



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of March 9, 2020

Report covers from February 22, 2020 to March 6, 2020

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

No items.

B. Computer Systems

(1) Renewal of Antivirus Client Licenses

A portion of the Town's antivirus software client computer licenses are set to expire soon. As such, I placed the necessary order for the renewal licenses and will install those to the central antivirus server when they arrive.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

C. Personnel

No items.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Route 133 Bridge Replacement Utility Coordination Meeting Summary(*)

I participated in the subject meeting on February 26, 2020. The meeting was organized by Mass DOT as part of ongoing design work for the eventual replacement of the Route 133 bridge over the Essex River in downtown Essex. The project is presently at the 25% design stage and DOT needs to continue to collect feedback from all utilities (including the Town's water and sewer utilities) with respect to maintaining service during and after the project.

At the meeting, we learned that the project is on track for construction bid advertising around May of 2021, with a 12 to 18-month duration (subject to change). With respect to utilities, since cranes will be working on the site, one major requirement is a temporary relocation of the high voltage lines along the causeway, in order to safely work in the area. Short electric outages will likely be required when cutting over to and then cutting back from the temporary lines. We do not expect the need for a water shutoff (valves can be used) and sewer service will be maintained with pump trucks when temporary pipes are put into operation for those utilities. A temporary bridge just landward of the existing bridge will keep traffic moving while the new, permanent bridge is being constructed and trucks up to four axles, school buses, and fire trucks will be allowed at all times.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(2) Public Safety Facility Project Update

(*)

Selectman Preen and I participated in a public safety facility project meeting on February 27, 2020 and Chairman Spinney participated in a project meeting on March 5, 2020. The project contractor is still working diligently on foundation footings and walls, which has been slowed down by the presence of ledge on the site. The contractor has also released a revised schedule, which anticipates a delay with respect to the ledge removal work and, as the Board has discussed in the past, an overall delay to deal with winter conditions and other smaller matters.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(3) Change Order: Relocation of HVAC Condensers to Public Safety Bldg. Roof (*)

In the past, the Board agreed in concept concerning the need for the relocation of some HVAC condensers to the roof of the new public safety building, along with a roof hatch and ladder/stairs. We will have a final price with recommendations from our representatives by meeting time.

Recommendation: **Formal Board approval of the change order for condenser relocation and access.**

(4) Change Order: Time Extension for Public Safety Building Project (*)

The Board discussed in the past the concept of extending the public safety facility project completion date through the end of January, 2021. The extension was to allow the contractor to absorb most small setbacks and would really only mean moving into the new facility at the beginning of February, 2021, as opposed to mid-January. More recently, our contractor has indicated that even more time is desired, through late-March, 2021. While the exact date for building occupation is not critical to the Town, going beyond the end of January, 2021 has much more of a potential to require the payment of additional project carrying costs.

At the last meeting, the Board asked Chairman Spinney, Town Building Committee Chairman O'Donnell, and me to work with our contractor and our project professionals to arrive at a proposal that provides the extra time, but with a minimum of carrying costs. We have learned that extending the Builders' Risk policy for sixty days (the months of February and March, 2021) will cost the Town approximately \$3,500. While the contractor is not looking to be paid for its "General Conditions" during the extension period, our Project Manager will require about \$70,000 for full coverage and our architect will require about \$30,000. This brings the carrying cost of the extension to a total of \$103,500, if full coverage is desired. However, there may be a way to complete the project with only part-time coverage.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(5) Change Order: Additional Bedrock Removal Work at Public Safety Site(*)

As discussed in the past, the geotechnical experts for the public safety facility project had anticipated the need to remove boulders from along foundation footing and wall excavations. However, in certain areas, the rock encountered during drilling was not boulders, but hard ledge. While the project did carry a certain quantity of ledge removal at a unit price, that quantity was far exceeded during actual work. As such, it is necessary to compensate the contractor for the extra work. We will not know the full value of this change order until all rock has been removed.

Recommendation: **Initial Board discussion relative to this future change order.**

(6) Change Order: Miscellaneous Public Safety Facility Construction Changes(*)

A variety of small change order items (some extra costs and some credits) have been proposed in a miscellaneous items change order. Items include a deleted hydrant, some deleted ductwork fire dampers, deleted ceiling painting (ceiling plastic in these areas), a deleted window, a deleted power supply, some deleted variable refrigerant flow equipment, a cabinet unit heater modification, some light framing deletions, a change to the entry vestibule ceiling construction, and modifications to one door. Most of the items are not fully-vetted yet, so this change order will be presented in the future.

Recommendation: **Initial Board discussion relative to this future change order.**

E. Insurance

(1) Monthly Pothole Log

I received from the Department of Public Works during the week of March 2, 2020 the pothole log for the month of February, 2020. One pothole was reported during the month of February and was promptly repaired.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

F. Facilities

(1) Town Hall Roof Leak

A rainstorm with a particular intensity and direction of wind on February 27, 2020 produced a leak that manifested above the third-floor stair landing in Town Hall. This leak had occurred in the past, in similar conditions, and our Town Hall renovation project contractor had twice come to assess and make repairs (the second time bringing back a lift for repairs). We had experienced several storms of this nature since the most recent repair and we thought the issue was behind us. I made contact with the contractor and he will visit Town Hall to review the

matter. I also pointed out that one window in the Assessors' office leaked during the same event.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

G. Fiscal/Budget

(1) Public Safety Facility Bond Sale Call

I joined the Treasurer/Collector and the Town Accountant in a Standard & Poor Global bond rating call on February 27, 2020. The Treasurer is preparing to go to market for municipal bonds that will fund the new public safety facility, which is presently under construction. The SP Global personnel on the call asked a wide variety of questions concerning the Town's operation, financial policies, and long-range planning. Subsequently, we learned that SP Global has kept the Town's current bond rating at AA+/Stable (one step under AAA, which would be difficult for a relatively small town to attain).

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

(1) Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce Essex Division Meeting

I attended the subject meeting on March 3, 2020. At the meeting, I updated those present on a variety of Town issues and initiatives and Officer Ryan Davis provided the Police Department update. Later in the meeting, I reviewed the Town's progress in the areas of community housing and economic development and indicated how the zoning bylaw proposal for this coming May with respect to downtown mixed-use zoning has the support of the Housing Coalition, the Economic Development Committee, the Planning Board, and the Board of Selectmen.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

J. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

(1) Continued Review of Draft 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 Board is scheduled to approve and sign the warrant at its next meeting, on March 23, 2020.

Recommendation: **Continued Board review of the draft warrant.**

(2) Review of Town Speed Regulations

At the last meeting, the Board and the Chief of Police agreed that one speed limit sign on Southern Avenue could be increased to be in step with the Town's Chapter 90 speed regulations, which are maintained by MA DOT. However, two other speed limit signs, on Western Avenue, should be kept at the lower speeds (even though these are not in step with the speed regulations for this area). I have discussed this matter with DOT personnel and we are in agreement that the speed study that DOT will be conducting this spring, along the entire length of Route 22 in Essex, may show that the lower posted speed limits are appropriate. As such, no action is necessary at this time with respect to those two signs. The Chief of Police will work with the DPW directly to replace the sign on Southern Avenue.

Recommendation: I will update the Board as necessary.

K. Legal Issues

No items.

L. Grants

No items.

M. Emergency Planning

No items.

N. Other Items

No items.

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