



## Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of Dec. 21, 2015

Report covers from December 6, 2015 to December 18, 2015

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

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### A. Town Department Reports/Requests

#### (1) Review of Proposed Conomo Point Improvements by CPPC (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board asked me to reach out to the Chairman of the Conomo Point Planning Committee (CPPC) to learn when the CPPC might be meeting next to consider the topic of waterfront access improvements. Chairman Lynch indicated that the CPPC will likely meet during January and requested that the Board consider granting a small amount of funding for the Committee to consult with landscape architect James Heroux.

*Recommendation:* **Board consideration of funding for consultation with Mr. Heroux.**

#### (2) Release of Essex Strategic Plan

The Essex Strategic Planning Committee has released its first draft of a new Strategic Plan for the Town. The plan focuses on nine general goals and the Committee is seeking public input. The plan may be found at [http://essexma.org/Pages/EssexMA\\_Stratplancomm/ESTP.pdf](http://essexma.org/Pages/EssexMA_Stratplancomm/ESTP.pdf) and comments are being received at [essexstratplan@essexma.org](mailto:essexstratplan@essexma.org).

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

### B. Computer Systems

#### (1) Activation of Virtual Private Network (VPN) for Temporary Town Hall

As the Board may recall, I had wired the temporary Town Hall quarters for a computer network and had set up a network switch, Internet service, a router, and an uninterruptible power supply. Our network expert visited the facility on December 8, 2015 and we worked to establish a VPN between the temporary quarters and Town Hall (which is, in turn, connected to the City of Melrose datacenter from which we compute). The connection is up and running and I was able to test the connection with a laptop. With the connection in place, as we begin to move users into the temporary quarters, some simple redirection of each zero-client device will easily re-establish all features that each user had in Town Hall.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary. Total time – 3 hours.

## C. Personnel

(1) Collective Bargaining for Essex Police Benevolent Assoc. Successor Contract  
The management team engaged the EPBA in collective bargaining for a successor contract on December 16, 2015. The present contract expires on June 30, 2016.

*Recommendation:* Board discussion in executive session per the posted agenda.

(2) Town Administrator Goals for Calendar Year 2016 (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board began discussion relative to the specific goals I had recommended for calendar year 2016. The Board asked that this topic be brought up again at the present meeting so that my list of goals may be finalized.

*Recommendation:* **Board finalization of my 2016 goals.**

## D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Town Hall/Library Renovation Project Update (\*)

Plans and specifications for the subject project were made available to general contractors and filed sub-bidders on December 16, 2015, via a project bidding clearinghouse service. The first walkthrough for prospective bidders was conducted on December 21, 2015 and I will have more information regarding that event by meeting time.

*Recommendation:* **Board discussion relative to the bidding process thus far.**

(2) Draft Request for Proposals for Management of Centennial Grove (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board expressed interest in the development of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for entities potentially desiring to enter into a management contract at the Centennial Grove. The entity would serve to enforce potential residents-only rules and provide general upkeep in exchange for private event marketing rights. The entity would also pay a fee to the Town in addition to their management services for this marketing privilege. I have begun to develop a basic list of specifications for the RFP.

*Recommendation:* **Board review of the draft specifications for this management contract RFP.**

(3) Release of Request for Quotations for Long-Term Lease Appraisals (\*)

I have developed a Request for Quotations (RFQ) that includes all specifications necessary for an appraiser to generate both land-only and land plus improvement valuations for long-term leases of twenty years in duration. The RFQ could be released immediately, with responses due by December 31, 2015.

**Recommendation: Board vote to release the RFQ for long-term lease appraisals.**

(4) Robbins Island Subdivision Process and Sale Appraisal Contract (\*)

I have worked with our engineering consultant to develop a draft of a subdivision plan for Robbins Island. The proposed plan takes into account Planning Board comments issued in 2013, before the Board withdrew the Robbins Island portion of the Central Conomo Point subdivision plan due to a private property line dispute. Board and Town Meeting action have resolved that dispute and the agreed-to property line is also featured on the plan. The plan can now be used as the basis for an appraiser to generate sale valuations for the benefit of Town Meeting and can be used to start the Definitive Subdivision application process (a Preliminary Plan is not required).

**Recommendation: Board vote to sign a contract with Tyburski Appraisal Corporation for the sale appraisals and to produce and submit a Definitive Subdivision application (authorizing the Chairman to sign the application, once complete).**

(5) Pricing for High-Quality Used Office Furniture and New Library Shelving

Since the Board is contemplating putting an article for high-quality used office furniture for the renovated Town Hall before the Town Meeting in May of 2016, I have begun researching pricing for the necessary items. I visited the warehouse of a used office furniture vendor on December 16, 2015 and discussed with the vendor a floorplan of the renovated facility. I have learned that the Town should be able to meet all of its needs for no more than \$60,000, inclusive of some new Library shelving and a new circulation desk, and I have inserted that figure into the Board's capital plan, for discussion purposes. This vendor I visited acquires high quality, solid wood, used furniture and completely refinishes it, which makes the pieces appear new.

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

(6) Congressman's Announcement of Bill to Alter Essex River Federal Channel

As the Board is aware, we have been working with the Army Corps of Engineers and Congressman Moulton to prepare for an Act of Congress to re-define the boundaries of the Federal Channel in the Essex River. This action will allow the River to be viewed by the Corps as "encroachment free", a critical step toward vying for future Federal dredging funds. The Congressman will be filing a bill concerning this matter early in the new year and plans to announce its filing in Essex, at the Essex Marina, on January 14, 2016 at 1:00 p.m.

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

(7) Preparation for Moving Town Offices

The Selectmen's Assistant and I met with a representative of the moving company that will move the Town offices to storage and temporary quarters in January. We received labels and learned about the system that will be used by the movers. The Selectmen's Assistant has explained the necessary preparatory actions to all departments and packing is underway.

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

(8) Draft Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) Application (\*)

As the Board may recall, the Woods Hole Group has been preparing a draft Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) application that is designed to request important flood elevation changes from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The most recent FEMA flood study and maps used overly broad methods to arrive at flood elevations and preliminary work by the Woods Hole Group had shown that preparing a formal application will most likely result in some very favorable changes. Presently, the Woods Hole Group has completed a draft of the LOMR for the Board's review, which I should have by meeting time.

*Recommendation:* **Board review of the LOMR application and potential authorization of the Woods Hole Group to formally submit it to FEMA.**

**E. Insurance**

(1) Monthly Pothole Log

I obtained the subject log from the DPW and provided to our insurer during the week of December 7, 2015 as part of the MIIA Rewards Program. No potholes were reported.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

(2) Builder's Risk Insurance Application Process

I have been working with our insurer, our Project Manager, and our architect to apply for the necessary Builder's Risk insurance policy for the upcoming Town Hall/Library renovation project. Now that our insurer is engaging prospective providers to cover this project, providers are asking for more information and various technical certifications.

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

**F. Facilities**

(1) Continuation of Demolition Preparation, 153 Conomo Point Road

Now that the Board has decided to continue on the course of demolition with respect to the structure at 153 Conomo Point Road, I have resumed certain

preparatory activities. Specifically, I have filed with the DEP a necessary air quality form, I have arranged for a pest control contract, and I have retained the services of a construction supervisor (all in anticipation of an early spring demolition). I have received the asbestos clearance report from our industrial hygienist and will work over the winter to line up a demolition contractor and Fire Department support. I will work with the Superintendent of Public Works to line up dumpster services at the appropriate time.

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

(2) Preparation for Moving of Basement Storage Items

As the Board is aware, the upcoming construction will require that all storage items in the Town Hall basement be moved to temporary storage, to allow construction activities to occur without obstacle. Two, temporary storage trailers arrived on December 14, 2015 and prisoners will move the items on December 22 and 23, 2015. Woodman's Restaurant has agreed to feed the prisoners both days.

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

(3) Reinstallation of Gate at Entrance to Centennial Grove

The Board had asked that a gate that had been removed from its post at the corner of the Water Filtration Plant property (entrance to the Grove) be reinstalled as a management option for the upcoming season. With the assistance of the Superintendent of Public Works, a new gate was put in place on the existing post during the week of December 7, 2015.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

(4) Removal of Spruce Trees in Front of Town Hall

I attended a public hearing held by the Superintendent of Public Work in his capacity as Tree Warden on December 15, 2015 regarding the Town's proposal to remove the two, large spruce trees in front of Town Hall. No one attended the public hearing and no comments were received in advance. As such, the process for preparing for removal has been completed and the Superintendent will work with a tree contractor in January to remove the trees (prior to the construction contractor taking over the site in February).

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

**G. Fiscal/Budget**

(1) Review of Draft Selectmen's Fiscal Year 2017 Operating Budget (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board begin to review the FY17 Capital/Personnel Plan. In the interim, the Finance Committee, through the Town Accountant, released the

annual call for operating budgets to all departments. I have begun to prepare the operating budget, which is due to the Finance Committee on January 12, 2016.

*Recommendation:* **Board review of the draft operating budget.**

(2) Continued Review of the FY17 Capital/Personnel Plan (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board provided guidance relative to my first draft of the FY17 Capital/Personnel Plan. I have revised the document accordingly and it is due to the Finance Committee on January 12, 2016.

*Recommendation:* **Continued Board review of the draft FY17 Capital/Personnel Plan.**

(3) Review of Tentative Manchester Essex Regional District FY17 Budget (\*)

Selectman Coviello and I attended the Manchester Essex Regional School Committee's FY17 Tentative District Operating Budget public hearing on December 9, 2016, along with members of the Essex Finance Committee and officials from the Town of Manchester. The Tentative Budget features a proposed FY17 apportionment from Essex of 2.82%.

*Recommendation:* **Board discussion relative to the proposal and determination of whether any additional review meetings are necessary.**

## **H. Complaints**

No items.

## **I. Meetings Attended**

(1) Meeting with Executive Director of Cape Ann TV

I met with Mr. Erich Archer, the Executive Director of Cape Ann TV on December 17, 2015. Mr. Archer described his upcoming goals for Cape Ann TV and we discussed issues of common concern for the successor cable contract with Comcast, such as the future of the Cable I-Net, the surcharge for Town technology, and the surcharge for support of Cape Ann TV. Mr. Archer will work closely with our representative to the Cape Ann Regional Cable Advisory Committee (Mr. Barry O'Brien) relative to these matters. Eventually, the Committee will provide a draft successor contract to the Board for review and comment.

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

## **J. Final Judgment**

### (1) DEP Quarterly Report (\*)

I have developed the Quarterly Report to the DEP relative to the most recent developments pertaining to Conomo Point planning and wastewater compliance. The report features a discussion relative to the resolution of the dispute between the Town and a private abutter to Robbins Island.

*Recommendation:* **Board approval of the transmittal of the report.**

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

### (1) Potential Special Town Meeting (\*)

It is possible that the Water Department will need a Town Meeting vote to utilize Water Enterprise Free Cash to begin the design process associated with some major renovations to the Water Filtration Plant. The Board does not presently have a meeting schedule for Monday, February 1, 2016 – so this may be a suitable date for a Special Town Meeting.

*Recommendation:* **Board discussion relative to the potential calling of a Special Town Meeting.**

### (2) Preliminary Draft List of Potential Topics for 2016 Annual Town Meeting (\*)

I have begun to compile a list of possible topics for articles on the 2016 Annual Town Meeting Warrant as a companion to the budget review process.

*Recommendation:* **Preliminary Board review of the draft list.**

### (3) Revised Signage for Town Landing and Municipal Parking Lot (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board voted to make changes to the regulations for the Town Landing and for the Municipal Parking lot. I have worked with Selectman Coviello to develop some new potential signage for both areas that will simply and clearly indicate to users the various parking restrictions.

*Recommendation:* **Board discussion relative to the potential new signage.**

## **L. Legal Issues**

No items.

## **M. Grants**

No items.

## **N. Emergency Planning**

### (1) Regional Dispatch Center Monthly Meetings

I attended a Finance Advisory Board meeting and a joint meeting of the various advisory boards as chair of both meetings on December 18, 2015. The present focus is the development of the fiscal year 2017 budget and the ongoing assessment of the Center's dispatch software, which will likely be replaced with products from a new vendor.

*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.*