

This meeting was neither audio taped nor video recorded.

## DEPARTMENT HEADS

DISASTER COMMITTEE -- BOARD OF SELECTMEN

~~Wednesday~~  
Tuesday, 11 September 2013, 10:15 a.m.

Dighton Disaster Committee Chairman/Selectman Patrick W. Menges convened a meeting of the Disaster Committee and Town Government Department Heads in the Town Hall Hearings Room on Wednesday 11 September 2013 for the purpose of an administrative tabletop preparedness exercise/disaster drill, at 10:15 a.m., the time having been chosen to permit the Town's First Responders to reserve moments of silence in honor of those Americans who perished on a terrorist attack on New York City on September 11, 2001. Chairman Menges announced that he would call upon each Department Head to state what measures he or she would have taken to prepare his or her department for the mock hurricane scheduled for drill only (not real) to make landfall in Southeastern Massachusetts at four o'clock this afternoon, following a tidal surge beginning at two o'clock.

Each Department Head was to state their location, inventories and personnel decisions made in view of the mock storm warning issued yesterday afternoon, and as well, to state what progress they had made in National Incident Managed Systems (NIMS) on-line training, required to make Dighton eligible for Disaster Preparedness Funds and Disaster Relief Assistance if necessary.

Chairman Menges led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag, followed by a moment of silence in memory of those who died on 9/11.

Town Clerk SUE MEDEIROS said that she would be at Town Hall when the hurricane hit. She would be in communication with the Police Department and Fire Department. In preparation for the storm, she had insured computer back-ups for the Town Clerks Office were functional. She had conducted an inventory to make sure that she had an adequate supply of paper and pens. Throughout the storm she expected to be working either at Town Hall, or, after the close of business or if Town Hall were closed due to the emergency at home. In the event of an escalation, involving an evacuation of residents, she would be located at the Dighton Middle School in the Evacuation Center, taking care of administrative details. She said that in any hurricane she would make sure that she had rain gear. Her NIMS on-line training remains a work in progress.

Town Treasurer NANCY HATHAWAY insured that she would have terminal exchange access to work from home, however, as long as Town Hall is functional, she would work at Town Hall. In the event of an escalation involving the use of the Dighton Middle School as an Evacuation Center, she would be

stationed at the Dighton Middle School. Her inventory included making sure that she had a change of clothes, stationery supplies, and foul weather gear. The Treasurer's NIMS on-line training remains a work in progress.

Town Accountant Jennifer Luiz will first inform her family that the hurricane is making landfall. She will wait for the Board of Selectmen to direct her to go home or to the Elementary School. She would make sure that her family is okay. She also has insured that she has a laptop to work from home or from the School if needed. The Town Accountant has completed her on-line NIMS training.

Police Chief ROBERT MACDONALD would insure that his vehicles are fueled, call in two additional men, meet with the Board of Selectmen, provide coverage at Pleasant Street ready to relay word to residents of any evacuation and assist in that evacuation. He would call in two dispatchers. The Chief has emailed all of his personnel the NIMS requirement, and some Officers have completed it in prior years; for those officers who have not, it remains a work in progress.

*Note: During the Police Chief's statement of its preparations, the Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director for the Town, ANTONE P. RODERICK, JR., stated that the Massachusetts Emergency Management Administration (MEMA) prefers large evacuations to regional shelters to having many local shelters which are difficult to keep in communication and keep supplied. He added that the Fire Department and the Highway Department would work in close coordination for such things as availability of sandbags for flood control operations, etc.*

Harbor Master RON MARINO would have notified Shaw's Boat Yard, the Taunton Yacht Club, the Shawmut Yacht Club, the Somerset Harbor Master and coordinated with the Fire and Police Chiefs and the Highway Department. Prior to landfall, he would conduct an on-water survey of how many boats are at moorings and would attempt to contact boat owners regarding any poorly tied boats. He has fueled his Harbor Master's boat, it is ready to go. He has insured that he has functional radio. He will advise of his availability for the Incident Command Post. Among his items of inventory would be computer, radio, telephone for communication. Harbor Master Marino estimated that the high tide would occur at 1:15 p.m.. In the meantime, he and his assistant Eric Easterday would attempt to tie up and make safe loose boats in the harbor. In the event of an evacuation, the Harbor Master's location would be on the waterfront. Harbor Master Marino's on-line NIMS training has been completed.

Building Commissioner JAMES D. AGUIAR, JR., stated that he has previously prepared for such storms. He relies upon his Emergency Response Manual. The Building Commissioner has State Agency contacts. He will be in town in the event of the hurricane, but will only be "hands-on" if high water destroys or compromises houses. If necessary, he will isolate entire areas, to include coordinating shutting off of utilities. The Building Commissioner has ample supplies of forms. He has been NIMS certified for eight years.

Fire Department under Chief Antone P. Roderick, Jr., has communicated with MEMA. The Fire Department in a hurricane emergency would contact National Grid directly, not through MEMA, to send a liaison to Town, although past experience is that it doesn't work. Emergency Services Priority I, II, and III and TMLP. He has ordered extra sandbags from MEMA for the Highway Department. Both ambulances have been checked and supplied. A2 would be moved to North Dighton. He would contact the Superintendent of Schools: use of school for Shelter/Town Nurse, and outfitting for shelter operations. The Fire Department will watch tides and winds. Fire Chief and Police Chief will oversee notification of residential evacuations.

Selectman Menges informed the Fire Chief to be aware of Emergency Preparation that Regional Preparedness Coordinatory Amy Palmer had called to the Board of Health's attention as needing improvement.

- (1) A written memorandum of Agreement covering evacuation shelter use of the Dighton-Rehoboth Region public schools.
- (2) Town vehicle with driver, dispenser, and security, for alternative dispensing.
- (3) Volunteer Management Program/MRC (Medical Reserve Corps)
- (4) Quarterly test of Redundant Communications: Amateur HAM Radio ("See Jimmy Varley.") and (cost prohibitive) satellite telephone communications.
- (5) Unmanned telephone hotline for town of Dighton.
- (6) Identify behavioral problems /at risk population in advance.
- (7) Have a town doctor or behavioral specialist for emergency dispensing site.

All full-time Fire Department Personnel have completed NIMS on-line training, and off-site training. Several Call-Firefighters are still completing NIMS on-line training and the Fire Chief is monitoring their progress.

Council on Aging Director ALICE SOUZA will be available to be called by the Selectmen, or she will call Communications. Her priorities for hurricane preparation include the Nutrition Program for the elderly, and coordinating with the Greater Attleboro Taunton Regional Transit Authority (GATRA). She noted the importance of identifying people who will need to come in in case of storm (shelter). One concern, she said: transportation, especially for the residents of Lincoln Village – all electric; if the power fails, the elderly and disabled in Lincoln Village will have no heat and no availability of cooking.

Police Sergeant Edward Dutra stated that it would be difficult to move the elderly population of Lincoln Village to a shelter in a distant city such as Fall River or Attleboro. He noted that sometimes under stressful conditions, the elderly become disoriented. In a storm situation, they should not be subjected to the dangers of exposure to the elements. Selectman Menges said that for the elderly, a distant regional shelter unbeknown to their families would amount to "outer Mongolia". He stated that it is imperative that we plan for local shelter for the displaced population of Lincoln Village in the event of a

power failure in a major disaster. He said to the Disaster Committee that planning for evacuation of Lincoln Village is a major priority, and he assured Council on Aging Director Alice Souza that she will be part of the planning when that evacuation plan is being developed. The Council on Aging Directors' NIMS on-line training is a work in progress.

The Animal Control Officer STACY FERRY stated that farmers make good provision for housing large animals in storms, but some may be displaced. For kennels, their need to be identification bands for sheltered animals, so that evacuated/sheltered animals can be returned to their owners. Increased water and food for the kennel will be necessary. The Animal Control Officers' location will be going around town picking up animals. As for NIMS on-line training, Stacy Ferry has completed disaster training for Animal Control Officers.

Highway Superintendent THOMAS FERRY in preparation for the hurricane ordered new fuel for all chain saws and gasoline powered tools, because ethanol compromises stored gasoline in their tanks. Extra chains for chain saws. Two machines, he believes, will be adequate for clearing roads. Also, he warned that initial vigilance is good, but not to become complacent, we must be ready for twelve to twelve and a half hours later, when the storm strikes again with all its vengeance. The Highway Department has a generator, and a mobile generator is available at the Highway Garage. Selectman Menges reminded him that Dighton now has a State-Wide Intermunicipal Public Works agreement with all Massachusetts cities and towns, and the MEMA website should indicate what towns if any might be able to help Dighton in the emergency without undue strain on their own resources. On-line NIMS training for the Highway Department is a work in progress.

Before the Disaster Committee yielded the meeting for the regular Department Heads meeting, Fire Chief Roderick suggested that the Committee invite someone from National Grid or TMLP to a future meeting to get one electrical utility truck stationed in town in the event of a hurricane. The Fire Chief will meet with National Grid on the 24<sup>th</sup> of September and, additionally, will request a disused Sewer Department generator (Lincoln Avenue Pump Station) from the Sewer Department. Selectman Menges has announced that the next meeting of the Disaster Committee will be on Wednesday September 18<sup>th</sup>, at 2 p.m. and that in the meantime the Disaster Committee will prepare an After Actions Review of the Mock Hurricane Drill which will be disseminated to all Town Government Department Heads. Fire Chief Roderick will monitor NIMS on-line training progress. All personnel required to be NIMS trained should plan to have the on-line NIMS training completed by September 30<sup>th</sup>. Tom Ferry reminded everyone present that if winds exceed forty miles an hour in a hurricane, utility boom trucks will not be moving. On a motion of Sergeant Edward Dutra of the Police Department, seconded by Selectman Cronin, the Disaster Committee adjourned at 11:20 a.m.. All Department Heads were asked to remain in place to give to the Board of Selectmen their monthly Departmental Reviews.

Selectman Chairman Dean Cronin convened the Board of Selectmen at 11:22 a.m.. Absent was Selectman Thomas Pires.

Department Heads gave the following overviews of the situations of their Departments.

- Town Accountant is focusing on preparing figures for articles for the October 29<sup>th</sup> Special Town Meeting, supporting getting the tax rate set, and reminding that Growth Certification by the Board of Assessors is needed before Fall Town Meeting financial action.
- Town Treasurer is trying to collect money; two subdivisions' tax partial payments will be received by the end of the month, including payments on eight lots of the Hunters Hill Development, and some payment from Stonegate. The Town Treasurer stated that she has not received further payment from a Tremont Street arrearage. The Town Treasurer has not yet received for comment the text of a Town Meeting article that would authorize the Town to impose liens to recoup money spent maintaining abandoned properties.
- Police Chief Robert MacDonald asked if there was a mandatory ban on after-dusk activities due to the mosquito scare. Selectman and Board of Health member Menges said "no". The Board of Health has contacted the Superintendent of Schools to say that after-dusk activities should be banned, and we have reason to believe that Mr. Malone has banned after-dusk activities at the school because of the EEE and West Nile Virus scare. However, technically, the ban remains voluntary. The Little League has been advised not to have after-dusk games, and has suspended play at Lopes Field. The Police Chief said there was a report of an after-dusk game in North Dighton. Selectman and Board of Health member Menges said perhaps we are reaching the cool time of the year when mosquitos are not apt to be as prevalent. Chief MacDonald plans still to attempt to coordinate with the High School Principal the creation of a School Resource Officer position. Selectman Menges commented that the School Department would be well served to provide a contribution to make the position full time.
- Building Commissioner. The Building Commissioner will be proposing three new by-laws. 1. A proposed by-law loosening restrictions on accessory apartments and grandfather existing accessory apartments. 2. A medical-marijuana by-law designating the zoning district in which a medical marijuana dispensing facility can be located. Selectman Menges suggested that medical marijuana facilities be located in a part of town zoned for tall building so that persons in need of medical marijuana would be sure of getting high. This evoked laughter. 3. An outdoor boilers by-law. Not to prohibit outdoor boilers, but to reduce their adverse impact upon the quality of lives of neighbors. The Building Commissioner also said he needs decisions concerning demolitions of old and dilapidated buildings. Selectman Menges said that he feels that the Historical Commission should initial an approval for the demolition of any historic building. The Building Commissioner also stated that there needs to be a new comprehensive list of town-owned properties indicating what could be sold to the Town's advantage, to be returned to the tax rolls. He would also like to highlight for residents of overlay districts, the benefit to owners from overlay districts, so that residents will not be inhibited from taking advantage of the opportunities that they afford.
- The Harbor Master stated that he is enforcing a mooring fee, but it became the consensus of the meeting, that a by-law may be needed to give the mooring fee enforcement legitimacy. Selectman Cronin suggested that the Town look into the practices of towns on the Cape

with experience with mooring fees, to see how they handle enacting them i.e., whether it is by by-law.

- The Fire Chief stated that he is currently concerned with Fall Fire Education for the public school children, and the Bristol County Agricultural High School building renovations (safety first).
- The Council on Aging will be organizing a celebration of Prime Time's twentieth anniversary next year. The Council on Aging also reminds everyone that Prime Time needs roof repairs.
- The Animal Control Officer presently has no animals in the animal shelter, and a Boy Scout has proposed an Eagle project that would result in effort to improve the shelter.
- The Superintendent of Streets said that he expected to submit two sizable bills for payment next week totaling just under \$225,000.00 for highway maintenance.

The Selectmen thanked everybody for their time and attention. There will be a Disaster Drill in November. The Board of Selectmen adjourned, and the Department Heads withdrew, at 12:15.

Handwritten signature of Patrick W. Menges in cursive script.

Patrick W. Menges

Chairman of the Disaster Committee and Clerk of the Board of Selectmen