



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of May 21, 2018

Report covers from May 5, 2018 to May 18, 2018

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Renewal of Blanket Order of Conditions for Routine DPW Operations

The Department of Public Works has a blanket Order of Conditions from the Essex Conservation Commission allowing the department to conduct routine operations, such as roadside brush cutting in the area of wetlands. The existing Order of Conditions expires soon and the Superintendent is looking into renewal. If a new application is required, I will assist the Department with that process.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

B. Computer Systems

(1) Technology Hosting Agreement with the Town of Danvers (*)

As discussed at the last meeting, the Town of Danvers will provide a secondary live instance of the Town's entire virtual server environment (with archival backup), just as the City of Melrose has been providing since 2011. The Board was in favor of adapting the Melrose Agreement (which expires on June 30, 2018) for use in Danvers and the annual cost will be \$5,200 (within the existing budget for these services and actually less than the Melrose pricing). A formal agreement is now available for the Board's review and approval.

Recommendation: **Board approval of the hosting agreement with the Town of Danvers.**

(2) New Network User, Youth Director

The Essex Youth Commission has hired a new, part-time Youth Director, Suzanne Slater. Ms. Slater began work on May 14, 2018 and I prepared her computer and telephone equipment and accounts for use.

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

C. Personnel

No items.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Purchase of Street Lights from National Grid (*)

Now that Town Meeting has appropriated additional funding for the subject purchase, plus some money for maintenance of the lights between the commencement of Town ownership and actual conversion to LED, it is necessary for the Board to approve and sign various documents from National Grid to begin the purchase process. I expect to receive new documents (perhaps with a revised price) from Grid by meeting time and Town Counsel will need to conduct a review. I am told by MAPC staff that Grid generally does not accept requests for changes in the form of the various legal documents.

Recommendation: Board discussion relative to moving the purchase process forward.

(2) Third-Party Ambulance Billing Agreement Renewal (*)

The third-part ambulance billing contract is considered on an annual basis. Our present vendor, Comstar, has provided excellent service and has developed a successor agreement for fiscal year 2019.

Recommendation: Signature of the successor agreement with Comstar for fiscal year 2019 (effective July 1, 2018).

E. Insurance

(1) April Pothole Log

I received the pothole log for the month of April from the Department of Public Works during the week of May 7, 2018. No potholes were reported during April. I will resume the practice of reviewing the logs in the fall.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

F. Facilities

(1) Meeting to Discuss Replacement Process for Route 133 Bridge (*)

I participated in the subject meeting with the Chief of Police, personnel from MassDOT and personnel from DOT's engineering consultant (Stere Engineering) on May 9, 2018. Pavement cores and soil borings are occurring as part of the design, during the nighttime hours of May 21-25, with one lane open to traffic. DOT Project Manager John Fallon provided the following information:

- The schedule for replacing the bridge will take us through the year 2022 and that is actually considered an "accelerated" schedule for work of this nature.

- The “substructure” of the bridge (meaning the abutments, wingwalls, etc.) is in good condition and does not require replacing or renovation.
- The “superstructure” of the bridge (meaning the steel beams and road deck, etc.) is in poor condition, which is prompting this project.
- The traffic barriers that have been placed on the bridge to focus traffic on the inner support beams (outer beams are in worse shape), will be in place indefinitely.
- Although the State will conduct a “hydraulic study” as part of the design project, designers do NOT expect to be able to raise the level of the bottom of the bridge to allow for future high water events. Increasing the level of the bottom of the bridge would require modifications to the bridge approach elevations, which would conflict with nearby driveways and private property elevations. The new bridge will not be any lower than the present bridge, but will not be appreciably higher, either.
- The designer will provide a written summary as to why the bridge cannot be made higher, after an analysis of the Town’s coastal resilience goals is made. It is possible that the Town might want to explore future grant funding to allow more work to be done with respect to bridge approaches and abutting private property issues.
- DOT expects to meet with Town officials relative to potential design choices and aesthetics toward this coming fall (maybe as late as December).
- The constraints of the site limit the type of replacement bridge that can be used in this application.
 - Staged construction, which would keep just one lane open to traffic, is not possible, because that would focus too much weight on one part of the bridge while the other lane was being upgraded.
 - “Accelerated Bridge Construction” similar to what the State did recently along Interstate 93 is also not an option because some substructure modification will be required, complex utility issues exist, limited design choices exist, and the road crosses water, not another road.
 - Bridge closure is an option but the Town does not have an acceptable detour, so this option has been and will continue to be discouraged.
 - That leaves the construction of a two-lane, temporary bridge with pedestrian walkway on the landward side of the causeway as the best option. This is the approach that was taken in 1970 when the present bridge was constructed. One drawback of this option is that it may be difficult for long trucks to negotiate, due to the two curves necessary in a short distance. The temporary bridge will run through Paglia Park, which will have to be temporarily closed. The State will deal directly with the owner of that private property, and other private owners.

- Businesses will be impacted, although we will work with the State to try and minimize the impacts. Delivery trucks supplying restaurants and moving boats to and from marinas will be affected, as will the ability to park along the State road in the area of certain businesses. DOT will meet with abutting owners and the Chamber of Commerce in the future as the project progresses.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(2) Deployment of Ramp and Float at Conomo Point Park

The ramp and float have been deployed for the season at the Conomo Point Park. Those eligible for dinghy tie-up at the float (residents who use a non-motorized pram to reach mooring area G) may approach the Harbormaster for an annual permit.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(3) Repair to Town Hall/Library HVAC System

The Town Hall/Library split heating and cooling unit system ceased to function recently. I contacted the installer, as the system is still under warranty, and the problem was related to rodent habitation within one of the condenser housings. As such, the technician cleared out debris from the rodent and replaced a part that had been chewed through (causing the system failure).

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(4) Town Hall/Library Elevator Fault

The Town Hall/Library elevator ceased to function on the evening of May 3, 2018. I contacted the installer under warranty and the technician found that a fault had occurred with respect to a switch in the elevator's electronic system. The technician corrected that issue and the system is functioning normally.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

G. Fiscal/Budget

(1) Joint Municipal-School Capital Planning Public Forum

(*)

I participated in the subject forum along with the Board, members of the Finance Committee, School District personnel and officials, and Town of Manchester personnel and officials on May 16, 2018. The forum was a follow-up to a forum held back in December of 2017 concerning the various capital issues facing the three organizations. We do not know any additional details relative to the eventual cost of the fire/police building project, since the recent, particular proposal did not pass at the Town Meeting. We will also know more about the needs and timing for our water system when the Water Department conducts its

assessment in the near future. At the forum, all three entities presented information concerning future school projects, including how a request by the Town of Manchester to construct town-specific space as part of the Memorial School replacement project (to be paid for solely by Manchester).

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to the recent forum.**

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

No items.

J. Final Judgment

No items.

K. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

No items.

L. Legal Issues

(1) Renewal of License to Use the Area Known as Paglia Park (*)

As the Board is aware, the Town uses and maintains by license with a private property owner the land near the Route 133 bridge over the Essex River known as Paglia Park. The present license will expire as of May 31 and the property owner is inclined to offer a renewal. I developed the necessary paperwork and the owner has signed.

Recommendation: **Board countersignature of the renewal license.**

M. Grants

(1) Submittal of MVP Action Grant Applications

As approved by the Board at the last meeting, the Town has submitted two applications to the new Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Action Grant program (after much time and effort). One application is for the study of how the marsh will respond to storm-caused deposition of sediment upon the marsh. This work is important because, if the marsh rebounds favorably, it may provide insight as to how the Town could use sediment to build up the marsh in the future, while keeping the navigational channel clear in the process. The other application is for the site selection and design of oyster reefs just seaward of

degraded marsh banks. The area between the reefs and the degraded banks would be backfilled with sediment from the navigational channel. If the work leads to actual construction in the future, it could arrest the loss of marsh area while providing another beneficial re-use of sediment.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

N. Emergency Planning

No items.

O. Other Items

No items.

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