



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of May 2, 2022

Report covers from April 23, 2022 to April 29, 2022

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Strategic Planning Committee Meeting Summary (*)

I attended the Strategic Planning Committee meeting of April 28, 2022 along with Chairman Preen and Town Planner Dana Menon. The Committee has now compiled a complete version of the draft update to the Town's Strategic Plan and will meet again on May 26, 2022 to finish up any necessary detail work before the draft goes out to various Town departments, boards, and committees for internal review.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(2) Board of Public Works Recommendation for Solid Waste Disposal (*)

At its meeting of April 25, 2022, the Board of Public Works (BPW) came to the resolution that the best way to move forward with solid waste disposal after the current contract with Covanta expires at the end of this calendar year will be to move to curbside trash collection. The BPW is presently envisioning the issuance of an official trash container for every participating resident. If a resident has more trash than will fit into a container in a given week, the resident would have to purchase specially-marked trash bags for the overage.

It is likely under this scenario that the resident will need to pay for the container itself, plus an annual fee for participating in the curbside program (plus individual bags for overages in a given week). As each new year begins, the resident could purchase an official sticker for the container signifying to the solid waste contractor that the resident renewed their curbside service or the DPW could collect containers from any resident opting not to renew. Details need to be worked out, of course, and the BPW is contemplating still running a very limited service transfer station for the collection of larger items (all based on per-item sticker fees).

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

B. Computer Systems

No items.

C. Personnel

No items.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Route 133 Bridge Replacement Project Update (*)

I attended a construction update meeting with personnel from the bridge contractor and MA DOT on April 26, 2022. The contractor has indicated that traffic may still be diverted over the temporary bridge sometime in May but that the diversion could be delayed until June. Complexities with respect to the diversion of utilities, including National Grid's lead time, are the reason for the slower transition to the temporary bridge.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(2) Conomo Point Seawall Replacement Project Update (*)

I participated in a seawall replacement construction project on April 27, 2022, along with our engineering consultant and personnel from our general contractor. The contractor is still on schedule and also brought to the meeting the subcontractor that will conduct all of the landscaping work. Our engineering consultant and I stressed how all landscaping needs to be done exactly per the plan since most of the landscaping is integral to the function of the wall (preventing back scour if the wall is overtopped in a storm surge). The landscaping subcontractor is presently pricing the delta between several red cedar trees that had been originally specified and basswood trees in those locations. Once I have the figure, I will ask the resident who offered to pay any difference to write a check to the Town. If the resident is no longer interested, the originally-specified trees will be installed.

Our general contractor is working out figures for a new change of conditions where the wall is founded half on a footing and half on bedrock and Selectman Phippen will consider the approval of this type of change order, along with a second "scribe to ledge" change order in the coming weeks. Also, the general contractor is separately pricing a minor repair to one of the stone piers. That work is not part of the present contract but it would be advantageous to have the contractor complete that work while on site since the work is necessary. That work will be paid for out of the Town's operating budget.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

E. Insurance

No items.

F. Facilities

(1) Preparation for State Elevator Inspection and Test, Public Safety Facility

Now that a year has elapsed since the new Essex Public Safety Facility was opened, the State Elevator Inspector has announced that he will inspect and test the elevator at the building (required annually) on May 2, 2022. I worked to line

up our elevator contractor, our fire alarm contractor, and our emergency generator contractor for the test. Earlier this year, I had arranged for a new provider for elevator emergency phone monitoring and had this new elevator added to our maintenance and testing contract with United Elevator. Next year, the Chief of Police will take over making arrangements for annual testing.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

G. Fiscal/Budget

(1) School Budget Collaboration Group Meeting Summary (*)

I attended the subject meeting along with Selectman Bradford and Finance Committee Chairman Buttrick on April 28, 2022. The meeting featured a discussion regarding the School District's operating budget motion at the upcoming Annual Town Meeting.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

(1) Climate Change Workshop

I attended the subject workshop on April 27, 2022, along with Selectman Phippen. The workshop was made possible via participation in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Building Blocks for Regional Resilience Program and is the first of two workshops. TownGreen2025 is hosting a workshop series to take a broader look at climate threats and vulnerabilities on Cape Ann. The workshops are exploring both increased flooding concerns and a 2038 Great Storm scenario revealing potential damages from a Category 3 hurricane. At the first workshop, participants were presented with some interesting illustrations of why might happen and then broke into several smaller groups to discuss matters in more detail. There may be new opportunities for communities, either individually or collaboratively, to meet these anticipated, common challenges.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

J. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

(1) Public Hearing for Change of Use Moratorium Extension

I attended the subject Planning Board public hearing along with Chairman Preen on April 27, 2022. The Town Meeting warrant includes an article to extend a moratorium on the change of use of a parcel from residential or vacant to commercial or industrial (from August 30, 2023 until January 1, 2024). Since the

moratorium is part of the Town's zoning bylaws, a public hearing was required. It is the Selectmen's shared intention with the Planning Board to continue evaluating the Town's zoning bylaws in order to bring formal proposals for possible amendments to the Fall Town Meeting in November of 2023. At the hearing, Planning Board members debated the options and unanimously agreed to support the moratorium. Reasons ranged from following through on the commitment that was set up after the initial Town Meeting vote to improving the chances of grant funding for phase 2 of the work.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Review of Final Annual Town Meeting Motions

(*)

I have prepared final Annual Town Meeting motions based upon the Board's guidance from the last Selectmen's meeting.

Recommendation: **Board review and discussion of the final motions.**

K. Legal Issues

No items.

L. Grants

(1) Community Planning Grant Application Discussion

I met virtually with personnel from MAPC and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Planning Board on April 28, 2022 to review the scope of services that will be expected from MAPC if the Community Planning Grant application that MAPC is helping us write is successful. As noted by the Vice-Chair at the Board's last meeting, the Planning Board is probably not inclined to move toward defined zones as part of recommendations for zoning bylaw revisions that will come to the Town Meeting in the fall of 2023. Instead, the Planning Board wants to move forward with planning that will show residents what defined zoning in Essex would look like but will try to usher in other bylaw changes first, and possibly move on to defined zones. The full Planning Board will meet with MAPC personnel on May 4, 2022 to arrive at a final scope of services and MAPC will use that guidance to submit the grant application by the deadline of June 2, 2022.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

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.