



## Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of August 10, 2020

Report covers from July 25, 2020 to August 7, 2020

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) Renewal of Firewall/Router Support

Each year at this time, it is necessary to renew our support with Cisco for our firewall/router appliance. I have made the necessary arrangements for renewal.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

#### (2) Call with Regional IT Partners

Even though COVID-19 has slowed progress toward getting several area communities directly connected to the Town of Danvers datacenter via fiber optic cable, we are nearing some important milestones. I spoke with personnel from Danvers and some area Town Administrators on August 6, 2020 about the project. Essex connects to Danvers over the Internet, by secure tunnel, presently. Fiber to Danvers is connected on our end and, once it is connected on the Danvers end, we will have a secure, fast link to Danvers, enabling real-time backups. Other fiber links with Hamilton, Wenham, Middleton, Topsfield, and others will come on line eventually and the group of communities will look to Danvers for centralized services (as Essex has done with Melrose and now Danvers, for about ten years).

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

### C. Personnel

No items.

### D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

#### (1) Public Safety Facility Construction Project Update

(\*)

Chairman Preen and I attended construction project meetings on July 30 and August 6, 2020. Roof cladding work is moving along well and the contractor is preparing the generator pad for the eventual delivery of the generator. The storm water detention area is finished and the slab on grade portion of the apparatus bay has been poured. Sheathing and window blocking work has been moving along well and the contractor is working on interior layout and framing. Masonry work at the police prisoner detention area is well underway.

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

#### **E. Insurance**

No items.

#### **F. Facilities**

(1) Downtown Line Striping and Signage Prohibiting Parking in Dangerous Areas

The subject project was kicked off on the evening of August 6, 2020 with the application of painted lines along parts of Route 133 downtown and on the beginning of Martin Street. The lines, and associated signage (to be installed later), serve to prohibit parking in areas that present a danger to traffic. One area in front of Howard's Flying Dragon Antiques was scaled back by one car length since the merchant pointed out that at least one car length should still be safe to park in (with agreement from the Chief of Police, the Superintendent of Public Works, and Chairman Pereen).

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

#### **G. Fiscal/Budget**

(1) Feedback from Departments with Respect to Budgetary Savings in FY21 (\*)

The Board and the Finance Committee had jointly issued a memo in early July warning departments that budget freezes may be necessary in some spending categories during fiscal year 2021 due to expected reduced revenue as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. Departments were asked to provide feedback concerning how each planned to possibly save money and to limit contracts to shorter durations. We have received several responses containing various ideas that departments have to curb spending and commitments until more about our revenue picture is known.

*Recommendation:* **Board discussion concerning the various ideas from Town departments.**

#### **H. Complaints**

No items.

#### **I. Meetings Attended**

(1) Planning Board Meeting Assistance

I participated in a Planning Board meeting on July 29, 2020 to assist the Board with the review of a complaint.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

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

### (1) Continued Review and Crafting of Marijuana Industry Regulations (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board agreed that two of the marijuana regulations templates that were provided by Town Counsel should be merged into one document, as a foundation for the Board's promulgation process. I have completed the merge and that is available for the Board's discussion at the present meeting. Several members of the public did write in with suggestions for what the regulations should cover.

***Recommendation:* Continued Board discussion relative to the development of the regulations.**

### (2) Finalization of Marijuana Host Community Agreements with BB Botanics (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board discussed new drafts of both the Retail and Cultivation Host Community Agreements (HCAs) that resulted from a meeting of the Town's negotiation group with representatives of BB Botanics. The Board asked me to cover all outstanding issues with BB Botanics and to report back at the present meeting relative to overall status. I discussed the documents with BB Botanics on July 28, 2020 and we were able to bring document content in line with the satisfaction with members of the negotiation team.

***Recommendation:* Board vote to approve both the Retail and Cultivation HCAs with BB Botanics.**

### (3) Further Review of Potential Fall Town Meeting Topics (\*)

At the last meeting, the Board provided further guidance relative to the list of potential Fall Town Meeting topics. I have revised that list and it is available for discussion at the present meeting.

***Recommendation:* Further Board review of the draft Fall Town Meeting topic list.**

## **K. Legal Issues**

No items.

## **L. Grants**

### (1) Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Grant Monthly Report

Personnel from Boston University filed the subject report with the State during the week of July 27, 2020. The project involves computer modeling of sediment transport along Castle Neck Island (Crane Beach) and throughout Essex Bay. As more modeling is conducted, a clearer picture is becoming apparent about how sediment travels through the Essex Bay system. This information will be very

important to future project that may seek to remove sediment from some areas of the navigable channel to be distributed on the marsh or possible as beach nourishment for Crane Beach or other beaches to the north.

*Recommendation:* No further action is necessary.

#### **M. Emergency Planning**

No items.

#### **N. Other Items**

##### (1) Town Administrator Vacation Leave

I was out of the office on vacation leave for portions of the day on July 28 and 29 and August 6, 2020.

*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.*