



## Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of October 16, 2018

Report covers from September 29, 2018 to October 12, 2018

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

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### A. Town Department Reports/Requests

#### (1) Strategic Planning Committee Meeting Summary (\*)

Selectman Spinney and I attended the Strategic Planning Committee's quarterly meeting on October 4, 2018. The meeting featured a discussion relative to the updated Strategic Plan accomplishments document, along with discussions involving future bicycle lanes, the prospect of an Economic Development Plan, the recent mixed-use downtown zoning study, and potentially adding climate change as a new pillar within the Strategic Plan (among other topics).

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

### B. Computer Systems

#### (1) New Town Website Platform Rollout

Our website vendor has now migrated 100% of the old website's content to the new website platform and departments have provided much input as to final configuration of many of the new web pages. Training on editing the website will occur for all departments on October 18, 2018 and the new site will go live during the afternoon of October 25, 2018 (giving departments a chance to practice editing and to clear up any questions before the go-live date).

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

#### (2) Fiber Optic Municipal Area Network (FMAN) Completion

The Town's new FMAN was completed during the week of October 8, 2018 and is ready for the installation of appropriate switchgear that will facilitate communication among the Town Hall, the Senior Center, the Fire and Police Station, the Essex Elementary School, and the Water Filtration Plant. The Fall Town Meeting will consider the appropriation of dedicated cable system revenue for the purchase and installation of this equipment. If the equipment is funded, the new network will be operational in the next few months.

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

#### (3) Annual Computer Network Penetration Testing

As recommended by our Auditor and our insurer, we carry funding each year to test the security of the interface between the Town's internal network and the

Internet. We have commissioned our testing company to begin work for this fall's annual testing round and we should have results in a few weeks.

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

### **C. Personnel**

#### (1) Continued Development of OSHA Coordinator Role

The Board of Health Administrator is signed up for OSHA-10 training and is actively working to put the initial framework of a Health and Safety Management System (HSMS) together for the Town. During the fall and early winter, the Administrator will ramp up activities in order to have some initial coordination and tracking in place by the time the Massachusetts Department of Labor Standards (DLS) begins to enforce OSHA standards in February of 2019.

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

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

#### (1) Review of Cost Proposal from Public Safety Building Project Designer (\*)

As the Board may recall, the Town Building Committee ranked the top three design firms interested in the public safety building project at a joint meeting with the Selectmen on October 10, 2018. Proposals were due on October 1, 2018 and the Town received a total of six. The Town Building Committee narrowed down the list of firms to the top three (unranked) on October 4, 2018. At the October 10 meeting, the Board agreed that our Project Manager and I should solicit a cost proposal for services from the Building Committee's top-ranked firm (Johnson Roberts Associates of Somerville). The cost proposal will be available by meeting time and the Board will have the opportunity to review the proposal in advance of tonight's Fall Town Meeting, at which the first phase of project design services may be funded. An actual contract with the firm would only materialize if the funding is approved.

***Recommendation:* Board review and potential approval of the cost proposal from Johnson Roberts Associates and a contract with the firm, pending approval of the necessary funding by the Fall Town Meeting.**

### **E. Insurance**

#### (1) Monthly Pothole Log

I have obtained the pothole log for the month of September from the DPW. Now that we are approaching the fall and winter, it is important to stay on top of any potholes that are reported and I will continue to compile this information for our insurer, through the spring. No potholes were reported during September.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## **F. Facilities**

### (1) Installation of Boiler Flow Switch

The original installation of the Town Hall high-efficiency gas heating plant did not include a flow switch that shuts down the boiler if circulation is lost in the hot water distribution system. When the boiler inspector for our insurer, who also serves as the State Inspector, inspected the unit for the first time, he indicated that the switch was required (even though our original designer did not agree, due to the small size of our plant). As such, we utilized the same heating contractor that installed the system to get the switch installed, using that last bit of funding from the Town Hall/Library project (approximately \$2,000). I have informed our inspector about the new equipment and he will return to the boiler room to confirm the work and to issue a State certificate.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

### (2) Replacement of Library Exterior Door Automatic Opener

While the automatic door opener from phase 1 of the Town Hall/Library project (not the recent work) was still working, it was likely to fail soon, according to a door technician who recently inspected it. As such, the unit was completely replaced during the week of October 8, 2018, at a cost of approximately \$2,000, using money available in the Luther Burnham Fund.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

### (3) Centennial Grove Winterization

The Department of Public Works will soon undertake winterization activities at the Centennial Grove, including removal of the swim and fishing floats and the draining of the summer waterline. The Selectmen's Assistant will arrange for the removal of the portable toilets and I will arrange for a plumbing contractor to drain the pipes in the cottage. Our irrigation system contractor will be draining the Field of Dreams irrigation system in late October.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## **G. Fiscal/Budget**

No items.

## **H. Complaints**

No items.

## I. Meetings Attended

### (1) Thin-Layer Deposition Meeting

Selectman Phippen, Dr. Gregg Moore of UNH, Morgan Bell of Congressman Moulton's Office, and I met on October 3, 2018 to discuss the advancement of funding for thin-layer deposition (TLD) of dredged marsh sediment in the future. Dr. Moore's monitoring of the how the marsh has rebounded from a natural TLD event last winter shows that fairly rapid recovery is possible if the layer of sediment is thin enough. At the meeting, we discussed how the Congressman's office may be able to help interface with the Army Corps of Engineers to support a pilot project or further research involving TLD. The technique may be very suitable to disperse dredged material on a regular basis, allowing "maintenance" dredging to keep channels consistently clear while helping the marsh keeping pace with projected sea level rise.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary at this time.

## J. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

### (1) Final Fall Town Meeting Motions

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I have developed final motions for the Fall Town Meeting based upon the Board's guidance from the last meeting.

*Recommendation:* **Board review and discussion relative to the final motions.**

## K. Legal Issues

### (1) Quarterly Review of Executive Session Minutes

The Chairman has reviewed the Board's unreleased executive session minutes as of the quarter ending September 30, 2018. No additional minutes were recommended for release.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## L. Grants

### (1) Citizens' Housing and Planning Association Grant Kickoff Meeting (\*)

Selectman Phippen, Town Planner Matt Coogan, and I participated in the subject meeting, along with personnel from CHAPA on October 11, 2018. The meeting featured an overview of what the grant, known as the Municipal Engagement Initiative, will seek to accomplish and how the various players will contribute to the process. Generally, CHAPA can help the Town organize a coalition of stakeholders to develop a plan for how affordable housing initiatives would best work in Essex. Thereafter, the coalition would host public education meetings and, after building support for the chosen strategies, would promote the use of

Community Preservation Act funds that are earmarked for affordable housing as part of financing future projects.

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

#### **M. Emergency Planning**

No items.

#### **N. Other Items**

(1) Town Administrator Leave

I was out of the office on vacation leave on October 5, 2018.

(2) Columbus Day Holiday

The office was closed on October 8, 2018, 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.*