



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of July 1, 2019

Report covers from June 15, 2019 to June 28, 2019

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Town Building Committee Meeting Summary

The Board met jointly with the Town Building Committee on June 19, 2019. At the meeting, our design professionals provided the final design update of the Design Development (DD) phase of the design process. The Board and the Committee will meet jointly again on July 24, 2019 to receive the next cost estimate for the project (DD cost estimate). At the meeting, the Board and the Committee discussed a variety of ongoing planning and logistics issues. Also, during the week of June 17, 2019, the Department of Public Works removed the fence at the front of the new Town-owned parcel at 11 John Wise Avenue to improve security at the site.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Safety Committee Meeting Summary

I attended the subject meeting on June 20, 2019, as a member of the Committee. We were joined by our Loss Control Manager from our insurance company. The meeting featured a discussion relative to the Town's anticipated receipt of grant funding from the Massachusetts Department of Industrial Accidents (DIA) for DPW safety training. If funded, the grant will also allow the Town of Manchester to participate – assisting both communities to continue to adapt to new OSHA requirements. The Town of Manchester can apply for additional funding next year and allow Essex to participate. The Committee also discussed the Town's progress toward other goals.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

B. Computer Systems

(1) Configuration of New Fire/Police Lobby Camera System

During the week of June 17, 2019, the Regional Dispatch Center worked to replace the subject system that allows the public to speak directly with a dispatcher from the building lobby. I was consulted with respect to the configuration of the former equipment so that the new equipment could be deployed smoothly.

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

(2) Deployment of New CAD/RMS Software, Regional Dispatch Center

The Regional Dispatch Center in Middleton is in the process of moving from the Spillman computer-aided dispatch (CAD) and records management system (RMS) software suite to a new product from a new vendor known as IMC. Unlike Spillman, IMC is server-based (server at the Center) and will therefore not require any complex client-side software. The same hardware-based VPN we have now will connect our users to the new product at the Center. During the week of June 17, 2019, I worked with the computer consultant for the Center and the Town's computer consultant to work out the necessary routing to get traffic associated with IMC to and from our users over our network. We have verified connectivity to the new application and it will not go live (replacing Spillman) until July 22, 2019.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary. Total time – 6 hours.

C. Personnel

(1) Informal Staff Meeting

I hosted the subject meeting on June 20, 2019, as I do from time to time. The meeting featured an update on the planning for the proposed, new police and fire facility. Various department heads also updated the group on programs and initiatives going on in specific departments. I provided an update relative to some major projects we are working on, including the hope of grant funding for street light conversion and the replacement of the Conomo Point seawall.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Distribution of Sexual and Discriminatory Harassment Policies

Paper copies of the subject policies were included with employee paychecks recently. The Sexual Harassment policy must be distributed in hard copy by law. Employees separately acknowledge the receipt of all Town policies via a process that was initiated in late May.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(3) Distribution of Red Flags Policy

Paper copies of the Town's Red Flags Policy were distributed to those involved with utility billing in the Town recently. The policy is intended to encourage employees to report any suspected fraud activity associated with people or organizations inquiring about utility billing information. All applicable employees will return a policy acknowledgement form.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Route 133 Bridge Replacement Design Update (*)

Chairman Spinney and I met with other Town officials and personnel from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (and its engineering contractor) on June 19, 2019 to review the status of the project that will replace the subject bridge, by around 2023. We discussed a wide variety of project aspects including: the general nature of the project; the limited ability of the project to adapt to predicted sea level rise; necessary project right of way acquisitions; the plan for a temporary bridge during a project that may take two to three seasons to complete; the likely need for detours for large trucks; the overall project schedule; and other elements. The Town and the public will be directly engaged by project designers as part of the 25% design hearing process, which is expected to occur around April of 2020.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(2) Quarterly Affirmative Marketing Report

I have filed with the State the subject report for the quarter ending June 30, 2019. The report provides information on the Town's utilization of woman and minority-owned businesses on State-funded construction projects. No such utilization occurred over the past quarter.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(3) Review of Options with Respect to Future Electricity Purchasing (*)

The Town's present, fixed-rate contract for electricity will expire in December of 2019. In preparation for a successor, fixed-rate contract, we have been monitoring future power purchase rates with our present vendor, Constellation Energy. We use Constellation since they are the vendor for the Massachusetts Municipal Association's (MMA) MunEnergy Program, and provide a preferred contract and rate structure for MMA members. Lately, future rates have stayed appreciably higher than our current rate and we are hopeful that a downturn will be recognized this summer. The Board may wish to continue monitoring the situation with our current vendor or may wish to work with a broker to see what other offers are available. If a broker is used, the broker gets paid for their services over the life of any power purchase contract that they broker. However, a broker would require an exclusive relationship that would prevent us from continuing to receive pricing via the MunEnergy Program. The Chairman is presently authorized to enter into a successor agreement with Constellation, through MunEnergy.

Recommendation: **Board discussion relative to which process is preferable moving forward.**

E. Insurance

(1) Liability-Only Insurance, 11 John Wise Avenue

Now that the Town owns the property at 11 John Wise Avenue (proposed site for a portion of the proposed, new public safety facility), I arranged with our insurer to cover the property for liability purposes. As the structures on the property will be dismantled/demolished, there is no need to carry loss or damage coverage.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

F. Facilities

(1) Quarterly Facility Self-Inspection Checklists

I completed the subject checklists for the Town Hall and the Senior Center during the week of July 1, 2019. The checklists are aimed at detecting safety hazards in Town buildings and addressing them before any accidents can occur. This quarter, I commented on the continued progress the Town Hall/Library Custodian is making to organize the Town Hall basement storage area. Other departments are completing the checklists for other Town buildings and these are discussed at quarterly Safety Committee meetings.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

G. Fiscal/Budget

No items.

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

No items.

J. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

No items.

K. Legal Issues

(1) Quarterly Review of Executive Session Minutes

Each quarter, the Chairman reviews whether any executive session minutes should be released, based upon the purpose of each matter possibly having ended. No minutes have been recommended for release this quarter – beyond the minutes

with respect to acquiring property for a public safety facility that were released at the Board's last meeting.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

L. Grants

(1) Closeout of FY19 MVP Action Grants

All grant deliverables for the subject grants were submitted by the end of June, 2019 and I will soon provide to the State closeout documentation and a request for full reimbursement of the Town, for both grants. Each grant helped to improve our understanding of how we might preserve the salt marsh in Essex on both the horizontal and vertical planes as climate change and sea level rise continue to affect this resource. The State did not fund a second year of salt marsh recovery from the natural sediment deposition event but we may apply again this summer. We are also kicking off a fiscal year 2020 MVP Action Grant that did get funded (working with Boston University), which will improve our understanding of sediment and current dynamics along Crane Beach and within Essex Bay.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Closeout of Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Grant

The draft final update of the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan is under review by the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). I have worked with personnel from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) – which has been assisting us with the update – to close out the MEMA grant and receive reimbursement for the 75% of the project cost that is State-funded. The closeout process requires detailed backup information and certifications, all of which have now been provided to MEMA. We should expect to see the reimbursement arrive in late July or early August.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(3) Memorandum of Understanding for Senior Van Services, Manchester (*)

At the last meeting, the Board signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City of Gloucester that will allow Gloucester to share with Essex a portion of a State grant that provides additional funding for transportation for low income senior citizens. The Council on Aging and the Board have decided that these additional services should be provided by the Manchester Council on Aging since the two towns are collaborating on service delivery and since Manchester has capacity to offer in its van service program. The Town of Manchester will develop a MOU with respect to the terms of and payment for the service for the Board to review and sign, which may be available by meeting time.

Recommendation: **Board signature of the MOU with Manchester, if available by meeting time.**

M. Emergency Planning

No items.

N. Other Items

(1) Town Administrator Vacation Leave

I was out of the office on vacation leave from June 24 through June 26, 2019.

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