



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of April 9, 2018

Report covers from March 24, 2018 to April 6, 2018

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Safety Committee Meeting

I attended the subject meeting on March 29, 2018 as a member of the Committee. The meeting featured a discussion regarding ongoing Committee goals and how the Town should start gearing up for OSHA jurisdiction, which takes effect early in 2019.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

B. Computer Systems

(1) Shift of Computer System Replication from Melrose to Danvers

As the Board is aware, for the past eight years, our disaster recovery system for our computer network has been hosted by the City of Melrose. The City is transitioning out of that business and will not serve the Town beyond June 30, 2018. As such, I recently met with personnel from the Danvers IT Department who have indicated that Danvers will soon be offering an identical program. These personnel actually were in place in Melrose when the Town originally commenced the program and have now moved to the employ of Danvers. Soon, I will have pricing on the new hosting arrangement and I am confident that it will be within the existing budget.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

C. Personnel

No items.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

No items.

E. Insurance

(1) Pothole Log

I obtained the subject log for the month of March from the DPW during the week of April 2, 2018. No potholes were reported during March.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Freeze-up Prevention Logs

Each year, police and DPW personnel enter all Town buildings once each weekend, during the colder weather. The entering party logs their presence on a sheet and verifies that heating systems are working properly. Now that the winter is over, I obtained the logs from the departments and have provided to our insurer for credit on our insurance premium as part of the MIIA Rewards Program.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

F. Facilities

(1) Damage to Conomo Point Seawalls

(*)

I recently toured the public seawalls and stone piers out at Conomo Point with the Superintendent of Public Works. The various winter storms have caused a high degree of damage, which we began to report to the State back in January. So far, the State has not received any declaration of disaster assistance from the Federal Government. Various options for repair of the seawalls in the public areas include near-term shoring by the DPW and/or its contractors, engineered replacement wall solutions, or possibly, engineered living shoreline solutions. While we may or may not see Federal funding as a disaster declaration, it is possible that funding may be available at the State or the Federal level for green infrastructure (nature-based or natural solutions). We have also received a note from a private abutter that the failure of the Town's seawall at 9 Beach Circle is adversely affecting the abutter's new seawall at 7 Beach Circle.

***Recommendation:* Board discussion relative to the various approaches and with respect to the Town's abutter at 7 Beach Circle.**

(2) Use of Centennial Grove for Rowing Program

As the Board may recall, the Pingree School is licensed to utilize the area near the Centennial Grove Cottage for its rowing program, through this coming Memorial Day. I recently visited the site with the program's director and arranged for building interior access. It is my understanding that the school will likely propose to expand its presence in the future, maybe in conjunction with the YMCA, and with certain rowing and sailing programs that could be offered to residents.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

(3) Memorial Park Restrooms

The subject facility opened for the season as of April 1, 2018. The facility is open from 8:30 a.m. until 8:00 p.m., seven days, through September 30, 2018.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

G. Fiscal/Budget

(1) Finance Committee Budget Recommendation Book Finalization

The Finance Committee finalized its recommendation for the fiscal year 2019 budget during the week of April 2, 2019 and I have provided the camera-ready copy of the Finance Committee Report/Town Meeting booklet to our printing contractor. The booklet should be available in print in the next week or so and is already available at the [Finance Committee's web page](#).

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) Preliminary Annual Town Meeting Motions

(*)

I have developed preliminary motions for the Board's review relative to preparing for the Annual Town Meeting.

Recommendation: **Board review of the preliminary Annual Town Meeting motions.**

(2) Public Hearing for Revision of Essex Floodplain Bylaw

As the Board is aware, the Annual Town Meeting warrant contains an article that updates the various references to FEMA flood maps in Essex, in light of recent map revisions. The Planning Board will hold a public hearing on this proposal on April 18, 2018.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary at this time.

(3) Coastal Barrier Resources System Unit Boundary Updates

(*)

The US Fish and Wildlife Service is responsible for managing the subject System, which is broken into individual units along the entire US coast. The use of Federal funding for "development" in any unit is prohibited. Recently, we received a notice that the Service is working to revise the boundaries of many

units, some of which are in our area. Presently, a general expansion of unit boundaries has been proposed. I have learned that maintenance dredging of our Federal channel is exempt from the Federal funding prohibition in these areas. However, it is not clear as to whether the use of Federal funds for beneficial re-use of sediment within our own system is exempt. Whereas the units in our area are generally proposed for expansion and whereas public recreational development and beneficial sediment re-use in the future could propose the use of Federal funding, I recommend that the Board review the matter more closely.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(4) Draft Final Report Concerning Mixed-Used Zoning in Downtown Area

As the Board may recall, the Town was working with the Harriman consulting firm using grant funds to study the prospect of a future mixed-use zoning district in the downtown area. Our Town Planner and the Chairman of the Planning Board have both now reviewed the draft final report, which was updated as a result of a public forum in late 2017. Presently, our Town Planner is working with the consultant to provide final comments that will lead to the release of the final report.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

L. Legal Issues

No items.

M. Grants

(1) Fiscal Year 2019 Coastal Resilience Grant Application (*)

In the past, the Board has supported the concept of a grant application that could study the prospect of oyster reefs being able to stabilize degraded salt marsh banks, including possibly restoring the banks with material taken from the river. After reviewing this concept at Senator Tarr's recent Northeast Coastal Coalition Meeting on March 23, 2018, the parties interested in partnering with the Town to apply for the grant spoke with personnel from the Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) on March 26, 2018 and attended a CZM grant workshop on April 3, 2018. It appears that the best chance of funding might be realized through a new grant program that is associated with the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) process that the Town is presently working through (see next item). It also appears that the use of mussel reefs, as opposed to oysters, may be preferable.

Recommendation: Board discussion as necessary.

(2) Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Grant Workshop

I attended the subject workshop with about 35 other people (including many other area Town personnel and officials) on April 5, 2018. This all-day workshop was a necessary part of achieving the MVP designation from the Commonwealth. The MVP process has helped the Town assess the types of coastal and other weather-caused hazards are expected in the future, based on climate change and sea level rise. Now that the workshop is completed, our grant contractor, the Ipswich River Watershed Association, will finalize our findings in a final report. The MVP designation will assist the Town with competing favorably on upcoming grant applications, using priorities established as part of the process.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

N. Emergency Planning

(1) Cape Ann Emergency Planning Team Meeting

I attended the subject meeting in Ipswich on March 28, 2018, along with Fire Chief Doucette. The meeting featured a discussion relative to the upcoming public forums that will weave together the concepts of emergency preparedness and coastal resilience. The workshops will include perspectives from key emergency management officials in Ipswich (April 11), Gloucester (April 17), and Essex (April 25). All workshops are from 6-8:30 p.m. in the respective town/city halls and all are welcome.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Initial Damage Assessment Form, March 7-8 Nor'easter

As was the case with the January 4, 2018 nor'easter, the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) officially requested damage assessments for one of the March storms. I coordinated a response from the various Town departments and also included damages experienced by two private businesses for that storm. MEMA is still working to determine if any of the recent severe storms meet the overall cost thresholds for disaster relief.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

O. Other Items

(1) Town Administrator Vacation Leave

I was out of the office, on vacation leave, on March 29 and April 2, 2018.

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