

**CITY OF NORWALK  
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE  
AUGUST 11, 2010**

**ATTENDANCE:** Richard A. Moccia, Mayor; Dennis McCarthy, Fire Chief, Norwalk Fire Department; Lt. Resnick, Norwalk Police Department; Hal Alvord, Department of Public Works; Natalie DosSantos, Red Cross; Michelle DeLuca, Director, Emergency Management; Tad Diesel, Mayor's Office; Jennifer Lord, Norwalk Hospital; David Kennedy, United Way; Adam Bovilsky, Human Relations Dept;

Call to Order

Fire Chief McCarthy called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m. and asked the members of the Committee to introduce themselves.

**Emergency Management Update**

**EOC Checklist**

Chief McCarthy stated that the recent tornado in Bridgeport was used as an example of emergency center response, especially due to the regional coordinators that were out of town during the time. He added that one of the key improvements to the preparedness plan was having hard copy of the "go kit" to have key contact information easily accessible in the event of loss of computer access. He added that they now have a pre-scripted guide to use as a game plan for notification and operation status updates and briefings for the Emergency Center with information updates.

**Alternate EOC at NFD**

Chief McCarthy stated that the current EOC at the Police Department is good for briefings but not for a full start-up operations center. He added that the Fire Department is a better location as it contains maps, charts and pertinent communication information, and is more completely equipped to serve as a complete EOC. Mr. Alvord asked is the new facility will include an EOC, and Chief McCarthy responded that there is \$1 million in grant funds available to include construction of an EOC and he is hoping to parallel the room that the City of Bridgeport has.

**September – National Preparedness Month**

Ms. Deluca reported that the theme for the program is Preparedness is Everyone's Responsibility and will include volunteers from organizations such as the Exchange Club, and an open house at Veteran's Park. Chief McCarthy stated that they plan to include a publicity program of newspaper articles along with school fliers and lawn signs to build awareness of the program.

## October - Norwalk Hospital Drill

Ms. Jennifer Lord with the Norwalk Hospital stated that they had experienced lightning strikes that resulted in power loss and required relying on 100% generator power for 36 hours. She added that they were able to function without incident and it was truly a learning experience for emergency preparedness, but are now working on upgrading the capacity of the Co-Gen System to avoid future outages of this nature.

Mr. Lord stated that a Mass Casualty Emergency Exercise is scheduled for October 21 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. and will be a regional drill in response to a building collapse emergency response. She added that it will be a small, controlled, functional drill held in the Patio Room, and she will report on the outcome of the drill at the next meeting.

### **Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan**

Ms. Deluca presented the outcome from last month's meeting where Nicole Davis with SWERPA had distributed the South Western Region Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan (see pages 5-6) and reviewed the goals and objectives as follows:

- Goal 1: Reduce the loss of life and property and economic consequences as a result of flooding, high winds, severe winter storms and dam failure.
- Objective 1. Improve the ability of Norwalk departments to prepare and respond to severe weather and other natural emergencies.
- Objective 2. Through education and outreach activities, improve the ability of Norwalk residents and business to prepare and respond to severe weather and other natural emergencies.
- Objective 3. Whenever practical, incorporate natural hazard mitigation strategies into existing City projects.
- Objective 4. Reduce the likelihood and potential loss of life and property as a result of dam failure.
- Objective 5. Reduce the amount of debris from severe storms through preventive tree maintenance and debris planning

She added that after input on the draft plan from department review she would be making some changes and edits and will present in final form next month. She added that this plan should help with the State and FEMA assistance and provide a way to tap into available relief funds.

Mr. Alvord stated that regarding FEMA's involvement he had expressed his assessment at last month's meeting that the area DPW Directors had expressed dissatisfaction with FEMA not being cooperative. He added that he doubts if there will be much relief funds approved for the City, as reimbursement guidelines are very difficult to get approved.

## Traffic/Construction Update – DPW

Mr. Alvord stated that there was nothing new to report other than he has requested access to hydrants for sweeper water replenishing as an improvement to the productivity due the time it takes because the proximity is not ideal. He added that the water line replacement system to increase flow through water line bursting should save the city money. Chief McCarthy added that there should be a GPS driven schematic system and infrastructure for the program

Mr. Alvord added that the Route 123 shutdown is scheduled to be re-opened today. Metro North has advised them that there will be a shut down schedule for Broad Street and Perry Avenue, and are working on night work to minimize the traffic impact and disruption.

Chief McCarthy asked when North Street will open and Mr. Alvord stated that things are slow with the DOT, combined with signal changes to Butler, and alternate access to 95/7 property, he anticipates November.

## New Items for Discussion/Roundtable

### Red Cross

Ms. Dos Santos stated that the Red Cross has been working on housing for residents in Bridgeport as a result of the tornado, and the process has been slow due to Section 8 approval requirements. Chief McCarthy stated that there was a tremendous effort with the mass feeding of firefighters at the recent funeral for the Bridgeport firefighters that were killed in the line of duty. Ms. Dos Santos added that over 80 volunteers were on hand to help with preparing and serving meals to over 5,000 people in attendance.

### Police Department

Lt. Resnick presented the Battle of the Badges Blood Drive that is schedule for September in line with National Preparedness Month, and hopes for a good participation between the Police and Fire Departments.

### Human Resources

Mr. Adam Bovilsky, Director of the Human Relations Department stated that they were working on the City's training program for the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Chief McCarthy added that there were special smoke alarms available for the hard of hearing with strobe lights and he was trying to determine the scope of the need for these and asked Mr. Bovilsky if he could provide some information from the ADA sources.

## Department of Public Works

Mr. Alvord stated that he is working on Parks and Recreation being absorbed as part of the DPW in the Emergency Preparedness Plan. He added that the Regional Directors continue to work on the procedures but that CL&P has been the only active participant and they are trying to get other utility companies to be involved, and the next meeting is October 4.

Mr. Alvord added that there are weekly meetings that include traffic plan updates on detours, DOT bridge closures, and that an e-mail distribution list has been created to enhance the communications system. Mr. Alvord added that there is a 24-hour crew that changes weekly and they are updated with contact information for downed trees, flooding, and contractor contacts for situations such as steel road plate covers, etc. He added that these important details are communicated in weekly post-construction progress update meetings, and Chief McCarthy stated that to include ambulance services and the Norwalk Transit Authority for all communication systems.

## Information Technology Department

Mayor Moccia stated that Ms. DelVecchio was busy working on the new City Website, which will be up for the official unveiling on August 14, and added that the new site is very impressive and reflects a great deal of work and input from the departments along with practical use suggestions from the general public.

Chief McCarthy added that there is a new emergency alert feature, and Ms. DeLuca added that there are additional pages set up for future development as the need arises, which was an efficient way to build the capability to adapt the site in response to public input.

Ms. DeLuca stated that the next meeting will be on September 8 at 3:30.

There were no other items for discussion.

## ADJOURNMENT

**\*\* MAYOR MOCCIA MOTIONED TO ADJOURN.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Knox,  
Telesco Secretarial Services

Attachment: Pre-Disaster Mitigation Strategy -  
Implementation Activity Summary

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## Pre-Disaster Mitigation Strategy - Implementation Activity Summary

**Goal 1.** *Reduce the loss of life and property and economic consequences as a result of flooding, high winds, severe winter storms and dam failure.*

**Objective 1.** Improve the ability of Norwalk departments to prepare and respond to severe weather and other natural emergencies.

<b>Supporting Tasks</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Priority</b>
1 Continue to maintain an emergency telephone notification system that allows the municipality to alert various segments of the population depending on the nature of the emergency. Encourage residents and businesses to update their contact information within the system.	OEM	<b>On-going</b>	High
2 Plan for the activation of the Emergency Operations Center and an alternate location, including equipment and staff with trained personnel.	OEM	On-going	High
3 Identify and prepare and/or update site specific emergency evacuation plans for critical facilities such as Norwalk Hospital, King Industries, Merritt 7, Norden Place office park and other significant complexes as well as the gas pipeline.	Public Safety	Ongoing	Medium
4 Perform hazard analysis at WWTP/DPW center to identify areas of concern.	DPW	Ongoing	Medium
5 Provide adequate back-up generators at critical facilities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Hall</li> <li>• Sanitary sewer pumping stations</li> <li>• Storm water pumping stations</li> <li>• Shelters (shelter area and beyond)</li> <li>• Alternate EOC at Norwalk Fire Dept</li> </ul>	Multiple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need capital support</li> <li>• In progress (20 of 22 done)</li> <li>• No action</li> <li>• BMHS/NHS done</li> <li>• Completed</li> </ul>	High High Medium High High
6 Evaluate municipalities sheltering and evacuation needs and how these needs can be met through local and regional sheltering concepts	OEM	On-going	Medium
7 Ensure the ability of Departments to function beyond first 24 hours by executing pre-positioned contracts for logistical support.	OEM Purch/ Finance	No action	High

**Objective 2. Through education and outreach activities, improve the ability of Norwalk residents and business to prepare and respond to severe weather and other natural emergencies.**

<b>Supporting Tasks</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Priority</b>
1 Add natural hazards information to the annual Fire Dept Open House, web site and the public access channel.	OEM	On-going	High
2 Identify special-needs populations for various hazards.	Public Safety	On-going	Medium
3 Provide presentations and workshops to community groups, non-profits and businesses to increase their ability to prepare and respond to emergencies.	OEM	On-going	High

**Objective 3. Whenever practical, incorporate natural hazard mitigation strategies into existing City projects.**

<b>Supporting Tasks</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Priority</b>
1 Expand maintenance activities such as more frequent catch basin, storm drainage facilities and channel cleaning.	DPW	Suspended- due budget reductions	High
2 Request capital funding for drainage and flood mitigation projects throughout the City.	DPW	In Progress	Medium
3 Increase awareness to homeowners about mitigation activities.	OEM	On-going	medium

**Objective 4. Reduce the likelihood and potential loss of life and property as a result of dam failure.**

<b>Supporting Tasks</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Priority</b>
1 Upgrade the flood spillway of the Browns and Grupes Reservoir Dams.	First District Water Department	Project going to bid 5/10	Low

**Objective 5 Reduce the amount of debris from severe storms through preventive tree maintenance and debris planning**

<b>Supporting Tasks</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Priority</b>
1 Encourage more citizen participation to inventory and identify condition of street trees and integrate with City's GIS to optimize tree maintenance activities.	DPW	Ongoing	Medium
2 Continue to fund the citywide tree planting and maintenance program. Assess condition of trees and work with Norwalk Tree Alliance in this effort.	DPW	Ongoing	Medium
3 Prepare and maintain a debris management plan	DPW	Ongoing	Medium
4. Replace diseased trees, plant new trees and improve street tree maintenance	DPW	Ongoing	Medium