

**Selectmen's Minutes
Senior Center**

January 23, 2017

Present: Chairman Lisa J. O'Donnell, Selectman Susan Gould-Coviello, Selectman David A. Doane, Town Administrator Brendhan Zubricki, and Selectmen's Assistant Pamela J. Witham.

Also Present: Conservation Commission Chair Michael Burke; Bicentennial Committee Chair and Assistant Town Clerk Dawn Burnham; Planning Board Chairman Westley Burnham; School Committee member Annie Cameron; Town Planner Matt Coogan; Council on Aging Interim Director Kristin Crockett; Hayes Demeule; Strategic Planning Committee Chair and Finance Committee member and Bicentennial Committee member David Gabor; DPW Superintendent Paul Goodwin; Essex Housing Authority members Margot Hammond, and Roger Tyler; Assistant Greenbelt Director Vanessa Johnson-Hall; Board of Health Agent Erin Kirchner; Shellfish Constable William Knovak; Architect Bill Nolan; Animal Control Officer Amy Reilly; Police Chief Peter G. Silva.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the upstairs meeting room of the Senior Center on Pickering Street and announced that the Board would hear Public Comment. No one offered any comment.

Vanessa Johnson-Hall, the Assistant Director of Land Conservation for Essex County Greenbelt, came before the Selectmen to discuss a request for the Selectmen's signature on the following conservation restriction documents for the Sagamore Hill Project: 1. Conservation Restriction from Essex County Greenbelt Association, Inc. to the Town of Essex and the Department of Conservation and Recreation, 0 Choate Street, 0 Choate Street Rear, 0 Belcher Street; and, 2. Conservation Restriction from Essex County Greenbelt Association, Inc. to the Hamilton Wenham Open Land Trust, Inc., 0 Belcher Street. Town approval of the project had previously been voted and the documents were now available for signature. A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to sign the documents. A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to authorize Chairman O'Donnell to sign the remaining finalized documents for the project when they become available sometime in February. Vanessa Johnson-Hall notarized the Selectmen's signatures. She thanked the Selectmen and left the meeting.

In other business, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve the weekly warrant in the amount of \$711,264.73.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to exempt from Section 20 of Chapter 268A of the General Laws, the contracts and amounts for the individuals listed below contained within the 1/12/17 warrant pursuant to subsection (d) of said Section.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>VENDOR</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>DEPT'S BIL</u>
Ernie Nieberle	Nieberles	12/24/16	\$614.22	Council on Aging
Ernie Nieberle	Nieberles	12/24/16	\$42.00	Shellfish
Ernie Nieberle	Nieberles	12/24/16	\$504.60	Police

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to exempt from Section 20 of Chapter 268A of the General Laws, the contracts and amounts for the individuals listed below contained within the 1/19/17 warrant pursuant to subsection (d) of said Section.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>VENDOR</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>DEPT'S BILL</u>
Ernie Nieberle	Nieberles	12/24/16	\$1,893.34	Fire
Ernie Nieberle	Nieberles	12/24/16	\$4,587.09	Highway
Ernie Nieberle	Nieberles	12/24/16	\$3,000.00	Snow & Ice
Ernie Nieberle	Nieberles	12/24/16	\$138.27	Water
Ernie Nieberle	Nieberles	12/24/16	\$138.55	Wastewater

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve the minutes for the Selectmen's January 9, 2017, Open Meeting.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to accept the *resignation of Scottie Robinson* from the Finance Committee.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to appoint Rob Fitzgibbon to the Finance Committee. The Selectmen signed his appointment card.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve a request to appoint Hayes Demeule to the volunteer position of Assistant Animal Control Officer for the remainder of this fiscal year. The Selectmen signed her appointment card.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve and sign *letters to the Democratic Committee and the Republican Committee* requesting a recommendation for a candidate to fill the vacancy on the Town's Board of Registrars.

It was agreed that the Board would discuss and consider final approval of the Calendar Year 2017 Goals for the Chief of Police at their next meeting on February 6, 2017.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve the following requests for annual Shellfishng Permits:

Senior:

- Charles A. McNeil

Student:

- Troy Ciarametaro

Non-Resident Recreational:

- Scott Perkins, Cape Neddick, sponsored by Charles McNeil
- Colby Thomassen, West Newbury, sponsored by Joshua Devos

The Selectmen were reminded that the final FY2018 MERSD Budget meeting will take place at the Essex Elementary School on Tuesday, January 31, 2017, starting at 7:00 p.m.

The next regular Board of Selectmen's meeting will take place on Monday, February 6, 2017, at 7:00 p.m. in the Senior Center, 17 Pickering Street.

Mr. Zubricki said that moving to Executive Session would not be necessary at tonight's meeting.

Only two of the three members on the five-member Board of the Essex Housing Authority were present. The EHA had not posted their meeting for tonight and a quorum of three members was required, so discussion of possible candidate(s) to fill the vacant seat on the EHA Board was postponed until the next Selectmen's meeting on February 6, 2017. Roger Tyler and Margot Hammond left the meeting.

Architect Bill Nolan joined the Selectmen to continue the discussion regarding a tenant's proposal to replace the structure on Town-leased land at 111 Conomo Point Road. Chairman O'Donnell thanked him for providing comparison drawings of the proposed structure and the existing structure. Chairman O'Donnell said that the Board is in the process of formulating standard guidelines for approving repairs, remodeling, and replacement of structures on the Town's land that is leased to tenants at northern Conomo Point. The Board will be using the bylaws developed for southern and central Conomo Point as guidelines for the northern Conomo Point standards. Once the guidelines are in place, the Board will be able to move forward with their review of Mr. Nolan's request to build a replacement structure. The Chairman said that they may be ready to continue discussion of the proposal by their next meeting on February 6th. Mr. Nolan thanked the Selectmen and said he would return on the 6th. He left the meeting.

Chairman O'Donnell said that she would like to schedule a joint meeting of the Selectmen, various Town boards and committees, and the Fire and Police Chiefs, along with a representative from Town Counsel, KP Law, for discussion and sharing of information regarding the new marijuana legislation and its possible impact on the Town.

Mr. Zubricki began the presentation of his Town Administrator's Report for the period January 7th through January 20th, 2017, regarding the following:

Additional Work, Engineering Options for Police/Fire Building Siting: Mr. Zubricki reported that he had met with the Town Building Committee last week to review the three options provided by the Town's engineering consultant, Reinhardt Associates, for a new public safety building on the Memorial Park site. Exploration of an additional option was suggested at that meeting, which would be to remodel the existing building at 24 Martin Street for the Police Department and then construction of a new building to house the Fire Department at the Martin Street site between the remodeled building and the Town Hall. The Selectmen agreed that they were interested in exploring the fourth option and a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to authorize Reinhardt to expand their feasibility study to include this fourth option. The funding for the additional work will come from the remainder of the amount appropriated for the feasibility project and Town Property Expense.

Contract for Asbestos Abatement, 4-8 Conomo Lane: Mr. Zubricki reported that several bids had been received for the asbestos abatement project at 8 Conomo Lane, ranging from \$14,445

to \$35,000. A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to award the contract to E&F Environmental Services, LLC in the amount of \$14,445.

Northern Conomo Point Improvement Project Specifications: Mr. Zubricki said he continues to move forward with the Waterfront Project. He hosted the site visit for prospective bidders last week and he has been working with an engineer to formulate an addendum to the bid request that will address the many questions that have been asked about the project. The addendum will also include necessary changes to the original job specifications and is scheduled to be released tomorrow. The Board agreed that the bid documents needed to contain bid alternates for pricing flexibility.

Choice of Lighting System for Town Hall Clock Faces: Mr. Zubricki reported that the Architect has offered two choices for lighting the four clock faces of the Town Hall (from the ground versus a building-mounted wand system). Following a description of each choice, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to choose the LED wand light system.

Negotiation of Successor Cable Television Franchise Agreement: Mr. Zubricki reported that Comcast and the Cable TV Regional Committee had met recently and Comcast has agreed to review the Committee's requests and issue a counterproposal in the near future. The current cable contract will expire in March 2017.

Review of Preliminary Draft Annual Town Meeting Warrant: Mr. Zubricki said that he had updated the items on the current draft of the May 2017 Annual Town Meeting Warrant based on past discussions of the Board.

On another matter, Mr. Zubricki said that National Grid will sell the Town streetlights to the Town for approximately \$14,000. The price is non-negotiable and is based on a valuation of the existing equipment. Once the Town decides to purchase the lights, the process could take up to one year to complete. The Town Planner will be able to apply for State grants to fund conversion of the lights to LED when the Town has ownership of the lights.

Mr. Zubricki reported that the Open Space Committee has requested that some parcels that the Town has taken for tax title be placed in conservation. The Board agreed to add an article to the Annual Town Meeting Warrant for this purpose.

School Committee member Annie Cameron said that it is still uncertain whether the foot bridge that was damaged by a truck near the school in Manchester will be repaired.

At 8:00 p.m., the Chairman welcomed those present for the Department Head Quarterly Meeting segment. She asked Town Planner Matt Coogan to begin with an update regarding his recent activities. He reported that he has most recently submitted a Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Grant Application for technical assistance funding. He is also considering submitting Green Community grant applications to assist funding of a new boiler at the Water Treatment Plant and energy reduction projects at the Essex Elementary School. Mr. Coogan reported that the

Strategic Planning Committee is investigating the formation of a Town Economic Development Committee. If the Committee is established, there is a grant available that would provide technical assistance from the Massachusetts Area Planning Council for the creation of an economic development plan for the Town. He also reported that the SPC intends to meet quarterly, at which times, the Committee will update the Town's strategic plan and take note of which items have been accomplished to date.

Board of Health Agent Erin Kirchner reported that she has been working with the Police Department and the School, as well as consulting with those departments and health boards in other towns, regarding ways to assist residents with mental health and substance abuse issues. She has also been researching the feasibility of providing affordable septic loans to low income residents who need to repair or replace failed septic systems.

Conservation Commission Chair Michael Burke reported that the Commission has recently reviewed and signed off on the Sagamore Hill Project. The Commission is currently reviewing the proposed northern Conomo Point waterfront project.

Planning Board Chairman Westley Burnham said that Peter Van Wyck had first requested permission to build the Lowland Farm development in 1985. Mr. Burnham reported that it now appears likely that his Board will be able to finally sign off on the completion of this project after all these years of negotiations. He said the PB may also try again to get the Town vote at the May 2017 Annual Town Meeting to modify the percent impervious lot coverage standard in the water protection district.

David Gabor, a member of the Finance Committee, Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, and a member of the Bicentennial Committee, reported that the FinCom has recently had three new members appointed to fill the vacant seats on the Committee. He said FinCom members will be happy to assist departments with the formulation of their FY18 budgets. He advised departments to contact the FinCom as soon as possible regarding anticipated future financial needs in order to allow the FinCom to begin planning for them. Mr. Zubricki said that it was the intention of the Board of Selectmen and the FinCom to hire a new firm to perform the annual audit of Town finances, based on a recommendation from the Department of Revenue. Mr. Zubricki said that Mr. Chris Rogers from the Town's present auditing firm would like to meet with the Selectmen and the FinCom to discuss reasons for not hiring a new firm. The Selectmen were in agreement and Mr. Zubricki will schedule the meeting with Mr. Rogers.

Bicentennial Committee Chair Dawn Burnham distributed a *draft budget for the coming Bicentennial Celebration*. David Gabor, a BC member, reviewed the various items with Dawn Burnham for those present. Ms. Burnham said that the Committee is planning one event per month in 2019, with the major celebration, including fireworks, occurring the weekend of August 9th, 10th, and 11th. Based on the proposed budget, Mr. Gabor and Ms. Burnham requested the Selectmen to approve funding the Committee earlier rather than later to facilitate the planning of events. They said they would like an appropriation of \$10,000 annually. The Selectmen agreed to increase their budget request to \$10,000.

Acting in her capacity as Assistant Town Clerk, Dawn Burnham said that Town Clerk Christina St. Pierre had asked her to report that the Town Clerk, along with other towns, is participating in the State study regarding the effectiveness and cost of providing voters the opportunity to vote early in the last election. She also read a statement from the Town Clerk, who is also the newly designated Records Access Officer, regarding the responsibility of Town boards and entities to publicly post their meetings and the minutes from those meetings as stated in the Open Meeting Laws contained in the Massachusetts General Laws. Presently, only some of the boards consistently post their meetings and/or minutes.

Interim Council on Aging Director Kristin Crockett reported that she has been working with an intern to formulate and distribute a survey to residents regarding their expectations for services and programs provided by the Council. The survey will be available on the Town website and will be mailed to residents next week. She said that the Council on Aging van has been repaired and inspected. The van is available to take seniors to medical visits and is scheduled to provide transportation to the Rowley Market Basket once a week. One of the Council's objectives is to increase van use and it will offer training to the van drivers in March. Council members will have an opportunity to participate in another training program to be offered by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. The Senior Center elevator is again functional and she is investigating whether or not to repair the inoperative 1973 generator or seek a new one funded by grants. Workers will be coming to complete the repairs and/or renovations to the Center that were initiated a couple of years ago.

Police Chief Silva said that his department will be participating in training classes which will receive special credit from the Town's insurance carrier, MIIA. He said that the department was recently successful in obtaining two grants: one to help combat opioid issues and one to promote community interaction. The Department continues to work towards achieving State accreditation. He said that he has ordered the mooring stickers for the coming season and is working on completing the revisions to the mooring regulations. The department expects to receive a new cruiser in the near future.

School Committee member Annie Cameron reported that it appears that the school budget for FY18 will likely be finalized at a 3.2% increase, resulting in an increase in the share paid by Essex of about 2.21%. She said that a meeting with committee members, Selectmen, and FinCom members will be scheduled to discuss apportionment, the school buildings, and long range planning sometime after the annual town meetings. FinCom member David Gabor offered to provide her with advice on the school budget.

Superintendent Paul Goodwin reported that he is completing his FY18 budget request. He has level funded as many items as possible. He said that the sewer system is now 10 years old and many of its parts, such as the lifter and grinder pumps, are at the end of their useful life. In addition, the water mains are also beginning to fail. The break that happened recently on the causeway cost approximately \$20,000 to repair. He said that the Department has recently purchased a new dump truck with the help of Chapter 90 funding and that the Water Department

filter project has been completed. He said he is finding it harder and harder to find qualified personnel for the various DPW positions. In addition, he said that the State has increased the amount of reporting required on the procedures performed by the Department.

Animal Control Officer Amy Reilly introduced her newly appointed assistant Hayes Demeule. Her assistant will provide coverage during the times when Amy is away. The position is currently a volunteer position and it is anticipated that funding will be sought in May to make it a paid, part-time position starting in FY18. She said that some people have expressed interest about the recent increase in coyote attacks on pets. She said Gloucester will be sponsoring an informational meeting open to the general public on February 2, and Essex residents would be welcome to attend. She said that she has not had any reports of rabid animals this year and she only had to issue one nuisance dog warning during the past year. Chief Silva thanked her for doing an excellent job and also being available when called by his department to help with an animal issue.

Shellfish Constable William Knovak reported that the boat and the truck are running well. His department is planning on making some repairs to the boat in the spring. He said that whenever there is a sewer break, the State mandates that the flats be closed for at least 21 days. However, depending on the time of year and/or the geographic location, some flats may be allowed to remain open for harvesting. Consequently, after the recent sewer break on the Causeway, there were still some Essex flats that were open for digging. He reported that Dave Roach at Marine Fisheries has retired and he has been working with Mr. Roach's replacement to periodically collect water samples. Mr. Zubricki said that someone from the State will be contacting the Constable to discuss the possibility of creating an oyster bed in the area.

Town Administrator Brendhan offered a brief update on the status of the Town Hall/Library Project. The anticipated re-entry into the building is now scheduled for mid-May 2017.

There being no further business before the Board, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Documents used during this meeting include the following:

Resignation of Scottie Robinson

Letters to the Democratic Committee and the Republican Committee

Draft budget for the coming Bicentennial Celebration

Prepared by: _____
Pamela J. Witham

Attested by: _____
Susan Gould-Coviello