

Meeting Minutes
Hightstown Borough Council
Emergency Meeting – St. Anthony's church
August 28, 2011
6:00 pm

The meeting was called to order by Council President Quattrone at 6:00 pm and he stated that this meeting was an emergency meeting to address the damages and situation of the Borough relating to damages sustained due Hurricane Irene and was not noticed.

In attendance at this meeting were Councilmember Bibens, Councilmember Gilmartin, Councilmember McGinty, Council President Quattrone, Councilmember Vanderbeck and Councilmember Woods.

Also in attendance were various Department Heads and employees of the Borough: Debra Sopronyi, Borough Clerk; Ken Lewis, DPW Superintendent; Bill Searing, AWWTP; Larry Blake and Sean McGuire, Water Plant; Chief James Eufemia and Sgt. Frank Gendron, Police Department; George Lang, CFO; Robert Hary and Jill Swanson, Health Department; Larry VanKirk, OEM and Fire Department; and Carmela Roberts, Borough Engineer.

Council President Quattrone called for a roll call vote of Council to declare this meeting an emergency meeting without public notice due to the emergent need to address damages sustained by Hurricane Irene.

Roll Call Vote: Council members Bibens, Gilmartin, McGinty, Quattrone, Vanderbeck, and Woods voted yes.

Meeting declared an emergency meeting, 6-0

Council President Quattrone stated that this meeting is a follow-up to the 11:00am emergency meeting, to re-evaluate the damages sustained from Hurricane Irene.

Water Plant

Larry Blake, Lead Operator, stated that he has been in touch with Mike Donato and Lane Christianson regarding resuming the pumping of water from the plant. Matt Lucas and JCPL have been contacted to cut the power to the plant so the needed work can be performed. The Borough has been connected to the East Windsor MUA at Stockton and Morrison and a 5" hose has been installed at Station Road in Wyckoff Mills. Mr. Blake and Mr. McGuire are monitoring and evaluating the system. There was further discussion.

Health Department

Robert Hary and Jill Swanson gave an explanation of the NJDEP Water and Wastewater and Sewer advisories which state:

Boil Water Advisory

The Hightstown Water Department is issuing a Boil Water Advisory for residents within the Borough of Hightstown. Due to flooding related to the impact of Hurricane Irene the Treatment Plant has been inundated. Please note that this is a standard procedure whenever a treatment failure occurs which may compromise the quality of your drinking water. Hightstown Water is working with New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Agency and as a precaution, the following Boil Water Advisory is required until testing of the water supply is deemed satisfactory.

Effective immediately and until further notice, bring tap water to a rolling boil for one minute and allow the tap water to cool before using for:

- * *Drinking.*
- * *Preparing foods, washing vegetables and fruit.*
- * *Cooking.*
- * *Making ice cubes.*
- * *Taking medications.*

- * *Brushing teeth.*
- * *Mixing baby formula, food, juices or drinks.*

Hightstown Water also recommends the following steps:

- * *Throw away uncooked food of beverages or ice cubes if made with tap water during the day of the advisory.*
- * *Keep boiled water in the refrigerator for drinking.*
- * *Rinse hand-washed dishes for a minute in dilute bleach (one tablespoon of household bleach per gallon of tap water) or clean your dishes in a dishwasher using the hot wash cycle and dry cycle.*
- * *Do not swallow water while you are showering or bathing.*
- * *Provide pets with boiled water after cooling.*
- * *Do not use home filtering devices in place of boiling or using bottled water; most home water filter will not provide adequate protection from microorganisms.*
- * *Use only boiled water to treat minor injuries.*

Please be advised that The Borough of Hightstown is doing all it can to make sure that your Water is of the highest quality. We will notify our residents as soon as the advisory is lifted. If you are experiencing an emergency please call the West Windsor Health Department at (609)936-8400 till 11:00 pm on Sunday, August 28, 2011.

General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

Wastewater and Sewer Advisory

The Hightstown Wastewater and Sewer Department is issuing a Wastewater Advisory for residents within the Borough of Hightstown. Due to flooding related to the impact of Hurricane Irene the Treatment Plant has been inundated. Please note that this is an Advisory Request Only. Hightstown Wastewater and Sewer Department is working with New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Agency to restore full function to its plant and as a precaution, the following Wastewater and Sewer Advisory is requested until the plant is back to full operations.

Effective immediately and until further notice, if possible please decrease your waste water functions and equipment usage for:

- * *Running Water Taps.*
- * *Washing Clothes.*
- * *Consistent Flushing of Toilets.*
- * *Usage of Sump Pumps When No Longer Needed.*

Please be advised that Borough of Hightstown is doing all it can to make sure that your Wastewater and Sewer Service is running at full capacity. We will notify our residents as soon as the advisory is lifted. If you are experiencing an emergency please call the West Windsor Health Department at (609) 936-8400 till 11:00 pm on Sunday, August 28, 2011.

These advisories have been posted on the Borough website and the reverse 9-1-1 system was used to advise residents. The Health Department is in contact with the NJDEP and Mercer County regarding health matters. They have visited the restaurants in the Borough to review the advisories and explain special requirements now in effect for their operation. The Health Department call center will be operational and open to take calls until 11:00pm to accommodate questions from businesses and residents.

AWWTP

Bill Searing advised that the pumps for raw sewage are under water and that there is river water in the system and he needs to get the pumps operating tomorrow. He has Deltronics and an electrician coming on Monday to change the box and the four mag and two allen pumps need new motors; he will be acquiring diesel six inch, 1,500 gallon per minute pumps to get pumping.. The plant will need to pump 3,000 gallons per minute around the clock due to the river water infiltration into the system and is hoping to turn this around by the end of the week. All of this will require NJDEP clearance. There was further discussion.

Police Department

Chief Eufemia and Sgt. Gendron advised that there was so much water in Borough Hall that everything was under water and/or ruined; their communication center is down. Public Works is pumping water from the building now; they are in need of a facility from which to operate and Lucas Electric, on Mercer Street, has offered them a facility. The Police vehicles were saved and they have been operating temporarily from St. Anthony Church. 9-1-1 calls have been temporarily deferred to East Windsor and are forwarded to Cranbury as the County system cannot patch to Cranbury; Robbinsville has also offered assistance with 9-1-1 services if needed. There was further discussion and they advised that they are in need of, at a minimum, phones, communication and dispatch equipment, phone lines and computers to get the 9-1-1 up and running. There was discussion regarding the Lucas facility being a short term solution and the possibility of it becoming a permanent facility and moving all Borough offices to that location. Cranbury is presently being used as the Police Department base; but with Route 33 closed, the police are needed in town to protect and assist the businesses. There was discussion regarding the assistance of Sheriff Officers and use of their commend center.

Public Works

Ken Lewis advised that there was water throughout Borough Hall as well as the garage and basement of Public Works and they are presently in the process of assisting the water and sewer plants to get them back in to operation. He has cut power in Borough Hall and all generators were under water; there is a need for an electrical evaluation in the building before power can be restored. The DPW staff has been working around the clock, day and night, with all staff working. They are still evaluating losees, but know they lost a pump and vehicle in the flood. There was further discussion.

Office of Emergency Management and Fire Department

Larry VanKirk, OEM Coordinator and Fire Chief advised that a shelter has been established at the High School and it will be demobilized tomorrow; there were twelve victims who utilized the shelter. The sludge from the flood has been removed from downtown. The firehouse is up and running but they are down one bay for vehicles due to the excessive powerful water that flowed through; it appears that the floor may have been undermined and there is substantial structural and equipment damage. The tanker task force will be operating until further notice. There was no power loss during the storm. FEMA worksheets will be forthcoming for all departments. There was further discussion.

Borough Engineer

Carmela Roberts recommended that a structural engineer be retained to determine the soundness of the firehouse and Borough Hall; there was discussion regarding the possible undermining of the floors in the firehouse and she was charged with retaining the structural engineer to evaluate these two facilities.

NJDOT has closed Main Street at the dam pending inspection to determine whether the integrity of the bridge, roadway and/or parapet wall at the dam has been compromised. Re-opening of the roadway will be dependent upon NJDOT inspection results and there was discussion regarding detour routes and traffic flow; she is working with NJDOT on this matter.

General Discussion

George Lang advised Council that an emergency will have to be declared and Council will have to concur with the declaration at the next meeting. It is expected that the Borough should receive some reimbursement from FEMA and the insurance and he will need to know the scope of damages and costs associated with it. There was discussion regarding the declaration of an emergency and Larry VanKirk emphasized the need for good recordkeeping and documentation during restoration from the disaster.

After further discussion, it was determined that all Borough Hall employees will report to work on Monday to evaluation offices and prepare for a move to temporary facilities. The Department Heads were excused from the meeting at this time.

The Borough Engineer determined that an emergency exists in the Borough and declared same.

There was discussion regarding insurance and the Borough Clerk was charged with contacting the Mid Jersey JIF and getting the claim established; the Borough Engineer can then follow-up if necessary.

There was discussion regarding important pending matters that must be immediately addressed and it was decided that there would be a special meeting on Monday, August 29th; arrangements for a location to hold the meeting will have to be made. Councilmember Bibens will check with the Fire Department and Councilmember Gilmartin will check with the First Aid for possible use of their facilities. They will advise the Borough Clerk once a meeting location is established. The matters to be discussed will include the Cranbury 9-1-1 contract in executive session; and in public session the resolution to declare the emergency will be adopted as well as an emergency recovery update given. The Borough Administrator's start date will also be discussed. Department Heads should be present to give updates on their progress and additional needs for recovery.

Council President Quattrone then opened the floor for public comment and the following individuals spoke:

Rob Thibault, 504 S. Main Street – expressed that there should be communication to the public and a contact person assigned regarding bulk pick-up, water questions and tree debris removal. There should also be a group appointed to do a post-event incident report.

Councilmember Vanderbeck moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:05pm and Councilmember McGinty seconded; the motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra L. Sopronyi
Borough Clerk