



## Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of February 6, 2017

Report covers from January 21 to February 3, 2017

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

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### A. Town Department Reports/Requests

#### (1) Forum Regarding Marijuana Regulation/Taxation Act

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that officials from the Board of Health, the Planning Board, the Fire Department, and the Police Department should join the Board in an informational public meeting hosted by Town Counsel concerning the subject Act. The session will be aimed at providing officials with an overview of the law, present status, options that may be explored, phase-in dates, and workplace ramifications. Town Counsel is available on Monday, February 13, 2017 and the forum has been scheduled for that evening, at 7:00 p.m., at the Essex Elementary School. The meeting is, of course, open to the public, but no public input is contemplated for this initial, informational session.

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

### B. Computer Systems

#### (1) Regional Dispatch Software Maintenance

A recent update to the Regional Dispatch Center software worked well on all police department computers except one. As such, I work with RECC staff to correct the issue.

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

#### (2) Essex Police Department Software Consultation

The Essex Police Department is moving to a cloud-based system for managing its attainment and future maintenance of State Accreditation. I participated in an informational meeting with the vendor on February 1, 2017 to advise the Department on whether any changes to computer system configuration will be necessary and then conducted minor modifications to certain systems.

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

### C. Personnel

#### (1) Informal Department Heads Meeting

I hosted the subject meeting on February 2, 2017. The meeting featured a discussion relative to the status of the Town Hall/Library renovation project and

the Northern Conomo Point Public Waterfront Access Project. Department heads also gave individual department updates.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

#### **D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects**

##### (1) Town Hall/Library Renovation Weekly Construction Meetings

I attended the subject meetings on January 25 and January 31, 2017. The general contractor is presently focusing most of his efforts on interior finish work, including the new stairway and the various interior countertops and other custom carpentry. Also, the interior painting subcontractor has arrived on site and the elevator subcontractor is fine tuning the new elevator in preparation for the necessary State inspection. Further, some roof repair work had to be conducted (at no cost to the Town), due to damage sustained in recent strong winds.

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

##### (2) Change Order for Recessed Can Lighting Under Town Hall Portico (\*)

The original scope of work called for recessed can lighting within the ceiling of the exterior portico at Town Hall. The design had assumed that the roof rafters were at least 2" x 10" and, upon investigation by the contractor, the rafters were confirmed at a very unusual dimension of 2" x 7 3/4". As such, the lights that had been ordered by the electrical subcontractor were too long to fit in the space. Two of those four lights were used in the new stage conference room, since they were a better solution than a single, linear fixture in that particular area. We have asked our contractor for a credit to return the two other can fixtures and the linear fixture. The new, shorter can lights for the portico are being installed at cost of \$2,243.97 and work is already proceeding, due to timing constraints.

*Recommendation:* **Board approval of the change order for the replacement lights.**

##### (3) Change Order, Sprinkling & Interior Finish, Town Hall 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Storage (\*)

During construction, it was pointed out that four otherwise inaccessible (hollow) areas near the front of the new, third-floor auditorium could be used for storage if fitted with removable panels or doors. One of the four areas contains an electrical panel and will just need a small access door (will not be used for storage). While the framing and access to the three remaining areas is not complicated, and doors on two of the spaces were included in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor change order, code requires the installation of sprinkler line extensions and interior plaster. The total additional cost necessary to make the three areas accessible for the future may be available by meeting time.

**Recommendation: Board discussion of the change order for the finishing of this useful potential future storage space.**

(4) Potential Library Employee Parking Area (\*)

The Librarian asked whether the area to the right of the Library parking lot (currently a grassy area being used by the contractor for parking) could be converted to gravel and used for Library employee parking when the Town Hall/Library project is concluded. I spoke with the Superintendent of Public Works since that area is the gateway to an access road to the Memorial Park fields. He stated that, if used, entry would have to be via the Library parking lot, since he would not authorize an additional curb cut in that area. Also, aesthetically, the area may not be very pleasing.

**Recommendation: Board discussion relative to this concept.**

(5) Consideration of Bids for Northern Conomo Point Improvements (\*)

Bids for the construction of a waterfront park and associated parking lot in the northern area of Conomo Point were due by noon on February 1, 2017. A total of three bids were received and the apparent low base bidder at the bid opening was Campbell Construction Group, LLC of Peabody, with a base bid of \$307,000. However, shortly after the bid opening, Campbell contacted the Town to indicate that numbers on the bid form had been transposed and the base bid had been intended to be \$370,000. Campbell explained that this was a bona-fide clerical error which would cause the company serious financial harm, if honored, and Town Counsel (after reviewing Campbell's materials) agrees. As such, the Campbell bid (which would have been higher than available funds if placed correctly) should be allowed to be withdrawn. That would leave the two other bids, the next lowest of which was about \$422,000.

**Recommendation: Board vote to allow the Campbell bid withdrawal, to reject all other bids, and to authorize me to re-bid the project, making changes with the designer to lower the cost.**

(6) Demolition Contract for Structures at 4 and 8 Conomo Lane (\*)

Written responses for the demolition of three structures at 4 and 8 Conomo Lane were due by noon on February 2, 2017. A site visit was held on January 25, 2017 and two bidders attended (with three others making independent site visits). A total of seven responses were received and the apparent low respondent was K&R Construction of Boxford, with a price of \$7,400. Asbestos abatement will occur under a separate contract beginning on February 7, 2017 and demolition can occur anytime between March 15 and April 14, 2017.

**Recommendation: Board vote to award the demolition contract to K&R Construction.**

(7) Investigation of Fourth Siting Option for Fire/Police Facilities

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that our consulting engineer should conduct a review of a potential fourth siting option for police and fire facilities in the 24-30 Martin Street area. This option will involve a new fire station between Town Hall and the current location of Shepard Memorial Drive, with a renovation of the existing building at 24 Martin Street just for the police department. Our engineer finalized the scope of services for this fourth option during the week of January 30, 2017 and work is now underway. We expect to have a preliminary report in a few weeks time.

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

**E. Insurance**

(1) Driving Simulator Training

Our insurer, MIIA, provided its mobile driving simulator to the Town for employee training for most of the week of January 23, 2017. The driving instructor provided both classroom training and individual simulator session training to employees in the DPW, the Police Department, and the Fire Department. The training will help to avoid mishaps and the Town receives premium credits as part of the MIIA Rewards Program.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

(2) Asbestos Awareness Training

I participated in two webinars regarding asbestos awareness and best management practices as part of the MIIA Rewards Program during the weeks of January 23 and 30, 2017. The webinars provided refresher information useful in future building management and maintenance.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

**F. Facilities**

(1) Asbestos Abatement at 8 Conomo Lane

At the last meeting, the Board awarded the contract for asbestos abatement at 8 Conomo Lane to E&F Environmental. The company provided the necessary insurance and other paperwork during the week of January 23, 2017 and work will begin on or about February 7, 2017. The work will be fully coordinated with our industrial hygienist to ensure that all asbestos is removed via independent inspection and testing.

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

(2) Site Visit with Town Hall/Library Furniture Provider

As the Board may recall, American Office Furniture is under contract to provide custom office furniture for the Town Hall and Library. Personnel from the contractor visited the building on February 1, 2017 to take some final measurements now that wall plastering and trim installation have been completed in most spaces. The company will consult with the Town in the coming months to arrive at final stain color choices (which may differ between the Town Hall pieces and what the Library would like on its own pieces). The company expects to have all items completed for delivery in late April.

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

**G. Fiscal/Budget**

(1) Manchester Essex Regional School District Final Budget Hearing

I attended the subject hearing along with members of the Board and of the Essex Finance Committee. School officials indicated that the increase in operating costs to the Town of Essex for fiscal year 2018 will be \$169,595 (2.28%). For the Town of Manchester, the increase will be \$493,622 (3.71%) – with an overall apportionment increase of 3.2%. The School Committee and administrative staff fielded a number of questions from both Essex and Manchester Selectmen and Finance Committee members.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

**H. Complaints**

No items.

**I. Meetings Attended**

No items.

**J. Final Judgment**

No items.

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

(1) Exploration of Regional Resource Management Plan for Great Marsh ACEC

As the Board is aware, I am working with individuals in four other communities (Gloucester, Ipswich, Rowley, and Newbury) to pick up an exploration effort that was put on hold in 2011 regarding a regional Resource Management Plan for the Great Marsh ACEC. I am pleased to announce that each community is interested in proceeding and has designated a primary point of contact.

Between now and the end of March, each contact will commit to reviewing three documents: Horsley Witten's summary of the past effort (2011), the State's most recent guidance for RMP's (2004), and the Pleasant Bay RMP – the only example of a regional RMP in the State (2013). In April, we will work together to begin framing how to approach the issue and who else should be involved. Our goal will be to have a summit in September in the Essex Town Hall that will hopefully define a clear course of action for the future. I have been in touch with Kathryn Glenn of the Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management Office and she has indicated that CZM will support the effort in any way possible, with potential participation from a research fellow that the agency may have access to in the coming year.

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

(2) Guidance for Structure Renovation/Replacement, Northern Conomo Point (\*)  
Chairman O'Donnell and I have begun to work with Town Counsel and others to develop a potential way of looking at requests to significantly renovate, add onto, or replace structures on leased property at Northern Conomo Point. The proposed guidance will be based upon the zoning overlay rules for the southern and central areas and a draft of the concept will be provided to the Board for discussion and review at a future meeting.

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

(3) Continued Review of Draft Annual Town Meeting Warrant (\*)  
I have revised the Draft Annual Town Meeting Warrant per the Board's guidance from the last meeting.

*Recommendation:* **Further Board review regarding the Draft Annual Town Meeting Warrant.**

## **L. Legal Issues**

No items.

## **M. Grants**

(1) Investigation of Potential Brownfields Assistance/Grant, Allen Property (\*)  
Governor Baker recently announced additional funding for dealing with former commercial and industrial contaminated sites, otherwise known as "brownfields". The former Allen properties at the beginning of Southern Avenue are in this category and, as the Board is aware, even though much environmental analysis has been conducted to date, a recent summary report cautions about many unknowns.

I contacted the DEP Brownfields Office and Director Rodney Elliott visited the site with me on January 26, 2017 to review the matter. His office can potentially provide technical assistance that will help align a future plan to somehow remediate the site and get it back into productive taxation status. It is also possible that grant funds could help the Town (via a taking) or a private individual (after purchase from the court-appointed receiver) in the future with the actual implementation of redevelopment. Given the unknowns concerning potential environmental contamination, a taking by the Town could come at a very high future cost and should not be entered into without much study and financial backup from the State.

As a next step, Mr. Elliott and his technical team are going to meet with me in Essex on February 8, 2016 to go over the summary report that has been produced for the Essex County Greenbelt. It is possible that this discussion will help align a course of action that may translate to real progress for the parcel.

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

## **N. Emergency Planning**

### (1) Regional Dispatch Center Monthly Meeting

I attended the subject meeting on January 27, 2017 as Chairman of the Executive Advisory Board for the Center. The meeting featured a discussion with new Sheriff Kevin Coppinger regarding his vision for the future and a discussion about planning for the fiscal year 2018 budget. The Center's staff will prepare the budget proposal for a public hearing at the next monthly meeting, in February.

*Recommendation:* No further action is 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.*