



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of July 10, 2023

Report covers from June 24, 2023 to July 7, 2023

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

No items.

B. Computer Systems

(1) North Shore IT Collaborative Update

I attended a virtual meeting of the Collaborative on June 27, 2023. The meeting featured a discussion with respect to Danvers IT interns utilizing sophisticated tools to analyze the state of cybersecurity for all Collaborative members. The interns are funded by the Northeast Homeland Security Regional Advisory Council (NERAC) and are also working on assessments of all other communities in the NERAC region. Also, the Collaborative is starting to assess the growing use of artificial intelligence (AI) and how it could be used to assist communities with respect to more robust provision of information to the public.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

C. Personnel

(1) Distribution of Sexual Harassment & Discriminatory Harassment Policies

While all employees acknowledge all applicable Town policies annually via our on-line system, employees are required by law to have a physical copy of the Town's Sexual Harassment Policy provided to them. As such, in the month of July, we include a copy of the Sexual Harassment Policy (along with the Town's Discriminatory Harassment Policy) with employee paychecks. The provision of the policies will occur soon.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Distribution of Red Flags Policy

The Town's Red Flags Policy is aimed at detecting fraud attempted by the public with respect to obtaining information within municipal utility accounts (water and sewer). Each year, in July, the Superintendent of Public Works and the billing office staff receive and acknowledge the policy (which has now been distributed for fiscal year 2024).

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Quarterly Affirmative Marketing Report

I provided the subject report to the State during the week of July 3, 2023 in my capacity as the Town's Affirmative Marketing Construction Officer (AMCO). The report documents the utilization of any woman or minority-owned businesses on State-funded construction project. No such utilization occurred over the past quarter.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

E. Insurance

(1) Facility Self-Inspection Checklists

I completed the subject checklists for the Town Hall and the Senior Center during the week of July 3, 2023. The checklists, which are reviewed at quarterly Safety Committee meetings, are aimed at identifying safety hazards in Town buildings and working to rapidly eliminate them. No hazards were encountered over the past quarter. Other departments fill out checklists for other buildings.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

F. Facilities

(1) Library Telephone Line Replacement

The main phone line into the Library stopped working during the week of July 3, 2023. Verizon came and checked the line between the street and the building and found no problem. The Librarian asked me to review the situation and I found that the jumper line connecting the Verizon feed to our internal network had gone bad. I replaced that line and dial tone was restored.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Public Safety Building Maintenance and Repairs

(*)

Stain on the cedar shingles at the public safety facility is beginning to peel in some places and the PVC trim around doors and windows and in other locations has pulled away from the building over time. Also, the color-match caulking used to seal between trim and siding and to fill screw holes is not well matched and appears to have been applied liberally in areas not requiring it and not at all in some areas that could use it. While the building is still in new condition, it would be advantageous to address these issues, many of which could translate to water problems if left untouched. The work would require an engineer or a designer to specify the project scope and a sealed bid process to hire the necessary contractor. The original project came in well under bid, so funding remains available for this work.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

G. Fiscal/Budget

No items.

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

No items.

J. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

(1) Continued Review of Fall Town Meeting Article Topics (*)

I have revised the possible list of Fall Town Meeting topics in accordance with the Board's guidance from the last meeting.

Recommendation: **Continued Board discussion with respect to Fall Town Meeting possible article topics.**

(2) Transient Vendor and Hawker & Peddler Licensing Policy

At the last meeting, the Board began to discuss this draft policy and agreed that the policy should be reviewed by the Economic Development Committee (EDC) as a next step. I will report back to the Board on any EDC comments after the EDC meets on July 20, 2023.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

K. Legal Issues

(1) Sale of Gregory Island Properties Update (*)

At the last meeting, the Board decided to make a site visit to the Town-owned properties on Gregory Island in order to better understand how the use of the parcels should be restricted into the future (via deed restriction), after being sold. That site visit occurred on July 9, 2023 and the Board will resume discussion at the present meeting.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(2) Quarterly Review of Executive Session Minutes

Each quarter, the Chairman reviews all unreleased executive session minutes in the event that any particular sets of minutes are recommended for release. No such recommendation has been made this quarter.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

L. Grants

(1) Quarterly Reports and Reimbursement Requests

I am presently managing about 9 active grants and the end of the fiscal year becomes a busy time given that quarterly reports, final reports, and requests for reimbursement of funds spent during the fiscal year are all due. Some grant programs required filing of materials by June 30, 2023 and all of those requirements have been met. Other grant programs allow filing of materials through July 15, 2023 and I am on track to meet all of those requirements as well.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Essex Zoning Bylaw Review Project Update (*)

Courtney Lewis is now the lead consultant from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) with respect to the Community Planning Grant that is funding MAPC's review of the Essex zoning bylaw. Courtney held a project update meeting on July 5, 2023 and I was in attendance along with the Town Planner, the Chairman of the Planning Board, and Chairman Preen. The meeting featured a discussion regarding priority zoning bylaw amendment proposals for the Fall Town Meeting in November. Planning Board Chairman O'Donnell proposed codification of the Town's General Zoning District within Section 6-3 (Establishment of Districts) – perhaps with some additional district designations for future use; the addition of a Use Table within Section 6-4 (Use Regulations); the elevation of the Site Plan Review process for a change of use to that of a Special Permit; and an article to possibly extend the change of use moratorium should articles for the above-described topics be unsuccessful.

Community Forum number 2 was supposed to have been held back in May but was postponed. This forum will now likely be held during August, with forum number 3 to be held in September and forum number 4 to be held in the winter or spring of 2024. MAPC has proposed that its schedule be extended beyond the end of this calendar year to accommodate those changes, at no extra cost. Joint meetings of the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen are proposed for July 26, August 23, and September 27. Fall Town Meeting will be held on November 13 and some new definitions and uses could be proposed at the Annual Town Meeting in the spring of 2024.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

M. Emergency Planning

No items.

N. Other Items

(1) Town Administrator Leave

I was out of the office, on leave, all day on June 22, 23, and 30 and on July 3, 2023.

(2) Independence Day Holiday

The office was closed on July 4, 2023 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.*