



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of Nov. 14, 2016

Report covers from October 29, 2016 to November 11, 2016

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Strategic Planning Committee Meeting (*)

I participated in the subject meeting on November 9, 2016, along with Chairman O'Donnell and Town Planner Matt Coogan. The Committee did not achieve a forum so the group just informally discussed the agenda topics. The next meeting of the Committee will occur on December 12, 2016.

Recommendation: Board discussion as necessary.

(2) Encouraging Boards/Committees to Post Approved Meeting Minutes

At the last meeting, the Board agreed with a resident who suggested that not enough of the various Town boards and committees post approved meeting minutes on a consistent basis, if at all. While posting of minutes on the website is not a requirement of the law, the Board agreed that the practice will lead to a more informed citizenry and may encourage volunteerism and informed Town Meeting discussion and voting.

As such, I reached out to various boards and committees on behalf of the board to encourage each one to begin posting or update posting of minutes. I offered assistance with creating minutes pages for those with direct website access and the Selectmen's Assistant and I can help smaller boards with postings if the minutes are supplied to us. To address a related comment, I have worked with our website vendor to clearly show how to view official meeting agendas when visiting any of the calendars offered on the website (an option that has always been available from the homepage).

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

B. Computer Systems

(1) Pilot Project to Virtualize Regional Dispatch Records Management System

Presently, the Regional Dispatch Center requires all member communities to run client-side software on its own computer systems to interface with the Center's records management system. However, this requirement places a maintenance burden upon the staff in each community, since the software is constantly evolving via patches and updates. At my request, personnel at the Center are willing to serve up the software via the Remote Desktop protocol available on Windows so that all software maintenance will be performed at the Center, with

Essex users merely logging into District servers remotely. If the connection works well, it will eliminate the need for any client-side maintenance (which sometimes leads to difficult-to-diagnose software running problems). Other communities can also visit Essex to determine if that type of arrangement should be adopted.

On November 10, 2016, I participated in a conference call with Regional Dispatch Center personnel and technicians from the software vendor (Spillman) to determine how this pilot project should be designed and rolled out. We determined that the concept can be tested on a very small scale initially and, if performance proves adequate, may be expanded.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary. Total time – 2 hours.

(2) Renewal of Antivirus Client Subscription

Each year at this time I renew the antivirus licensing for 10 of our client computer systems. All other clients are renewed in June. I ordered the renewals and deployed the licenses within our antivirus server software.

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

(3) Further Configuration of Replacement Domain Controller

The replacement domain controller has been physically brought to the server room in Town Hall and has been joined to the Windows domain as a domain controller. I have also transferred all of the various master domain roles to this machine. Further, I have worked to install our central antivirus program to this server (since the server that is being replaced also runs the antivirus software).

Recommendation: No further action is necessary. Total time – 4 hours.

C. Personnel

No items.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Weekly Construction Meetings, Town Hall/Library Renovation Project

I attended the subject meetings on November 2 and November 9, 2017. Our General Contractor is presently working to finish up certain exterior elements. Siding has been completed and stained. Trim work is close to completion, including most painting. Roofing work will begin during the week of November 14, 2016 and most of the windows (new or restored) have been installed. Interior work will resume in earnest by early December.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Contract for Provision of Furniture, Town Hall and Library (*)

I hosted a site visit at the Town Hall/Library at 30 Martin Street on November 2, 2016 for all vendors interested in bidding on the Town's need for custom furniture for the building. A total of four vendors attended the site visit and bids were due on November 9, 2016. We received a total of three bids, with the lowest bid coming from American Office Furniture, which specializes in "like-new" furniture that is produced from high quality, used stock. American's bid was \$54,275, with the next lowest valid bid at \$122,337 (for the provision of brand-new furniture).

Recommendation: **Board vote to award the contract to American Office Furniture so that production can occur over the winter, with a May delivery.**

(3) Change Orders, Town Hall/Library Renovation Project (*)

During the past week, I have been in close coordination with our Project Manager, our architect, and our general contractor relative to other unexpected items that may be necessary to complete the Town Hall/Library renovation project. These must be taken into account as the Board moves into the Fall Town Meeting this evening, in order to inform the Meeting about the appropriate level of additional funding that will be necessary.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(4) Change Order, Additional Permit Preparation Time, Northern Conomo Pt. (*)

As the Board is aware, the Essex Conservation Commission and two State agencies require that a number of questions be researched and answered with respect to the Notice of Intent the Town filed for the northern Conomo Point public access project. While our sub-consultant, Mill River Consulting, carried ample time for meeting attendance and initial permit preparation, additional time will be required to research and respond to the variety of questions that have been raised (and that could not have been anticipated). As such, Copley-Wolff (our primary consultant) has indicated that an additional \$1,650 will be necessary for these tasks.

Recommendation: **Board approval of this minor change order to complete the necessary wetlands permitting.**

E. Insurance

(1) Monthly Pothole Log

I obtained the pothole log for the month of October from the Department of Public Works. No potholes were reported during October.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Freeze-up Prevention Program

As in past years, we will participate in the MIIA Rewards Freeze Up Prevention Program. DPW and police personnel will conduct weekend building checks to ensure that heat is working and pipes are not in jeopardy of freezing. I have obtained the forms for this season and have provided them to the Chief of Police and the Superintendent of Public Works for use between December and March.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

F. Facilities

No items.

G. Fiscal/Budget

(1) Annual Update of the Essex Visual Budget

After the Fall Town Meeting and the setting of the fiscal year 2017 tax rate, the Town Accountant will be working to update the Essex Visual Budget, which is offered on-line via the Town's website. The visual budget presents the figures for a given fiscal year via an easy to understand graphic interface. The tool can be directly reached at www.essexvisualbudget.org.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) School District Budget Collaboration Group Meeting

I participated in the subject meeting on November 4, 2016 along with officials from the Town of Manchester and the Manchester Essex Regional School District. The meeting featured a discussion regarding the overall schedule for the District's budget formulation and refinement process for the fiscal year 2018 budget. The District is working to present a budget that works well within the Proposition 2 ½ levy increase. Also, we discussed the fact that the footbridge connecting the middle/high school with the Memorial School is still closed, due to a truck strike. The District is in the process of working through the truck driver's insurance company to determine how the repair or possibly, improvement, may be paid for. The group will meet again on December 2, 2016.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary at this time.

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

(1) Essex Shipbuilding Museum Public Outreach Discussion

I participated in a morning coffee gathering at the Essex Shipbuilding Museum on November 10, 2016, along with Selectman Doane. The gathering was intended to update those in attendance regarding the Shipbuilding Museum and Historical Society's future plans for facilities and programs and encouraged networking and overlap with other things going on in Town. For example, it is possible that the antique hand tub fire apparatus might be displayed on the school house grounds leased by the Society, at some point in the future. Also, the Society's artifacts could be displayed from time to time in the new display cabinets that are planned for the third floor of the Town Hall.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Merrimack River Beach Alliance Meeting

Chairman O'Donnell attended the subject meeting on November 4, 2016. The Alliance is a regional effort to work toward the re-use of sand that has drifted from the north toward southern areas, like the mouth of the Essex River.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

J. Final Judgment

No items.

K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

(1) Final Fall Town Meeting Motions

(*)

I have developed final Fall Town Meeting motions per the Board's guidance at the last meeting.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to the final motions.**

L. Legal Issues

No items.

M. Grants

No items.

N. Emergency Planning

No items.

O. Other Items

(1) Veterans' Day Holiday

The office was closed on November 11, 2016, 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.