



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of October 20, 2014

Report covers from October 4, 2014 to October 17, 2014

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Transfer of DPW Pickup Truck to Shellfish Department

The Shellfish Constable recently informed me that the truck he drives (which the Town purchased used several years back) is no longer operative due to serious frame issues. As such, I asked the Superintendent of Public Works whether he anticipated having an older, surplus vehicle available soon, in light of recent purchases in that department. The Superintendent did have an older pickup truck that he was willing to transfer to the Shellfish Department (and for use by the Animal Control Officer as necessary). The vehicle is two-wheel-drive and may pose an issue in the winter. However, the Constable is willing to try the vehicle and we can address the matter later if winter traction becomes an issue. The old truck will be disposed of by selling it to a scrap dealer.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary at this time.

(2) Continued Review of Fire/Police Operations by Public Safety Committee

The Public Safety Committee continues to review the various materials at hand to work toward final recommendations relative to the operations of the various public safety departments. The Fire Department has provided the Committee with its own input relative to the recently-completed Essex County Fire Chiefs Association report.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

B. Computer Systems

(1) Remote Backup of Town Data

(*)

As the Board is aware, the City of Melrose already remotely hosts the Town's computer data and will be increasingly providing remote computer desktop services. The City already has a replication site that its servers are backed up to in the event of an emergency there. However, that site is also in Melrose and it would be preferable in the future to have a "far-site" backup option as well.

Recently, a group of municipalities formed the Community Software Consortium (CSC) and the CSC has been assisted by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue's Division of Local Services (DLS) in investigating secure, remote backup. CSC has approached small communities with an offer to provide a far-site backup service at no cost, as part of a recent grant. I have learned that Essex

is, indeed, eligible for the program, even though our data is not stored in-house. After one year, the participating towns will need to pay the backup vendor (Carbonite) an annual fee. However, since volume discounts have been offered as part of the grant, the service will be less costly than our former contract with MozyPro.

Recommendation: Board approval of a basic MOU to allow Essex to participate.

C. Personnel

No items.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Completion of Demolition Site Work, Conomo Point

As the Board is aware, demolition of the structures at 103 and 138 Conomo Point Road occurred during the week of September 29, 2014. A small amount of site work was completed at #103 on October 6, 2014 and the filling of the cellar hole and major site restoration at #138 was completed during the week of October 6, 2014. Demolition work and associated restoration on both sites is therefore now complete. A final step will be to find, pump, crush, and fill the septic tank serving each of the properties. I will seek certificates of compliance from the Conservation Commission in the coming weeks.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Request for Proposals for Sale of 5 Beach Circle

The submission deadline for proposals from parties desiring to purchase 5 Beach Circle has been extended until October 27, 2014 at noon. At the last meeting, the Board answered a question from a party who wanted to know if the Board would entertain extending a lease to allow for arrangements to be made for an existing house on another property. The Board indicated that a limited license would be granted to someone in that situation to allow for the transition and I provided that information to all RFP holders on October 7, 2014.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(3) Request for Qualifications for Town Hall Renovation Project Manager

As discussed at the last meeting, a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a Project Manager to oversee the next phase of the Town Hall renovation project was released on October 8, 2014. I hosted a site inspection visit for prospective project managers on October 16, 2014 and six firms were in attendance. To date, a total of 26 firms have requested documents for the project. Responses to the

RFQ are due on October 29, 2014 and the Board will rank the proposals at the next meeting on November 3, 2014.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(4) Draft Federal Channel Report (*)

By meeting time, I expect to have the first draft of a report from our engineering firm relative to the various options that might be in play with respect to the reconfiguration or realignment of the Federal Channel in the Essex River in order to eliminate various encroachments.

Recommendation: **Preliminary Board discussion relative to the draft report.**

E. Insurance

(1) Annual Review of Insurance Coverage

I met with a representative of our insurer on October 9, 2014 for our annual review of our insurance coverage related to property & casualty and workers' compensation. Our representative made several minor recommendations that I will work with various department heads to review. She pointed out that we will need a builder's risk policy if the Town Hall exterior renovation project is funded (due to the value of the project). I will work with our Project Manager to factor this into the cost estimate for the project.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Monthly Pothole Log

With winter approaching, we have resumed the submission of our monthly pothole logs to our insurer. For September, one pothole was reported and it was repaired swiftly.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

F. Facilities

(1) Proposal to Use Centennial Grove Cottage in November (*)

At the last meeting, an individual appeared to request the private use of the Centennial Grove Cottage for a wedding in November (after water is turned off and despite the fact that the Cottage has no heating system). The Board asked that I pose the request to the Fire Chief, since the party indicated that an external heating source would be used that would blow hot air into the structure. I contacted the Chief for his input and he indicated that a device that uses a safe heat exchanger type of arrangement would be acceptable. The individual would still be responsible for bringing in appropriate sanitary facilities and for securing

any other licenses, such as an alcohol permit and insurance, if desired, and any foodservice permits.

Recommendation: Board discussion relative to the potential approval of the request, provided that all other requirements are met.

(2) Inspection and Testing of New Fire Alarm System in Town Hall

The Fire Chief and the Deputy Fire Chief/Electrical Inspector were present for inspection and testing of the new Town Hall/Library fire and carbon monoxide alarm system on October 16, 2014. Testing went smoothly and the Fire Chief asked that two additional horns be placed in the upper reaches of the two rear stairwells, just to ensure good alarm penetration in adjacent areas. That additional work will be completed by change order.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

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) Revision of Shellfish Regulations Relative to Propagation Netting (*)

At the last meeting, the Shellfish Advisory Commission, the Shellfish Constable, and the Selectmen agreed upon new language that will be added to the Town's Shellfish Regulations relative to the placement and removal of shellfish propagation netting. I have now incorporated that language into the body of the regulations.

Recommendation: Board vote to approve the revisions to the regulations, with an effective date of November 1, 2014.

(2) Approval and Signature of Fall Town Meeting Warrant

I revised the subject warrant per the Board's guidance from the last meeting. The warrant is ready for the Board's final review, approval, and signature.

Recommendation: Board votes to include the various articles, close the warrant, approve the warrant, and sign the warrant, per the posted agenda.

L. Legal Issues

(1) Quarterly Review of Executive Session Minutes

The Chairman recently conducted his quarterly review of executive session minutes and did not find any minutes that are suitable for release.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

M. Grants

(1) Green Crab Trapping Grant

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that any parties interested in trapping green crabs as part of a new Division of Marine Fisheries program would need to have their own equipment and would be paid either 40 cents per pound or 43.5 cents per pound, depending on whether disposal would need to be paid for, versus free or sale. The Shellfish Constable put a notice on the shellfish hotline that trapping contracts are available and I put a notice on the Town website and in Town Hall. I also notified the Gloucester Times about the opportunity. Further, I developed a contract document for use between the Town and each trapper and the Division of Marine Fisheries approved that before use. Initial contracts were written for 5,000 pounds of crabs each (approximately \$2,000), with the ability for each trapper to be authorized to trap more, until funds are exhausted. To date, five trappers have entered into contracts but no invoices have yet been presented for payment.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) MIIA Loss Control and Risk Management Grant Applications (*)

As usual, our insurer is offering both a \$5,000 Loss Control Grant and a \$10,000 Risk Management Grant. This year, we intend to use the Loss Control Grant for training that would simulate a chemical spill at the Water Filtration Plant. This training will benefit both the Fire Department and the Water Department. For the Risk Management Grant, we intend to seek funding for the mapping of a portion of our storm drain system that is not already well mapped. The mapping effort will benefit daily DPW operations and will contribute toward our continued development of our EPA-mandated storm drain management work.

Recommendation: **Board vote to authorize the Chairman to sign both grant applications.**

N. Emergency Planning

(1) Regional Dispatch Center Monthly Meeting

I attended the subject meeting on October 17, 2014 as a member of the Center's Finance Advisory Board. The meeting featured an update from the Director relative to overall operations and additional discussion was held with respect to legislation that would exempt the Center from having to pay State fringe benefit expenses.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

O. Other Items

(1) Columbus Day Holiday

The office was closed on October 13, 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.