

**Selectmen's Minutes
Town Hall Stage Conference Area, 2nd Floor**

December 18, 2017

Present: Chairman Lisa J. O'Donnell, Selectman David A. Doane, Selectman Andrew C. Spinney, Town Administrator Brendhan Zubricki, and Selectmen's Assistant Pamela J. Witham.

Also Present: Michelle Dyer and Tina Lane.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Stage Conference area on the second floor of the Town Hall at 30 Martin Street and announced that the Board would hear Public Comment. Tina Lane asked about the importance of dredging and development of the coastline in ranking the Town's goals. Mr. Zubricki explained that dredging is a goal of the Town, but there are no plans to develop the coastline. The Town is in the midst of a study with the Army Corps of Engineers for coastal resiliency that could result in funding for beneficial re-use of sediment within the Essex River channel, thereby helping to mitigate future effects of climate change and sea level rise, while concurrently dredging the channel.

In other business, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve the weekly warrant in the amount of \$217,547.65.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to exempt from Section 20 of Chapter 268A of the General Laws, the contracts and amounts for the individuals listed below contained within the 12/14/2017 warrant pursuant to subsection (d) of said Section.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>VENDOR</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>DEPT'S BILL</u>
Ernie Nieberle	Nieberle's	11/24/17	\$ 331.60	Fire Department
Dave Pereen	Pereen Plumbing	11/26/17	\$ 278.00	Town Property

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve the minutes for the Selectmen's December 11, 2017, Open Meeting and Executive Session. Selectman Spinney signed the minutes in his capacity as clerk for the Board.

The Board and Mr. Zubricki discussed Attorney John Guerin's request to communicate with Town Counsel with respect to private property access over Town property that has been transferred into conservation. Mr. Guerin is representing a client who is involved with property near Laurel Lane and the property is accessed by crossing over such property. Mr. Guerin has suggested that the property does have access rights and would like to discuss the matter with Town Counsel. Following the discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to authorize Mr. Zubricki to discuss the matter with Town Counsel, and also, to approve Mr. Guerin's request to speak to Town Counsel on the matter following Mr. Zubricki's conversation with Town Counsel.

A letter had been received from the Mass Cultural Council announcing the expiration of the State 5-year designation of the Essex River Cultural District in June 2018. Mr. Zubricki had contacted Jean Grobe, who had been very instrumental in obtaining the designation for the Town five years ago. Jean Grobe said that Lee Spence and Nancy Dudley have offered to help her take care of the

renewal and would like to meet with the Selectmen to discuss how it can be accomplished. The Selectmen approved of the idea and a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to authorize Mr. Zubricki to inform the Massachusetts Cultural Council of the Town's intent to renew. The Board will accept Jean Grobe's, Lee Spence's, and Nancy Dudley's offer and they will meet with them on January 22.

The Selectmen voted the following regarding the 2018 Annual Town Meeting:

- A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to hold the Annual Town Meeting on May 7, 2018, starting at 7:30 pm at the Essex Elementary School.
- A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to open the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting and accept articles for inclusion in the Warrant until 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 28, 2018.
- And, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to accept reports for the Annual Town Report until noon on Wednesday, January 31, 2018.

Mr. Zubricki reported that the Department of Revenue has contacted the Town, and although the paperwork was digitally submitted, has requested tangible proof that the Board of Assessors and the Board of Selectmen are in agreement concerning the setting of the tax rate and that the public hearing regarding the residential factor was properly advertised. The DOR has been sent a copy of the advertisement and the Assessors have signed the *Classification Tax Allocation from the DOR*, which also needs to be signed by the Board. Consequently, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to sign this document which the Town Accountant will forward to the DOR.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve the following license renewals for 2018:

Antiques License Renewal:

- Susan Blake, Muzio Designs, 55 John Wise Avenue
- Robert Coviello, Main Street Antiques, 44 Main Street
- Robert Landry, L.A. Landry Antiques, 164 Main Street
- Tom Lang, Perim Lang Antiques, 18 Eastern Avenue

Common Victuallers License Renewal:

- Cape Ann Pizza
- Essex Pizza

Mr. Zubricki informed the Selectmen that one of the Conomo Point lots that was leased to the David and Mary Mears Trust has now been converted from year-round use to seasonal use, as a result of the Trust being divided and conveyed to a number of other trusts. David and Mary Mears are now both deceased.

The Selectmen were reminded of the following events and meetings:

- The Selectmen will attend a Manchester Essex Regional School capital budget review meeting at the Manchester Essex Regional High School on December 19, 2017, starting at 7:00 p.m.

- The next regular Board of Selectmen's meeting will take place on Monday, January 8, 2018, at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Stage Conference Room on the second floor, 30 Martin Street.
- There will be a Town Building Committee meeting on Thursday, January 18, 2018, at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Auditorium.
- There will be a Public Forum on Wednesday, January 24, 2018, at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Auditorium to review options for a public safety building replacement.
- The Selectmen will attend a Public Hearing concerning the Manchester Essex Regional School District FY2019 final Operating Budget at the Manchester Essex Regional High School on January 30, 2018, starting at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Zubricki announced that the Youth Commission was not ready to recommend a job description for a Youth Director or discuss sponsoring future seasonal events. The Commission has informed him that they intend to make a recommendation at the January 22nd Selectmen's meeting.

Mr. Zubricki began the presentation of his Town Administrator's Report for the period December 9th through December 15th, 2017, regarding the following:

Tree Work off of Robbins Island Road: Mr. Zubricki said that he has viewed the Town right of way off Robbins Island Road with the DPW Superintendent and Tree Warden, Paul Goodwin, and has talked with the resident requesting the tree removal. Mr. Zubricki asked the resident to clarify the septic installer's need for access to the property resulting in his request for the tree removal. Superintendent Goodwin will be contacting National Grid to see if they would prune or remove the trees, if necessary. The DPW will not be able to help with the trees, since there are power lines involved. At present, Mr. Zubricki said that more information is needed before a decision can be made regarding the extent of the tree removal that is needed.

Network Penetration and User Testing: Mr. Zubricki said that he has received an estimate for penetration testing of the Town Hall Internet interface and for user testing in the amount of \$6,600 from INS. He recommended that the Board approve a request to the Finance Committee for a Line Item Transfer from Blanket Liability Insurance to Network Equipment and Maintenance in the amount of \$6,600. Annual testing has been recommended by the Town's auditor and by the Town's insurance carrier, and the Town Technology Fund does not contain sufficient funding, due to the planned fiber optic system. Subsequently, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to authorize Mr. Zubricki to sign a line item transfer request to the Finance Committee to pay for the testing.

Discussion of Town Administrator's Goals for Calendar Year 2018: Mr. Zubricki reviewed the latest draft of his goals for calendar year 2018. The Board was in agreement with his goals that include the implementation of a municipal fiber optic network, working with the new Town Hall/Library Custodian to the job description and establish a routine maintenance and cleaning schedule, working towards the resolution of providing an adequate building for public safety,

pursuing government funding for coastal resiliency to pay for dredging the river, and working with the Town Planner to guide and help the Strategic Planning Committee with their projects. Chairman O'Donnell suggested that Mr. Zubricki add working with Senator Tarr to continue the promotion of a regional dredging effort, working with school officials to guide the Manchester Memorial School project, and helping the Department of Public Works work towards developing an incremental master plan for an upgrade and preventive maintenance of the Town's water system. Mr. Zubricki agreed to revise his list and will provide a final version to the Board.

Appointment of Town Hall/Library Custodian: Mr. Zubricki reported that he had interviewed both applicants who had applied for the new custodial position. He said he is recommending Ed King for the position, since he has extensive experience in facilities maintenance. The Board was in agreement and a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to offer the job to Mr. King, pending successful drug and medical screening, a CORI check, and favorable consultation with the references supplied by Mr. King.

Alternative Mechanism for Conversion and Maintenance of Street Lights: Mr. Zubricki said that he is waiting for more information on this matter and the Board agreed to add this to their agenda for January 8.

Rehabilitation of Route 133 Bridge Over Essex River: Mr. Zubricki said that he had discussed this project with a MassDOT representative. MassDOT has agreed to offer the Town an opportunity to review the plans when the design and engineering phase of the project is complete. Also, MassDOT plans to alert the Town to any road closures or traffic detours scheduled during the research and planning phase of the project.

Repairs to Large Stone Pier, Conomo Point: Mr. Zubricki said that he had consulted with a mason regarding the damage to the large stone pier. The mason said that the stones in a structure of this type are mostly held in place with gravity and that he would be happy to inspect the pier at low tide in the spring and quote a scope of services and price. The Selectmen agreed to table the project for the time being.

Further Review of Draft FY19 Capital and Operating Budget Requests: Mr. Zubricki reviewed each of the items in the proposed Selectmen's Operating Budget and collected the Board's comments. The list will now be updated for final approval on January 8th by the Board and submitted to the Finance Committee by January 10th.

Finance Committee Chair Michelle Dyer joined those present for a discussion regarding the hiring options available for replacement of the Town Accountant. Mr. Zubricki said that only one application has been received so far. The Town has the option to hire someone new or to promote someone already employed by the Town. Those present discussed various ways the finance team could be structured, if an employee was promoted. It was agreed to continue the discussion and seek additional input from others at the next Selectmen's meeting on January 8th. In the meantime, the external search process will continue on a parallel track.

Mr. Zubricki reviewed each of the items on the Selectmen's proposed capital budget which will be revised based on comments from those present for final approval on January 8th and then forwarded to the Finance Committee.

On another matter, FinCom Chair Michelle Dyer asked the Board to think about ways the Town could save money by regionalizing certain services. By regionalizing the Emergency Center, the Town had reduced the cost of that service from \$80 per capita to \$16.26 per capita in 2013, with original estimates offered in 2010. And, that rate is still in effect more than seven years later. Mr. Zubricki suggested that regionalization be a topic for discussion at the next quarterly department head meeting on January 22nd.

Preliminary List of Potential Article Topics for Annual Town Meeting: Those present discussed the tiered list of article topics for the May 2018 Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Zubricki will continue to revise the list which will eventually evolve into the warrant articles for the annual meeting.

There being no further business before the Board, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Documents used during this meeting include the following:

Classification Tax Allocation from the DOR

Prepared by: _____
Pamela J. Witham

Attested by: _____
Andrew C. Spinney