



Town Administrator's Report Board of Selectmen's Meeting of October 4, 2021

Report covers from September 25, 2021 to October 1, 2021

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

A. Town Department Reports/Requests

(1) Community Preservation Committee Tennis Court Project Consideration

On September 28, 2021, the Community Preservation Committee considered a proposal by a private group to assist with the renovation of the tennis courts at Memorial Park, which would also involve the provision of materials by the Town. The Committee voted unanimously to support the Town's provision of materials in the amount of \$49,999.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

B. Computer Systems

(1) Configuration of Fire Department Radio Room PC

Now that the new public safety facility is fully operational and the dispatch console in the fire department radio room has been installed, the fire department set up the dedicated PC that I had purchased for that purpose. I visited the station and configured the PC for use on the Town's network and for communication with the dispatch software in the North Shore Regional 911 Center.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Installation of Additional Digital Cable Television Connections, Fire Station

When the Fire Department moved into the new building, the three free cable television connections that the Town had in the old station that are provided as part of the Comcast cable television franchise agreement were moved to the new building. The Fire Department informed me during the week of September 27, 2021 that they are in need of two additional connections to serve monitors in two other locations (which will carry monthly charges). As such, I arranged for the installation of two new connections, which Comcast completed the same week.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

C. Personnel

No items.

D. Procurement/Ongoing Projects

(1) Quarterly Affirmative Marketing Program (AMP) Report

I filed the subject report with the State during the week of October 4, 2021 in my capacity as the Town's Affirmative Marketing Construction Officer (AMCO). The report documents the Town's utilization of minority or woman-owned businesses on State-funded building construction projects. The Town had no such utilization over the last quarter.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Old Police/Fire Station Demolition Project Update (*)

Chairman Perea and I participated in a construction meeting with respect to the subject project on September 28, 2021. Asbestos abatement wrapped up on or about October 1, 2021 and demolition of the old police and fire station will likely commence on or about October 4, 2021. I assisted the contractor with the acquisition of a demolition permit from the Building Inspector after confirmation that all necessary utilities had been disconnected and the Conservation Commission, the Board of Health, and the Historical Commission had signed off on the application. The contractor will work with the Water Department to provide temporary water service for spraying down the work during demolition. Also, since the building footprint will become a greenspace, we will preserve the old building waterline for water service to that new area. Project completion is still anticipated in early November.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

E. Insurance

No items.

F. Facilities

(1) Quarterly Facility Self-Inspection Checklists

I have completed the subject checklists for the Town Hall and the Senior Center for the quarter ending September 30, 2021. The checklists are intended to identify safety hazards and prompt rapid corrective action. No hazards were identified but I did document how we are still working to find the source of a roof leak on the third floor of Town Hall.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

(2) Possible Change of VOIP Service Provider for Non-Public Safety (*)

The Essex public safety facility uses a Voice-Over-IP (VOIP) telephone vendor that also runs the VOIP system for the North Shore Regional 911 Center. This arrangement allows the system in our building to be fully integrated with the

Center, including elements involving in-person communication with residents who present themselves in the station's entryways and control of various building functions by the Center using the station alerting system.

Recently, I asked that VOIP vendor, NetTelOne (which is a vendor on the State Contract), what it would cost for the non-public safety departments in Town Hall and the Senior Center to switch over to their service. NetTelOne has the ability to install replacement equipment in all locations and either lease the equipment to us, accept a one-time payment for the equipment at installation, or lease the equipment to us until we desire to pay it off (but not translate to a lease savings). Even the leasing option would come in lower than our present carrier (MiTel) is charging us and an up-front equipment payment by the Town would bring the monthly operational cost down considerably more.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

G. Fiscal/Budget

(1) Finance Committee Meeting Summary (*)

The Essex Finance Committee met on September 27, 2021 to discuss the proposed, financially-related articles for the Fall Town Meeting warrant. The Committee is in support of the various articles and had some questions and comments related to some articles.

Recommendation: **Board discussion with respect to the Committee's feedback.**

H. Complaints

No items.

I. Meetings Attended

No items.

J. Town Meeting, By-Laws, and Regulations

(1) Continued Review of Draft Fall Town Meeting Warrant (*)

The draft Fall Town Meeting warrant has not changed since the Board reviewed it at the last meeting. However, the Board should discuss the current status of items related to the articles as well as recommendations for monetary amounts.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

K. Legal Issues

(1) Possible Participation in the National Opioid Settlement (*)

The Town was informed during the week of September 27, 2021 that a court action known as the National Opioid Settlement has enough interest from various states to move toward individual awards to participating local communities. I have reviewed the matter with Town Counsel and Counsel recommended that the Town at least register with the National Prescription Opioids Litigation Consortium to remain engaged at this point and to get more information. I have completed this registration step and we will be provided with more information as the settlement process unfolds.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

L. Grants

(1) Local Rapid Relief Grant Program Public Forum Summary (*)

The Local Rapid Relief Grant Program helped Essex and Manchester study some possible strategies for helping local businesses recover from the COVID crisis and six areas of focus were recommended. Town Planner Dana Menon coordinated the Town's participation in a virtual public forum on September 29, 2021 that was arranged by personnel from Dodson & Flinker (the consulting firm assisting with the project). The forum gave personnel and officials from both communities, along with business leaders from both communities, the chance to understand how the public views the chosen focus areas.

The Town Planner had the following to report: Generally, each of the focus areas has multiple opportunities for grant funding, with some grant programs overlapping focus areas. It may be possible to develop a future grant application that addresses multiple areas of interest. While public participation was not robust, it seemed that people supported starting with both a strategic planning effort and a shorter-term immediate effort (like an off-season event) that would benefit businesses more quickly, and also generate some public interest and feedback. Participants supported lighting (possibly combining it with wayfinding and branding improvements), and general discussion indicated an interest in an economic development professional, as well as a placemaking plan. The two communities would like to continue partnering on issues and future grant applications.

Recommendation: **Board discussion as necessary.**

(2) Green Community Grant Quarterly Report

The Town Planner filed the subject report with the State during the week of September 27, 2021. She worked with the Manchester Essex Regional School District Facilities Manager, since our current project involves the final phase of building automation at the Essex Elementary School.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

M. Emergency Planning

(1) North Shore Regional 911 Center Executive Board Meeting

I attended the subject meeting on September 27, 2021 as the Chairman of the Center's Executive Advisory Board and its Administrative Advisory Board. The Administrative, Police, and Fire Advisory Boards were also assembled. The meeting involved the introduction of various new members of various advisory boards and a discussion concerning the possible admission of new member communities into the Center. While the Town of Ipswich has been interested in possibly joining, it is our understanding that this is no longer the case. However, the Town of Manchester is still actively considering joining. The boards also discussed minor modifications to the Center's performance standards and heard updates on a number of technical fronts.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary.

N. Other Items

(1) Town Administrator Leave

I was out of the office, on leave, for a portion of the day on September 27, 2021.

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