

Board of Selectmen Special Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 8, 2020 at 3 pm

Meeting held virtually due to COVID-19

- 1- **Call to Order:** First Selectman Chris Spaulding called the meeting to order at 3.04pm. Also in attendance were Selectwoman Samantha Nestor, Selectman Stephan Grozinger, Town Administrator Jonathan Luiz, Fire Marshall John Pokorny, Michael Schlecter, John Conte, Police Chief Ed Henion, Police Sergeant Joe Miceli, Director Communications Center John Ojarovsky, Director of Social Services Allison Lisbon, Senior Center Director Wendy Petty, Terry Blake, Tracey Alston from Eversource, Esme Lombard from Altice, Michael Cicchetti from Frontier, Neighborhood Captains Ken Edgar and Dawn Egan, Editor of Weston Today Ted Craft and Weston Residents participating.
- 2- **Pledge of Allegiance – The pledge was recited.**
- 3- **Post Hurricane Isaias Recap:**
 - First Selectmen Spaulding described the town challenges, damages and outages during the storm and introduced Ms. Alston From Eversource and Ms. Lombard from Altice to the group.
 - Ms. Alston of Eversource provided updates and steps taken since the storm. She will be sending First Selectman Spaulding a 30 day storm report with planning and execution.
 - Selectwoman Nestor asked why did we not get all the information needed? Ms. Alston explained why mentioning communication issues, dashboard problems and a system wide crash.
 - Selectman Grozinger highlighted two things needed from Eversource - information and timeline. Ms. Alston explained that Hurricane Isaias was a top 3 storm, with similar damage to Hurricane Sandy. First Selectman Spaulding mentioned there were supposed to be improvements made after Sandy and this doesn't make us feel comfortable moving forward. He said most residents would agree that it was not resolved timeously. More discussion ensued on the technicalities of system outage reportages.
 - Sergeant Micelli introduced Esme Lombard from Altice and once again stressed the need for communication and transparency. First Selectman Spaulding noted most complaints were about cable/ internet services outages and shared frustrations from residents. Ms. Lombard went over updates and investments in training as well as the number outages as well as enhancements to the system.
 - Sergeant Micelli introduced Mike Ciccheti from Frontier. Sergeant Micelli mentioned that there was no communication from Frontier. Mr. Ciccheti said the town was reaching out to the incorrect person at Frontier. First Selectman Spaulding highlighted a lot of double poles in town that are attached to other wires and pose a significant risk

during wind events. Mr. Cicchetti responded and spoke about the old poles, the state mandate about these poles and Frontier's plans to deal with this issue statewide.

- Group discussion took place on storm communications moving forward as well as other more traditional forms of communication such as radio.
- First Selectman Spaulding read out a letter about the Town participating with other towns in a complaint about Eversource filed with PURA.
- Sergeant Micelli mentioned the fact that everyone on the Town side did a remarkable job and expressed his thanks for all of the hard work and support. The current COVID situation limited their response and made everything more difficult.

Sergeant Micelli initiated Role call:

- **Chief Henion:** recognized Sargent Micelli for his incredible job during the storm.
- **Director Ojarovsky:** Mentioned difficulties when a resident calls about a tree down - difficult when it has wires attached and what wires they are cable/ electricity. He expressed his thanks to Sergeant Micelli for the live spreadsheet.
- **First Selectman Spaulding** started a discussion on the number of 911 calls and how to better guide residents on "decision tree," who to call for what and when.
- **Chief Pokorny:** stated that the Fire Department responded to well over 100 calls. There was frustration at not being able to get to streets because of downed wires. First Selectman Spaulding thanked Chief Pokorny for his team's quick response time to the Town fire. There was a further discussion on electrical pole fires and prioritization, First Selectman Spaulding highlighted a burnt pole on Lord's Highway that is structurally not safe.
- **Michael Schlechter** - spoke of a Priority One situation that was not escalated and addressed by Eversouce. Selectman Grozinger said that this was an unacceptable response to the situation. Ms Alston acknowledged this and made note.
- **Mr. Luiz:** received a quote to fix the generator room that was damaged by fire and is moving forward because of the importance of the work.
- A discussion ensued on Everbridge and the effort needed to migrate residents over to Everbridge from Code Red for emergency messages. Selectwoman Nestor brought up the success in getting people to take the town survey and suggested a similar model be used for Everbridge. Ms.Petty mentioned she sent out an insert to those over 70 with information on Everbridge. Sergeant Micelli suggested using Code Red to communicate to Code Red subscribers about the migration.
- **Mr.Edgar:** went over citizen response and reliance on the comfort station. A discussion ensued about the power issue to the comfort station as well as communications to the general public. Neighborhood captains need to be utilized better in future, e.g., an information package/fact sheet should be created ready beforehand to print and distribute.
- **Ms. Petty:** Made lots of phone calls to seniors because information was not getting to them. Share mailer with Joe M and Chris - Samantha link up with the marketing committee on this.

- **Mr. Weingarten:** highlighted issues with no power and inability to communicate even calling 911 was impossible.
- **Mr. Conte:** described a week-long effort, and long hours for his team. The biggest hurdle was outside utility companies and waiting for them to de-energize their circuits
- **Mr. DelMastro:** working on getting Comfort Center running on a generator and energy management to run that room.
- **Mr. Craft:** asked why the National Guard request? Sergeant Micelli explained that the National Guard assistance was requested because Eversource is required to respond once the National Guard is deployed.
- **Sergeant Micelli:** discussed underpreparedness of Eversource highlighting that the response rate seems to be getting worse despite constant communications efforts at meetings
- First Selectman Spaulding said that it is incumbent on every citizen to reach out about Eversource and complain.

4- Motion to adjourn: Selectman Grozinger moved to adjourn. Selectwoman Nestor seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 5.28 pm.

Minutes submitted by:

Sara Beer, Executive Administrative Assistant

Approved 10-15-2020