



## Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of November 1, 2010

Report covers from October 16, 2010 to October 29, 2010

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

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### A. Town Department Reports/Requests

#### (1) Town Building Committee Final Public Forum

The Town Building Committee held the subject forum on October 25, 2010. The forum focused on addressing the concerns of a group of residents. Extensive discussion regarding the public's questions and concerns was held and the Committee will meet one more time prior to the Special Town Meeting in order to plan a presentation that highlights the need for the study while addressing some common questions and concerns.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary.

### B. Computer Systems

#### (1) Continued Configuration of Water Filtration Plant Server

I uncrated and initially set up the subject server on October 15, 2010 with assistance from DPW employees. However, once I powered on the system, a boot problem was experienced. I contacted the manufacturer on October 15, 2010 and worked with technical support to correct the problem (the factory had not listed the hard drive array as the primary boot disk in the system's setup manager). The system booted as expected after that correction and I prepared the existing domain for the addition of this newer operating system. I then continued to configure the server and add software as time permitted during the weeks of October 18 and October 25, 2010. The server is now ready to interact with new workstations if the Special Town Meeting should fund that equipment. I will continue to run the old server until the status of new equipment is known in order to avoid having to migrate the old workstations and then having to soon thereafter switch to the new machines.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary. Total time – 6 hours.

#### (2) E-mail Archiving Solution

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I was approached by an e-mail archiving company after they heard about our recent efforts to improve our archiving capabilities at a recent Selectmen's meeting. The company can pull all e-mail traffic (after we bring it to a central box) onto a cloud computing platform that is disaster tolerant with unlimited storage for \$5.00 per e-mail address per month. This type of service would offer more convenient live storage, disaster recovery, and restoration/indexing than we presently have. Presently, our system requires the production of archived DVDs

periodically and will not necessarily allow for easing indexing or restoration once archived to disk (can be done but with much effort). For 60 boxes, the system will cost \$300 per month. The convenience of such a system should be weighed against the relatively small need to access the backups.

*Recommendation:* **Board discussion relative to this service.**

(3) Replacement of Network Interface Card

A motherboard-integrated network interface device in a Water Department computer ceased to function during the week of October 18, 2010. I first ruled out a network cable or other hardware problem and then installed a spare component card in an available slot. The component card worked well and the network connection has been reestablished for that system.

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

(4) Antivirus Software Update

Library personnel reported stability problems with the Library's new laptop and found via tech support that the version of antivirus software that I had installed on the machine sometimes causes problems with some Windows 7 machines. We had not experience any problems with any of our other Windows 7 systems. However, the solution to the problem was fixed in the newest release of our software. As such, I downloaded the newest version and created a CD. I then installed the update to the Library laptop. We will monitor the situation to determine if other problems exist.

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

(5) Assessors' Database Restoration

A recent update procedure caused data corruption relative to the Assessors' database. As such, I worked with our software vendor to restore the database to a version that immediately predated the update procedure.

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

## **C. Personnel**

(1) AFSCME Contract

The Board has signed a new contract with AFSCME. The funding for the first year of the contract is subject to appropriation by Town Meeting and will be considered on November 15, 2010.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) EPBA Collective Bargaining (\*)  
I may have a status update by meeting time.

*Recommendation: Board discussion in executive session, if necessary.*

(3) Teamsters Collective Bargaining (\*)  
I may have a status update by meeting time.

*Recommendation: Board discussion in executive session, if necessary.*

#### **D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects**

(1) Rte. 133 Reconst. Project Bimonthly Update and Monthly Meeting (\*)  
I issued the subject bimonthly update (number four) to members of the Route 133 Task Force on October 25, 2010. The status of the project did not change appreciably since the last update.

On the same date, I attended the subject meeting along with Selectman O'Donnell, other members of the Task Force, and the MassDOT Resident Engineer. The meeting featured a discussion relative to the various options pertaining to what will be a very busy construction season from late-March, 2011 through November of 2011. It will likely be necessary to have two construction crews working in the project area during the upcoming season in order to complete the work on time (and avoid a fourth construction season). The need for National Grid to resume and complete its pole move work was also discussed.

A planned detour using Pickering Street will help alleviate traffic delay problems for the area between John Wise Avenue and Martin Street. However, that detour will not help with delays between Martin Street and Southern Avenue. The use of Apple Street as a detour was discussed (which carries disadvantages to Apple Street residents and to business owners looking to maintain passerby traffic in the downtown area). The use of night work was also discussed and the Resident Engineer plans to have a representative of the contractor present at the November Task Force meeting (scheduled for November 30, 2010). The contractor is not contractually obligated to offer night work. A suggestion for continued work by the contractor during the winter months was made but the limited availability of asphalt during the cold weather will not likely allow that to occur. Apple Street appears to be the only option within the Town's control at this point in time.

Regarding National Grid's obligation to move utility poles, it is imperative that the company work diligently to complete work associated with the active construction zone over the next few weeks and to work over the winter to complete all of the other moves. Otherwise, when construction resumes in the spring, utility crews will actually be in the way of a very busy roadway reconstruction contractor. It is my understanding that National Grid is presently

working to complete the seasonal work and to gear up for the winter work, potentially with the assistance of their own, private subcontractor. If work does not commence very soon, it may be necessary for the Selectmen to engage directly with National Grid and other authorities.

*Recommendation:* **Board discussion relative to this status update as necessary.**

(2) Ambulance Bid Deadline

Bids for the Town's new ambulance were due on October 26, 2010. A total of one bid was received (from Greenwood Emergency Vehicles of North Attleboro, MA). The cost of the new ambulance, including trade-in of the old vehicle, will be \$152,225. The Fire Department is presently reviewing the technical aspects of the bid and will report to the Selectmen once approved. The Selectmen may then vote to authorize the contract so that the vehicle may be ordered.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary.

(3) Northern Conomo Point Planning Final Report (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board approved the timetable for the completion of the subject report. I provided the Board's final feedback to our consultant during the week of October 18, 2010 and a draft of the implementation plan was provided back to the Town on October 25, 2010. The full final report was provided to the Town at the end of that week.

*Recommendation:* **Board discussion relative to the final report as necessary.**

(4) Potential Use of Vacant Parking Lot for Downtown Parking

The Board received a suggestion to explore the temporary licensing of a vacant, downtown parking lot to offer off-street parking to those with business in that area during the ongoing construction project. At the last meeting, the Board asked that I contact the owner of the lot to discuss the issue. I have made contact, the owner is considering the matter, and I am awaiting a reply.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary.

(5) Backup Plans for Traffic Congestion Next Season

At the last meeting, the Board asked me to contact the Resident Engineer for the Route 133 Reconstruction Project to discuss plans that might be possible to avoid exceeding maximum traffic backup times associated with the project. Although Pickering Street will offer relief for that stretch of roadway, other parts of the project area will either need to utilize Apple Street as a detour (which may be a difficult road to negotiate) or night work may need to be considered. I discussed with the Board's concern with the Resident Engineer and the Route 133 Task Force on October 25, 2010 (see item D1, above).

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary.

## **E. Insurance**

### (1) Continued MIIA Rewards Program Seminar Preparation

As noted in the past, I am participating in a seminar aimed at providing managers with insight on the challenges of employees working in various departments. On October 25, 2010, I worked alongside a the Treasurer/Collector's Clerk for part of the day to get a sense of that position's responsibilities and requirements. I previously worked alongside a Water Department employee on October 6, 2010. I will use the insight that I have obtained to answer some questions that our insurer has developed for the seminar.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary.

### (2) Valuation of Town Buildings

Our insurer will be conducting a valuation of our various Town buildings that are valued at over \$100,000 to ensure that we are carrying appropriate coverage. I am presently arranging to have the evaluator come to Essex later this month. I will assist with tours of the buildings and the production of Assessors' records, etc.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary.

## **F. Facilities**

### (1) Conomo Point Planning

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Senator Tarr will be assisting the Town in setting up a meeting with DEP officials to discuss some potential options for the future occupancy of the northern area of Conomo Point. Once he has established some potential dates, I will arrange to attend the meeting with Chairman Randall.

Also, I have reviewed the Board's master calendar relative to Conomo Point planning and action items and have several suggestions for changes. As the Board looks out over the coming months, it may be appropriate to seek additional legal funds for the legal review and coordination of issues surrounding the Point.

***Recommendation:* Board discussion relative to the Conomo Point calendar and the potential need for additional legal funding.**

### (2) Centennial Grove Portable Toilets

The Selectmen's Assistant has made arrangements to remove the portable toilets in the upper Grove area in the coming days (left in place for the Halloween event). The single toilet in the Field of Dreams parking lot will be removed toward the middle of the month, once the soccer season is over.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

(3) Memorial Park Restrooms

The subject facility is now closed for the season (effective November 1, 2010). As the Board may recall, in the spring of 2011, on a test basis, the facility will be open seven days from April 1 through September 30 (the old schedule had been just Thursday-Sunday between April 1 and Memorial Day).

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

(4) Sidewalk Improvements, Western Avenue and Martin Street (\*)

Selectman O'Donnell recently attended a forum held by the Board of Public Works regarding two sidewalk projects that are being contemplated using Chapter 90 funds.

*Recommendation:* **General Board discussion relative to these projects.**

**G. Fiscal/Budget**

No items.

**H. Complaints**

No items.

**I. Meetings Attended**

(1) Manchester Essex Rotary Club Meeting

I attended the subject meeting as a guest speaker on October 20, 2010. I updated the group regarding current issues and initiatives in the Town and answered a variety of questions. The Rotary is considering sponsoring and running the annual Easter Egg Hunt this spring.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

(2) Massachusetts Health Officers Association Annual Meeting

I attended the subject meeting on October 27 and 28, 2010 in Springfield. The meeting included a variety of presentations and exhibits that will be useful as the Town considers the wastewater issue at Conomo Point. I was also able to receive my continuing education credits to maintain my status as a Registered Sanitarian, an approved Septic System Inspector, and an approved Soil Evaluator.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## J. Final Judgment

No items.

## K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

### (1) Chapter 30b Warrant Article

Chairman Randall and I met with Senator Bruce Tarr and Inspector General (IG) Sullivan on October 20, 2010. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss with the IG the Town's draft language for a Special Legislation authorization article for the upcoming Special Town Meeting. The Senator had suggested that running the language by the IG in the beginning may assist with passage of the Legislation later. The IG's staff subsequently discussed the draft with Town Counsel and some changes were made. The Board signed the warrant on October 26, 2010, pursuant to its previous vote.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

### (2) Cost of Reverse 911 System

At the last meeting, the Board asked that I work with reverse 911 system vendors to arrive at a suitable appropriation for the setup of such a system in Essex (in preparation for the upcoming Special Town Meeting). I had already spoken with Blackboard Connect and I have since spoken with Code Red and a company called WENS. It is reasonable to expect that a system for our size community will be less than \$5,000 per year.

*Recommendation:* I will carry \$5,000 in the motion for the system at the Special Town Meeting.

### (3) Cost of Fishing Dock Replacement

I have learned that a maintenance-free, 5'x20' floating dock will cost approximately \$3,000-\$3,500 without any accessories. If we want to add cleats, new chains, anchors, etc., the cost will be more.

*Recommendation:* I will carry \$5,000 in the motion for the replacement dock at the Special Town Meeting.

### (4) Shellfish Regulations

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Recently, a resident asked various questions regarding the recently-revised Shellfish Regulations.

*Recommendation:* **Board discussion as necessary.**

## L. Legal Issues

### (1) Antique Store License

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The Licensing Clerk called to the attention of a local antiques store that they appeared to still be in business (open from time to time) but had not renewed their license. The Board asked me to investigate the matter further on their behalf and to take appropriate steps to compel compliance if the establishment desired to continue in business. I was able to contact the owner and he stated that he would make application for consideration at the present meeting. The application was not received by the time of printing of this report but additional information may be available by meeting time.

*Recommendation:* **Board discussion as necessary.**

### (2) Entertainment License

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A local establishment had been advertising evening entertainment and the Licensing Clerk informed the establishment that a license was necessary. It appears that the establishment has chosen not to offer entertainment, as evidenced by the removal of signs promoting this offering.

*Recommendation:* **Board discussion as necessary.**

### (2) Conservation Land

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At the last meeting, the Board asked me to contact the last surviving member of a non-profit land trust listed as the last known owner of land off of Cogswell Court to determine the status of that organization. I was able to make contact and the individual indicated that she is in control of the property and might be interested in conveying the property to the Town, for the Town to manage. However, she specifically indicated that she was not interested in the Town transferring the property to any other party thereafter. Beyond the statement made by the individual, it is not clear to me whether the land trust still legally exists and legal research regarding this matter would be necessary to verify the parcel's status.

*Recommendation:* **Board discussion as necessary.**

### (3) Potential Acceptance of a New Public Way

A Lowe Hill Road resident recently approached me about the process for getting that private way accepted as a public way by the Town Meeting. I outlined the steps, which include interfacing with the Selectmen, the Board of Public Works, and the Planning Board and he will likely work with his neighbors to petition the Selectmen to consider the first step (layout of the road). He will also likely approach the Board of Public Works to get a recommendation first.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary.

## M. Grants

### (1) Seaport Bond Bill Funding

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We have learned that the funding for the downtown boardwalk feasibility and conceptual design study will be part of a FY12 appropriation. This suggests that the funding will not be available until at least July 1, 2011. We are presently awaiting written guidance on the matter, which may be available by meeting time.

*Recommendation:* **Board discussion as necessary.**

## N. Emergency Planning

### (1) Emergency Planning Drill

I participated in the subject drill hosted by the Cape Ann Emergency Planning Team on October 29, 2010 along with other Town employees and officials. The drill was intended to simulate an ice storm on Cape Ann. The morning session focused on communication within Essex and the afternoon session focused on the regional response.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## O. Other Items

No items.

*This report is available at [www.essexma.org](http://www.essexma.org) on the morning after any regularly scheduled Essex Board of Selectmen's Meeting.*