



## Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of October 29, 2018

Report covers from October 13, 2018 to October 26, 2018

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

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### A. Town Department Reports/Requests

No items.

### B. Computer Systems

#### (1) Training for All Employees Regarding New Website Platform (now live)

Our website vendor, CivicPlus, conducted training on how to edit the new website platform for all employees on October 18, 2018. The new site went live on October 25, 2018 and the training was intended to familiarize staff with making custom edits and adding content as desired. Content from the old platform was all moved over to the new platform and is now presented in a more organized fashion, with a much-improved look and feel. After all staff attended a group training session, individual departments with more specific needs attended one-on-one sessions. As always, the site is found at [www.essexma.org](http://www.essexma.org)

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

#### (2) Purchase and Installation of Fiber Optic Network Switchgear

Now that the Town Meeting has appropriated funds for the equipment necessary to make our new Fiber Optic Municipal Network (FMAN) operational, I ordered the equipment using vendors on the State Contract. Our computer consultant will soon configure it and then install it to get the fiber network running. Thereafter, we will transfer all internal traffic from the old, VPN-based system to the new, fiber-optic based system. The process should take several weeks.

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

#### (3) Upgrade of Server Operating Systems

IT personnel from the Town of Danvers will soon begin work on upgrading the operating systems in four of our virtual servers and in our physical primary domain controller. They will initiate new virtual servers within our existing host box and then migrate all necessary data and features from the old virtual servers to the new virtual servers.

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

(4) Treasurer/Collector System Maintenance

I was advised by the Treasurer/Collector during the week of October 22, 2018 that a PC in his office was not starting properly. I found the problem to be loose memory chips. After cleaning the interior of the machine and resetting the chips, the system is functioning normally.

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

**C. Personnel**

No items.

**D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects**

(1) Public Safety Building Site Selection and/or Acquisition (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board authorized me to task the Town's appraisal contractor with the appraisal of the subject property, both for the whole parcel and for just the upper portion of the parcel. Before negotiations toward the possible purchase of the property go any farther, it will be necessary for the Town to have its own basis for the property's value. I sought an appraisal proposal from the firm that we usually work with but the firm's lead time may be too long for our needs. I have also sought proposals from other firms.

The Fall Town Meeting approved funding for a designer to begin assessing various site and building options, in conjunction with the Town's Project Manager. Pursuant to the Board's vote at the last meeting to enter into a contract with that designer (Johnson Roberts Associates), contingent upon the Town Meeting funding, our Project Manager assisted with the finalization of the designer's contract and Johnson Roberts and the Board have both signed it. While the acquisition of the new property may be an ideal solution, it is not presently known whether an agreement will be reached or whether a future Town Meeting will vote to authorize and fund the purchase. As such, both our Project Manager and our designer will continue to assess all options for the time-being.

Chairman O'Donnell and I met with our Project Manager and our designer on October 24, 2018 to discuss the project in general and to begin assessing different scenarios. Our professionals are scheduled to meet with the Town Building Committee on November 8, 2018, with other meetings occurring through the end of the calendar year. Our designers will meet with the police department and with the fire department on October 30, 2018.

***Recommendation:* Board discussion relative to the proposed property purchase and with respect to the status of the site selection process in general.**

## **E. Insurance**

### (1) MIIA Rewards Program Webinar

I participated in the subject webinar on October 22, 2018. The MIIA Rewards Program is offered every year by our insurer (the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association) and it encourages employee training and good practices, especially in areas that are prone to losses. We receive credit toward our insurance premiums for completing various aspects of the program. As usual, I will coordinate the Town's overall participation in the program.

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

### (2) MIIA Cyber Security Webinar

I participated in the subject webinar on October 23, 2018. Our insurer, MIIA, now offers cyber insurance as one of its coverage lines and the webinar was held to review the coverage and to recommend best practices to avoid problems. MIIA has brought in a partner, ePlace Solutions, to offer resources and training in this area. This new program includes on-line courses that employees can review to remain familiar with common cyber threats such as e-mail phishing. I plan to recommend this training to employees who work on Town computer systems.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

### (3) Renewal of Retiree Health Insurance Plans

I met with our health insurance representative from MIIA on October 17, 2018. He reviewed the proposed terms of renewal for retiree health insurance, which runs on a calendar year and is due for renewal in January. The PPO plan will carry a zero-percent increase and the HMO plan will carry a 0.59 percent increase. Although rate increases are extremely low, Blue Cross Blue Shield will be changing the prescription medication formulary such that many medications that were formerly covered as tier-1 medications will now be considered tier-2 or tier-3 medications, costing the retiree more per prescription.

*Recommendation:* Board approval of the plan renewals as per the posted agenda.

### (4) National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Site Visit

The Building Inspector, the Assistant Superintendent of Public Works, the Conservation Agent, and I met with the Director of the State Flood Hazard Management Program on October 24, 2018. The meeting was required as part of the Town's participation in the NFIP. Generally, the Director went over the Town's building permit issuance process, to ensure that building projects proposed in flood plains are properly reviewed and permitted. We will likely have a much more official review of the Town's policies in the coming few years and this informal visit was aimed at answering questions and ensuring that new standards are understood and are being adhered to.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## **F. Facilities**

### (1) Removal of Seasonal Stairs, Gangway, and Float, Conomo Point Park

A marine contractor has removed the seasonal water access stairs, the gangway, and the float from the park at Conomo Point. These items will be floated to a storage yard for the winter and will be reinstalled in the spring.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

## **G. Fiscal/Budget**

No items.

## **H. Complaints**

No items.

## **I. Meetings Attended**

### (1) Cape Ann Caucus

I attended the subject meeting, sponsored by the Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce, on October 26, 2018. The Caucus featured a group discussion among local and State officials and local businesspeople relative to ongoing local government projects and initiatives. Each community provided a short update on current events and a discussion session was offered thereafter.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

### (2) Northeast Coastal Coalition Meeting Summary (\*)

The Northeast Coastal Coalition (NECC), a group organized by Senator Tarr, met at the Essex Town Hall on October 26, 2018. I attended along with Chairman O'Donnell, Selectman Phippen, and other Town officials. The group's focus is on regional dredging, including consideration of coastal resilience planning and sea level rise. Essex continues to explore the possibility of coupling the need for dredging with the need to preserve the horizontal and vertical benefits of our salt marsh areas. Thin-layer deposition of suitable dredged sediment upon the marsh platform may eventually help us in this area.

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

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

No items.

## K. Legal Issues

No items.

## L. Grants

### (1) Economic Development Action Plan (EDAP) Grant

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) has awarded the Town the subject grant under its District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program. The Town Planner and the Economic Development Committee are working on finalizing the scope of services so that work on the EDAP may commence early in the new calendar year.

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

### (2) Seawall Repair Design Grant Award (\*)

The State announced during the week of October 22, 2018 that the Town will receive \$65,650 in grant funding for a design grant that will assess the entire Conomo Point Seawall system and make prioritized recommendations for incremental, permanent repairs. As the Board may recall, the Town spent around \$30,000 in emergency repairs to the system this past spring. The State has recognized that work as the required match for the grant and no new grant match funding will be necessary. The grant match funding that the Fall Town Meeting just approved can therefore be put aside as matching funds for a construction grant application next spring.

***Recommendation:* Board vote to authorize the grant contract outside of a meeting, once the paperwork is available from the State, and, thereafter to enter into a contract with GZA Geoenvironmental, the firm that assisted me with the grant application, for the design work.**

### (3) Potential 2<sup>nd</sup> Community Compact, Regionalization & Elder Issues (\*)

As the Board is aware, the Town already has a Community Compact with the Commonwealth that features two “best practice” areas – one around coastal resilience planning and implementation and another around economic development and affordable housing. The Board will be meeting with the Manchester Board of Selectmen on November 19, 2018 to discuss regionalizing more services with Manchester.

It is possible that Essex could apply for a second Community Compact with regionalization and efficiency as one best practice area. We have also been approached by SeniorCare to explore whether the Board has interest in a best practice area that the State just added (age and dementia-friendly communities). Since this second Compact can include up to three best-practice areas, both best practices may be applied for. Essex may be able to help neighboring communities

compete for grant funding in these areas of regional interest if the other communities already have two full Compacts, without capacity to add other areas.

*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 for part of the day on October 15, 2018.

*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.*