

From: Susan Mazurski January 19, 2012 10:15:34 AM
Subject: Public Safety Sub-Committee Minutes 09/15/2011 Approved
To: SimsburyCT_SafetyMin
Cc:

PUBLIC SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE - MINUTES 09/15/11 - ADOPTED

PUBLIC SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 15, 2011

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. John Hampton, Chairman, called the regular meeting of the Public Safety Committee to order on Thursday, September 15th, at 7:00 a.m., in the Main Meeting Room at the Town Offices. The following members were also present: Chief Ingvertsen, Simsbury Police Department, Chief James Baldis, SVFD, Kevin Kowalski, Fire Marshall, Lucille G. Bowman, SVAA. Also in attendance were Lieutenant Nicholas Boulter, SPD, Michael Delehanty, SVAA, Tom Cooke, Director of Administrative Services, Thomas Roy, Director of Public Works, Lisa Heavner, Board of Selectmen, and Burke LaClair, Board of Education Assistant Business Manager.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - JULY 21, 2011 REGULAR MEETING

Ms. Bowman made a motion to approve the July 21, 2011 minutes with one change. The motion was seconded by Chief Baldis and passed unanimously.

II. PUBLIC AUDIENCE

Mr. Hampton asked if there was anyone present for Public Audience. Margret Patricelli, Resident of Simsbury, addressed the Committee regarding the Connecticut Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Challenge. Ms. Patricelli told the Committee she has brought the concern about this event to Mary Glassman's, First Selectmen, attention for several years now and wanted to get some information from the Committee regarding public safety related to this event. Chief Ingvertsen gave some background with regards to the event and said that they fill out a public gathering permit signed by department heads as well as have restrictions placed upon them by the Police Department. Chief Ingvertsen said they did distribute a notice to surrounding residents that would be affected by the noise/activity. Chief Ingvertsen said an officer was placed there as a liaison to help answer any

questions by the public. He then said all of the weapons used do meet the standards for the particular range at which they are located. Chief Ingvertsen also mentioned that there are no children allowed on-site. Ms. Patricelli then asked if Simsbury is involved in the event planning each upcoming year. Chief Ingvertsen said that yes, they are involved in some of the preparation aspects of the event. Ms. Patricelli thanked the Board and said she will work, in the upcoming year, with Mary Glassman in order to support the surrounding residents affected by the SWAT Challenge.

Mr. Hampton asked if there was anyone else present for Public Audience. There was no additional public audience present.

III. UPDATES & REPORTS

AMBULANCE - Mr. Michael Delehanty, SVAA, said they are holding an EMT refresher Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Also Mr. Delehanty said they are holding EMT Initial Course, which will run Tuesday and Thursday evenings starting October 11, and lastly, Mr. Delehanty thanked, on behalf of the Ambulance Association Chief Baldis and the folks at the Fire Department for their very impressive September 11th Remembrance Ceremony.

FIRE PREPAREDNESS - Chief Baldis thanked Jay Dixon, President of Fire Company, Chief Randall Chesanek, Assistant Fire Chief, and the many volunteers for helping to make the September 11th Remembrance Ceremony a special one. Chief Baldis gave some highlights with regards to Hurricane Irene in terms of calls. He said, in the aftermath of flooding, there was one water rescue of three (3) teenagers, which was handled without incident and no injuries. Chief Baldis mentioned that there was a little activity regarding the earthquake felt on August 23, 2011. Chief Baldis then referenced the upcoming Fly-In on Sunday, September 18th. The issues with regards to parking at the Fly-In were discussed among the Committee Members. Chief Ingvertsen then said that there will be an Incident Commander on location at the Fly-In, as they anticipate over 5,000 attendees.

FARMING VALLEY HEALTH DISTRICT - Not in attendance of meeting.

POLICE - Chief Ingvertsen started off by reiterating his pride in, and thanks to, the Fire Department with regards to the September 11th Remembrance Ceremony. Chief Ingvertsen said the study on regional communications is being signed and will be contractual, and they will be conducting the study to see if regional dispatching would be beneficial. Chief Ingvertsen emphasized that Simsbury is committed to the study but that does not necessarily mean the Town is committed to the results of the study. He has expressed this to the other two (2) towns (Canton and Avon) as well. Chief Ingvertsen mentioned that their newest officer should be

completing training shortly. In response, Mr. Kowalski then said that during Irene, there were at least five (5) dissipaters on duty just for Simsbury answering calls due to the fact that we have the seating capacity for that number. Mr. Kowalski then said that if dispatching was combined, he does not think there would be that ability to serve the community as well, although he realizes this is premature to the findings of the study. Chief Ingvertsen said that yes, he agrees, but they do want to see the results of the study. Mr. Hampton then discussed the issue of traffic speed monitoring within Tariffville and referenced a MPH display board that had been purchased. It was discussed where the appropriate location would be for that display. Chief Ingvertsen said that they do not intend to put these monitoring devices all over Simsbury, just in the appropriate places, especially near schools.

BOARD OF EDUCATION - Burke LaClair, Board of Education Assistant Business Manager said the opening of the school year has been a successful one, despite all of the challenges with that period of time, thanks in large part to the people in the room.

CL&P - The CL&P representative present thanked everyone during the challenges of the storm and said she brought Mark Massaro, Account Executive CL&P, with her to the meeting. Mr. Massaro said that in the near future, they would be setting up a meeting with Town Executives in order to open the lines of communication moving forward. Mr. Massaro also spoke about things they plan to do with regards to future storms. Mr. Kowalski then read a letter from the Fire District, siting concerns with some overall issues, with regards to Irene, and how they might be able to better respond to emergency situations by using preventive measures (i.e. - tree trimming) now. Tree trimming/maintenance was then discussed by the Committee, CL&P and Tom Roy, in terms of being a preventative measure to avoid taking out power lines from a storm, snow or ice. Mr. Kowalski asked what the Committee could do in order to take action on this issue. Mr. Roy suggested putting a draft proposal together with the end goal of reducing the impact of any minor storm on communications/power supply. Mr. Kowalski made a motion to endorse the concept of maintenance to the right-of-ways and power communication lines from vegetation, and to research a possible ordinance to allow this proper maintenance. Mr. Hampton seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Roy then gave a brief update on the emergency communications tower that is slated to be replaced.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

DISCUSSION OF TROPICAL STORM IRENE - Chief Baldis started the discussion by saying they did fully staff the firehouse at the height of the storm and

set up the stations as shelter points. He noted that the quick rise in the river was of some surprise to them, as it rose much faster than was forecasted. A fire-watch was put up at Rosedale Farms in case they could not get across the river. Chief Baldis did say there were a number of water evacuation calls due to sump pumps going out when electricity failed. Chief Baldis said he did think overall, things went smoothly.

Chief Ingvertsen said, with regards to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), there are some improvements that they would like to make in order to make it more well-equipped to handle these types of situations. Mr. Roy discussed the power back-up system they would like to put in place.

Mr. Kowalski said at the Fire Station, they do a 100% power switch off in order to test the generator. The testing system was then discussed by Mr. Kowalski and Mr. Roy. Mr. Kowalski then went on to say that since they were anticipating the storm to be a whole lot worse, there were times that the Operations Center was very quiet, which is a good thing. He said one of the things that this storm made them think of was, at what point does it get too dangerous and force them to not send out emergency responders to a call. Mr. Kowalski said they did research on this issue and got standards on wind velocities that would put emergency vehicles in jeopardy (55mph constant winds is a standard used by West Palm, FL). He also said that it was a good exercise resulting in valuable feedback and information that will be useful going forward. Mr. Kowalski said they did not have the need to set up a shelter, although they were ready in coordination with the schools if it was needed. He said they are speaking with FEMA, who is now in town, as Connecticut was declared a disaster area. Mr. Kowalski brought up the issue of differentiating between storm damage and accident damage, which was discussed. He then thanked CL&P for the crew that came to shut down the power on Riverside, and then came back to restore power, saying that they went above and beyond the call of duty. The layout of the EOC was then discussed by the Committee. Mr. Kowalski said some surrounding towns opened their EOC the night before the storm, which Simsbury did not do, and he is glad we did not do that. He also mentioned that continuity of operations is key and that if a top official leaves the EOC, they need to have someone to replace them that can answer questions or can immediately contact the absent party in order to get that answer. With regards to Public Assistance, Mr. Kowalski told the Committee, there is paperwork to be filled out to identify extra costs incurred due to the storm. He then thanked everyone for their help during the storm.

Ms. Bowman then said she thought the preparation that Mr. Kowalski had done really prepared people for what might come, with regards to the storm. Ms. Bowman then had to leave the meeting at 8:47AM.

Mr. Roy reported he had approximately 20 trees that came down, but they

were lucky enough to be able to work through the storm. Mr. Roy sited his biggest concern is that his workers would work through a period that was unsafe and it is his job to let them know when it becomes a dangerous environment in which to work. Mr. Roy said that the telephone lines going down did limit some communications. He then mentioned the loss of some river bank on Riverside and there will need to be an evaluation conducted and will be a significant cost to repair. Mr. Kowalski responded that the bank repair work would be covered under FEMA Long Term Costs.

Mr. Kowalski told the Committee that currently the Army Corp of Engineers required a release of the McDonough and Saville Dams into the Farmington River creating substantially increased flow, with Simsbury as the monitoring point. He said they need to get the reservoirs down, so he is not sure when the release will end.

Mr. Kowalski then brought up the previously mentioned requested funds in order to purchase a generator for Tariffville. Mr. LaClair said Rich Sawitzke, Town Engineer, is putting a project budget on that issue and will be pursuing it. Chief Ingvertsen said he has received frequent requests regarding this matter from Tariffville residents.

Mr. Delehanty said he thought his staff did a great job preparing, in his absence, prior to the storm and that it was internally a good exercise for them.

Mr. Cooke then thanked Mr. Kowalski for his leadership during the storm.

It was then discussed how Town Officials could communicate with the public, during a storm like Irene, in order to keep them abreast of what is happening in the community, for example broadcasting over an AM radio station.

WEST STREET CROSSWALK AT SIMSBURY HIGH SCHOOL - Chief Ingvertsen said the issue has arisen that there a lot of pedestrians crossing on West Street from the High School side of the street over to the opposite side (Avon Driving School, gas station, consignment store), which is a very congested area of traffic, creating a dangerous situation. On September 8th, they met with the State to evaluate this issue and to consider putting a crosswalk in, although Chief Ingvertsen said there is an issue with motorists not stopping for a crosswalk. There are multiple issues that arise from putting a crosswalk at this location that are now being analyzed/discussed. Chief Ingvertsen is expecting to get a replay from the State by the end of the month.

Ms. Heavner, who has been working with Chief Ingvertsen on this issue, then addressed the Committee saying that this issue was brought up by a student

concerned about this safety issue. She gave a detailed account of how there is no direct, safe way to get across the street at that location. She said that while she does not think there is a way to make it 100% safe, there has to be a way to make it safer for the pedestrians. Chief Ingvertsen discussed some alternatives regarding where they could place a crosswalk.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Kowalski made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 a.m. This motion was seconded by Chief Baldis and was passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. John Hampton, Chairman
Clerk

Leslie U. Faraci,