



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of Nov. 18, 2019

Report covers from November 2, 2019 to November 15, 2019

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Initial Meeting of the Host Community Agreement Advisory Committee (*)

The newly-established Host Community Agreement Advisory Committee (HCAAC) is working to pull together an initial meeting. I met with the Committee's Clerk, Antonella Muniz, on November 13, 2019 and we covered many topics, including logistical considerations, the Open Meeting Law, and the Public Records Law. Ms. Muniz will work with the Committee members to convene a meeting and work on basic tasks, such as the appointment of a Chairman and a general framework with respect to how the Committee will conduct its advisory work. The Committee will likely meet jointly with the Board at certain times and I will serve as the conduit of information between the two bodies in between joint meetings.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

B. Computer Systems

(1) Preparation for Windows Desktop Server Operating System Upgrades

As the Board is aware, I have steadily been working with personnel from the Town of Danvers IT Department to upgrade all of our computer server operating systems. The two remaining servers provide our users with their Windows desktops (one for non-public safety users and one for public safety users). Over the past few weeks, we have been working with some test users and test equipment to work out user migration issues before we begin in earnest. We have noticed performance improvements and have a chance to improve system standardization. After the Fall Town Meeting, if the appropriation for the necessary new equipment is approved, I will order the equipment and begin a systematic process of migrating the non-public safety server users to their new server and then take up the migration of public safety users. All work should be complete by the middle of January.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

C. Personnel

No items.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Status of Scope of Work for Downtown Parking Striping and Signage (*)

At the last meeting, the Board discussed the subject scope of work with the business community and the Economic Development Committee (EDC). Generally, those present felt that laying out parking striping would end up just decreasing the overall amount of parking in the downtown area, while carrying an increased annual expense. It was not until the details of what is possible with respect to getting a DOT permit for the project were brought to light by our present engineering firm that the substantive decrease in the parking space count became apparent. With respect to wayfinding signage, it appeared to the group that the size of the signs required by DOT is just too large for our setting. The EDC discussed this matter at its own meeting on November 13, 2019 and, considering the above and the information below, the EDC is no longer backing the project. The EDC has recommended that the Board abandon any further design or permitting work.

After the last meeting, I asked our engineering firm, on behalf of the Board, whether the Town could possibly apply to just line and sign out spaces that are dangerous and where “no parking” should be imposed. I also asked whether simpler signage or smaller signage could be installed that would still be accepted by DOT. I have learned that DOT would allow the Town to line out dangerous areas. However, thermoplastic line paint would have to be used. This material is very expensive to install and to maintain. Further, DOT will not allow signage within the State Highway layout that has lettering smaller than their standards (four to six-inch letters, depending on location).

Recommendation: **Further Board discussion relative to this matter.**

(2) Status of LED Street Light Conversion Project (*)

At the last meeting, the Board provided feedback on the lighting study that our lighting consultant completed in advance of developing the final design for the LED street light conversion project. I provided our consultant with this feedback and the consultant (Citelum) has since begun to put together the project design. Also, the Town of Ipswich has provided pricing for the conversion project and Citelum is presently reviewing that proposal. Soon, our Town Planner will contact a representative of the Green Communities grant program to go over the various utility rebates and incentives with National Grid personnel.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(3) Public Safety Facility Construction Project Update (*)

Our Project Manager hosted the first construction meeting for the subject project on November 12, 2019. Subsequently, on November 15, 2019, the Selectmen signed the contract for the project and additional construction meetings are scheduled for November 19 and November 26. Generally, Chairman Spinney and

I will attend all meetings, along with the Chief of Police, the Fire Chief, our architect, our Project Manager, our Clerk of the Works, and personnel from the contractor. At this first meeting, we went over general expectations and protocols. Of specific interest is whether the Selectmen wanted to put together a ground breaking ceremony and how the Board will consider requests for project change orders when those inevitably arise in the future.

***Recommendation:* Board discussion relative to a possible ground breaking ceremony and the general protocol for change order requests.**

E. Insurance

(1) Monthly Pothole Log

The DPW provided me with the pothole log for the month of October during the week of November 11, 2019. No potholes were reported during October.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

F. Facilities

(1) Annual Fire Extinguisher Inspection and Replacement

Our fire extinguisher contractor arranged to visit various Town buildings on November 14, 2019 to inspect all extinguishers and to replace units that are out of date.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

G. Fiscal/Budget

No items.

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

(1) Massachusetts Health Officers' Association Annual Conference

I attended the subject meeting in Falmouth on November 6 and 7, 2019. The conference provides a variety of useful training with respect to on-site wastewater, emergency planning, and other relevant disciplines. The conference allows me to keep current with my annual continuing education credits for my System Inspector, Soil Evaluator, and Registered Sanitarian certifications.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

J. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

(1) Fall Town Meeting Motions

(*)

I have developed final motions based upon the Board's guidance.

***Recommendation:* Board review and discussion regarding the final Fall Town Meeting Motions.**

(2) Discussion Relative to Outdoor Entertainment Noise Policy

Chairman Spinney and I met with three representatives from the Essex business community and three residents on November 5, 2019. The group discussed opinions concerning whether the Selectmen should continue to work toward establishing some type of outdoor entertainment noise policy. Various major themes emerged including:

- Possibly revising the Town's application forms for annual and one-day entertainment licenses, in order to collect more information for the Board in advance of considering a particular application.
- Whether moving to a general policy only allowing acoustic music, without percussion, outdoors will offer a good compromise between business interests and ability of area residents to enjoy their own properties.
- Whether the State's noise control regulation should be referenced and/or enforced in some way by the Town.
- What roles the collection of baseline background noise data and the history of complaints for a given location might play.

Further, as had been requested previously by the Board, the Economic Development Committee met to discuss formulating its own recommendation on the topic (on November 13, 2019). The Committee has determined that it views the topic as something that the Licensing Board should specifically deal with, since the intricacies of creating new licensing rules are beyond its charge. However, the Committee did recommend that the Board begin with revising its existing entertainment application forms to collect more detailed information.

Recommendation: Board discussion at its December 2, 2019 meeting.

K. Legal Issues

(1) Amendment of Solid Waste Contract with Covanta

(*)

The Selectmen and the Board of Public Works had already agreed that amending the solid waste contract with Covanta is in order, pending review and approval of the amendment document by Town Counsel. The amendment will cause Covanta to cease charging the Town a monthly labor fee and a trailer rental fee in exchange for the Town running the transfer station with its own staff. We have worked out an amendment that is acceptable to the DPW, Town Counsel, and Covanta and it is contingent upon the Town Meeting voting this evening to move

the necessary funding from the solid waste contract budget line to the appropriate DPW wages budget line.

Recommendation: **Board signature of the amendment document.**

L. Grants

(1) Municipal Collaboration Final Report Released

The Collins Center released the final report on possible future collaboration efforts between Essex and Manchester on November 5, 2019 and the report is available on the [Town website](#). I plan to bring the report to the Board for discussion concerning future implementation at the Board's next meeting.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

M. Emergency Planning

No items.

N. Other Items

(1) Veterans' Day Holiday

The office was closed on November 11, 2019, in observance of the subject holiday.

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