

**TOWN OF WINDSOR
HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE
TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS
January 11, 2012**

APPROVED MINUTES

PRESENT: Chair, Jody Terranova, Councilors William Herzfeld and Michael McDonald

STAFF: Town Manager, Peter Souza; Assistant Town Manager, Emily Moon; Chief of Police, Kevin Searles; Director of Health Services, Dr. Charles Petrillo; Public Health Nurse, Sharon Enot; Fire Administrator, Paul Goldberg; Health Sanitarian, Mike Pepe

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

3. REVIEW WINTER STORM ALFRED RESPONSE AND AFTER-ACTION DEBRIEFING RECOMMENDATIONS

Ms. Emily Moon, Assistant Town Manager, gave an overview of the Storm Alfred response and after-action debriefing recommendations as follows:

Following Winter Storm Alfred (October 29-30, 2011), town staff solicited feedback from volunteers, employees and community members about the town's emergency management and response. Four primary areas were analyzed: initial emergency response, Emergency Operations Center (EOC) functions, shelter operations and debris management.

Tonight, we'll be reviewing the most critical recommendations or most frequently made observations. Some of these follow up suggestions require Council authorization of funds and others will require significant staff time to implement. On the whole, the reaction to the town's emergency management response has been over-whelmingly positive.

Staff has identified some areas for possible improvement. Across all areas of emergency management, the following findings and recommendations were made:

- Staff will work on developing, updating and sharing contact lists more effectively. It became apparent very quickly that the information staff had easily on-hand during the first few hours of the storm was not as thorough as it could have been.
- Another suggestion that overlaps the debriefing focus areas was to use staff or volunteers to help gather field information for the EOC and Department of Public Works (DPW).
- Staff will also need to refine how it might be able to respond to a protracted emergency that demands a sizeable effort when town staff needs to return to its normal functions.

The following summary describes the most substantial recommendations for improvement, either because of the effort or funding required.

Initial Emergency Response (the first 24 hours)

1. Replace current dispatch consoles and add a third Emergency-911 Public Safety Answering Point station in the communications center – this could help answer a high volume of calls or to perform a dedicated aspect of dispatching, such as dispatching the Fire Department. A Capital Improvement project is proposed for FY 2014 for \$263,000 to replace current consoles, but not to add a third. Cost to add a third station is estimated at \$45,000.
2. Develop a procedure and have personnel present to track staffing and equipment deployments – have staff at the Police Department (PD) who can perform clerical and runner tasks for dispatch, who can track when PD field staff needs to be relieved by DPW staff or vice versa, and track where barricades and other materials have been left.
3. Policy Development – Establish best practice staffing levels for dispatch (for example, for certain thresholds of calls); update contingency practices for communications equipment; strengthen policy, procedure, timing and training for staff to know when to activate the EOC.

Emergency Operations Center

1. Functional layout of EOC and utility of the room and its equipment – Examine and refine the layout of the EOC, purchase a replacement and two additional computers for the EOC (\$2,000), add two base radios (\$2,500), add a Comcast cable box or exterior antenna for the television (\$200), add a mobile phone network extender to boost Verizon signal reception in town hall (\$450), update electrical and data wiring in the EOC and data and phone lines in the Council Support Room (\$4,000). Further, it is suggested to fully energize the lower level of town hall with emergency power to enhance the utility and effectiveness of the EOC (\$21,000). The cost to energize all of town hall is estimated to be \$255,000.
2. Information Handling - gathering, collating, displaying and disseminating, and Just In Time Training (JITT) and pre-event training – Discuss better ways of collecting meaningful information for DPW, PD, the shelter and the EOC and how to better organize and disseminate that information within and outside of the EOC. This involves computer, paper and radio/phone-based systems. Outline what EOC call takers should have for training and what information needs to be relayed consistently for new call-takers coming into the EOC at each shift change.
3. Security and Safety – Analyze ways to improve safety at town hall during an emergency. The parking lot was extremely dark and employees and volunteers had difficulty getting from the cars to the building or vice versa. Key fob access presented problems for employees who do not work at town hall but who were asked to report to the EOC. When the exterior doors to town hall were open, the general public had immediate access to the EOC, which disrupted operations. Determine what staffing level and complement is appropriate in the building during overnight hours.
4. Staff training on Everbridge, HVAC system and elevator override, phone system forwarding, computer systems, in-room equipment – Determine what additional areas of training (other than call-taking) are needed and development and implement that training. Establish staff back-up for the Everbridge, phone and computer systems administrators. Train staff assigned to EOC on how to operate key building systems and equipment. Ensure additional training for staff to increase depth of expertise in some computer systems (i.e. Excel and GIS).

5. Remove staffing responsibilities for shelter and EOC from EOC command and EOC room – Suggestion is to delegate this function to a pair of senior staff members who will perform this role in another room and have direct reporting to the EOC. This function took a great deal of time and reduced the assistant town manager's ability to attend to other matters and the EOC's ability to function more effectively.
6. Establish more formal roles for some staff members to hold throughout the event – Reinforce the use of the Incident Command System structure including producing quick job descriptions that delineate responsibilities or create a list of tasks that can be delegated to individuals to take responsibility for throughout the event.

L.P. Wilson Shelter

1. Kitchen code compliance and functionality improvements – Bring the kitchen up to health, building and fire code compliance for emergency food cooking and preparation by installing a grease trap (\$3,500), installing a fire suppression hood (\$3,000), painting the walls, ceiling and floor (\$6,000), installing/replacing some kitchen equipment (preliminary estimate includes: \$2,800 for a triple compartment sink, \$6,500 for a double convection oven, \$300 for smallwares storage), and installing replacement or new light fixtures (\$1,000). Total preliminary estimate = \$23,100.
2. Registration procedures and equipment – Enhance the registration function so that it is more efficient and better organized for volunteers, staff and guests.
3. Information sharing – Design 'Just In Time' Training for volunteers and staff, determine a way to verbalize information throughout the shelter's spaces, establish procedure and a portal or location for volunteers and staff to get information at shift change and throughout their shift, establish consistent practice and schedule for communicating with EOC, assign a person to monitor in-coming calls from EOC, review all shelter operations practices and ensure all are complete and easy to follow, and create information portal and scheduled briefing times for shelter guests and determine how information gets posted here.
4. Improvements to restrooms and shower facilities – Renovate the restrooms at the front of the building and the restrooms / locker rooms at the rear of the building to improve functionality and disability accessibility. The design phase (\$10,000) of a capital project that would study and design possible improvements to the front restrooms is in the draft FY 13 plan; the construction phase is tentatively listed in FY 14 (\$170,000). Staff has not estimated the cost of the design or construction of improvements to the locker rooms or rear restrooms.
5. Managing children and recreation – Discuss how to better track children in the facility and their responsible parties, assign a staff member on each shift to handle youth-related issues, develop policies concerning children, and create a plan for recreational and emotional enhancement opportunities.
6. Identification of volunteers and staff – Ensure that staff and volunteers are easily recognizable (visually) and to post a list of each shift's staffing at the staff check-in and break areas. Possibly issue t-shirts, vests or wristbands.
7. Managing medical needs and guests with special needs - Discuss policies and practices relating to the care of guests with medical needs, including transportation, aides, sleeping arrangements, power and oxygen accessibility, nurse availability, EMS presence, and

recording and communicating special needs (such as disabilities, restraining orders, etc.) to shelter staff and the PD.

8. Cot management - Perform a regular inventory, ensure the proper people have access to storage areas, attempt to assemble cots and place in rooms before shelter opens, write out cleaning and storage procedures, assign guests to specific rooms according to staffing present and each guest's needs, and better keep track of used versus available.

Shelter Options

Some council members and residents have asked about the possibility of opening additional shelters or, specifically, about using Windsor High School or the Community Center at 330 Windsor Avenue as shelters.

While the community center at 330 Windsor Avenue is a multi-dimensional and highly functional space for daytime activities and could accommodate sleeping, apart from the Caring Connection's small kitchen, it does not have adequate capacity for in-house meal preparation. The generator would need to be upgraded, beyond the planned upgrade in the FY 2012 Capital Improvement Program, to ensure power to the entire facility. This upgrade would cost at least an additional \$75,000.

The high school has large usable space, ample parking and kitchen facilities; however, the building's generator essentially only provides back-up emergency power to meet basic life safety needs. The existing generator currently provides emergency power for one walk-in freezer in the kitchen, emergency lighting in the building, boiler room, boilers, heating hot water pumps, and domestic hot water. The existing generator does not have enough capacity to generate power for the areas that would be used for a shelter (e.g., the gymnasiums, the auditorium, the locker rooms, restrooms, kitchen, cafeteria and nurse's area.) Due to the way the building is wired, if a new generator was installed to simply serve the areas that would be used for a shelter, new wiring throughout the whole facility would be needed. If a new generator were installed to serve the entire school, no new wiring would be needed. Either option is likely to cost over a million dollars. In addition to the power generation concerns, the high school is less suitable as a shelter than L.P. Wilson due to the fact that it would be highly problematic to operate a shelter at the high school when school could be in session. Also, if a major emergency occurred, the state's plan is to open regional shelters.

The estimated cost for recommended improvements are outlined below. One line item, "Shelter go kit and shelter/EOC management supplies", is intended to be used to purchase items such as identification wrist bands, meal ticket rolls, pre-made signage, portable easels and dry erase boards, and a few other minor supplies that will help staff organize and run both the shelter and the EOC more easily in the future.

Staff is still researching the ability to add a 3rd Emergency 911 station at dispatch. This item may be combined with a future Capital Improvement project.

Recommendations:

Emergency Operations Center improvements	\$	9,150
Emergency Power Lower Level Town Hall		21,000
LPW kitchen improvements		23,100
LPW front restroom rehab design		10,000

Dispatch Console (add 3 rd station)	45,000
Shelter go kit and shelter/EOC management supplies	<u>2,000</u>
<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>\$ 110,250</i>
Contingency 15%	<u>16,550</u>
TOTAL	\$ 126,800

Councilor Terranova said that she feels it is good to focus on getting out external information.

Councilor Herzfeld said that the town could use the public or a group of people (through social networking) to gather and push information to the community (e.g., what streets are out of electricity, etc.) He stated that the town should explore purchasing used/refurbished kitchen equipment.

Councilor Herzfeld asked if during this storm we had non-residents at the shelter? Did we have nursing homes drop people off? What are the procedures for that? Assistant Town Manager Moon said we did not have this problem of having nursing homes drop people off. We did, however, have to manage issues with people who had physical and mental health care needs. Our problem is to communicate that we cannot provide that level of care at the shelter and that everyone needs to be able to care for themselves or have a caregiver present. We did have EMS, nurses and social workers on staff to assist and didn't turn anyone away.

Moved by Councilor Herzfeld, seconded by Councilor McDonald, that the Health & Safety Committee endorse the proposed appropriation for the emergency management improvements as outlined in the agenda item summary for \$126,800."

Motion Passed 3-0-0

Councilor McDonald left the meeting at 6:52 p.m.

4. HEALTH DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Dr. Charles Petrillo, Director of Health Services; Ms. Sharon Enot, Public Health Nurse; and Mr. Mike Pepe, Heath Sanitarian gave an overview of the department and its key issues and trends.

Dr. Petrillo explained that the department has organized its services into four major program areas which are: inspection and regulation, disease prevention and control, clinic services, and emergency management. These four programs address the eight general program areas required to be provided as specified by the Department of Public Health.

He continued by stating that there are four key trends that the department has identified. These four areas are disease prevention (e.g. obesity, asthma, health care access, and emerging infections, to name a few); emergency response planning (e.g. Emergency Operations Plan; sheltering; staff training; decrease in federal funding, etc.); environmental health (e.g. housing code, absentee landlord, vacant dwellings; food service inspections; property maintenance; etc.) and Health Department organization and staffing (e.g. staffing, certifications, qualifications, training, institutional knowledge, retirements; national standards; etc.)

Dr. Petrillo reviewed the FY 2012 budget totals. The total FY 12 budget is \$578,590. Of this amount, \$489,700 or 84.6% is funded by the General Fund; \$63,490 (11.0%) is funded by grants

such as the BT and Preventive Health Block Grants; \$25,200 (4.4%) is funded through User Fees such as the flu clinic, sale of bike helmets, conducting CPR classes, funds for lead paint investigation; and finally \$200 or 0.003% from contributions for the toy drive. The department no longer receives any per capita grant monies from the State Department of Public Health for having a full-time health department, but that serves less than 50,000 people.

(Councilor McDonald left the meeting at 6:52 p.m.)

Ms. Sharon Enot, Public Health Nurse, spoke about the department's challenges in disease control. Many of the disease trends relate to changing human behavior and how we are or are not taking care of our health. Health care access is another challenge for public health; ensuring people have information and resources.

The committee discussed the issue of people choosing not to vaccinate their children.

Councilor Herzfeld asked about the sanitarian vacancy. Dr. Petrillo spoke about the department's attempts to fill the position and the problems it has encountered. The department will re-post the position next week.

Councilor Terranova asked about how the department uses or shares results from health screenings.

Mr. Michael Pepe, Health Sanitarian, spoke about environmental health issues, including the department's work on property maintenance and housing codes. He reviewed the types of facilities and the rules governing food inspections.

The committee talked about efforts to improve the state requirements for sanitarians and the amount of time it takes to become certified and the lack of instructors and sanitarian candidates.

Dr. Petrillo gave a brief overview of Emergency Management. He stated that Windsor is unique in housing Emergency Management in the Health Department, but that it provides many benefits. He spoke about our active collaborations across department lines and practicing. State and federal funding for Emergency Management is decreasing. Lastly, Dr. Petrillo spoke about his staff's tenure and experience and the possibilities of future retirements. He spoke about the need for on-going training and how to document and pass down acquired institutional knowledge. There is also a national trend to increase standards and accreditation for local health departments.

Councilor Herzfeld asked about the department's ability to sustain itself as a local full-time health department. Town Manager Souza said that he believes our local health department delivers a very high amount of services per capita and unless a district can meet and augment that level of service, he believes that a standalone department is the best option. Our community is going to continue to have increasing environmental, public health and Emergency Management needs in the future and lessening services will not meet those needs.

Dr. Petrillo spoke about the department's needs for succession planning.

Councilor Terranova asked the department to explain its role and response to food borne illnesses. Ms. Enot and Mr. Pepe explained the protocol and gave examples.

5. STAFF REPORTS

Town Manager Souza said he would be happy to ask the Safety Services departments to present overviews of their operations and trends and issues. He also mentioned that town staff is working on developing some internal employee wellness programs and policies.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Councilor Herzfeld, seconded by Councilor Terranova, to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2011 meeting as presented.

Motion Passed 2-0-0 (Councilor McDonald left the meeting at 6:52 p.m.)

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Emily Moon
Assistant Town Manager
Recording Secretary