



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of November 7, 2011

Report covers from October 15, 2011 to November 4, 2011

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Definitive Subdivision Plan for Southern Conomo Point

I attended the public hearing for the subject subdivision along with the Selectmen on October 19, 2011. After hearing public comment, the Planning Board decided to continue the hearing until November 2, 2011 and requested that Town Counsel be made available to confer regarding an issue that had been raised.

On November 2, the Planning Board took additional input and closed the hearing. The Planning Board will deliberate over the matter during upcoming meetings and will render a decision in the near future.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Youth Activities Programming

(*)

A resident has inquired as to whether the Youth Commission (which is currently the Board of Selectmen) will be reconstituted or will work in some way to ensure that various seasonal activities are offered for youth. Last season, each of the traditional seasonal activities was offered by various volunteer organizations. This year, the usual Halloween party was not offered. Other residents have contacted the Chamber of Commerce to offer assistance with the upcoming Holiday Festival. It is possible that the YMCA would be willing to pick up the management of various activities.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to seasonal programming.**

B. Computer Systems

(1) Melrose Datacenter Agreement

The City of Melrose has now countersigned the subject agreement and I will be working with Melrose personnel shortly to begin testing a new connection between Essex and Melrose. If all goes well, we will proceed in a stepwise fashion to migrate data and, eventually, proprietary programs as well. Our first step will be to set up a new device that will integrate our Internet connections and will create a secure tunnel between Essex and Melrose.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

C. Personnel

No items.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Request for Proposals for Real Property (*)

Proposals offering real property to the Town for the relocation of Town offices are due the morning of November 7, 2011. I will have all proposals by meeting time.

Recommendation: **Board review of the proposals.**

(2) Route 133 Reconstruction Project Utility Pole Issues

I have been monitoring National Grid's plans to make the locations of several utility poles permanent (poles had been moved across the street from the seawall) and Verizon's plans to remove the old utility poles from the areas where new poles were added. I have recently inquired again with each company and am awaiting an update from National Grid. Verizon has commented that the old poles will be removed after they complete a line splicing operation, which is currently underway.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(3) Successor Solid Waste Contract

The Superintendent of Public Works has continued to work with Covanta to determine if favorable terms for a successor solid waste contract may be offered. Covanta has provided some information to the department for review. The Board of Public Works will review the information and a discussion between that Board and the Board of Selectmen should occur thereafter.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

E. Insurance

(1) Annual Property, Casualty, and Workers' Comp Insurance Review

I met with a representative of our insurer on October 19, 2011 to review the Town's property and casualty insurance coverage. The representative recommended that I review the coverage we have for miscellaneous fire and police equipment to ensure that no items valued at over \$2,500 are included in these general listings (should be separately-scheduled instead). I will verify that information as suggested. Our insurer is also now moving to a new, on-line tool for reporting workers' compensation claims and I have asked key employees to participate in a webinar to learn that system (which will replace the 800 number telephone system).

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Monthly Pothole Log

I obtained the subject log from the Department of Public Works for the month of October and provided it to our insurer as part of the MIA Rewards Program. No potholes were reported for this month.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

F. Facilities

(1) Appraisal Report Regarding the Value of Bridge Leases at Conomo Point

The subject report was released on October 18, 2011. It may be viewed at www.essexma.org/cp.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Town Hall Repairs

(*)

I arranged for a contractor to conduct the necessary assessment and repairs regarding the exterior water leak at the Town Hall at the end of the week of November 1, 2011. I will have additional information by meeting time regarding the status of the repair.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(3) Town Building Committee Meeting

(*)

The Town Building Committee met on November 1, 2011 to discuss the draft final report from Reinhardt Associates regarding the Town Building Feasibility Study and to discuss the Special Town Meeting article relative to the potential purchase of real property for the relocation of Town offices. Any additional comments that Committee members have regarding the study will be forwarded to Reinhardt through the Chair. As for the relocation of Town offices, the Committee encourages that process and is also in support of finding temporary quarters for the Library so that the existing building can be offered for some type of re-use.

Selectman O'Donnell, who chairs the Building Committee, will attend the Finance Committee's meeting on November 9, 2011 to provide input to the Finance Committee along with Sherri Davis (the Finance Committee's representative to the Building Committee).

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(4) Final Winterization of Grove Cottage

The Department of Public Works shut down and blew out the surface water line to the Grove Cottage on October 31, 2011. A plumbing contractor blew out and winterized the water system at the Cottage that same day.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(5) Porch Repairs, Grove Cottage

(*)

The Church of Latter Day Saints has completed their service project regarding the Grove Cottage. The Church chose to provide volunteer labor to replace weather-damaged decking on the porch and to reseal the entire porch with exterior sealer. This repair prevented what would surely be major deterioration in the future.

Recommendation: **Board authorization of a thank-you note to the church members.**

(6) Town Hall Clock

The Town Hall clock stopped working during the week of October 31, 2011. I investigated and found that the plug for the new winding mechanism was dislodged. I contacted our clock expert and he visited the Town Hall and reset the system. Apparently, he had unplugged the winding system for maintenance purposes but forgot to plug it back in as he left.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(7) Maintenance of Paglia Pocket Park

(*)

Maureen Duncan Mitchell of Flowerscapes by Maureen is interested in maintaining the Paglia Pocket Park as a volunteer and would like to post a small sign referring to her business. In the past, the Board discussed this topic in general and determined that any sponsorships should be approved on a case by case basis, including an advanced review of the desired sign. The Board had commented that all signage should be no larger than 8"x 8" and that the basic design must be approved so that it can be duplicated by other sponsors in other areas, for consistency. It is also possible that the Rotary Club is interested in assisting in some way.

Recommendation: **Board discussion regarding the review process for a proposed sign and consideration of granting sponsorship to Ms. Duncan Mitchell.**

(8) Senior Center Maintenance

The Fire Department recently walked through the Senior Center and noticed the growth of mold in the furnace room and a small leak in a sprinkler valve. I plan to spray the mold with bleach and I will ask our sprinkler system contractor to visit the site to correct the valve leak.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

G. Fiscal/Budget

No items.

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

(1) Joint School District – Municipal Budget Process Meeting

I attended the subject meeting along with Selectman Coviello and various school and town officials from both communities on October 17, 2011. The meeting featured a discussion of the major issues facing each of the three entities and the development of some dates for other meetings. The group will get back together on December 1, 2011; the District's Tentative Budget will be distributed to the towns on December 7, 2011; the Tentative Budget Public Hearing will occur on December 14, 2011; and the full School Committee, both finance committees, and both boards of Selectmen will meet jointly on January 24, 2012.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Massachusetts Health Officers' Association Annual Meeting

I attended the subject meeting in Springfield on October 26 and 27, 2011. The meeting allows me to keep current on wastewater issues and to obtain all necessary continuing education credits for several professional certificates that I hold. As usual, I was able to discuss Essex's current situation with DEP officials who commonly attend the meeting.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

J. Final Judgment

No items.

K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

(1) Special Town Meeting Motions

(*)

At the Board's meeting of October 17, 2011, the Board approved and transmitted ballot language for a Special Election, called a Special Election for November 21, 2011 from noon to 8 p.m., called a Special Town Meeting for November 14, 2011 at 7:30 p.m., and opened the special town meeting and election warrants for those

items. The Board finalized the Special Town Meeting articles at their meeting of October 24, 2011 and signed the warrant. The warrant has been posted and is available at www.essexma.org.

Recommendation: Board discussion regarding motions for the Special Town Meeting.

(2) Draft Parking Signs, Conomo Point (*)

At the Board's meeting of October 17, 2011, I was asked to produce mockups of two different signs for potential use regarding non-resident parking at Conomo Point. I have developed those signs for the Board's review.

Recommendation: Board review and discussion regarding the draft signage.

(3) Proposal for Acceptance of Shea Court as a Public Way

In a fashion similar to Lowe Hill Road, residents on Shea Court are considering entering the process to have Shea Court accepted by the Town as a public way. The residents first plan on taking the matter up with the Board of Public Works and it may then be referred to the Selectmen, with a recommendation.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

L. Legal Issues

(1) Release of Bridge Leases to Current Conomo Point Leaseholders

Bridge leases were offered to most of the current Conomo Point leaseholders during the week of October 31, 2011 (cover letter, bridge lease, and appraisal information were mailed on November 1). The bridge lease and the cover letter used to transmit it were posted on the Town's website on November 4, 2011. The information in the cover letter and the major features of the bridge lease will be presented to the public at the start of the present meeting. Those opting to sign bridge leases must do so by November 30, 2011. Final rent figures for each property were set at 2.25% of the land-only value during the first year and 3% and 3.75% of that value for the second and third years, respectively. A sample cover letter and bridge leases may be found at www.essexma.org/cp.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

M. Grants

(1) Loss Control Grant

Recently, the Town was awarded a \$10,000 grant from our insurer for the purchase of recording equipment necessary in the Police Department's new interview room. The Town had also applied for approximately \$5,000 from our

insurer for the purchase of safety vests and traffic cones. We have now learned that this grant has been awarded as well.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

N. Emergency Planning

(1) Cape Ann Emergency Planning Team Monthly Meeting

I attended the subject meeting on November 3, 2011. The meeting featured updates from the various subcommittees. Also, the membership elected Fire Chief Daniel Doucette as the new Chairman, effective January 1, 2012.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

O. Other Items

(1) Town Administrator Leave

I was out of the office on vacation leave on October 20 and 21, 2011, and for a portion of the afternoon on October 31 and November 2, 2011.

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