



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

Report covers from June 30, 2018 to July 13, 2018

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

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### A. Town Department Reports/Requests

#### (1) Final Location for Essex National Heritage Commission Kiosk

At the last meeting, the Board provided Donna Roy of the Essex Merchants' Group with a preferred hierarchy of locations for a new tourist kiosk for the downtown area, to be supplied by the Essex National Heritage Commission. I have learned that the Merchants' group will meet on July 18, 2018 to choose a final location.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

#### (2) Dog Waste Bag Dispenser/Receptacle Units Update (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board received suggestions for the siting of dog waste bag dispensers with waste receptacles at Conomo Point and at the Centennial Grove. The Board asked that I contact the Department of Public Works relative to that department's capacity to maintain these units, if installed. I have learned that the department is not prepared to maintain the units. As such, it does not appear that installation is a viable action at this point in time.

*Recommendation:* **Do not proceed with installation, since maintenance capabilities are not presently available.**

#### (3) No Through Truck Traffic, Apple Street (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board asked that the DPW work together with the Chief of Police to post signs at either end of Apple Street that say: "No Through Truck Traffic, Local Deliveries and Services Only". The Superintendent of Public Works reviewed the matter with the Board of Public Works and that Board has recommended that signage be included at advance points in either direction on Southern Avenue and Western Avenue so that trucks will be warned of the prohibition before actually reaching Apple Street.

*Recommendation:* **Further Board discussion relative to this new signage.**

#### (4) Repurposing of Police Vehicle to Council on Aging

At the last meeting, the Board and the Chief of Police discussed potentially repurposing the Chief's present, unmarked police vehicle, which is being retired, to the Council on Aging. After speaking with the Council Chairman and its Director, we have confirmed that the Council does want to move forward with that vehicle transfer. The vehicle will give the Council an opportunity to offer

individual rides to seniors, without having to drive the large van. It is my present understanding that the Police Department is waiting for the replacement Chief's vehicle and will transfer the old vehicle as soon as possible thereafter.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

(5) Future Possible Uses for Centennial Grove Cottage and Environs (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board met with the Youth Commission (EYC) and the parties agreed to review the following:

- a) Tour the facility with the Building Inspector to understand what types of building improvements (speaking of the Cottage and the adjacent garage) will be necessary to use the Cottage for future EYC programming and the garage for storage. A site visit will be held on July 19, 2018 whereat the Building Inspector, the Youth Director, the Selectmen, and I will attempt to understand the needs, so that the Special Town Meeting in August can consider funding to prepare the facility for use.
- b) Determine if the Pingree School is interested in using just the basement of the Grove Cottage for storage, in conjunction with its rowing program. Pingree would also need parking and access to the waterfront and would pay a fee for its presence. My present understanding is that Pingree may not wish to utilize the area without use of the Cottage but a representative may attend the July 19 site visit to look the basement area over.
- c) Determine if the YMCA would like to use the Grove Cottage as part of Summer Camp Dory or other future programs, with an expectation that the YMCA would help to maintain the facility. I contacted the Program Director and have learned that he will be present at the July 19 site visit to better understand the facility.
- d) Discuss with our insurer the implications of possibly offering boating equipment to the public. I expect to discuss this topic with our representative when she visits for our annual policy review.

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

## **B. Computer Systems**

(1) File Replication Cutover to Town of Danvers

Our file replication system that maintains a secondary live instance of our computing infrastructure has now been redirected to a datacenter run by the Town of Danvers. As the Board may recall, we were previously housed at the City of Melrose's datacenter but Melrose decided not to offer that service any longer. We had been connected to Melrose with a dedicated MPLS circuit provided by Comcast, which is no longer necessary. As such, Comcast personnel retrieved the fiber optic modem associated with that circuit on July 10, 2018.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

(2) Migration of Town Website to New Platform

The budget for fiscal year 2019 included sufficient funding to convert our existing website platform (based on a FirstClass back-end editor) to a new platform, known as Drupal. Drupal will offer a more professional look and feel and will allow employees to update content faster and more intuitively. Our existing website vendor, now known as Civic Plus, will guide us through the process and I will be participating in a kick-off conference call on July 18, 2018.

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

**C. Personnel**

No items.

**D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects**

(1) Process for Procurement of Project Manager for Public Safety Building (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board authorized me to move forward with the procurement of a Project Manager to lead the Town through the comparison and vetting of options for a public safety building replacement and/or renovation. The procurement is subject to appropriation by the Special Town Meeting that will occur on August 27, 2018. The Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the Project Manager will be advertised in the *Central Register* and in the Gloucester Times on July 11, 2018 (when the RFQ is released).

Interested project management firms can attend a briefing session at the existing public safety building on July 26, 2018 at 10:00 a.m. and proposals are due at noon on August 2, 2018. The Town Building Committee members will each pick up copies of all proposals thereafter so they can become familiar with them and the Committee will meet on August 9, 2018 to arrive at the top three firms (generally, not ranked). The Town Building Committee will conduct interviews of the top three firms, at a joint meeting with the Selectmen, on August 13, 2018. The Committee will arrive at its recommendation for the top-ranked firm after the interviews and the Selectmen will begin to negotiate a cost proposal with that firm between the 13<sup>th</sup> and the Special Town Meeting on August 27, 2018.

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

(2) Process for Solicitation of Proposals for Acquisition of Real Property (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board authorized me to move forward with the solicitation of proposals for Essex property owners desiring to sell private property to the Town for future public safety building purposes. The procurement is subject to appropriation by a future Town Meeting. The Request for Proposals (RFP) for this solicitation will be advertised in the *Central Register* and in the

Gloucester Times on July 11, 2018 (when the RFQ is released), and a second time in the Times on July 18, 2018. We will also seek to have the Times cover the solicitation as a feature story, in order to gain maximum exposure to the public. Properties must meet certain minimum criteria in order to be eligible for purchase by the Town.

The solicitation must be open for at least 30 days and proposals are due at noon on August 13, 2018. The Town Building Committee members will each pick up copies of all proposals thereafter so they can become familiar with them and the Committee will meet on August 16, 2018 to assign a composite score to each proposal. If a suitable property emerges, the Selectmen can enter into a Purchase & Sale Agreement that is subject to future appropriation and the Town's Project Manager can begin to review the property as one possible scenario for the siting of a future public safety building.

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

#### **E. Insurance**

No items.

#### **F. Facilities**

##### (1) Possible Assistance with Renovation of Memorial Park Tennis Courts (\*)

A local business has offered to possibly help renovate the existing tennis courts located at Memorial Park. I put the business (East Coast Asset Management) in touch with the Board of Public Works and the Board will begin to discuss this generous offer, including what type of improvements should be undertaken and how the work will be contracted for.

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

##### (2) Route 133 Causeway Bridge Repair Update (\*)

Chairman O'Donnell and I met with officials and personnel/contractors from MassDOT and other Town personnel on July 13, 2018 to discuss plans to repair the Route 133 bridge and restore it to two-way traffic. The repair work aimed at restoring two-way traffic over the bridge will begin during the night of July 29, 2018 and is expected to continue for two weeks (until about August 15, 2018). For the first four nights, from 11 p.m. until 5 a.m., there may be a need for total detouring of traffic. Short-term detouring of traffic could happen on the fly, anytime between 8 p.m. and 5 a.m. Work that does not impact the one-way, alternating traffic pattern that is currently in place will occur throughout the day and night.

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

(3) Failure and Repair of Senior Center Air Conditioning System

The air conditioning system at the Senior Center failed during the week of July 2, 2018. The compressor failed catastrophically and caused other damage within the system. I was on vacation at the time and assisted the Director with the necessary protocols to request emergency funding for the repair (involving complete replacement of the exterior portion of the system), given that lead time would not even begin to elapse until a service order could be confirmed. Funding was secured through the Finance Committee's Reserve Fund and the repair will be complete early in the week of July 16, 2018.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

**G. Fiscal/Budget**

No items.

**H. Complaints**

No items.

**I. Meetings Attended**

(1) FEMA RiskMAP Program Flood Risk Review Meeting

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has partnered with the United States Geological Survey (USGS) to continue to refine flood map predictions for various river reaches in our area. Specific maps exist for each community and I have picked up the maps for Essex. This effort was commenced in 2015 and we were told at that time that final maps would be developed and circulated in the future. Presently, I am looking the maps over and will involve other departments in order to provide the USGS with comments.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

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

(1) Draft Warrant for Special Town Meeting, August 27, 2018 (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board provided guidance as to the topics it expects to cover at the Special Town Meeting that the Board expects to eventually call for August 27, 2018. I have developed a draft warrant for the meeting and I will commence with review by Town Counsel after the Board provides feedback at the present meeting. The Board expects to sign the warrant at its next meeting, on July 30, 2018.

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

**K. Legal Issues**

No items.

**L. Grants**

No items.

**M. Emergency Planning****(1) Regional Dispatch Center Monthly Meeting**

I presided over the subject meeting of the three Regional Dispatch Center advisory boards on July 11, 2018. The meeting featured continuing discussion related to the State 911 Department assuming the operation and all costs associated with the Center as of fiscal year 2020 (approximately one year from now). The Finance Advisory Board had met previously and supported this transition and the July 11 meeting provided the other boards with a chance to discuss the matter. The State 911 Department plans to issue a letter by the end of July that will provide more details regarding what is planned. The Department expects each of the three remaining communities (Essex has already endorsed the concept) to consider the proposal and express support during August, so that planning may continue in earnest.

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

**(2) Federal Disaster Declaration for March 2-3, 2018 Nor'Easter**

We have learned that one of the 2018 nor'easters (the March 2-3 storm) has met the damage threshold for Federal disaster relief funding. As with past such declarations, 75% of all eligible costs will be reimbursed to municipalities. The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) will be holding a meeting concerning the process for reimbursement on July 20, 2018 and either a Police Department or DPW employee will attend to represent the Town. Thereafter, all affected departments (police, fire, DPW, and Selectmen) will develop a joint request for reimbursement. I will assist with the coordination of that effort.

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

**N. Other Items****(1) Independence Day Holiday**

The office was closed on July 4, 2018, in observance of the subject holiday.

**(2) Town Administrator Vacation Leave**

I was out of the office on vacation leave from July 5, 2018 through July 9, 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.*