

**CITY OF NORWALK
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
MARCH 12, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Deputy Chief Wrinn, Police Department; Lenard Nelson, Health Dept.; Karen Del Vecchio, Director of Information & Technology; Louis Schulman, Norwalk Transit; Adam Bovilsky, Human Relations; Hal Alvord, DPW; Kristen Biveau, American Red Cross; Sherelle Harris, Norwalk Public Library; Donna Castrocasa, Finance Dept.; Andrew Maguire, Norwalk Hospital;

STAFF: Denis McCarthy, Fire Chief, Norwalk Fire Department; Michelle DeLuca, Director, Emergency Management.

Call to Order

Fire Chief McCarthy called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

TEEX Program – MTA/CT DOT

Chief McCarthy reminded the committee about the national emergency training program sponsored by a grant from the MTA and CT DOT. He explained that Norwalk can send members of the municipal team to Texas A&M University in May 19-23, 2014. He described the training center and reviewed the itinerary and highlights of the program. He asked those interested to let him know as soon as possible so that he can confirm arrangements and attendance with the Mayor.

Leadership Training for Crisis Management – Fairfield University

Chief McCarthy announced that there will be a regional workshop held at Fairfield University that is sponsored by Harvard's National Preparedness Leadership Initiative on April 16, 2014 from 8:am – 4pm. He explained that this program is to train chief elected officials of the DEMHS Region on crisis leadership skills. He suggested that members attend and that it is an opportunity to participate in advanced level emergency preparedness workshop.

Table-top exercise - April 10

Chief McCarthy stated that the next table-top exercise is scheduled for April 10 and will be held at Brien McMahon CGS Community room for department representatives. He reported that they will be reviewing the preparedness guide which is similar to the one that was done for the school district with procedures for lockdown and evacuation. He noted that he is still looking for a facilitator.

American Red Cross

Ms. Kristen Biveau, coordinator from the Red Cross stated that there is a strong relationship with the City of Norwalk and the Red Cross. She provided an information kit on the services provided by the Red Cross and noted that it mirrors one that is provided by FEMA. She reviewed the leaflets on services that are provided for shelter and food for families displaced by fire or shelter emergencies and noted the limitations, such as transportation which is normally not provided and has to be arranged.

There was discussion on emergency shelter coverage for service animals and limitations and that there is no registry for service animals. Ms. Deluca noted that the acceptable question that can be asked include what service does the animal provide, which determines if it is a comfort animal or service animal. Ms. Biveau then covered a school project designed to reach grade 2 students on emergency tips where they decorate a pillow case on what to do if something happens.

Ms. Biveau then reviewed the vendor service agreement and outlined the areas that are covered for the City of Norwalk. There was discussion on questions regarding notification time and call times for incidents and Ms. Biveau requested immediate notice for emergencies so that they can make contact and necessary arrangements. She noted that they can cover five families or 25 clients with one emergency and beyond that regional shelter arrangements are then worked out. She added that there are regional shelters and Norwalk could act as a host city if needed by another town.

Emergency Operations

Ms. Deluca stated that scheduling for IPAD training will be done soon, and explained that there will be training on the system and the next steps include establishing user access.

Mr. Alvord asked if the EOC is set up as classroom style or if it is work station like an emergency, and Ms. Deluca replied that the room was set up as it would be during an actual emergency operations event. There was discussion on how the incidents are tracked and updated and the ways data can be searched by category.

Board of Education - School Emergency Update

Chief McCarthy stated that Dr. Rivera has made emergency preparedness a priority and now that there is a Director of communications, the public information process is now in place.

Deputy Chief Wrinn stated that City Hall and municipal building assessments are in progress. He explained the numbering doors with outside access has been a major improvement of room identification for first responders, and they are working on maps and electronic aerial maps. He added that after the schools are finished, municipal buildings are next for facility assessment.

Department Updates/Roundtable Comments

Norwalk Hospital

Mr. Maguire reported that now that the Regional Center has been set up, the organizational structure is in place with Norwalk, Danbury and Milford Hospitals and a new CEO and new management levels are in place. He added that there is much going on with the construction and infrastructure upgrades with utilities and the installation of the Co-Gen system. He described the new emergency operations and mass casualty plan implementation and for new procedures there will be staff training. He spoke about the command channel and high frequency systems that have been in place with Police Dispatch Operations.

Norwalk Police Dispatch

Lt. Resnick stated that they are working with digital software on protocol card system and the 911 consoles. Deputy Chief Wrinn noted that they are looking to replace the cell tower in the Rowayton area.

Norwalk Transit

Mr. Schulman stated that they are in the process of evaluation of final bids with GPS systems and cameras for vehicle location tracking. He noted that they are replacing a few vehicles and they will have inside cameras and GPS systems. There was discussion on the capability of forward looking ones that can be used for live stream feeds.

DPW

Mr. Alvord reported that they are in limbo on a restructuring of the WPCA management position and there a few other vacancies that they need to fill. He spoke about the rough conditions with the weather and the problems with procurement of road salt. Chief added that the regional resources were contacted and they need to do a follow up review for clarify the procurement process.

Mr. Alvord noted that the radio system is shot and they are looking to replace it. He stated that they are still looking for a warehouse location for large equipment during emergency evacuations. He noted that 100 Fairfield Avenue owners have not been fully accommodating, and now that the Data Center is at Noreen that is no longer a viable location, they have looked at the National Armory facility as a possibility but the location is a bit far.

I.T. Dept.

Ms. DelVecchio reported that there infrastructure improvements in progress with the network supplier and back up archives in place for faster band service. She added that the IPADs for fire apparatus are being set up with connection on the fiber phone lines with the state fiber network.

Ms. DelVecchio noted there are about 200 names of City employees that have been compiled to receive texts or e-mail alerts on city hall closures or opening delays. She added that there needs to be clarification on the definition of essential employees.

There was discussion on this new protocol and the parameters of notification. Mr. Alvord added that in his definition all are essential as employees are should be exempt from notification alerts as they are expected to come to work when there is routine snow.

Health Department

Mr. Nelson stated that there are new state call downs for mass dispensing agencies and reported that there should be an e-mail alert coming between April 22 -24. He described this as a SSM drill and that if there was a real emergency it would indicate what would be done. Mr. Alvord suggested that a planning session be scheduled for preparedness of a health crisis emergency.

Human Relations – Fair Rent

Mr. Bovilsky asked if the EOC will be available for the public like the community room at the police. He added that the ADA compliance some rooms need to be equipped with hearing device capability and this can be arranged to be installed. There was a discussion on the limitations for this room due to the technical equipment that is at risk of misuse. Ms. DeLuca noted that there will be training for the IPAD at the EOC with voice recognition and video conferencing capability.

Library

Chief McCarthy asked about increased Library attendance of homeless due to the weather conditions. Ms. Harris, replied that there has not been a noticeable increase of visitors using the Library as warming center, and it was noted that the shelter has extended hours during extreme cold temperatures.

Finance Department

Ms. Donna Castrocasa mentioned that expense reimbursements are still in progress from FEMA.

Ms. Herring noted that the DPW is to be commended on the good job keeping up with snow plowing amidst the rough winter conditions.

Next Meeting - It was noted that next meeting would be on April 16, 2014.

There were no other items for discussion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Marilyn Knox, Telesco Secretarial Services