plaster, since it might be more cost-effective for them. In other cases, our professionals may ask that certain areas be replaced, rather than be repaired, which may have additional cost implications for the Town. Should such recommendations be made, it is important to be able to provide rapid decisions to the contractor, so that the work is not delayed. As such, it would be prudent to authorize the Chairman to make these plaster change order decisions, on a case-by-case basis.

Recommendation: Board vote to authorize the Chairman to approve plaster-related change orders between meetings, as circumstances dictate.

(4) Preference for Removal or Preservation of Front Town Hall Sign (*)

The recent renovation of the Town Hall entry door area featured the application of a gold window sign identifying the building as Town Hall. From years ago, there also exists a wooden sign on the front of the portico. That sign is weathered and not in keeping with the overall architecture of the building. Our architect does not see any historical significance to the sign and will consult with the Essex Historical Commission. If the Commission does not express any desire to preserve the sign, the Board will have the choice of removing it versus preserving it.

Recommendation: Board discussion relative to the future plan for the sign.

(5) Coordination of Elevator and Panic Alarm Circuits and Panels

The renovated Town Hall/Library will feature panic buttons at various customer counters that will automatically summon the police in the event of a disturbance or other emergency. Our general contractor is providing the rough wiring for those alarms and the elevator subcontractor will be installing an emergency telephone in the elevator, by code. Both of these systems will require coordination with new or existing phone circuits and/or new or existing alarm panels in order to achieve successful monitoring by our central station vendor (which presently monitors our fire alarm system). I have ordered a new phone line for the elevator phone circuit and I am working with an alarm panel vendor to recommend.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(6) Northern Conomo Point Waterfront Public Access Design Meeting (*)

The Board met with representatives from the Conservation Commission, the Strategic Planning Committee, and the Conomo Point Planning Committee on September 8, 2016. The meeting featured an initial presentation from landscape architect James Heroux relative to his recommendations for the improvement of two waterfront sites (138 and 153 Conomo Point Road). At the meeting, those present commented on some of the challenges faced in the design process and, in particular, recommended that a preliminary idea to have a wooden deck cantilevered far out over the water be scaled back to just a narrow overhang (for cost and durability reasons). A full public input session on the design, which will be revised based on these initial comments and any comments the Board has at the present meeting, will be held on September 22, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. at the Essex Elementary School.

Recommendation: Board discussion relative to the finalization of the design presentation for September 22.

(7) Heating Oil Quotations for the 2016-17 Heating Season

Each year at this time I solicit quotations for the provision of heating oil to Town buildings (Town Hall and the Fire/Police Headquarters). Now that Town Hall will be heated with natural gas going forward, this year's quotation is only for the Fire/Police Headquarters. All other Town buildings are already heated by natural gas. Quotations are due by 2:00 p.m. on September 22, 2016 and the Board will consider making an award at the meeting of September 26, 2016.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

E. Insurance

(1) Safety Committee Meeting

The Safety Committee will meet on September 22, 2016. I will attend as a member of the Committee. A draft agenda has been placed in the Board's reading folder.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

F. Facilities

(1) Replacement of Electric Line on Centennial Grove Road (*)

After much study and urging from residents and Town officials, National Grid has decided to replace the entire electric line down Centennial Grove Road. The present line is very old and has dozens of splices from past line breaks. A new line will require new poles and new pole support/guying and will offer much more reliable service for area residents and for the Water Filtration Plant. The new supports are proposed for placement on Town land and, as such, the Town Meeting must authorize the Selectmen to grant all necessary easements before National Grid will undertake the project.

Recommendation: **Board discussion regarding adding this topic to the Fall Town Meeting warrant.**

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) Continued Review of Potential Fall Town Meeting Topics (*)

At the last meeting, the Board briefly reviewed a preliminary list of Fall Town Meeting article topics. I have revised this preliminary draft list per the Board's guidance and continued review. The Fall Town Meeting will be held on November 14, 2016.

Recommendation: **Further discussion regarding items for the Fall Town Meeting.**

L. Legal Issues

No items.

M. Grants

(1) Meeting with State Personnel Relative to Unfunded Coastal Resiliency Grant

Mr. Peter Phippen and I met with personnel from the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) on September 6, 2016 to discuss why a recent grant application exploring sea level rise mitigation techniques was not funded. According to CZM, while the proposal was very strong with respect to administration, regional benefit, matching funds, and overall approach, it's lack of a specific resource that is immediately in jeopardy did not allow it to be scored above some other projects with specific capital needs identified. The same project may fare better in the next round and I asked whether consideration might be given in the future for communities which have taken the time to set up community compacts in this area. The group had a great discussion regarding the status of coastal resiliency planning and dredging needs in Essex and in the region and we plan to continue this type of discussion. We also discussed the recent interest shown by the Army Corps of Engineers for a potential beneficial dredge spoil use project.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

N. Emergency Planning

No items.

O. Other Items

(1) Labor Day Holiday

The office was closed on September 5, 2016, 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.