



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of March 11, 2024

Report covers from February 24, 2024 to March 8, 2024

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

No items.

B. Computer Systems

No items.

C. Personnel

No items.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Resumption of Downtown Decorative Lighting Project (*)

As the Board may recall, our decorative lighting contractor had pre-cut the sidewalk along the Essex Causeway in various locations to begin the process of accommodating bases for 23 decorative sidewalks. Winter weather then moved in and our contractor has been off site for a number of weeks. Work on setting the actual light bases is set to resume March 11, 2024 and I am working with the construction crew to ensure that any pole that is set has the requisite clearances for our sidewalk plow and pedestrians. In some cases, it may be necessary to skip or move a pole location in order to allow for proper clearance and I plan to test the locations with the smallest tolerances with the DPW's plow on site.

The contractor will first complete the setting the bases for the poles and will then move on to installing feeder conduits and pulling wires. The light poles are scheduled to ship to the Town on April 12, 2024, with the lanterns shipping close behind, on or about April 17, 2024. As such, most work will be completed well in advance of Memorial Day. However, the lead time on the two wiring cabinets within the project area has been extreme and it is possible that the cabinets will not be set until the fall, meaning that the lighting will not be operational until then.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(2) Centennial Grove Communications System Update

Our fiber optic contractor has now completed both the running of fiber optic cable to the Grove concession stand and cottage and the termination of the fiber runs to make them useable. I have been working with our IT consultant to procure all of

the necessary switching equipment to get electronic traffic from the Grove to the Town's network at the Water Plant. After all equipment arrives, I will deploy at the concession stand, cottage, and Water Plant and then work with our consultant on routing and testing.

With respect to security cameras, the optimal plan will be to have any new cameras that are deployed interface with the Police Department's existing video surveillance and recording system for the Public Safety Facility. To that end, on March 8, 2024, I met on site with the Department's video vendor and I am expecting a quotation concerning expanding that system to accommodate video from the Grove. Funding for this expansion and the purchase of the actual cameras can be obtained via a new appropriation from the Cable Technology Fund at the upcoming Annual Town Meeting in May.

Eventually, the Town may wish to also offer WiFi service to the public at the Grove. The equipment for that offering is not terribly expensive. However, we are not presently ready to accommodate the necessary bandwidth without upgrading our Internet connection with Comcast. That upgrade would require an ongoing additional charge that may or may not be something that the Town desires to pay for.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

E. Insurance

No items.

F. Facilities

No items.

G. Fiscal/Budget

No items.

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

(1) Planning Board Zoning Study Public Forum Summary (*)

I attended the subject forum along with the Selectmen on February 28, 2024. The meeting featured a discussion concerning work accomplished with the zoning bylaws to date, as a precursor to forming actual zoning districts, along with a discussion about potentially adding some uses that will require the granting of a

Special Permit. Generally, our Town Planner will now work directly with the Planning Board to prepare zoning bylaw amendment proposals intended for consideration at the Annual Town Meeting. Preliminary versions of the amendments that the Planning Board is seeking have been forwarded to the Selectmen and to Town Counsel for review. The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), which has been assisting the Planning Board with the zoning bylaw amendment process, will wrap up its services soon, mostly providing final deliverables and documentation regarding both current and future zoning amendment proposals.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

J. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

(1) Further Review of Annual Town Meeting Warrant (*)

I have revised the draft Annual Town Meeting Warrant in accordance with the Board's guidance from the last meeting. The final version of the warrant will be presented to the Board for signature at the Board's next meeting, on March 25, 2024.

Recommendation: **Further review of the draft warrant by the Board.**

K. Legal Issues

(1) Possible Conomo Point Boat Storage License for Essex Bay Sailing Club (*)

At the last meeting, the Board reviewed a draft license for the Essex Bay Sailing Club to store sailboats at the Town's property at 103 Conomo Point Road during the off-season. The Board asked that I collect additional information from the club before finalizing the details of the license.

I contacted the club and discussed potential license details such as the exact location on the property where boats could be stored, the number and type/length of sailboats and possibly power boats associated with club activities, the required annual duration of storage, and whether non-resident members could be charged more to serve as the basis for the annual storage fee. The club's treasurer has provided answers to all of the Board's questions for further consideration of the license.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(2) Review of Revised Draft License for the Private Use of Town Landing (*)

At the last meeting, the Board continued to review and discuss a possible license/rental agreement allowing private groups to use the Town Landing for one-day events during off-peak months. The Board asked that I make some additional changes to the draft document for discussion at the present meeting.

Recommendation: Board discussion as necessary.

L. Grants

No items.

M. Emergency Planning

No items.

N. Other Items

(1) Town Administrator Leave

I was out of the office, on leave, all day on March 4 and 5, 2024 and for part of the day on March 7, 2024.

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