



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of November 2, 2015

Report covers from October 17, 2015 to October 30, 2015

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Strategic Planning Committee Update (*)

I attended a meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee on October 27, 2015 along with Chairman O'Donnell. The meeting featured the organization of action items and timelines associated with each of the major planning goals in the Town's draft Strategic Plan. Some gaps still existed and the group decided that a final effort should be made to provide our technical assistant, Mr. Mark Fine of MAPC, with the necessary material in advance of the next meeting (which will be held on November 23, 2015). Thereafter, it is likely that the Committee will release a summary document for public comment.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

B. Computer Systems

(1) Replacement of Managed Network Switch

The managed switch on the Essex side of the dedicated link to the City of Melrose datacenter began experiencing problems recently. Melrose personnel indicated that the switch needed to be exchanged for a new one and visited the Town during the week of October 26, 2015. I assisted the technician with the replacement process and the replacement switch is working well.

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

C. Personnel

(1) Commencement of Collective Bargaining for Successor Union Contracts (*)

Both the AFSCME collective bargaining agreement (clerical and DPW) and the EPBA collective bargaining agreement (police) expire as of June 30, 2016. Traditionally, we engage both unions with respect to the negotiation of successor agreements in late-November or early-December. Also, one Selectman traditionally participates in all bargaining sessions.

Recommendation: **Board discussion regarding the timing of bargaining commencement and which Selectmen will participate.**

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Review of Quotations for Moving Services (*)

As noted in my last report, I was in the process of soliciting quotations for moving and packing services for both the Town Offices and the Library (I solicited six quotations). In addition, the Library had solicited two quotations of its own. Some moving vendors chose not to submit quotations and others only quoted on either the Library or the Town offices. The Board of Library Trustees will be in attendance at the present meeting to discuss the various prices.

Recommendation: **Board discussion with the Library Trustees as to the selection of a mover or movers for the upcoming relocation work.**

(2) Town Hall/Library Renovation Design Update (*)

Our architect has continued to prepare the design plans for our upcoming building work. Two issues have surfaced that the Selectmen should provide guidance on. First, the Board of Assessors asked whether additional space in what will be the former, second-floor lobby can be allocated to their office. Second, our architect has suggested an alternative location for the server room in an area that will become a former stairwell. Also, I have begun to work with our architect on planning for the natural gas connection and the sprinkler water service connection to the building.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to these items.**

E. Insurance

(1) Freeze-up Prevention Building Check Program

As has been the case in recent years, the Town earns credit toward our insurance premiums for monitoring building temperatures during the winter season (part of the MIA Rewards Program). The DPW and the Police Department are instrumental on checking buildings each weekend and I have provided both departments with the necessary log forms for the upcoming season.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary at this time.

F. Facilities

(1) Further Discussion Regarding Town Landing and Municipal Lot Parking (*)

At the last meeting, the Board reviewed the two sets of regulations governing the Town Landing and the Municipal Parking Lot. I have now generated color images of both areas so that the Board can discuss how the rules and signage may be better coordinated for next season.

Recommendation: Board review of the aerial images and further discussion relative to potential regulatory and signage changes.

(2) Boarding up of Centennial Grove Cottage Garage (*)

We have had problems over the years with vandals breaking windows at the Centennial Grove garage and gaining access. Recently, this occurred again and major vandalism occurred. As such, I contacted a board-up contractor to make the building inaccessible (preventing further damage) and to provide adequate public safety. The police department is investigating the incident.

Recommendation: Board discussion relative to future steps for the garage.

(3) Fax Line Connectivity Issue

Our fax line suddenly stopped working on October 27, 2015. I verified that we had tone at the phone company interface and then traced the local wires. The fax machine was at one time in a different office and the line originally terminated there (with a new section of line serving the fax in its new location). One of the wires on the new line had become separated from the jack, causing the problem. Service was restored easily by reconnecting that wire.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

G. Fiscal/Budget

(1) Annual Capital Project Request Update

The Town Accountant has released the Finance Committee's annual call for updated capital project requests. Each department must update capital needs anticipated over the next five years and request packages are due by January 12, 2016. I have begun work on updating the Board's five to ten year capital and personnel needs plan.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

(1) Massachusetts Health Officers' Association Annual Conference

I attended the subject conference on November 21 and 22 in Hyannis. The meeting featured a variety of presentations relative to the most recent advances in the on-site wastewater treatment technology as well as sessions regarding disaster preparedness. The conference allows me to keep up with current on-site

wastewater information and satisfies my annual training requirements for my Registered Sanitarian, System Inspector, and Soil Evaluator certifications.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

J. Final Judgment

No items.

K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

(1) Draft Fall Town Meeting Motions (*)

I have developed draft motions for each of the Fall Town Meeting articles for the Board's review. When discussing the article involving the Folsom Pavilion, it will be important to keep in mind that the Essex Historical Commission would like to see the existing structure restored.

Recommendation: **Board review and discussion relative to the draft motions.**

(2) Offer of Donation of Land to Town (*)

The Board has received correspondence from the Trustee of a realty trust associated with a certain parcel of land. The Trust would like to donate the 1.5-acre parcel to the Town. However, in the transition from the Town's old, paper Assessors' maps to the new, digital system, the lot no longer appears on the map. I contacted our mapping contractor and asked about this development. It is my understanding that the old tax map may have depicted the parcel in the wrong location and that more information on the deed may be required from the owner before discussion can continue.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

L. Legal Issues

No items.

M. Grants

(1) Grant Eligibility and Permitting for Street and Pedestrian Lighting (*)

At the last meeting, the Board asked whether the first round of Green Community funding could be used to install lantern-style, efficient lighting that would replace the "cobra head" streetlights along the Essex causeway. In speaking with the Town Planner, I have learned that this is a question he plans to ask in the near future. In addition, I have spoken to personnel at MassDOT regarding State standards for street lighting along a State highway. I have learned that the Department would require both a permitting process and some type of ownership

agreement, since the fixtures would be Town-owned property on a State-owned road layout. It does not appear that the Town would be denied a permit so long as the lighting ultimately complied with DOT standards.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

N. Emergency Planning

No items.

O. Other Items

No items.

This report is available at www.essexma.org on the morning after any regularly scheduled Essex Board of Selectmen's Meeting.