

**Town of Mansfield
Board of Selectmen
Minutes of September 7, 2011**

Present: Chairman Jess Aptowitz, Vice Chairman Olivier Kozlowski, Clerk Douglas Annino, Selectman Kevin Moran, Selectman George Dentino, William Ross Town Manager

Absent:

Airport Commission Discussion

Lou Andrews, Airport Commission Chairman, and Howard Fiske, member, are present for meeting. He would like to discuss a flight obstruction and proposed removal of trees on adjacent town property.

The FAA requires the airport to trim trees that extend into the flight clear zone and light path for the main runway. They are providing funding for the tree trimming project however, the trees are on town property so the airport commission needs the Board of Selectmen's approval to trim or remove them.

The specific area in question is adjacent to the lot that contains the animal shelter and along the access road to the animal shelter and former wastewater treatment plant site.

Selectman Kozlowski asked about the work as shown on the color coded map handed out to the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Andrews explained to the bos and audience what the color codes meant. Airport, town property, private property, etc.

Selectman Annino asked about the number and height of the trees to be trimmed or removed. Mr. Andrews replied that the majority of the trees are tall, slender yellow pines. It will be hard to tell how many are needed until the area is reviewed again next year, prior to work commencing.

Motion: To allow the Airport Commission to trim or remove trees on the properties that grows into the airspace now and in the future as required for FAA funding. This would include the access road and allow the Town Manager to send letter authorizing such. (Kozlowski/Moran) 5:0 passes

Airport Open House will be this Saturday, September 10th from 10am to 1pm.

Conservation Commission - NRT Discussion

Discussion of 2010 Town Meeting Land Transfer Approval. There were some errors in the deeds that were corrected after the town meeting vote and are ready for bos signatures now.

Selectman Kozlowski had a couple of questions about the location of the parcels involved and Mr. Andrews was able to indentify them.

Tropical Storm Irene update

1. Pre-Storm Planning:

We met with senior staff twice prior to when the storm event actually occurred. The first meeting was held the Wednesday before the hurricane was anticipated to arrive. We spoke about preliminary items at that time including making sure all of our equipment was serviced and ready, we had adequate fuel for equipment on hand, we had an inventory of items such as chainsaws, generators, sandbags and other items and that we were coordinating activities and communicating how we would interact and provide services during the storm event. We ended that meeting with plans to meet again just prior to the weekend in order to make final determinations on such actions as might be required and to discuss up-to-date information on the strength of the storm, the anticipated path, arrival time, etc. We met again on Friday, August 26th and made a determination that based upon information received at that time, the storm would be impacting Mansfield. At that point, we anticipated the storm would be stronger than it actually was based upon weather service reports. We further determined that based upon weather service projections, the storm would be passing west of Mansfield through western Massachusetts which would put us in a situation where we would have more wind and less rain. Therefore, we prepared for more of a wind event. This did not mean we didn't prepare for possible flooding or impacts of heavy rain, but it appeared to be more likely we would be impacted by trees down, electric service being

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interrupted and the need to clear streets and possibly rescue persons from buildings if trees or other debris impacted the buildings. We also agreed we would establish an emergency operating center at the Water Department building. We further arranged for food for all the employees who would be called in to work. The Fire and Police Departments arranged for additional staffing during the event. The DPW and Electric Departments notified employees that any vacations would be canceled and the employees needed to be available to be called in prior to the

actual arrival of the storm. We left that meeting feeling that we had coordinated activities and were as prepared as we could be.

2. During Storm Event Activities:

The storm arrived somewhat later than we had originally anticipated and even further west in terms of the storm track than we had thought on Friday. We opened the Emergency Operating Center on Sunday morning and called in additional staff. The Electric Department had one member of the line crew and one station operator who spent Saturday night at the Electric Department in case of problems. The remainder of the crews came in early in the morning on Sunday to prepare for the storm. Same situation in terms of calling in staff was utilized with the DPW. During the storm, we concentrated on keeping the streets open for access for both emergency vehicles and the Electric Department. The Electric crews concentrated on putting primary lines back in place while keeping a list of service lines that were down. We prioritized service lines based upon information of any special needs by individuals in the residences and buildings impacted. We made a few generators available on an interim basis where again, special needs were impacted. There were several incidents of electric lines coming down, mostly in West Mansfield, which seemed to receive the brunt of the storm. The most difficult situations were on Otis, West, Balcom and Tremont Streets. That is not to say there were not other instances, but the locations that impacted the most customers were on Otis and West Streets. The DPW, Police, Fire and Electric Departments worked well together in addressing these issues. The effort to maintain services and restore utilities is not limited to any one department. The Police Department is necessary for traffic control. The Fire Department is necessary if there are lines down or lines arcing causing any kind of fire. The DPW needed to clear streets so the line crews and others can access the location. The line crews do the work of restoring the electric lines so power can be restored to the community. We estimate that at one point in time, we may have had as many as 4,000 customers out of power because of major distribution circuits that were impacted by trees. The line crews worked diligently to restore power. We had virtually all of the circuits back in place and operating either late Sunday evening or early Monday morning. We then worked on individual streets and began working on individual services. The majority of services were restored by Monday afternoon, and the last services were finished on Tuesday. There is some cleanup to do. We also operated from the emergency operating center and senior staff was present to coordinate activities. The system functioned well during the storm with a few minor issues that will be addressed in the after-storm action.

3. After Storm Recovery and Review:

We met with senior staff on the afternoon of August 31st to review our actions during the storm to discuss the activities that went well and to review those activities that we can improve on. Overall, we felt that coordination of activities, overall communication and responsiveness to the citizens went very well. We did find several items that we will be making improvements on. One is that we need to improve the source of electric supply for our computer network and dispatch center. While the power was out, we found that our UPS systems are somewhat limited and they don't address the needs of all our equipment. We are putting together a plan to overcome those problems. We also found the design of our fiber network limits the ability of the network to function if the servers at Town Hall are down, so we will be looking into any changes that might need to be made in the layout of the system. A side issue that would help overcome the concerns with the network is the provision of a generator to supply power for the critical elements of the Town Hall operation. We are looking at options for the provision of a generator or other source of supply for Town Hall.

We also will be looking at our telephone system to see if there are ways to improve its operation and make it easier for citizens to access town services during emergencies.

One item we discussed at length was how to communicate with the community during a storm event. An option that we are exploring and in fact have begun to set up is to utilize social media such as Facebook and Twitter. We believe we can use social media for more routine types of communication with our citizens and will be moving forward on that activity in the very near future.

We also determined that in future events, we need to include the director of the Housing Authority and as needed, the Superintendent of Schools in the pre-event planning and execution. The Housing Authority has a number of locations that house elderly and persons with disabilities who need special attention during a serious storm event, especially if the power is out. We also found that we needed better coordination with the School Department on the utilization of school buildings as shelters.

Mr. Ross commended the diligent work and care for the Mansfield Community that was shown by all of our employees and staff involved in the storm effort. Mansfield stands out as a community that is organized, has the ability to coordinate resources and to bring resources to bear on the issues that impact our citizens during an event such as hurricane Irene. The municipal ownership of the electric utility is a definite asset. We were able to keep customers on line with power and

those instances where we had damage to restore the power as quickly as possible. I commend the work of the Electric Department in restoring the power. I would hasten to add that the DPW, Police and Fire were also involved in many of these activities; without their assistance, in many cases the work of the electric department would have been much more difficult. We had one unfortunate incident where two linemen were injured. We are thankful that neither injury appears to be serious; in fact, one of the two gentlemen was back to work the day after the incident. Overall, the storm was well-handled. We coordinated activities and provided services to our citizens throughout the storm. We have learned some valuable lessons and plan on doing a better job next time.

Chairman Aptowitz stated that he received many phone calls and complements regarding the speed and efficiency of our Electric, DPW and public safety staff. Mansfield is fortunate to have our own Electric Co. and talented, dedicated employees.

Selectman Kozlowski also received many comments on how well Mansfield weathered the storm in comparison to our neighboring towns. He is also glad to see that the town is reaching out to the public via social messaging such as Facebook.

Selectman Annino lives on one of the streets that received a lot of tree damage and noticed first hand the responsiveness of the employees involved in storm management through out the weekend.

The costs associated with the storm clean up and damage is being tallied and will be forwarded to FEMA for reimbursement once finished.

Selectman Dentino too is very proud of the Town of Mansfield and our employees.

Veterans Service District Discussion

Mr. Ross previously sent the bos a memorandum regarding interest expressed by the Towns of Easton and Norton and having Mansfield join the Veterans Service District that Easton and Norton have in place. he had had a discussion with Kevin Paicos, the Town Manager in Foxboro, who has expressed an interest in joining with Mansfield, Easton and Norton to form a four-community district with two Veterans' Service Officers and appropriate clerical support staff. Mr. Ross believes that the formation of a four-community district would be advantageous to all four communities and to the Veterans that live in the communities.

Mansfield and Foxboro both have full-time Veterans' Service Officers. John Hogan, the Mansfield Veterans' Service Officer, is very experienced and very diligent in provision of

services to the Veterans of Mansfield. The Foxboro Veterans' Service Officer is relatively new on the job; however, he is very service-oriented and is learning rapidly. He is relatively young and has many years of service ahead of him. Mr. Hogan has indicated to me that he may wish to retire in the next 2-3 years. A joint venture with Easton, Norton and Foxboro would allow Mr. Hogan to mentor the Veterans' Service Officer from Foxboro and pass along his vast knowledge of the needs of Veterans in our communities and the services that can be provided to them. When Mr. Hogan does retire, we would then be in a position to potentially move the current Foxboro Veterans' Service Officer in to the Senior Director's position and through the district, bring on board a second Veterans' Service Officer to provide services to all four communities. This would provide continuity of service and a level of competency for all of our communities.

Easton and Norton do need to know if Mansfield is interested in participating. The Board of Selectmen has the authority to join with Easton and Norton. If the Board of Selectmen finds it is appropriate to further explore the creation of a joint District or an addition of Mansfield and/or Foxboro to the existing District, I would appreciate a motion to that effect and authorization to work with the appropriate communities to reach agreement on the addition of Mansfield to the existing Veterans' Service District. It will need to be future actions to file a request with the Secretary of Veterans' Affairs to join the District and enter into any agreements and applications that may be necessary. The final approval of Mansfield joining the existing district rests with the Secretary of Veterans' Services of the Commonwealth.

Chairman Aptowitz thinks it is a good idea and supports Mr. Ross in exploring the idea. Selectmen Moran, Kozlowski and Annino are also interested as well and would like to examine the concept.

Selectman Dentino believes that regional services are a good idea. However, he would like to see how many people are being serviced by each community before going forward.

Motion: To authorize the town manager to work with Norton and Easton on the possibility of joining their Veteran's District. (Moran/Kozlowski) 5:0 passes

Q & C

None

Weekly Business

Signed - not voted last week

Warrant No. 12008PT in the amount of \$301,877.56

Motion: To approve (Kozlowski/Moran) 4:1 passes (Dentino nay)

Warrant No. 12008TV in the amount of \$87,492.96

Motion: To approve (Kozlowski/Moran) 5:0 passes

Warrant No. 12009T in the amount of \$1,338,021.17

Motion: To approve (Kozlowski/Dentino) 5:0 passes

Warrant No. 12009E in the amount of \$116,887.13

Motion: To approve (Kozlowski/Dentino) 5:0 passes

This week

Warrant No. 12009PT in the amount of \$326,788.71

Motion: To approve (Kozlowski/Moran) 4:1 passes (Dentino nay)

Warrant No. 12009TV in the amount of \$96,732.24

Motion: To approve (Kozlowski/Moran) 5:0 passes

Warrant No. 12009PS in the amount of \$867,517.28

Motion: To approve (Kozlowski/Moran) 4:1 passes (Annino nay)

Warrant No. 12009SV in the amount of \$254,107.16

Motion: To approve (Kozlowski/Moran) 5:0 passes

Warrant No. 12010T in the amount of \$301,651.74

Motion: To approve (Kozlowski/Moran) 5:0 passes

Warrant No. 12010E in the amount of \$1,956,716.44

Motion: To approve (Kozlowski/Moran) 5:0 passes

Warrant No. 12010S in the amount of \$292,258.46

Motion: To approve (Kozlowski/Moran) 5:0 passes

Motion: To reconsider. diff amount (was recorded as \$2,550,626.64)

Motion: To approve (Kozlowski/Moran) 5:0 passes

Warrant No. 12010PT in the amount of \$365,628.43

Motion: To approve (Kozlowski/Moran) 4:1 passes (Dentino nay)

Warrant No. 12010TV in the amount of \$110,332.41

Motion: To approve (Kozlowski/Moran) 5:0 passes

Application for Water Installers license from Oliveira Construction.

Water Operations Manager recommends approval.

Motion: To approve (Kozlowski/Moran) 5:0 passes

Applications for Hackney Driver license from Bills Taxi. Town Manager recommends approval.

- Tommy Falcon

Motion: To approve. (Moran/Kozlowski) 5:0 passes

- Stephen MacKinlay

Motion: To approve. (Moran/Dentino) 5:0 passes

- Frederick Dwyer

Motion: To approve. (Moran/Kozlowski) 5:0 passes

Correspondence

- Notice: Bird Road electric work being done in the public right of way from Maple Street past Mary Dee Lane at the transmission Line. Work will start on September 12th and last 3 months. A road closure will be required for this work and will be closed from 7am - 4pm daily.
- Letter of resignation from Cheryl Collins from the Mansfield Beautification Committee.
Motion: To accept with regret and send thank you letter. (Kozlowski/Annino) 5:0 passes
- Thank you letter from Gary and Robin Forget for the exceptional service of employees.
- Memo from Planning Board asking for designation of 2 CIP reps from BOS.
Motion: To appoint Selectmen Dentino and Moran to CIP. (Kozlowski/Annino) 5:0 passes
- Request for support letter from the Foxboro Town Planner in regards to a MassWorks Infrastructure Program grant they are seeking.
Motion: HOLD FOR NEXT WEEK

- Letter of request for speed limit change on Franklin St. PD has been notified of request.
- Letter of thanks from Frank Bennett, Balcom St. resident for the great work of town employees during storm.
- Letter of request that the bos appeal the Ellsworth vs. TOM case.
- 2 letters of request that the bos NOT appeal the case.
- Fairfield Green housing cost examination from Mass Housing.

Town Managers Report

- MMED meeting on September 21st with a short Board of Selectmen included. Mr. Ross will be away that day so he will review all material prior to that meeting.
- Water repair valve work in the center and north end of town will be starting soon. Water shutoff notices will be sent to all customers affected by work.

BOS Updates

- Selectman Kozlowski: None
- Chairman Aptowitz: Weekday restaurant parking on Park Row is still an issue. Mr. Ross will follow up with local businesses.
- Selectman Annino: None
- Selectman Moran: None
- Selectman Dentino: Thank you for follow up on issues at Fresh Catch Plaza.

Adjournment

Motion: Adjourn meeting at 8:53pm to executive session (Moran/Kozlowski) 5:0 passes

ROLL CALL: Chairman Aptowitz aye, Vice Chairman Kozlowski aye, Clerk Annino aye, Selectman Dentino aye, Selectman Moran aye. 5:0 passes

Douglas Annino

Signature of Clerk

September 14, 2011

Date of Approval