



## Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of Nov. 13, 2017

Report covers from October 28 to November 10, 2017

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

---

### A. Town Department Reports/Requests

#### (1) Essex Youth Commission Update

The recently-reconstituted Youth Commission has been meeting to finalize a new position description for the staff member that was funded this fiscal year. The Commission has determined that the staff person will be known as the "Youth Director", as opposed to "Youth Coordinator" and they hope to have someone on board on or about February 1, 2018. The Commission plans to finalize and recommend the new position description on November 29, 2017 and the Board will consider approving it, in its capacity as Personnel Board, in December.

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

### B. Computer Systems

#### (1) Conversion of Council on Aging Phone Lines to VOIP Lines

As the Board may recall, all Town Hall phone lines were converted from copper telephone lines to voice over Internet protocol (VOIP) lines about a year ago. The Council on Aging Director has reviewed the Town Hall system and would like to also move to VOIP at the Senior Center. As such, I made arrangements to acquire three new VOIP telephones (on a rental basis, like Town Hall), and to: a) move the Director's virtual voicemail-only line to one of the new phones, b) move the main copper line number from Verizon to ShoreTel (to be attached to one of the new phones), and c) obtain a new line for the new Outreach Coordinator on the third phone. A fourth line, the Council's transportation request line, is already a voicemail-only virtual box and will remain so.

When I have all equipment and lines in place (looking to use existing network wiring in the building), I will work with our provider to establish a suitable phone prompt menu that will be accessible by dialing the main number. This new arrangement will be added to the Town's master VOIP budget line for fiscal year 2019.

*Recommendation:* I will update the Board as necessary. Total time – 1.5 hours.

### C. Personnel

No items.

## D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

### (1) Feedback Regarding Centennial Grove Master Plan RFP

At the last meeting, I had provided feedback from one planning firm that had decided not to submit a proposal after reviewing the Town's Requests for Proposals for a firm to write a cost-driven Master Plan for Centennial Grove. The Board asked me to reach out to several other firms that also chose not to submit proposals to get a better understanding of how the RFP might be revised and re-released in 2018. I did so the day after the last meeting and, to date, no other firm has contacted me back with input. I will bring this matter back to the Board for potential revision and re-advertisement in 2018.

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

### (2) Draft Evaluation Criteria, Purchase of Property for Public Safety Facility (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board agreed to some minimum criteria for properties to potentially be considered for purchase via a future Request for Proposals to serve as a future site for a new public safety facility. I have now begun to work with the Fire Chief to explore specific criteria that would rate all proposals that met the minimum criteria.

*Recommendation:* **Board review and discussion relative to these draft evaluation criteria.**

## E. Insurance

### (1) Monthly Pothole Log

I obtained the subject log for the month of October from the Department of Public Works during the week of October 30, 2017. No potholes had been reported.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

### (2) Seasonal Freeze-up Prevention Inspections

Each year, the Police Department and the DPW conduct freeze-up inspections in each of the Town buildings once per weekend, December through March. I have prepared the inspection forms for the coming season and have distributed those to the Chief of Police and the Superintendent of Public Works for implementation. The inspections are intended to detect conditions that could lead to pipe freeze-ups early so that damage can be avoided.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## **F. Facilities**

### (1) Fire Extinguisher Inspection and Maintenance

The Selectmen's Assistant arranged for our fire extinguisher contractor to inspect and replace as necessary fire extinguishers in the various Town buildings during the week of November 6, 2017. This inspection and maintenance occurs each year at this time in order to ensure properly-working equipment.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

### (2) Leak in Town Hall Bell Tower Area

During a recent severe storm on October 20, 2017, we discovered a leak above the third-floor stair landing on the main stairway. This area is directly beneath the side beam of the bell tower that penetrates the ceiling. It appeared that water followed the beam in some fashion. I contacted our project contractor immediately and he will be bringing in a lift to review the matter from the exterior of the bell tower, since it is apparent to him that the leak is an exterior envelope issue and not associated with the membrane roof within the bell tower.

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

### (3) Discussion Relative to YMCA Camp Dory and Other Potential Initiatives

I met with Chris Bevilacqua of the YMCA on November 8, 2017. We discussed the ongoing relationship between the Town and the YMCA with respect to Camp Dory (ten-year contract) and how the YMCA may be able to assist with minor upkeep and maintenance items (as they have done in the past). Mr. Bevilacqua also plans to review the possibility that the YMCA could help in some way with the future of the Folsom Pavilion, at an appropriate time. Further, the YMCA will continue to offer after school programs at the Essex Elementary School and will eventually start to interface more with the Council on Aging and the new Youth Commission.

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

### (4) Spotlight Repairs and Adjustments

The DPW reported recently that a spotlight owned by National Grid, with electricity paid for by the Town, had a burned-out bulb. The area in question is dependent on good lighting for enhanced security. Also, we received a report of another such light that needed to have its angle adjusted to avoid blinding motorists driving through a separate area. As such, I contacted our Community Liaison at National Grid and both issues will be attended to soon.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## G. Fiscal/Budget

### (1) Joint Meeting of Selectmen, Finance Committee, School Committee

I attended the subject meeting of Essex officials and the Regional School Committee on November 2, 2017. The meeting featured a discussion relative to preparing for a November 29, 2017 meeting that will involve the boards of selectmen and finance committees from both communities, plus the School Committee. At this meeting, the three entities will cover operating budget forecasting and how factors important in each individual entity may affect future operating budgets.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup>, those assembled agreed that the Town's operating budget forecasting model is a good tool for future planning, especially as the budget for each new year is in the formative stages. The model will allow testing that may help guide particular decisions within a cycle. The group also agreed that the meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> should be more about understanding how each entity handles their operating budget and which factors are most important to each entity, as opposed to presenting any specific figures.

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

### (2) Preliminary Fiscal Year 2019 Capital Budget Request (\*)

The Finance Committee released its call for fiscal year 2019 capital budget requests on October 31, 2017. Request packages are due back to the Town Accountant from all departments by January 10, 2018. As such, I have begun to develop the Board's request package.

*Recommendation:* **Initial Board review of the preliminary fiscal year 2019 capital budget request package.**

## H. Complaints

No items.

## I. Meetings Attended

### (1) Great Marsh Symposium

Chairman O'Donnell and I attended the subject symposium in Essex on November 9, 2017. Chairman O'Donnell delivered the Symposium's welcome address and I participated as a panel member during a discussion concerning addressing various recommendations of the new Great Marsh Coastal Adaptation Plan. In Essex, we are presently working with the National Wildlife Federation and the Cape Ann Emergency Planning Team to highlight the interrelatedness of coastal resiliency planning and emergency management planning.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## **J. Final Judgment**

No items.

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

### (1) Review of Final Fall Town Meeting Motions (\*)

I have prepared final motions for the Fall Town Meeting in accordance with the Board's guidance from the last meeting.

*Recommendation:* **Board review of the final Fall Town Meeting motions.**

## **L. Legal Issues**

No items.

## **M. Grants**

### (1) Potential Grant for Construction of Regional Fiber Optic System (\*)

The Town of Danvers is contemplating being the lead community on a regional grant to establish an inter-town fiber optic communications system. While some individual communities already have or are contemplating in-town systems (like Essex is), this proposal would interconnect the systems to form a regional network. Such a network would allow Essex and others to enjoy hosting services in Danvers, much like we presently do with Melrose, only by private circuit. It would be beneficial to the Town to collaborate with Danvers, and others, on this regional grant application, since remote hosting has already proven to provide a very robust data backup and disaster recovery program. Our Agreement with Melrose expires at the end of June, 2018 and it is not presently clear whether Melrose plans to provide the same level of service and support we have been accustomed to with a considerable cost increase.

*Recommendation:* **Board authorization of the Town's participation in a regional fiber optic network grant proposal.**

## **N. Emergency Planning**

No items.

## **O. Other Items**

### (1) Veterans' Day Holiday

The office was closed on November 10, 2017 in observance of the subject holiday.

*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.*