

Selectboard Meeting

September 12, 2011

Present: Noreen Suriner, Chair; Alan Vint; Mitch Feldmesser
Duane Pease, Administrative Assistant

Meeting called to order by chair at **7:03pm**

General discussion with **Marge Batorski**, Town Clerk, regarding appointments and term length for various Town Positions.

Letter to be sent to **Leanne Every** confirming her appointment as the Plant Manager and delegate to Wired West.

Noreen advised she had met with the Gateway Emergency Management regarding the recent hurricane and that the Gateway School can be used as an emergency shelter by the residents of the school district. In case of flooding, shelters in hilltowns should be used because of GRHS location.

Larry Pease, Fire Chief, in attendance to discuss the response of his department to the hurricane. He received a call from resident concerned with the rising water and advised person he should go somewhere and stay with family or friends. He checked on East River Road as the Westfield River runs along it. Larry also was in contact with **Tom Austin**, Police Chief, during the entire period. **Skip Savery**, Road Superintendent, was also available. Larry had attempted to travel down Cone Rd to East River but the road was impassable and eventually they used the Army truck because of the water depth and road conditions to check on the residents. They went to every house on East River and offered to evacuate them to the Town Hall. They would have brought them out to an area where they could have been transported by either the police cruiser or pick-up truck to the Town Hall. One family was evacuated from River Road and brought to the Town Hall.

Jack Guyette, resident of 96 East River Road, spoke and thanked Larry, Tom, Skip and the highway crew for their response and all they did during the storm. He was concerned because when water like this occurs and both Cone Rd and Clark Wright Road wash out there is no way for residents of East River to get out. He said the phones in his area were out and they need a way to communicate with the town. He would like to have a town radio in his area. Also, some sand bags and a pile of sand to fill them. He said just before the rain stopped, the river rose 3 feet in a very short time. He also spoke of how the river had changed its course by 20-40 feet after the storm. That trees along the riverbank were uprooted and went downstream leaving the banks raw with nothing but rocks to protect them from further erosion. After the '55 flood the Army Corp of Engineers came in and bermed the river back and one more storm like this and much of the road will be washed away if nothing is done.

Larry and Skip were asked what worked and what didn't work. Larry felt most worked okay, he had 3-4 of the firemen with him and did not want to tone out for more men as many were having their own problems with the storm. Skip said he was able to keep in touch on the radios with Larry and Tom. Biggest concern was lack of a command center; Kathy Radwich did much of this in the past and was missed during this storm. She had been in the Fire Dept for years and was familiar with the town's operations. There needs to be a central location where the radios can be heard as there are "dead spots" and communications between vehicles is not possible.

Jack Guyette reiterated how the guys' response was great and appreciated and that something needs to be done sooner rather than later.

Steve Baker stopped in regarding a building permit for his garage; he needed the Conservation Commission to sign off on the permit. He spoke with Alan and Alan told him he would be out to inspect in a couple of days.

Alan said we need to move forward on East River Rd as it is an emergency situation and that communications seem to be a real problem.

Mitch was concerned that a number of people in town are in the same boat when it comes to phones going down and how do we determine who would get a radio and who wouldn't.

Alan felt the residents living on East River Rd were more trapped than the other residents.

Noreen was going to be at the FEMA meeting tomorrow and would see what relief would be available in regard to the issues brought up in tonight's meeting.

Warrant was reviewed and approved in amount of \$3,995.21. Minutes of 9/6/11 meeting were approved with changes.

Skip spoke of the need for a sizable machine for any restoration that was going to be done on East River as he can not put machinery in the river bed. He said Cone Rd is open and passable; all of the other roads are okay but for a few minor problems. He is hopeful the equipment he rented, the overtime and temporary help costs will be covered by FEMA or MEMA. As far as the water problem on Clark Wright Rd, Skip felt replacing the current culvert with an arch culvert would solve the flooding problem and thus giving the residents of East River Rd a way of escape in a time of flooding. He could use his Chapter 90 money for this as he did not feel FEMA or MEMA would pay for remediation. He had one other issue and that was a large tree that was split in front of the Barcome residence on Town Hill Rd, he would have to hire the removal out as the tree is close to power lines. That will be dealt with later in hopes that Western Mass Electric

will remove it as the Town will be questioning WMECO regarding polls erected on Chester Rd that weren't in compliance with a previous agreement.

Alan brought up the "neighborly response" issue and **Mitch** felt the best approach would be to advise the other party that the issue of some trailers on your property has come to our attention and to find out what the intended use was to be. Depending on the answer would lead to next decision to be made about the trailers.

Noreen said since the departure of Paul Tacy as building inspector, Hampshire Council is going to use Franklin Regional to service Middlefield and we can see what that inspection reveals about the trailers.

Discussion on **Personnel Policy**: it was agreed policy can't be reviewed at meeting and that set number of pages should be done outside the meeting and then discussed at next meeting. It was felt 9 pages could be read and then discussed. **Alan** made a motion to read 9 pages, **Mitch** 2nd, vote **3-0 in favor**.

Alan received communication from **Jim Barry**, Dept of Energy Resources, and he would like to use Criteria #4 in our Green Community Grant Application as an example for others to follow. Neither Noreen nor Mitch had any objections.

Appointments: Motioned, seconded and vote was 3-0 for the following:

Conservation Commission: Kim Baker and Wayne Main, terms expiring 2014

Cultural Council: Sarah Foley, Sam Cummings, Charlene Gero Tracy Gero, Judy Hoag, Crystal Main and Maureen Suriner, terms expiring 2012

Historical Commission: Marge Batorski and John Savery, terms expiring 2014; Howard Knickerbocker and Rita Doktor, alternate, terms expiring 2013

Registrar of Voters: Marge Batorski, Anita Myers, Cynthia Oligny and Tamarin Laurel-Paine, terms expiring 2012

Police Department: Curt Robie, Michael Pensivy and Matt Radwich, all one year appointments

Road Superintendent and Tree Warden: Skip Savery, one year appointment

Plumbing Inspector: William Zeitler, one year appointment.

Discussion regarding the Hampshire Council of Government's quarterly billing for the Building Inspector as there has not been a replacement named for Paul Tacy. **Alan** will contact and hopefully secure a reduction in the next billing.

Motion to adjourn made and seconded. Vote 3-0, meeting adjourned 9:44pm.