



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of July 31, 2017

Report covers from July 15 to July 28, 2017

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

No items.

B. Computer Systems

No items.

C. Personnel

(1) Hiring Process for Council on Aging Outreach Coordinator

At the last meeting, the Board, acting in its capacity as Personnel Board, approved a new position description for an Outreach Coordinator for the Council on Aging. The Council has since advertised for that position and applications are due no later than August 11, 2017.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Initial Meeting of the Essex Youth Commission

At the last meeting, the Board appointed five new members to reconstitute the Essex Youth Commission. The members have been working to select a date for an initial meeting and the first order of business will be to consider the development of a position description for a Youth Coordinator or a Youth Director. I plan on attending the first meeting to provide guidance and, tentatively, that meeting will occur on August 16, 2017.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Repair of Cracks and Scour, Base Seawall at Conomo Point Park

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that Mark Haskell should begin work to repair some cracking and scouring of the base seawall (which has been heightened via the waterfront park project). The present level of disrepair is minor and the repair work will avoid much more costly rebuilding in the future. Mr. Haskell will complete this work in the near future.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Rate Lock for Electricity Supply, December 2019 – December 2022

At the last meeting, the Board authorized the Chairman to lock an electricity supply rate for future years based on a recent favorable ability to do so. The Chairman and I are reviewing near-term trends with our supplier, Constellation Energy and the Chairman will likely lock a rate when it drops to its late-June level (the rate has increased slightly recently).

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(3) Development of Scope of Services for Centennial Grove Master Plan (*)

At the last meeting, the Board indicated it did not have any further input regarding the basic elements that should go into the scope of services for a planner to develop a Master Plan for the Centennial Grove. The Finance Committee had provided a list of elements and the Board agreed that all of those should be included. The Board asked that I formalize the scope of services for the present meeting so that it can be reviewed by other boards and then inserted into a Request for Proposals. I have worked with the Chairman to develop a more formal document that can now be provided to the Finance Committee and other boards for review.

Recommendation: **Board review of the scope of services.**

(4) Proposals for Visual Renderings of Future Public Safety Building(s) (*)

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that the Chairman and I should finalize a scope of services that we could use to solicit proposals from three planning/architectural firms capable of providing visual renderings. The scope will include renderings for two different scenarios: replacement of the existing public safety building with a larger building, on its existing site; and remodeling of the current public safety for a police-only building with a new fire house to be constructed across Shepard Memorial Drive. The final scope should be available by meeting time for the Board to review and we can then ask three firms for a price quote with an example of the type of product they would produce.

Recommendation: **Board approval of the final scope of services.**

(5) Progress on Punch List, Town Hall and Library Renovation Project

I reviewed the project punch list with our architect during the week of July 17, 2017. We were able to agree that some items could be removed from the list after a recent major push from the contractor. However, other items remain and our architect is working with our contractor to address the remainder of outstanding work.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(6) Conomo Point Waterfront Park Project Update and Change Order Request (*)

Our project contractor installed the ramp and float at the Conomo Point waterfront park during the week of July 17, 2017. The contractor made certain anchoring and other adjustments during the following week and the equipment is now fully operational. Also the following week, the landscaping subcontractor installed sod at the park, since attempts to grow grass from seed were unsuccessful. The decorative railing remains as the major missing component and we are told that it is still two weeks from installation. Our designer is working with our contractor on a number of more minor items. The Town separately purchased benches for the waterfront deck and those were delivered and subsequently installed by the Department of Public Works. Since the landscaping contractor chose to purchase sod to get the park in working condition, he spent an additional \$3,300. The Town is being asked to consider paying \$1,500 toward that cost.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to the sod installation cost increase request.**

E. Insurance

No items.

F. Facilities

(1) Development of Policy for Dinghy Tie-up to New Conomo Point Float (*)

The new ramp and float at the new Conomo Point Park was put in place during the week of July 17, 2017 and adjustments to anchoring were made during the following week. As such, it is necessary for the Board to determine rules for use of the float. For the time being, the Harbormaster has issued an order prohibiting unattended tie-up (essentially only allowing pick-up and drop-off) and signs to that effect will be placed on the float immediately. Per the Board's past discussion, portions of the float may be suitable for dinghy tie-up for certain mooring holders who get to their moorings via rowboat (as opposed to motorized skiff).

Considerations for tie-up rules, which may be included in the Harbormaster's Harbor Regulations, include the following:

- Will the tie-up privilege be for residents only?
- What is the maximum number of dinghies that can tie up to the float?
- Will at least one face of the float be kept clear at all times for loading/unloading of other boats?
- What will be the maximum "length overall" (LOA) for a dinghy to qualify for tie-up at the float?
- Will tie-up privileges be for dinghies that are rowed only (i.e. never have an outboard motor attached)?

- Will tie-up privileges be for mooring holders only?
- Will a fee be charged?
- What type of decal will need to be displayed on a dinghy that is registered by its owner for tie-up privileges?
- Should any type of signage be posted, including signage prohibiting tie-up to the park railing itself?

***Recommendation:* Board discussion relative to how this program should be developed and implemented.**

(2) Donation of Memorial Benches for Conomo Point Waterfront Park (*)

At the last meeting, I explained how two parties wish to donate memorial benches for loved ones at the new Conomo Point waterfront park. They looked at the benches along the Essex Causeway and also considered the memorial benches that are used in Gloucester, along the Stacy Boulevard. Both of the parties agreed that the Gloucester benches are preferred, since they include a dedicated space on the seat back for the dedication information. A third party has since come forward and agrees that the Gloucester benches are preferable. As such, I have obtained the details concerning the Gloucester benches from the City and it is possible for the Board to consider adopting that style of bench as the new standard.

***Recommendation:* Board discussion regarding finalizing a bench style and working with donating parties going forward.**

(3) Wrap-up of Miscellaneous Work, Town Hall Project

At the last meeting, the Board authorized a change order with Campbell Construction to replace and coordinate all of the exterior lighting on the Library side of the building. That lighting work has now been completed. Campbell had also quoted some interior electrical work for the Library that the Board was interested in pursuing. However, after the Board's meeting, our architect informed us that the quote did not include all of the work that the Board had expected and that the Town should consider seeking another contractor for that work.

During the week of July 24, 2017, a local electrical contractor completed the Library electrical work plus other services including: installation of refinished, historic lighting sconces in the auditorium; wiring of a new auditorium sound system; and installation of dedicated power for the Town Hall clock winding mechanism.

Further, three projects: the painting of a vent pipe with galvanic paint, the straightening of the Town Hall front light posts, and the replacement of the Library ramp lattice can all be done by others. I reached out to the contractor who recently completed some work in the Essex Senior Center and he will quote the job during the week of July 31, 2017.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(4) Placement of Fire Extinguishers in Town Hall

After the Town Hall/Library renovation project was complete, the Fire Chief walked the building with me to determine where additional fire extinguishers should be placed. The project supplied three of the necessary units and we needed to obtain a fourth unit. As such, we retained the services of our usual fire extinguisher contractor to properly hang the three available units and to provide and hang a fourth, all in the locations that had been prescribed by the Fire Chief.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

G. Fiscal/Budget

No items.

H. Complaints

(1) Placement of Commercial Signs along Spring Street

We received a complaint concerning commercial signs placed on a Town sign post and a utility pole along Spring Street directing patrons into several commercial businesses at the end of Dodge Street. The signs were not permitted through the Building Inspector's office and, as to the sign on Town property, the Selectmen had not granted permission per the Town bylaws. As such, the sign on Town property has been removed pending a proper permission and permitting process and the sign on the utility pole may receive permission from the utility but still needs review by the Building Inspector. The business proprietors will come before the Selectmen at the present meeting to request permission for the sign on Town property.

Recommendation: Board discussion with the proprietors at the present meeting.

I. Meetings Attended

(1) Visit from Lieutenant Governor

Lt. Governor Karyn Polito visited the Town Hall and Library on July 18, 2017. Her trip was focused on a review of the various energy saving elements of the renovation project, which were partially paid for using Green Community grant funds. Chairman O'Donnell, Selectman Spinney, and I were joined on the tour of the building by the Town Planner and various other State officials. The Lt. Governor was impressed with how the building features so many modern, energy efficient features but also retains so much of its historic grandeur.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

J. Final Judgment

No items.

K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

No items.

L. Legal Issues

(1) Moving of 9 Beach Circle House to 98 Conomo Point Road

An agent of the former 9 Beach Road tenant moved the house from 9 Beach Road to 98 Conomo Point Road on July 25, 2016. The same agent is responsible for the restoration of the site at 9 Beach Road along with the restoration of any other Town property that was impacted by the move (such as 103 Conomo Point Road – which the house was moved over). At 9 Beach Circle, crushed stone will be left in the building footprint to allow the Town with the most possible flexibility concerning potential future redevelopment of the site.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Update Concerning Fiber Optic Municipal Area Network (*)

We have now heard from Verizon that, although the utility will not charge the Town in any way for the Town to install a fiber optic network to interconnect municipal buildings, Verizon's standard pole attachment agreement is not negotiable. Further, National Grid has also now corresponded further with the Town and will require an application fee and a pre-installation survey (likely total cost of around \$8,000) in addition to the Town having to sign Grid's own, non-negotiable pole attachment agreement. National Grid is likely willing to waive both make-ready costs and annual pole attachment fees.

I have asked each utility to provide a list of communities that have already signed these standard agreements and I am working with Town Counsel to set up a conference call with each utility to go over a variety of questions.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

M. Grants

(1) Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Grant, Mixed Use Zoning District

Our Town Planner is working to initiate a project with the Planning Board focused on studying the prospect of a mixed-use zoning overlay district in downtown Essex. The work is part of a MDI grant funded by the State and a third-party design firm, Harriman, has been identified by the State as the technical assistance provider for the project. A project kick-off conference call will likely be held during the week of July 31, 2017.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(2) Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Grant Kickoff Meeting

I met with personnel from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) on July 26, 2017 to go over the process of updating the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan (which was first approved in 2012). In order to remain valid as a tool for seeking Federal grant funding, the Plan must be updated every five years. This MEMA funding, coupled with a small Town appropriation, will allow personnel from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to guide us through the update process, as the Town's technical subcontractor. At the meeting, State personnel went over the project scope, timeline, budget, reporting, and reimbursement procedures.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

N. Emergency Planning

(1) Regional Dispatch Center Monthly Meeting

I attended the subject meeting on July 20, 2017 as Chairman of the Executive Advisory Board and the Finance Advisory Board for the Regional Dispatch Center. The meeting featured a discussion relative to an upcoming, State-funded management, operations, and financial audit and discussion regarding recent performance data.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

O. Other Items

(1) Comments Relative to Dredging Needs

(*)

The Executive Office of Housing & Community Development, along with the Executive Office of Energy & Environmental affairs is sponsoring a "Dredging Listening Session" in Beverly on August 10, 2017. The purpose of the session is to share ideas amongst communities and to identify needs for coastal dredging projects. I will be on vacation at that time but Chairman O'Donnell plans to possibly attend the session and offer remarks from the Town. I have prepared a summary of the need in Essex, along with steps we have already taken toward the prospect of re-using dredged sediments in our own river system for coastal resiliency mitigation.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(2) Town Administrator Vacation Leave

I was out of the office on vacation leave on July 24, 2017.

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