



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of January 7, 2013

Report covers from December 15, 2012 to January 4, 2013

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Announcement of New Transfer Station Schedule

At the last meeting, the Board considered a request from the Girl Scouts to announce the troop's new bottle and can fundraising effort at the transfer station via our telephone notification system. The Board agreed that the requested message should go out in conjunction with a reminder regarding the station's new hours that begin on January 8, 2013 (Tuesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays only, from 8:00 a.m. until 3:45 p.m.). As such, I worked with the Superintendent of Public Works to get his input on the new hours message and used our Code Red system to send a combined message during the week of December 17, 2012.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Personnel Board and Youth Commission Annual Reports

Since the Board of Selectmen presently serves as both the Personnel Board and the Youth Commission, I developed the necessary annual reports for each function to be included in the Town's overall Annual Report. I will work with the Chairman to produce the Selectmen's annual report contribution in the coming weeks.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

B. Computer Systems

(1) Completion of MPLS Connection to Melrose

Comcast completed work on the new Multi-Protocol Label Switching (MPLS) dedicated fiber optic connection between Essex Town Hall and Melrose City Hall during the week of December 17, 2012. I subsequently ran category 5 cable from the connection back to my office, where our equipment is presently housed. Eventually, our equipment will be moved into a new server room on the stage, where the new connection has been located. During the week of December 24, 2012 our electrical contractor installed two new power circuits for the new equipment and I switched that equipment from its temporary power supply to those new circuits. We have actually tested the connectivity to Melrose and it is just as fast as file connection over our internal local area network. I will soon begin the process of migrating each Essex user's files to Melrose.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary. Total time – 2 hours.

(2) Accounting Software Updates

Our accounting software vendor released a product update during the week of December 17, 2012. The vendor had recently moved to a new on-line portal that first required me to re-register my information for new credentials. After that process was completed, I was able to log onto the portal and download and install the new release. I also performed the necessary database maintenance tasks. Our vendor released a patch to the upgrade the following week, which I also downloaded, installed, and performed database maintenance on.

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

(3) Computer and Database Maintenance

I performed maintenance on the firefighters' computer system and archived the 2012 burning permits during the week of December 31, 2012. The computer system as not properly receiving Windows updates and the burning permit database required the normal archiving of permit from the previous year to prepare for the 2013 burning season.

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

C. Personnel

(1) Safety Committee Meeting

The subject meeting had been scheduled for December 19, 2012. However, due to pressing business in the Department of Public Works and in the Police Department, we were unable to achieve a quorum of members. As such, the meeting was not held and we will move on to the next regularly-scheduled meeting next quarter.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) AFSCME Collective Bargaining

(*)

AFSCME representatives engaged management representatives in continued collective bargaining on January 7, 2013.

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

(3) EPBA Collective Bargaining

EPBA representatives will engage management representatives for an initial collective bargaining session for a successor contract on January 9, 2013.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(4) Motor Vehicle Records Checks (MVRs)

Each year at this time I request the Chief of Police to perform MVRs on all employees who frequently operate Town vehicles to ensure that all parties continue to have valid drivers' licenses and do not display any pattern of unsafe vehicle operation. The Chief has completed the checks for this year and has found no issues.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(5) OccHealth Connect Semi-Annual Report

The Town participates in the OccHealth Connect program offered by our insurer. The program allows for convenient pre-employment drug and medical screening as well as occupational therapy should an employee be injured on the job. Our insurer requires that the Town and the provider (Quadrant Health) file semi-annual reports. The Town did use the program for several pre-employment screenings in the past six months and, fortunately, no on-the-job injuries occurred that would require occupational therapy. I have filed the necessary report with our insurer.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Proposal for Pocket Dredging Design and Permitting (*)

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that we should explore the cost of getting pocket dredging for proposed public floats included in the eventual downtown boardwalk construction project. That cost will be a function of a change order with our present engineering consultant to design and seek permitting for this work if it is to be included as a viable construction element. Presently, our consultant has provided a cost proposal in the amount of \$34,420 for the necessary work. It is possible to add this cost into our proposal for boardwalk construction that we intend to make to the Seaport Advisory Council as a follow up to the feasibility study. It is also possible to seek local funding for this cost to potentially make the Town's Seaport construction proposal stronger while fulfilling a portion of the local match simultaneously.

***Recommendation:* Board discussion relative to potential funding of the dredging design and permitting work.**

(2) Preliminary Construction Cost Estimates for Boardwalk Project (*)

Our engineering consultant has developed preliminary construction cost estimates for the construction of a downtown boardwalk both with and without public floats. The total without floats is approximately \$900,000 and the total with floats is just over 1 million dollars. As noted above, additional design funding would be

necessary for dredging design and permitting if the public floats component is selected.

***Recommendation:* Board discussion relative to the Town's next application for Seaport Bond Bill funding for the construction phase (now that the project has been deemed feasible by the feasibility study).**

(3) Solicitation of Proposals to Eliminate Channel Encroachment

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that several proposals should be sought for coordination of entities that pose Federal channel encroachments in the Essex River and for design work to decrease the encroachment problem to be as small as possible. An engineering firm could be brought in to study possible options for realignment and/or revision of the Federal channel and to work with abutting pier and float owners to minimize encroachments. I plan to work with Selectman O'Donnell to pull this effort together in the coming weeks.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(4) Town Hall/Library Health, Safety, and Working Environment Design Update

Molly Richter of design firm Meyer & Meyer will be meeting with me and Selectman O'Donnell on January 10, 2013 to review progress on the various aspects of design that have been produced to date. At the meeting, we hope to work toward the selection of the next elements that the firm should consider.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(5) Quarterly Affirmative Marketing Report

I filed the subject report with the State in my capacity as the Town's Affirmative Marketing Construction Officer (AMCO). The report is required to document the Town's utilization of woman or minority-owned business entities on State-funded projects. No such utilization occurred during the past quarter.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

E. Insurance

(1) Annual Building Inspections

An inspector for our insurer conducted inspections of various Town buildings on December 27, 2012. Inspections are performed each year in order for our insurer to assess the Town's housekeeping practices and to recommend any actions that could improve safety or the potential for loss. We are presently awaiting his report.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Monthly Pothole Log

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

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

F. Facilities

(1) Historic Baggage Shed

(*)

The Board of Public Works has determined that Memorial Park is not a suitable location for the historic baggage shed that is scheduled for private demolition. The Board would be willing to temporarily store the building at the DPW yard so long as a timetable is set for the building's ultimate location.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to whether any other Town-owned locations should be explored.**

(2) Assessment of Asbestos Containing Material

(*)

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that we should obtain a quotation from an asbestos abatement contractor regarding the removal of degraded asbestos-containing window glazing at the Fire Station so that the cost could be compared to the estimated cost of abating all asbestos-containing materials (ACM) in the building. Preliminary findings of our survey contractor had suggested that the glazing contained ACM. However, follow-up work indicated that the preliminary findings were due to old, residual ACM that had clung to the new glazing and caulk and that no action is required.

The final report and management plan for the building will likely be available by meeting time and will likely show that only minor encapsulation of ACM is necessary in a few areas. As such, the cost to abate these minor issues will be far less than the cost to remove all ACM. Depending on cost, the Town Property Maintenance Fund or the Finance Committee's Reserve Fund could be used to conduct the minor work. According to our consultant, full removal would require destructive work that is not necessary until if and when the building were to be demolished.

Recommendation: **Immediate abatement of the minor ACM issues and continued sound management of the building to avoid accidental exposures to presently-encapsulated ACM.**

(3) Fire Alarm System Inspection and Testing

Each year at this time I bring in a fire alarm inspection and testing contractor for the systems in the Town Hall, the Water Filtration Plant, and the DPW barn. The Senior Center system is under a continuing maintenance contract with another

company. I have made contact with the usual contractor and testing will likely occur during January.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

G. Fiscal/Budget

(1) Final Draft of Selectmen's Budget Package (*)

I have developed the final Selectmen's operating and capital budget proposals for fiscal year 2014 based upon the Board's guidance at the last meeting. The proposals are due to the Finance Committee by January 10, 2013.

Recommendation: **Final review and approval of the budget package.**

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

No items.

J. Final Judgment

No items.

K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

(1) Preliminary Draft of Annual Town Meeting Potential Topics (*)

I have developed a preliminary list of topics that could become articles for the Annual Town Meeting in May.

Recommendation: **Preliminary Board review of the various potential topics.**

L. Legal Issues

No items.

M. Grants

(1) Seaport Grant Quarterly Report

I filed the necessary quarterly report relative to the Town's downtown boardwalk design grant with the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). The report highlights how our engineering consultant is presently working to complete design and permitting work for the boardwalk itself and how those products will

be bundled into a final report with Salem State's economic development analysis. As noted above, we also have a proposal from our designer for the design and permitting of limited "pocket dredging" that would make the prospect of floating docks possible as part of the construction project.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

N. Emergency Planning

No items.

O. Other Items

(1) MassRides Program Offerings Update

I met with Mr. Ari Ofsevit on December 20, 2012 to discuss the MassRides program and what that program can offer to the commuting public. The Town has participated in the Safe Routes to School Program in the past and has offered a link to the MassRides program on our website. Mr. Ofsevit covered MassRides' Emergency Ride Home program and the "NuRide" ride matching program as options that residents may be interested in. Interested parties can review program offerings at www.commute.com.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Christmas Holiday

The office was closed on December 25, 2012 in observance of the subject holiday.

(3) New Year's Holiday

The office was closed on January 1, 2013 in observance of the subject holiday.

(4) Town Administrator Leave

I was out of the office on leave on the afternoon of December 24, the afternoon of December 27, all of December 28, and a part of the afternoon of December 31, 2012.

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