



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of Dec. 14, 2009

Report covers from November 28, 2009 to December 11, 2009

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Review of Summer Program Offerings (*)

The Board had asked me to acquire through the Youth Director a comprehensive list of summer programs that are typically offered in other communities. The Youth Director reached out to other communities during the month of November and has compiled a list with actual program brochures as backup. Also as requested, the Youth Director has indicated what would be necessary in her opinion for the summer program if the Grove Cottage is not offered as a venue for the upcoming season.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to these Youth Commission matters.**

(2) Town Building Committee Update

I participated in the Town Building Committee meeting on December 7, 2009 and the group recommended some final changes to the Request for Proposals document. I have since incorporated those changes in the draft and have distributed the draft final document to all Committee members. The Committee will meet again on December 21, 2009 and the Chair expects that a final vote will be taken on the RFQ – which then may be prepared for an early February release.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

B. Computer Systems

(1) Removal of Old Server

Now that the new server at the fire and police headquarters appears to be functioning well and users appear to have access to all migrated files, I have removed the old server from the Police Chief's office. Since the new server was placed in the 911 closet, the removal of the old server freed up space in the Chief's small office and some reorganization has improved that space.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary. Total time – 1.5 hours.

(2) Installation of Accounting Software Update

Our software vendor released an update to our RevenueSense software during the week of November 23, 2009. The update required the running of a maintenance utility program after installation on the server and on all clients and I completed

the process during the week of November 30, 2009. The update did contain a bug but I was able to work through that with our vendor's technical support team.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary. Total time – 1.5 hours.

(3) Installation of New Council on Aging Computer System

I had ordered a new computer system for the Council on Aging that will be funded partially by the Council's grant and partially by Town computer system funds. The new unit arrived during the week of November 30, 2009 and I installed and configured it during the week of December 7, 2009. The new system is working well and will be a good test of the use of the new, Windows 7 Operating System in our environment.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary. Total time – 2.5 hours.

(4) Power Outage Recovery

Multiple power outages during the weekend of December 5-6, 2009 caused problems with servers in two buildings. I corrected the issues when I arrived on December 7, 2009.

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

(5) Support Renewals

Our annual support renewals for our server backup software, our antivirus software, and our firewall/router hardware/software occur each year at this time. I ordered the necessary renewals and all documentation will be provided for our files soon.

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

(6) Fire Department Computer Order

The Fire Chief indicated to me that he desired to purchase another desktop computer system for the Ambulance Department Office. I specified a system and verified that the proprietary fire-rescue incident system we use supports Windows 7 (the latest Windows operating system). I have placed the order and the system will arrive in the coming weeks. The system will be funded using designated ambulance computer hardware/software funding.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary. Total time – 0.5 hours.

(7) Archiving of 2009 Burning Permits

Each year at this time I archive the burning permit information from the previous season in preparation for the issuance of new permits in January. I visited the emergency center and performed the necessary work.

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

C. Personnel

(1) Town Administrator's Performance Review and Goal Setting (*)

During this time every year, the Board arranges to review my performance and set goals for the upcoming year. In the performance area, I will rely on the detailed reports filed with the Board at each Board meeting as a record of my activities, service, and accomplishments. As the Board may recall, an evaluation tool was developed at the outset of this year for use at this time.

Also, it is necessary to work with the Board to develop goals for the upcoming year. In addition to the general roles and responsibilities in my position description, which I will continue to update the Board on in detail for each new Board meeting, I recommend the following specific scope and welcome discussion with the Board:

- Continue to coordinate the Route 133 Reconstruction Project with MassHighway and continue to serve as a contact for local residents, businesses, and the Chamber's Task Force. Upcoming work will likely be even more disruptive than work performed this past season.
- Continue to assist the Board, the Conomo Point Planning Committee and Subcommittee, the Horsley Witten Group, and the Britt/Walker collaboration as necessary relative to issues associated with Conomo Point.
- Replace the file server in the Water Filtration Plant using the Town Technology Fund; replace the file server and accounting server in Town Hall, subject to appropriation; and replace at least half of the client computers on a Town-wide basis, subject to appropriation.
- Continue to work with the Selectmen and the Town Building Committee regarding the development of a plan for the future of Town offices, the Library, and the Fire/Police Headquarters. Work will involve the release of a Request for Proposals for a feasibility study; the selection of a designer; the preparation of the issue for presentation to the Town Meeting; contracting; and necessary management.
- Assist the Board with the continued management of a Town Planning Consultant and assist the chosen Consultant with the coordination of planning activities as necessary. Work may include the development of a strategy to implement the Village Initiative Plan.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to this year's evaluation process using the new tool and the goal setting process for the upcoming calendar year.**

(2) Personnel Board Quarterly Meeting (*)
Miscellaneous Personnel Board items should be discussed by the Selectmen (acting as the Personnel Board) at the present meeting. This discussion will serve as the Personnel Board's quarterly meeting and I have developed a brief agenda.

Recommendation: **Board discussion of the Personnel Board matters.**

(3) Mediation Training
I attended the subject training opportunity sponsored by our insurer in Danvers on December 10, 2009 along with the Treasurer/Collector. The presentation featured a discussion regarding some useful steps in working through informal mediation of disputes.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(4) EPBA Collective Bargaining
At the last meeting, Selectman Lynch indicated that he would serve on the EPBA collective bargaining team on the management side. I contacted the union President and we have agreed on an initial bargaining commencement date of January 5, 2010.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(5) Safety Committee Quarterly Meeting
The next Safety Committee meeting will be held on December 22, 2009. I have placed a draft agenda in the Board's reading folder.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Board of Assessors Mapping Project
At the last meeting, the Board agreed to sign the contract for the Board of Assessors mapping project outside of a meeting if that Town Counsel-approved contract became available between meetings. The Assessors met again with a mapping expert and may be seeking additional proposals from other mapping firms.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Software Support Contract Increase
At the last meeting, the Board sent a letter to our accounting software vendor asking for a reduction in the anticipated software support contract increase for the next fiscal year. We are presently awaiting a reply.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(3) Town Planning Consulting Projects

(*)

Selectman Lynch and I will meet with Planner Carolyn Britt and her associates on December 16, 2009 to discuss the scope of work for a potential project that will develop planning options for the northern portion of Conomo Point. Ms. Britt has also provided a short proposal regarding her potential assistance with the implementation of the Long Term Planning Committee's Village Initiative.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(4) Update Regarding Utility Pole Move

According to the National Grid representative who is leading the study regarding the potential to make the recent move of several causeway utility poles permanent, the company has made progress. Presently, the company is looking further at right of way issues and safety issues and I have been told that a letter summarizing the company's findings will be provided in the near future.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

E. Insurance

No items.

F. Facilities

(1) Centennial Grove Restoration Completed

Crews responsible for the restoration of the Centennial Grove and associated buildings vacated the premises recently. I had conducted a final site walk on December 7, 2009 to review the restoration work against the agreed-to punch list items. All work was found to be acceptable with minor exceptions (which were all addressed by December 9, 2009) and site rent from the production company for the extra occupancy time beyond September 15, 2009 amounted to \$38,500 in additional revenue. The Youth Director was able to mark each of the items that were in the on-site storage container for distribution into the concession stand, the beach barn, and the garage.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Town Hall Plumbing Leak

Our electrical contractor noticed a dripping pipe when he was down in the Town Hall basement recently. I contacted a plumbing contractor and the leak turned out to be a loose fitting at a valve that was simply tightened to correct the problem.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(3) Monthly Pothole Log

I obtained the pothole log for the month of November, 2009 and forwarded the document to our insurer as part of the MIIA Rewards Program. One pothole was reported and it has since been filled.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

G. Fiscal/Budget

(1) FY2009 Audit Process

Our Auditors have arrived to conduct the fiscal year 2009 audit. I have provided the firm with a variety of statements and source data as usual to enable the process to move forward smoothly.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Regional School District Budget Meetings

(*)

The Regional School District has informed us that the hearing for the tentative FY11 District operating budget will be held on December 15, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. in the dining hall of the new school building in Manchester.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(3) FY2011 Budget and Town Meeting Discussion

(*)

At the last meeting, the Board asked that I prioritize the items that have been suggested over the past year for the upcoming fiscal year. I have reviewed the items and have arrived at a list which is divided into both expense and non-expense issues. In the interim, the Finance Committee released their request for fiscal year 2011 operating budgets from all departments. I have developed a preliminary operating budget document and have combined it with the capital budget request that the Board discussed at the last meeting. I have developed a draft memo that explains and unifies the various budget documents.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to the draft, prioritized budget/Town Meeting list and review of the draft operating budget and budget memo.**

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

No items.

J. Final Judgment

(1) Southern Conomo Point Wastewater Meeting

I met with Consulting Planner Nick Cracknell and Mr. David Ferris from the Department of Environmental Protection on December 9, 2009. The purpose of the meeting was for Mr. Cracknell to verify his understanding about the various DEP wastewater requirements that are at play so that he may move forward with the new zoning by-law and the subdivision plan with a firm understanding of those matters. The meeting went very well and Mr. Ferris confirmed our understanding of the various issues.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

No items.

L. Legal Issues

(1) Review of Potential Use of Cemetery Land

(*)

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that a section of the Spring Street Cemetery that abuts John Wise Avenue should be studied for the potential future location of a Town building there. The Town Building Committee has recommended the use of this area but feels that it would be prudent to verify the process necessary to approve such use along with an analysis of its possibility. I contacted Town Counsel and Counsel's review of this issue began after I was able to find the deed to the parcel with the assistance of the Assessors' Clerk. I had also reviewed the Town Meeting and Selectmen's minutes and records for the period of time between 1937 and 1939 (the property was deeded to the Town in December of 1938).

Presently, Counsel has indicated that it appears that the parcel in question was given to the Town and was accepted as evidenced by the Town's control and dominion over the parcel for the last 71 years. It also appears that a patchwork of other parcels that were acquired over time by the Town for use as cemetery land and the parcel in question were all formally merged into one lot as evidenced by a plan filed at the Registry of Deeds in 1979. Counsel had indicated that, given the above history, the safest course of action will be to assume that the parcel is presently under the care and custody of the Board of Public Works, in their capacity as Cemetery Commissioners. In order to have the parcel transferred from that status to the custody of the Board of Selectmen, the Board of Public Works will need to declare the parcel as "surplus" and a two-thirds vote of the Town Meeting will be required pursuant to section 15A of chapter 40 of the General Laws.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to the necessary process.**

(2) Review of Flu Clinic Third-Party Billing Agreement

At its meeting of December 7, 2009, the Board authorized Town Counsel to review a draft third-party billing agreement that the Board of Health would like to the Town to enter into with the University of Massachusetts. The Agreement will allow UMass to bill insurers for H1:N1 and seasonal flu shots provided to the public at various public clinics offered by the Board of Health. The money collected will be deposited into the Board of Health's revolving fund for that purpose. Counsel has since reviewed and approved the Agreement and the Chairman has signed the Agreement in accordance with the Board's past vote.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

M. Grants

No items.

N. Emergency Planning

No items.

O. Other Items

(1) Town Administrator Leave

I was out of the office on vacation leave for a portion of the afternoon of December 8, 2009.

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