



## Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of November 4, 2013

Report covers from October 19, 2013 to November 1, 2013

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

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### A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Renewal of Sewer Inspection Camera Sharing Agreement (\*)

As the Board may be aware, the towns of Essex and Rockport have shared a jointly-purchased sewer inspection camera for a number of years now. The sharing of the equipment is governed by a specific agreement that runs for five years at a time and the agreement is due to expire in mid-November. Both the Essex Superintendent of Public Works and the Rockport Director of Public Works are in favor of renewal.

**Recommendation: Board vote to renew and sign the "Agreement of Joint Purchase" for an additional, five-year term.**

### B. Computer Systems

(1) Installation of High-Speed VPN for Regional Dispatch Software

As the Board may recall, we had been waiting for personnel from the new Regional Dispatch Center to roll out a new virtual private network (VPN) for high-speed secure connection between the Essex Police Department's computers and the computer-aided dispatch and records management software in the Center. I worked with a technician from the Center on October 28, 2013 to set up the new VPN, which runs on a dedicated high-speed cable link, and I then deployed the necessary client software to all Police Department computers. Officers can now utilize the software directly on their own workstations as opposed to having to use the single, dedicated workstation that we had set up prior to the launch of the VPN. The system is working well and the connection speed is excellent.

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

(2) Replacement of Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) Battery

The battery in the UPS unit that powers and protects the Fire and Police server failed during the week of October 28, 2013. I replaced the failed battery with a spare battery that I had on hand and I have ordered another spare for the shelf.

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

(3) Installation of Permanent Lobby Camera Solution

As the Board may recall, we had been using a temporary solution for audio and video communication between our fire/police lobby and the new Regional

Dispatch Center. Personnel from the Center have now settled on a permanent solution and I met with the vendor and Center personnel on October 31, 2013 to discuss deployment. We expect that the new solution will be installed within the month.

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

(4) Renewal of Server Backup and Antivirus Protection Software

I ordered server backup software renewal licenses for all servers still in operation and for a portion of our antivirus clients. The remainder of our clients are renewed at another time. Next year at this time, depending on how the migration to Melrose and vendor-hosted platforms continues, it may be possible to reduce or eliminate these renewals. I have registered all licenses with our on-site software and at the Symantec on-line database as necessary.

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

**C. Personnel**

No items.

**D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects**

No items.

**E. Insurance**

(1) Monthly Pothole Log

I obtained the pothole log for the month of October from the Department of Public Works and submitted the log to our insurer as part of the MIIA Rewards Program. No potholes had been reported during the month of October.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

**F. Facilities**

(1) Results of Electricity Audit

As the Board may recall, our electricity supplier, Constellation, was in the process of conducting an energy audit of our older buildings, primarily to determine the cost versus savings of upgrading older lighting fixtures. That audit has been completed and I met with Constellation personnel on October 30, 2013 to review the results. Essentially, when utility incentives and the savings from more efficient fixtures are considered, it will be possible to upgrade all lighting in the Town Hall, the Water Filtration Plant, and the Fire/Police station for approximately \$15,000.

The upgrade will include some LED lighting for screw-in fixtures, replacement of T-12 bulbs with T-8 bulbs and any necessary electrical components for fluorescent fixtures, and limited fixture upgrades. T-12 bulbs (which comprise the majority of our present bulbs) are no longer made and the Town will need to replace them in the near future, with or without our supplier's program. Also, National Grid still provides incentives for T-12 replacement in Massachusetts (incentives that have begun to disappear in other states). The Treasurer/Collector required the upgrade of her old ceiling fixture in the past (using T-8 bulbs) and the quality of light and absence of the flickering associated with T-12 bulbs have made her work environment much more pleasant and productive.

Given that the lighting upgrades can be performed now, making efficiency savings available even before the project is billed to the Town (over a three-year or a four-year future period), the net savings over a ten-year period will be approximately \$60,000 (approximately \$6,000 per year in savings from the use of more efficient bulbs). Also, it is possible that we will be able to purchase power from the end of our existing contract (which runs through 2015) for several years at a rate lower than we pay today (due to changes in the market). As such, a portion of the approximately 3-cent adder for the lighting retrofit may be offset by the lower rate (making the \$60,000 net savings even larger).

*Recommendation:* Board discussion with Constellation personnel at the present meeting relative to authorizing the lighting upgrade in conjunction with exploring potentially-lower electricity rates for our future contract.

#### (2) Annual Fire Extinguisher Inspection and Replacement

As is the case each year, the Selectmen's Assistant has contacted our fire extinguisher vendor to inspect all units in the Town Hall/Library, the Water Filtration Plant, the DPW Barn, and the Senior Center/senior van and to replace with recharged units any units that are out of date. This work will be completed on November 13, 2013.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

### **G. Fiscal/Budget**

#### (1) Preliminary Review of FY15 Capital Budget Request (\*)

The Finance Committee released the annual call for capital budget requests from all departments on October 24, 2013. As such, I have developed a preliminary list of topics for the Board's review.

*Recommendation:* **Board guidance relative to the further development of this request.**

## H. Complaints

No items.

## I. Meetings Attended

### (1) Massachusetts Health Officers' Association Annual Conference

I attended the subject conference on October 23 and 24, 2013. The conference provides training and information relative to a variety of public health related topics, including on-site wastewater disposal technology. A separate conference track offers excellent insight relative to community emergency management. By attending the conference, I am able to keep current on the latest septic system information (among other topics) and I receive continuing education credits for my Registered Sanitarian, Approved Soil Evaluator, and Septic System Inspector certifications. I also take the opportunity to discuss the present status of the Town's wastewater planning with key DEP officials who attend the conference.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## J. Final Judgment

No items.

## K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

### (1) Draft Special Town Meeting Motions

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I have prepared draft motions for the articles to be considered by the Town at the Special Town Meeting on November 18, 2013.

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

## L. Legal Issues

No items.

## M. Grants

### (1) Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI) Final Grant Presentation

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Icon Architecture, Inc. delivered a final presentation relative to recommendations for improvements to Town Landing and its environs on October 30, 2013. Icon was hired under the auspices of the MDI grant as a State contractor to assist the Selectmen and the Long Term Planning Committee with the improvement and unification of the Landing and its general vicinity. Public input received at preliminary meeting held in August and input from various boards and committees shaped the final presentation and additional feedback was collected on

the 30<sup>th</sup>. Icon's final presentation to the Town is posted on the Town website and implementation of the various recommendations could occur via future grant funding and/or future Town appropriations.

*Recommendation:* **Board discussion as necessary.**

(2) Estuarine Ecosystem Restoration Grant (\*)

Mr. Peter Phippen of the MassBays National Estuary Program has recommended that the Town consider supporting a grant application for eelgrass restoration in Essex Bay. Dr. Alyssa Novak (no relation to the Shellfish Constable) of the University of New Hampshire has been working in our area to promote the restoration of this resource since it is vital to habitat stabilization. Essex contains the northernmost eelgrass bed in Massachusetts and eelgrass only grows where water quality is excellent (a testimony to the pollution abatement efforts that Essex has taken over the past two decades). The funding would be in the amount of approximately \$20,000 through the Massachusetts Bays National Estuary Program Research and Planning Grant and the Town would be contributing a local match via in-kind services (such as grant administration and monitoring of the project by the Shellfish Constable).

*Recommendation:* **Board vote to authorize the Chairman to sign the grant application paperwork outside of a meeting as soon as Dr. Novak has completed it.**

## **N. Emergency Planning**

(1) Agility Disaster Recovery Logistics Service

Our insurer, MIIA, has recently enrolled its members in a disaster recovery logistics service offered by Agility Recovery. This enrollment gives all members access to generators, mobile office space, satellite phone, and Internet connectivity on very short notice, in the event of an emergency or disaster. I will be learning more about the service in a webinar on November 12, 2013.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary.

## **O. Other Items**

No items.

*This report is available at [www.essexma.org](http://www.essexma.org) on the morning after any regularly scheduled Essex Board of Selectmen's Meeting.*