



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of October 17, 2011

Report covers from October 1, 2011 to October 14, 2011

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

No items.

B. Computer Systems

(1) Maximization of Internet Connectivity

I have reviewed available increases in Internet throughput with both Comcast and Verizon in preparation for the implementation of the Melrose datacenter. With respect to Comcast, I have confirmed that the Town is presently enrolled in the fastest plan that Comcast offers in our area. With respect to Verizon, I have arranged for a tripling of the speed that we had been receiving for a lower price, due to a new program that has become available.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

C. Personnel

(1) Acknowledgement of Town Policies

Now that we have received acknowledgement of Town policies forms from all paid employees, I have begun a second round of acknowledgment solicitations involving all elected and appointed officials. I have provided the necessary information regarding where to access the policies and the acknowledgment form to various officials and board/commission chairs so that each can ask their associates to complete the process. Many people are involved and the Selectmen's Assistant and I will track submissions.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Testing and Training for New and Returning Senior Van Drivers

I have been working with the Chairman of the Council on Aging regarding the need to have current volunteer van drivers undergo annual drug and medical testing and to initiate CORI checks and drug and medical testing for new volunteer and paid drivers. The Town's policy requires annual drug and medical retesting, in addition to at the time of initial service. Also, the Council has been working through the requirement to offer annual first aid, CPR, and sensitivity training for all drivers. Pending all necessary testing and training, one new volunteer and the Town's first two paid drivers will commence service in the near future.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Definitive Plan Hearing, Southern Conomo Point

At the last meeting, the Board asked that I provide notice to the Planning Board that the Selectmen did not have any comments on the subject plan since the Selectmen are the applicant and their wishes are reflected within the application. I provided that notice to the Planning Board and indicated that the Selectmen will be in attendance at the public hearing on October 19, 2011.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Parking Lot Line Striping

At the last meeting, the Board asked whether line striping could be provided by the Route 133 Reconstruction Project in parking lots of establishments that received recent DOT paving work. The Department has indicated that no line striping will be provided and referenced the fact that all striping work of this type in other locations has been arranged for and paid for by the property owner.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(3) Requests for Proposals, Real Property for Town Offices

The Town's Request for Proposals (RFP) for the relocation of Town offices was released as of October 5, 2011. Proposals are due no later than November 7, 2011. I ran the necessary advertising during the weeks of October 3 and October 10, 2011 and the RFP is available for download at www.essexma.org.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(4) Delivery of Dump Truck

The new DPW dump truck arrived during the week of October 3, 2011. I arranged for the necessary processing of paperwork and insurance, and the DPW arranged for vehicle registration. A 1997 truck was traded in as part of the transaction.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(5) Affirmative Marketing Quarterly Report

I completed and submitted to the State the subject report for the quarter ending September 30, 2011 during the week of October 3, 2011 in my capacity as the Town's Affirmative Marketing Compliance Officer (AMCO). The report is intended to document utilization of woman and minority-owned businesses on State-funded projects. No such utilization occurred this quarter.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(6) Review of Draft Town Building Feasibility Study

(*)

Our consultant, Reinhardt Associates, has provided the Town with the subject draft report. I have reviewed the report and have generated a list of specific comments. It will be important to collect comments from all members of the Town Building Committee so that a comprehensive list can be sent to the consultant for consideration.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

E. Insurance

(1) Monthly Pothole Log

I forwarded the DPW's pothole log for the month of September to our insurer as part of the MIIA Rewards Program. The pothole logs are designed to track reported problems and to demonstrate rapid resolution in each case. I will forward the logs to our insurer each month through the spring.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Quarterly Building Self-Inspection Checklists

I completed the subject checklists as part of the MIIA Rewards Program for the Town Hall and Senior Center buildings during the week of October 10, 2011. The checklists help to determine if any health or safety hazards exist within buildings on a periodic basis. On the Town Hall form, I reported the existence of the new water problem in the Town Clerk's office that appears to be associated with a leak behind a chimney. A separate assessment of that problem has already commenced. Other departments inspect the other Town buildings.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(3) Risk Analysis Toolkit

This year, our insurer has released the subject toolkit as part of the MIIA Rewards Program. The toolkit is designed to provide our insurer with the Town's practices with respect to a large number of potential areas of risk. Our loss control representative will review a general survey (which I have completed and returned) and will make recommendations to change or adopt policies and procedures to further reduce risk. We are presently awaiting review and response.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(4) Early Retiree Reinsurance Program (ERRP)

(*)

Our insurer has informed us that they applied on behalf of their membership to a new Federal program aimed at making health insurance more affordable. The ERRP is part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010. Thus far, our insurer has received approval regarding a partial rebate of premiums for fiscal year 2010 (\$22,079) and is working on a fiscal year 2011 application. If the Town chooses to wait for the second application, any reduction that is offered can be planned into the health insurance budget for FY13. Otherwise, taking the available funds now will translate to funds arriving in a fiscal year where the health insurance budget is already fully-funded.

Further, the program requires that 25% of the rebate be shared back to the individuals who have paid premiums. The effective rebate to the Town budget will therefore be 75% of the total figure. Presently, our insurer is asking the Town whether the Town desires to accept the money now, versus waiting for the second year application process to wrap up with the ability to plan for an offset in FY13.

***Recommendation:* I recommend that the Board opt for the two-year aggregation with the offset being realized to the FY13 budget planning process.**

F. Facilities

(1) Repair of Town Hall Water Leak

At the last meeting, the Board authorized the Chairman to approve an emergency contract for repairs to the Town Hall concerning a leak that became apparent in the Town Clerk's office in the vicinity of a rear wall chimney. We received a quotation for the work during the week of October 10, 2011 and I am presently working to determine if the contractor will accept the work on a time and materials basis, with a cap, since it is possible that the problem will be found quickly.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Field of Dreams Irrigation System Winterization

Our irrigation contractor turned off the supply of well water and winterized the irrigation system at the Field of Dreams. The Superintendent of Public Works has contracted for the usual fall maintenance on each of the baseball diamonds as well.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(3) Centennial Grove Winterization

The Harbormaster will soon assist with the retrieval of the swim float and buoys from the water at the Centennial Grove Beach. The Superintendent of Public

Works will then work to move the swim float, the fishing dock, and the gangway inland for the winter. The Selectmen's Assistant will coordinate the usual winter removal of the portable toilets both at the Field of Dreams and at the upper Grove. Once the Department of Public Works blows out the summer water line to the cottage, I will work with a plumber to drain and winterize the pipes at the cottage.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(4) Replacement of Doorknob, Town Hall

The locking doorknob on the Town Clerk's/Treasurer-Collector Clerk's office had been experiencing problems with smooth key operation. The lock became too difficult to operate and the staff purchased a new knob. I removed the old knob and installed the new. Additional keys were made to serve all necessary personnel.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(5) Conomo Point Parking Site Visit

(*)

I visited Conomo Point along with Selectman Coviello, Superintendent Goodwin, and Chief Silva on October 12, 2011 to review the potential for non-resident parking along Conomo Point Road just as the road comes out of the wooded area, heading toward the Point. A sign presently requires sticker parking beyond a certain point. We determined that it would be possible to create a zone about 200 feet closer to the Point where non-residents could park for about a 350-foot stretch of roadway, on one side of the road (right side heading toward the Point). This action would alleviate public safety concerns raised by several parties regarding the practice of non-residents parking behind the current sign, which exists at a narrower section of the roadway, near a rise in the road.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to potential future parking designation options.**

G. Fiscal/Budget

(1) 2011-2012 Fiscal Planning Calendar

(*)

The Town Accountant has released the first draft of the planning calendar for this season's budget process. Also, by meeting time, we will have additional information regarding the Manchester Essex Regional School District's budget planning process.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

No items.

J. Final Judgment

No items.

K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

(1) Consideration of Acceptance of Lowe Hill Road as a Public Way

At the last meeting, the Board voted its intention to lay out Lowe Hill Road as a Town way, with all costs to be borne by the petitioners. As per the statute, I have officially notified the Planning Board of the Selectmen's intention and the Planning has 45 days to make a non-binding report. Simultaneously, I notified the leader of the residents seeking acceptance that any and all costs must be borne by that group. A meeting will need to be held in the future at which the layout will be considered by the Selectmen.

I am presently working with the residents to have them develop the necessary precursor materials and, when ready, a notice will be required to all property owners concerning any land or easements that will be necessary. That notice must be delivered at least seven days before the layout meeting.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Special Town Meeting and Election Warrant

(*)

At the last meeting, the Board provided guidance regarding the subject warrant and determined that a Special Election would also be necessary in order to consider a debt exclusion for the potential purchase of property. I have revised the draft in accordance with that guidance.

Recommendation: **Board vote to hold a Special Town Meeting on November 14, 2011 at 7:30 p.m. at the Essex Elementary School; to hold a Special Election on November 21, 2011 from noon to 8:00 p.m.; to notify the Town Clerk regarding the necessary ballot language for the Special Election as shown on the draft warrant; to open the Special Town Meeting and Election Warrant; to add the ballot language and articles as they appear on the draft warrant; to close the Special Town Meeting and Election Warrant; to approve the Special Town Meeting and Election Warrant; and to sign the Special Town Meeting and Election Warrant.**

L. Legal Issues

No items.

M. Grants

(1) MIIA Loss Control Grant Program

(*)

I recently worked with the Fire Chief regarding a grant application to our insurer for traffic cones used in fire apparatus driver training and reflective safety vests for all fire, police, and DPW personnel when working roadside. The total cost is \$4,732.50. I signed the application on the Board's behalf due to an impending review deadline.

Recommendation: **Board ratification of the grant application submission.**

(2) MIIA Risk Management Grant Program

(*)

I recently worked with the Police Chief regarding a grant application to our insurer for police interview camera and recording equipment. The Department is in the process of planning for an improved interview/interrogation room and this equipment is a necessary component to comply with standard protocols. The total cost is \$10,277 and the grant is capped at \$10,000. I signed the application on the Board's behalf due to an impending review deadline.

Recommendation: **Board ratification of the grant application submission.**

N. Emergency Planning

(1) Cape Ann Emergency Planning Team Monthly Meeting

I attended the subject meeting on October 6, 2011. The meeting featured a discussion regarding the Team's continuing effort to be recognized as a permanent emergency planning entity. Presently, the Team is recognized at a provisional status.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

O. Other Items

(1) Town Services Survey

Mr. Richard Thompson of the Ipswich Finance Committee visited my office on October 13, 2011. He is conducting a survey in various communities regarding how each community manages the delivery and cost of various services. He will provide all participating communities with a copy of the survey results, once completed.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Columbus Day Holiday

The office was closed on October 10, 2011 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.