

**TOWN OF SOMERS
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, November 10, 2011
4:00pm
Town Hall Auditorium**

Call to Order: First Selectman Lisa Pellegrini called the meeting to order at 4:05pm.

Members Present:

First Selectman Lisa Pellegrini, Selectmen Kathy Devlin and Bud Knorr, Kim Marcotte, CFO, Ellen Hendrick, Francine Aloisa, Sgt Jose Claudio, Donna Doyker, Michael D'Amato, Jeff Bord, Todd Rolland, Lisa Coope, Donna Hanks, John Collins, Linda Coleman, Jenifer Charette, Steve Jacobs and one interested resident.

Staff Meeting/ Winter Storm Aftermath:

- Mrs. Pellegrini announced that the Emergency plan worked and commended the Dept. of Public Works, the Fire Department, the State Police and Town Hall and School Staff for their support and hard work throughout the disaster.
- On Saturday October 29th at 5:00pm Mrs. Pellegrini declared a State of Emergency for the Town of Somers. After at 5:30pm the Governor declared a State of Emergency for the State of Connecticut.
- The Emergency Operations Center was officially opened at 5:00pm on October 29th by Mrs. Pellegrini and remained open until Wednesday, November 9th at 3:00pm.
- The Shelter was opened at the High School on Saturday, October 29th at 11:30pm.
- Mrs. Pellegrini shared with the group an average of 25 to 50 residents used the shelter over night and between 100 and 250 residents were using the shower facilities on a daily basis.
- Mrs. Pellegrini said that it was very difficult to communicate with staff and residents due to downed phone lines, no internet access and limited cell phone use, especially with AT&T cell phones.
- As a result communications relied on signs posted around town, communications captains in neighborhoods, flyers, door to door visits and an Emergency Town Meeting.
- Beginning Monday, October 31st and continuing daily during the event volunteers (neighborhood community captains) and Town Staff went door to door with flyers to communicate to residents information such as Shelter hours, School closings, availability of water at the Fire Station, availability of showers at the High School, as well as the time of an Emergency Town Meeting to be held on November 1st to update residents on power restoration.
- Mrs. Pellegrini stated to Town employees that in an effort to eliminate any confusion in the future Town employees should report to the Emergency Operations Center if they do not hear communications from their Supervisor and/or Selectmen. Mrs. Pellegrini commented that during an emergency your regular job duties may change and that you will be required to assist in other areas as required by the emergency.
- Mrs. Pellegrini stressed to the staff that as Town Employees when they speak to the public, they speak on behalf of the Town. They are to remain positive and keep to the

facts that are given in updates. Criticisms and personal opinions only bring problems and cause Safety issues.

- Sergeant Claudio stated that during a State of Emergency you do the job you are given and get it done, there are no time to have discussions during emergency's; after things return to normal then is the time to have further discussion. This eliminates confusion.
- Mrs. Pellegrini expressed her frustrations to the Governor during one of the many conference calls and then soon after the VP of CL&P contacted the Town. Many more CL&P crews were then dispatched to the Town.
- At this time the Board of Selectmen opened the meeting up for and discussion and questions.
- There were several questions from staff regarding phone trees, clarifications on who to report to, etc.
- One resident expressed dissatisfaction with the way the emergency was handled by town officials and asked if there was an emergency plan.

Adjournment:

Mrs. Pellegrini made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:55, seconded by Mrs. Devlin. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim LaFleur-Recording

Minutes are not official until accepted at a subsequent meeting.