



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of November 3, 2008

Report covers from October 18, 2008 to October 31, 2008

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Discussion Relative to Recreation Department (*)

At the last meeting, the Chair of the Essex Youth Commission asked the Board to consider the concept of a Recreation Department for the Town in the future.

Recommendation: **Preliminary Board discussion relative to this concept.**

(2) Quarterly Staff and Officials Meetings

At the last meeting, the Board discussed the planning for the next quarterly meeting among all departments, boards, and commissions. This meeting will be held in January at the school to provide more space. I will also work with the local press to bring additional attention to the gathering.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(3) Shellfish Advisory Commission Update

The Shellfish Advisory Commission (SFAC) attended the last meeting to discuss a number of issues important to the industry. The SFAC will meet again with the Board on December 1 to discuss matters further and they may have a chance to tour the Cat Cove Laboratory facility by then. Senator Tarr became aware of the recent meeting and has offered to accompany the members on that tour if it is pulled together. In addition, the Deputy Shellfish Constable was able to provide to the Commission through our office some interesting regulations that are in use in Maine and a web resource that provides many other examples of regulations.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

B. Computer Systems

(1) Accounting Software Update

Our accounting software vendor released an update to our RevenueSense application during the week of October 20, 2008. This update required a special procedure and coordination with the vendor's technical support team for proper installation. I followed the procedures provided with the update and our vendor ran the necessary utility at the end of the process. Subsequently, our vendor also informed us that the individual workstations needed to be updated. I worked with the vendor to perform that work as well.

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

(2) Board of Health Laptop Monitor

The Public Health Nurse uses an older model laptop computer in the office for her work. Recently, the monitor on that machine malfunctioned. I was able to establish that the auxiliary monitor output was still working by testing the system with an old CRT monitor. The Board of Health Administrator learned that replacing the monitor would be very expensive and the system is too old to spend that money. Instead, I recommended that a new, flat screen monitor be purchased since the system is only used in the office.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(3) Installation of Assessors' Report Files

Our appraisal system vendor sent the Assessors some new report templates via e-mail and those needed to be installed on two workstations. I distributed the raw files to both workstations and the Assessors were able to incorporate them into their application.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(4) Officers' Computer Maintenance and Setup of Second Terminal

I performed maintenance on the original police officers' terminal during the week of October 20, 2008. The system required a disk cleanup and other routines to free up disk space. Also, during the week of October 27, 2008, I worked with the Chief of Police and the day officer to demonstrate how each officer should go about migrating settings over to the new terminal that I had set up in the past.

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

(5) Configuration of New Disaster Recovery Server

I have now uncrated, set up, and partially configured the new backup server that will eventually be placed in Manchester, NH. Our computer consultant will visit my office on November 4, 2008 to review the system with me and to assist me with any pre-placement configuration issues. He will also schedule with me the exact date on which I will deliver the system to Manchester for final on-line configuration with remote operation capabilities to be made available over the Internet.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary. Total time – 1 hour.

C. Personnel

(1) Teamsters Collective Bargaining

The Management Team was scheduled to engage the Teamsters in continued, mediated collective bargaining on October 21, 2008. However, the union had to postpone due to a scheduling conflict. The next session is scheduled for November 25, 2008.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Migration to New Occupational Health Provider

I formalized our arrangement with Quadrant, our new occupational health provider, during the week of October 20, 2008. The company provided me with new forms and instructions and I subsequently named the new provider in our OccHealth Connect program (part of the MIIA Rewards Program). All pre-employment drug and medical screening work was effective with Quadrant as of November 1, 2008.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

D. Procurement

(1) Recommendation for Subdivision Consultant

(*)

The RFP Subcommittee held interviews with two finalists on October 21, 2008. I assisted with the checking of references and reported my findings back to the Subcommittee. On October 28, 2008, the Subcommittee recommended the firm of Horsley Witten for the project and the Conomo Point Planning Committee accepted that recommendation later that evening.

Recommendation: **Board consideration of offering the contract to The Horsley Witten Group contingent upon funding at the Special Town Meeting.**

E. Insurance

No items.

F. Facilities

(1) Verizon Underground Conduits

The Chairman heard from a resident that the phone company had installed underground conduits beneath Route 133 about 25 years ago and may not have ever used them. I contacted our Verizon representative to inquire about the existence and status of those conduits. He indicated that some ducts were, in fact, installed for future trunk line expansion but that no lateral ducts to serve the

various homes and businesses along the road were installed. As such, there would be no way to actually serve the telephone customers below ground even if the trunk line went below ground. Further, cable and electric lines would still be on the poles.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Town Hall Chimney

Just prior to the last meeting, our oil heating contractor indicated that it was possible to re-pipe the boilers to another chimney. As such, it became possible to simply tear down the unsafe chimney and save the bricks for a re-build when the exterior of Town Hall is handled in a comprehensive fashion. The Board indicated that the stated course of action was acceptable and sent a letter to the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) requesting permission for the work to occur. The Essex Historical Commission (EHC) was copied on that letter as requested in the past. Both MHC and EHC gave the necessary permission during the week of October 27, 2008 and our oil heating contractor is making preparations to re-pipe the boilers. Once that pipe work is completed, I will arrange for a mason to dismantle the unsafe chimney to the roof line and cap the hole.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(3) Future Inspection of Summer Program Facility

At the last meeting, the Board discussed with the Chair of the Essex Youth Commission the prospect of having the summer program facility at the Centennial Grove inspected by our insurer. A loss control expert may be able to recommend various improvements that would make the facility safer. I have contacted our insurer and have learned that a loss control representative will be available to us in the spring.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(4) Clammers' Beach Recreational Activities

(*)

At the last meeting, the Board briefly discussed a request from a resident to consider how the various activities that occur on Clammers' Beach should be coordinated and regulated. A variety of interests including swimming, powerboat launching, kayaking, etc. sometimes conflict according to this resident. The Board asked that the resident be invited to a future meeting along with a representative of a local kayaking tour company for further discussion. The resident is unable to attend a future meeting and provided some additional thoughts. The Board may be interested in discussing this matter further after considering the issue.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(5) Senior Center Heating System

A problem occurred with the damper controlling the flow of hot air to the Senior Center's second floor on October 22, 2008. I reviewed the situation over the phone with our heating contractor and a service technician was dispatched the following day. Two problems were evident: The damper control motor for the second floor damper had become separated from the damper shaft and the damper could not be opened to allow heat to flow. Also, one specialized damper designed to close in the event of a fire had malfunctioned and was also stuck closed. That situation was also resolved. The system is now functioning normally.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(6) Re-Staining of Grove Concession Stand

Rob Fitzgerald of the Church of Latter Day Saints has reported that his group has now completed the re-staining of the Grove Concession Stand as had been arranged in the past. The church had used the Grove for an outing this past summer and offered that service in exchange for a fee waiver. The Eagle Scout who will be re-staining the Folsom Pavilion has been provided with the stain color so that the two buildings will match once the Pavilion work has been completed.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(7) Grove Cottage Winterization

The Department of Public Works recently shut off and drained the summer water line leading to the Grove Cottage. Thereafter, a plumbing contractor blew out the internal plumbing in the cottage for the winter. The final element of Grove winterization will be the draining and of the Field of Dreams irrigation system that is scheduled for November 6, 2008.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

G. Fiscal/Budget

No items.

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

(1) Massachusetts Health Officers' Association Annual Meeting

I attended the subject meeting on October 29 and 30, 2008 in Springfield in order to obtain my continuing education credits for my various technical certifications including Registered Sanitarian, approved soil evaluator, and approved system

inspector. The meeting featured a wide variety of public health-related topics including topics relevant to my position as Town Administrator. Of specific interest were a sessions relative to conflict resolution, trench safety, goal setting, 21E (hazardous waste), and disaster planning.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

J. Final Judgment

No items.

K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

(1) Community Preservation Committee (*)

At the last meeting, the Board agreed to consider for appointment to the Community Preservation Committee the Town Treasurer and one member of the Finance Committee. The Town Treasurer has confirmed that she will serve and the Finance Committee Chairman has indicated that Richard Ross will also be available to serve.

Recommendation: **Board vote to appoint those two individuals to the Community Preservation Committee.**

L. Legal Issues

No items.

M. Grants

(1) Safe Routes to School Assessment Grant

Essex Elementary School Principal Eric Gordon completed the grant application form relative to the subject grant during the week of October 27, 2008. I assembled that piece along with letters of support from the Board of Selectmen, and the Essex PTO and the application package has been submitted. A letter of support from Senator Bruce Tarr will be submitted under separate cover.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

N. Emergency Planning

No items.

O. Other Items

(1) Coordinated Fact Sheet, Question 1

At the last meeting, the Board considered a suggestion by the Town of Manchester for the two towns and the School District to publish some financial facts relative to each entity and what the passage of Question 1 might mean. At the request of the Board, I provided to the group comments on the details relative to Essex and the piece has been published.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

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