



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of Dec. 23, 2013

Report covers from December 7, 2013 to December 20, 2013

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Manchester Lock-up Agreement

The present version of the prisoner lock-up agreement with the Town of Manchester runs through June 30, 2014 and we pay our base fee in two installments, with an option to cancel. The Chief of Police has recommended that the agreement remain in force through the end of the fiscal year. Near the end of the fiscal year, the Regional Lock-up Facility in Middleton should be accepting prisoners and the Chief's plan is to transition from Manchester to the new facility at that time.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

B. Computer Systems

(1) Network Preparation for Cutover to New Server Room

Our electrician will install a power outlet to serve a new uninterruptible power supply (UPS) and network switch on the right side of the Town Hall stage during the week of December 23, 2013. I have already installed the UPS and the switch and we will therefore be prepared to move all network connection wires from a switch in my office to the new switch as soon as the new server room has been constructed. The electrician will provide new network cabling between the new switch and the server room location. Also, he will provide new coaxial cable and phone line extensions that will run between the present Cable I-Net, Comcast High Speed Internet, and Verizon DSL points of termination and the new server room.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary. Total time – 1 hour.

(2) Vendor-Hosted Platform for Assessors' Software (*)

One part of our long-range technology plan is to have all proprietary software hosted by our vendors. I have been looking into this option with our Assessors' software vendor (Patriot Properties) but have found that the price is too high at this point in time. Patriot only recently began to offer this service and has only three clients, from out of state. I will continue to run the software on a local server and we can periodically assess the vendor's pricing (which I expect to decrease once the marketplace considers this option).

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(3) Installation of Evidence Scanner and Bar Code Printer

The new Regional Dispatch Center has provided the Essex Police Department with access to a centralized database for evidence logging and management. As part of that system, the Police Department needed a bar code scanner and a bar code printing device. I worked with personnel from the Center on December 11, 2013 to install the new devices.

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

(4) Fire Department Call Printout Feature

The new Regional Dispatch Center has a feature that will send a printout, via e-mail, to the Fire Department with information about each new call, as it comes in. The Fire Chief asked for assistance in configuring the Department's printer, which does have an e-mail receipt capability. After some configuration, we were able to get the printer to work in that capacity.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary. Total time – 1 hour.

C. Personnel

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

At this time each year, the Board arranges to review my performance and to 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, my evaluation template was updated with five specific goals at the outset of this calendar year for use at this time.

Also, it is necessary to work with the Board to develop goals for the upcoming calendar 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:

- Assist the Board, its consultants, and other Town boards and committees with continued planning and implementation of activities at Conomo Point, all in accordance with the Conomo Point Consolidated Calendar (which includes DEP compliance milestones) and Board guidance. Activities may include: the completion of the Central Conomo Point Subdivision approval process; the coordination of appraisals for the properties in the central area; the development of Purchase & Sale Agreements and coordination of sales for central properties should Town Meeting vote to sell; completion of any necessary road alterations in the central area; coordination of ongoing northern planning and design efforts; evictions and legal actions; and renewal of bridge leases as necessary.

- Continue to advance the transition of the Town's information/technology infrastructure from in-Town resources to the Melrose datacenter and vendor-hosted platforms. Work will involve: the migration of other users to the virtual desktop environment that is now being piloted and the migration of our Assessors' database to a vendor-hosted product, if cost-effective to do so.
- Serve as the Town's chief overseer of the Town Hall/Library health, safety, and working environment improvement project. Work will involve: interfacing with our designer, who will be providing construction oversight; interfacing with our contractor to properly sequence work from a logistical perspective; acting as a liaison to building staff during construction; administration of a Federal grant to provide a new generator for the building; implementation of all necessary measures and connections to move all IT equipment from my office into the new server room; and coordination of the larger project with Constellation Energy's planned energy efficiency retrofit.
- Coordinate the Federal Channel encroachment study among our design engineer and the various stakeholders. Work will involve: coordination meetings; securing permission for our engineer to work on private property; review of interim work products; and ultimately dovetailing the final report with steps that Federal legislators must take to obtain eventual approval of the final new channel configuration.
- Assist the Board, Town consultants, other Town boards and committees, other project stakeholders, and project abutters with the combination of the downtown boardwalk project and the improvement of the Town Landing. Seaport Bond Bill funding will be sought for the entire scope. Work will involve: communication with State legislators relative to our desire for additional funding and an application to the Seaport Advisory Council for phase 2 funding associated with project final permitting, Town Landing design elements, and overall construction of the entire project.

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

(2) Safety Committee Meeting

I attended the subject meeting on December 18, 2013 as a member of the Committee. The meeting featured a discussion relative to the successful funding of a \$5,000 grant application for a work zone safety trailer. The group also discussed upcoming goals and the soon-to-begin Town Hall / Library health, safety, and working environment project.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Kick Off Meeting for Federal Channel Encroachment Study

I hosted the subject meeting in my office on December 12, 2013. Our engineering consultant provided the major stakeholders (those with actual and potential encroachments) with an overview of the project and began to collect information such as licenses and permits granted by the State in the past for various docks and structures. Our consultant will first verify the position of the Federal Channel that has most recently been provided by the Army Corps of Engineers and will conduct survey work over the winter and in the spring to compare actual structure positions to the verified channel boundaries.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Draft Request for Proposals for Promotion of Town Resources/Attractions (*)

At the last meeting, the Board asked that I prepare a draft RFP for individuals and entities that may be interested in proposing a scope of services to most effectively utilize a recent, \$5,000 appropriation for the promotion of Town resources, advantages, and attractions. The Board indicated that the RFP should be broadly written in order to maximize the creative benefit to the Town. I have developed a draft document which needs further Board input to take to the next stage.

Recommendation: **Board review and discussion relative to the draft RFP.**

(3) Contract with Virtual Town Hall for On-line Burning Permit Payments (*)

As the Board may recall, the Town utilized the services of Virtual Town Hall (our website provider) for our on-line burning permit application and payment service last burning season. The Fire Chief is presently working with our tax collection software vendor (City Hall Systems) under the terms of our Master Agreement on a similar service. However, that new product will not be available until early next year. As such, the Fire Chief has recommended the Virtual Town Hall product for a second year and will likely recommend the City Hall Systems product for the 2015 burning season.

Recommendation: **Board vote to sign the one-season contract with Virtual Town Hall.**

E. Insurance

No items.

F. Facilities

(1) Draft License for Use of Conomo Point Properties by Sailing Club (*)

At the last meeting, the Board agreed to consider the granting of a license to the Conomo Point Sailing Club for the seasonal staging of club boats on a vacant Town parcel known as Parcel A in southern Conomo Point and for the off-season storage of one trailered boat in another location to be named. I have developed a draft license document for the Board's review and discussion.

Recommendation: **Board review and discussion relative to the draft license.**

G. Fiscal/Budget

(1) Fiscal Year 2015 School District Tentative Budget Hearing (*)

I attended the subject hearing along with Selectmen Jones and Gould-Coviello on December 11, 2013. The hearing featured a presentation relative to the various revenue and expense issues and challenges that the District is facing for the upcoming fiscal year. The District expects to find efficiencies and to make cuts to non-essential budget requests to bring the Tentative Budget's 6.9% town apportionment increase down to a much lower figure.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(2) Fiscal Year 2015 Regional School District Budget Discussion Meeting(*)

I attended the subject meeting on December 17, 2013 along with officials from the Regional School District and the Town of Manchester. The group discussed the recent release of the District's Tentative Budget and the District's plans to pare the budget down. The group determined that it is necessary to get a better picture of the five to ten year outlooks of all three entities in order to anticipate municipal needs and other factors that will affect the District's budgeting process for FY15 and beyond. To that end, small group of officials will meet on January 16, 2014 and the regular budget group will meet on January 22, 2014 to bring the coordination of needs into much better focus. The two boards of selectmen, the two finance committees, and the School Committee will meet jointly on January 28, 2014 to engage in group discussion prior to the final budget hearing on February 4, 2014.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(3) Continued Review of Draft FY15 Selectmen's Operating Budget (*)

At the last meeting, the Board provided guidance relative to the further development of the FY15 operating budget request. I have made revisions and have produced a new draft for the Board's review.

Recommendation: **Further Board review of the subject budget request.**

(4) Continued Review of the Draft FY15 Capital Budget Update (*)

At the last meeting, the Board provided guidance relative to the further development of the FY15 capital budget update. I have made revisions and have produced a new draft for the Board's review.

Recommendation: **Further Board review of the subject budget update.**

(5) Signature of Project Completion Certificate for State Revolving Loan Fund(*)

The Department of Environmental Protection has informed the Town that the Department wishes to perform a closeout process that certifies that our sewer system, which was funded via the State Revolving Loan Fund, has been completed and is fully operational. Although we achieved that status in 2006, the State process lags significantly behind. The closeout step requires the Board to vote a resolution authorizing the Chairman to sign the Project Completion Certificate. Thereafter, the Town Clerk will attest to the resolution and to the name of the present Chairman.

Recommendation: **Board vote to resolve the necessary authorization and signature of the Project Completion Certificate by the Chairman.**

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

No items.

J. Final Judgment

(1) DEP Quarterly Report (*)

I have completed the quarterly report to the DEP due January 1, 2014.

Recommendation: **Board vote to transmit the report.**

(2) Review of Conomo Point Mind Maps with Former Selectman Randall

At the last meeting, the Board asked that I work with former Selectman and current Conomo Point Planning Committee Member Ray Randall to review the mind mapping exercise that was conducted in 2011 and update the maps based upon events that have occurred in the meantime. To that end, I met with Mr. Randall on December 16, 2013 and we began the update and revision process. Mr. Randall will attend the Board's meeting of February 10, 2014 to report on how the update is coming along.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

(1) Preliminary Review of Potential Topics for Annual Town Meeting (*)

I have begun to develop a list of potential topics for warrant articles at the Annual Town Meeting in May of 2014.

Recommendation: **Preliminary Board discussion relative to this draft list.**

L. Legal Issues

No items.

M. Grants

(1) Council on Aging Service Incentive Grant Application (*)

The Chairman of the Council on Aging became aware of a grant opportunity after the last Board meeting which had an application deadline prior to the present meeting. Under the subject grant program, the Council on Aging is exploring the possibility of funding for a shower capability at the Senior Center in order to enhance the building's role as a potential short-term shelter, should the need ever arise. Since the submission to date is only a preliminary proposal, no signature from the Selectmen was required. However, it is possible that the Office of Elder Affairs will support the idea and require a more formal application.

Recommendation: **Board vote authorize the Chairman to sign a formal application, should that become necessary.**

N. Emergency Planning

(1) Regional Dispatch Center Meetings

I attended a meeting of the Finance Advisory Board (FAB) of the Essex Regional Communications Center and that board's Subcommittee on Communities of Interest on December 20, 2013, as a member of both groups. The FAB meeting featured an update from the Center's director regarding the operating budget and plans to cut the remaining communities over to the Center. The subcommittee meeting featured continued work relative to the process by which new communities will be allowed to apply for membership in the future.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

O. Other Items

(1) Town Administrator Leave

I was out of the office on leave for a portion of the afternoon of December 12, 2013 and a portion of the morning of December 18, 2013.

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