

Hazard Mitigation Commission
Town Hall
January 19, 2016
7:30 pm
Selectmen's Meeting Room,
Second Floor

Present Chair Hank Graver, Town Environmental Planner Kevin Magee,
Town Health Director Dennis Johnson, Allyn Brown, Rich Meier

Absent Steve Kops, John Henningson

Guests None

Call to Order/Determination of Quorum

At 7:34 pm, Chair Hank Graver called to order the regular meeting, noting that all present were eligible to vote.

Public Forum

There were no guests present.

Approval of Minutes of Previous meeting

Upon review,

Motion: Dennis Johnson moved to approve the November 19, 2015 minutes, seconded by Allyn Brown.

*Vote: Carried - Brown, Magee, Johnson, Graver
Abstained - Meier(Absent)*

Approval of Bills and Vouchers

Recording Secretary Invoice \$108.88

Motion: Rich Meier moved to pay the invoice, seconded by Allyn Brown.

Vote: Carried - Brown, Magee, Johnson, Meier

Other There were no other bills or vouchers.

Old Business

There was no discussion.

New Business

1. Work on "Strategies for Guilford" document

Commissioners came prepared to review in detail their individual strategy projects' lists. Kevin Magee advised that the Army Corp of Engineers (ACOE) 'Green Infrastructure' regulations are being changed. Due to topography, there are different regulations for each region of the United States. It was noted that the ACOE is not as agreeable to use new technology as the DEEP which pursues it.

Discussion reviewed the many years of invasive plant treatments at Lake Quonnipaug and long term plans to keep the lake healthy and safe for residents and the public. Kevin Magee advised that a contractor has been hired and a \$20,000 state grant has been awarded. Guilford coordinates projects with the State of CT, DEEP, Guilford Conservation Commission, other agencies and the Friends of Lake Quonnipaug.

Discussion focused on mitigation to prevent wave action erosion along the shoreline and the use of dredging spoils, especially at Soundview Avenue, and Grass Island. Spoils from the Town Marina remain wet and must be allowed to completely de-water in a berm created by the Town. This material works to avoid erosion. Most municipalities use dry spoils as land fill. It is illegal to be placed in marshlands. Coastal resiliency grant project require permits.

Discussion was held on areas of Town where storms over many years have been the major cause of ongoing erosion that continues to weaken soils and marshes, including Chaffinch Island and Chittenden Park with 300 feet of erosion over those years. This is occurring on the shores of rivers, lakes and Long Island Sound. Some grants have been denied in part due to Guilford's higher income average which does not take into account the burden of other Town expenses. Kevin, Dennis Johnson and other Town departments are working with CERCA for other grants.

Funds may become available to relocate Public Works' facilities when portions of the Town Center South Plan are put into place. This could include a company purchasing the current Public Works facilities adjacent to the train station. A North Guilford satellite facility would be more cost effective providing storage for road equipment, sand/salt, allowing crews to be safer and remain in the area. Currently, crews must return to the center of town to re-fuel or re-supply vehicles during storms.

a. What has been accomplished?

Discussion reviewed several accomplishments from each list of strategy projects researched, including several road restorations and elevations, wetlands and shore erosion projects, renewed evacuation routes, installing signs, updated emergency brochure for distribution to residents, and other projects.

b. To do in 2016.

Some additional priorities and to emphasize the November 2015 minutes' recommendations, (not in order of priority) :

- Continue to improve Evacuation routes and procedures in flood prone areas.
- HazMC to recommend to the BOS that the Town provide public education by field experts, clarifying information and solutions for hazardous conditions.
- The Town Budget should include line items to fund projects and education along with funds received from federal grants.
- Urgency to set up new high school as Community Emergency Shelter and update the current Community Center.
- Continue to request relocation of current Public Works facilities to higher less hazardous area.
- Continue to pursue a satellite facility in North Guilford, possibly on Route 80.
- Alert and work with Town Departments : Planning and Zoning (and Commission zoning code revisions), Building and Engineering, Police, Fire and Emergency Services to accomplish HazMC projects and need for code revisions related to disaster resilience. HazMC will continue to review permit procedures which are conducted through these departments.

Discussion continued on the major impact that disturbing natural resources can have on bacteria levels contaminating water quality, shellfish, aquatic and wildlife.

HazMC will recommend a scientific study to determine current conditions.

Discussion concerned the priority to obtain funds and hire a grant writer to work with Kevin Magee, Dennis Johnson and other departments to assist in successful grant applications and approvals.

Town taxes will continue to make a dramatic rise over the next five years to support the construction of the new \$100 million dollar high school. Town funds will not be available for many more years unless these strategies become BOS priorities.

Chair Hank Graver and Dennis Johnson reported on their meeting with Fire Chief Charles Herrschaft. They reviewed the emergency services' responsibilities, current practices and ongoing requirements to protect citizens.

They determined :

- which strategies are not the responsibility of the Fire Department and several that could be eliminated as a strategy.
- Providing public education on evacuation procedures and services must be done and regularly updated. Upon warnings of Mandatory Evacuations residents must leave their dwellings or risk no emergency services during hazardous conditions.
- Robotic video Drones were suggested as a major means to provide emergency information to fire and police personnel, as well as, to citizens via the internet and cell phones.

Allyn Brown submitted his updated priority strategy list and accomplishments in a letter form, to be revised by the HazMC, as a recommendation letter to the BOS. This would provide BOS with the work of HazMC over the last few years, with expectations to fulfill the FEMA criteria. This is

Further discussion and decisions included :

- Meeting the FEMA 2016 grant application deadline. The BOS must approve a list of HazMC recommendations soon.
- Connect with the regional municipal organization SCROG to establish the Community Rating System (CRS) and hire a consultant to manage it.

Chair Graver requested that commissioners review the CRS this month to determine whether the Town has complied with criteria to use the system.

- Many strategies have been accomplished or have become unnecessary since the extensive list was created in 2015.
- All commissioners were encouraged to continue to research, contact key people and update their strategy priorities, eliminating as needed. Grant applications will then be submitted with the new information.
- Local, State, and Federal political representatives should be requested to support Guilford by providing resources and funding for urgent and annual aid for environmental hazard mitigation management.
- HazMC will provide public awareness by community forums, timely news articles on safety and evacuation, and connect with Red Cross for citizen emergency training sessions.

- Encourage the Town to provide the North Guilford Fire Department with paid emergency personnel, leaving residents vulnerable to receive timely response.
- Zoning codes must be rewritten with funds do so.
- Ongoing dam projects and resolutions have been reviewed by Kevin Magee with Town Engineer Jim Portley, especially for Lake Quonnipaug, Munger Brook, County Road to the North Branford town line, and many more.

c. To do beyond 2016.

- Continue to pursue BOS approval and funding for all projects.
- Continue with a consultant and monitor funding resources.
- Continue to implement strategies, follow through with the HazMC long term Plans and update or revise as needed in consultation with other Town departments and services, agencies, residents, and businesses.

d. Each commissioner's assignment

Commissioners will continue to prioritize their strategies and be prepared to present for review at the next meeting.

Adjournment

Motion: At 9:24 pm, Rich Meier moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Kevin Magee.

Vote: Carried - Unanimously

The next meeting will be held Tuesday, February 16, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

*Judith Anderson Castellano
Recording Secretary*