



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of Nov. 30, 2009

Report covers from November 14, 2009 to November 27, 2009

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

No items.

B. Computer Systems

(1) Continued Fire/Police Network Setup

I continued to optimize the setup of the new fire and police server and network during the week of November 16, 2009. Tasks included creating additional and verifying existing backup jobs and the migration of all dispatchers to the new domain. I also set up some new users and updated software to correct an incompatibility issue.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary. Total time – 4.5 hours.

(2) Update of Assessors' Personal Property Data

I assisted our Assessors' database vendor with the subject annual update on November 24, 2009.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary. Total time – 0.5 hours.

C. Personnel

(1) Hosting of Management Seminar

Our insurer recently put together a seminar for newer managers, particularly assistant managers. We agreed to host the meeting and employees from Essex and other communities gathered at the Senior Center on November 18, 2009. The seminar was well-received and provided some useful management tips and strategies.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Commencement of EPBA Collective Bargaining

(*)

The Essex Police Benevolent Association (EPBA) has indicated that it desires to begin the collective bargaining process for the formulation of a successor collective bargaining agreement. The present agreement expires on June 30, 2009.

Recommendation: **Board discussion in executive session.**

(3) Town Clerk Vacancy Advertisement (*)

The Town Clerk Search Committee has finalized a job vacancy announcement for the new appointed position. It will soon be time to provide this announcement to a variety of outlets for advertisement.

Recommendation: **Board approval to release the announcement.**

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Town Building Committee Update (*)

I participated in the Town Building Committee meeting of November 23, 2009. The Committee is in the process of finalizing its Request for Qualifications to solicit proposals from a designer who could conduct a feasibility study regarding the future locations of the fire, police, library, and Town offices (subject to funding by a future Town Meeting). Prior to the meeting, I had tabulated the costs associated with similar studies in other communities and the Committee was able to choose a “not-to-exceed” fee for the proposed work. I provided the Committee members with an updated draft of the RFQ based on the input received at the meeting. The Committee will meet twice more before the end of the calendar year and a final RFQ will be completed for release in the new calendar year.

Also, the Committee has recommended that Town Counsel be consulted about the exact process and specific review steps necessary for the potential creation of a new lot abutting John Wise Avenue from a portion of the existing, municipal cemetery land in that area. Since this question is legal in nature, the Committee feels that it should be addressed in advance of the RFQ process and should not be a task assigned to the successful project designer.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to Town Counsel review of the cemetery issue.**

(2) Assessors Mapping Project Contract (*)

At the last meeting, I explained that the subject contract was undergoing an additional level of review by the Board of Assessors before being recommended for execution by the Selectmen. The draft language has already been reviewed by Town Counsel. The Assessors have now taken additional review steps and will likely recommend approval of a contract to the Board fairly soon. Part of the review process involved a meeting with our mapping contractor at which we determined that picking up other features such as catch basins, fire hydrants, call boxes, etc. is something that would be done by GPS survey on the ground and not via the aerial photography. As such, the Assessors concluded that the base mapping project should begin and that funding for the above-noted types of features should be sought separately (likely in the range of \$15,000).

Recommendation: Board approval of the signature of the mapping contract outside of a meeting, once available, and discussion relative to the potential addition of other features via GPS ground survey.

(3) Plan for Completing Southern Conomo Point Subdivision Work

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that Selectman Lynch and I should meet with Mr. Nick Cracknell to discuss plans for completing the Southern Conomo Point Subdivision work now that Town Meeting has approved additional funding. The Conomo Point Planning Committee met on November 19, 2009 to provide input on the matter and Selectman Lynch and I discussed the issue with Mr. Cracknell on November 20, 2009. Presently, Mr. Cracknell is planning to attend two Planning Committee/Planning Subcommittee meetings during December to assist with the further development and finalization of the proposed Zoning District By-law. Work on the submission of both the Preliminary and Definitive subdivision plans will resume after the by-law is considered by Town Meeting in the spring.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

E. Insurance

No items.

F. Facilities

(1) Completion of Centennial Grove Restoration (*)

The movie production company has almost completed all restoration work at the Centennial Grove (including work on the cottage). Presently, the company is estimating that work crews will be vacating the premises on December 11, 2009 (approximately two weeks later than the existing agreement allows for). The company is willing to enter into an additional extension to accommodate the extra days. I have scheduled a site walk for December 8, 2009 to review the punch list in a comprehensive fashion.

Recommendation: Board discussion relative to the final inspection of the premises and to an additional extension of the agreement.

G. Fiscal/Budget

(1) FY11 Accounting Software Support Contract Increase (*)

Given the difficult financial times, the Town Treasurer/Collector had a discussion with our accounting software vendor about a projected 5% increase in the cost of our support contract starting in FY11. The Treasurer/Collector indicated to me that the vendor is potentially willing to reduce the increase and would consider the

matter further upon a written request from the Selectmen. The Treasurer/Collector provided a suggested letter for the Board's review.

Recommendation: **Board review and approval of the request letter.**

(2) FY11 Capital Budget Request (*)

The Finance Committee released its annual call for capital budget requests to all departments on November 19, 2009. Completed request packages are due to back to the Town Accountant on or before January 11, 2010.

Recommendation: **Preliminary review of the FY11 Selectmen's capital budget request package.**

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

No items.

J. Final Judgment

No items.

K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

(1) Preliminary Annual Town Meeting and Budget Discussion (*)

At the last meeting, I provided the Board with some ideas that may be considered for the Annual Town Meeting and the FY11 budget. I have noted that the Board desires to add to the capital plan the possibility of constructing additional sidewalks along Story Street toward the school. I have informed the resident who recently made that suggestion that the topic will be carried in budgeting discussions.

Recommendation: **Continued Board discussion relative to the topics and suggestions.**

L. Legal Issues

No items.

M. Grants

No items.

N. Emergency Planning

(1) Execution of the Continuity of Operations Plan

(*)

The various department heads have now all signed the subject plan and it is ready for signature by the Board of Selectmen. I have provided the Board with the signature page since the document itself is not a public document.

Recommendation: **Board execution of the plan.**

O. Other Items

(1) Town Administrator Leave

I was out of the office on vacation leave for a portion of the morning of November 18, 2009.

(2) Thanksgiving Holiday

The office was closed on November 26 and 27, 2009 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.