

**BOARD OF ALDERMEN
EMERGENCY MEETING
AUGUST 31, 2011**

An Emergency Meeting of the Board of Aldermen was held on Wednesday, August 31, 2011 in the aldermanic chambers of City Hall. Chairman G. Smith called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. and asked those present to join him in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Roll Call

Board Members Present

B. Bevan
B. Bier
B. Blake
D. German
A. Giannattasio (5:44 p.m.)
F. Goodrich
M. Hardiman
B. Joy, Jr.
J. Patterson
G. Smith
P. Smith
P. Staneski
P. Vetro
R. Vitali

Also Present

Mayor James L. Richetelli, Jr.
Peter Erodici, Finance Director
Winthrop S. Smith, Jr., City Attorney
Lisa DiLullo, Mayor's Assistant

Absent

N. Veccharelli

Chairman G. Smith congratulated the Mayor and the emergency response teams on their work before, during and after Hurricane Irene. He also acknowledged the Public Works Department, Animal Control and the Police and Fire Departments who he stated he had nothing but accolades for.

2. Report Re: Hurricane Irene

Mayor Richetelli thanked everyone for coming out on such short notice. He stated he wished to provide the Board with information that can be passed onto their constituents. He also stated he wished to follow up with the comments of the Chairman regarding the work of so many during Hurricane Irene. He stated the City had an outstanding team and that although for many this is their career and what they are trained to do, they went above and beyond. Mayor Richetelli continued with the chronology that went on since they were first made aware of Hurricane Irene. He stated the team, which consisted of the Fire, Police, Public Works and Health Departments and representatives from the school). He stated they first met on August 24, 2011 when it became apparent that Hurricane Irene would hit Connecticut with the projections that she was coming right toward Milford. He stated as a shoreline community they immediately began preparations. Mayor Richetelli reported the first Everbridge (or Milford alert) message to residents went out on Thursday telling residents to start preparing. He reported the primary team met at 7:00 a.m. on Friday and at 9:00 a.m. with the entire team, which he stated is a multi facet team of many city departments as well as other agencies. He stated a press

conference was held the same day at 1:00 p.m. Mayor Richetelli stated another Everbridge message went out that afternoon. He stated that message was also posted on the City's web site. He stated Lisa DiLullo headed up the communications team along with Capt. Christopher Zak and Officer Jeffrey Nielsen and Lieutenant Vaughn Dumas and Jean Lasczak. Mayor Richetelli stated the messages to the residents were clear that Milford would be impacted in a major way and that they needed to make the necessary preparations. He stated he met again early Saturday morning with the entire team in the emergency center. He stated a representative from United Illuminating helped with the pre-planning and throughout the storm. Mayor Richetelli continued with a chronology of the weekend events. He stated the decision was made after a call with the Governor to evacuate those low lying areas and areas that typically flood. Mayor Richetelli also reported a shelter was also opened at Jonathan Law. He stated the shelter was headed up by the Health Department with the planning and operation of the shelter. He stated there were approximately 25 people at the shelter on Saturday night and approximately 40 after the storm. He also spoke regarding those residents with special needs such as oxygen, etc. Mayor Richetelli also reported they provided meals (MRE's) – Meals Ready to Eat. He continued with a chronology of the events of Sunday. He stated National Guard troops were deployed along with the Coast Guard and police and fire scuba teams. He stated there was a 24-hr line that was manned. He stated Milford was very fortunate in that there was no loss of life. He stated he had some very rough numbers with regard to damage, but reiterated the numbers were very rough. He stated there were thousands of homes with some damage, more than 100 homes with major damage and about two dozen homes that will likely have to come down. Mayor Richetelli reported the City went into full clean up and restoration after the storm ended. He stated he is in constant contact with the UI Company and noted there were 3 representatives (Chris, Sherry, Barbara) on hand throughout the storm. He reported he meets three times a day with UI representatives to see where they are and what still needs to get done. He stated the numbers prior to the meeting were approximately 8,600 residents without power, which he stated is approximately 33%. He spoke of the major UI infrastructure here in Milford, which he stated is complex. Mayor Richetelli stated he spoke with the Vice President of UI and that the hope is that power will be fully restored within the next 24 hours. Mayor Richetelli spoke about cleanup efforts. He reported Public Works crews have been out since the hurricane moved out on Sunday afternoon. He stated they have 5 heavy pay loaders out and that they have brought in private contractors as well. He also stated they are dealing with food spoilage. He stated because so many have lost so much in personal items, including furniture, etc., he stated crews are going to these areas in need of pickup. He also reported many of the beachfront areas have many feet of sand, which is a massive cleanup. Mayor Richetelli stated in these types of events they work together and do whatever it takes to get the job done and make sure our people in Milford are safe. He stated every department is going to great pains to document every penny that is spent.

Mayor Richetelli stated this part of his report brings him to the next reason for this emergency meeting which is to request \$100,000 for meals, equipment and any immediate replacement. He stressed the money is not for overtime. He stated he of the departments would use their overtime accounts, but it was likely they would have to come back to this Board at some point in the future. He stated if the Federal government declares this a disaster and the President signs a declaration, then Milford could receive up to 75% reimbursement. Mayor Richetelli stated he was happy to report the City's public infrastructure did okay. He reported beach ends such as Laurel Avenue, Point Beach Drive and Beachland Avenue, to name a few, was basically washed away. He stated he was thankful none of the City buildings sustained damage. He stated the greatest toll from the hurricane is personal property.

Mayor Richetelli also spoke about the FEMA process and reported he appointed Bill Richards, a retired firefighter as the Relief Coordinator. He stated Mr. Richards background as a firefighter and more recently as the Region II Representative for Homeland Security would be an asset to Milford. Mayor Richetelli stated they

met with FEMA officials yesterday (Tuesday) for the first time. He went on to give a brief overview of the FEMA process and explained the two types of assistance: 1) Public (PA); and 2) Individual (IA). He also reported there are five teams who will help with the damage assessment which is broken down into three categories: 1) Minor, less than 50% damage; 2) Major, more than 50% damage; and 3) Catastrophic. Mayor Richetelli stated FEMA's Preliminary Damage Assessment Team (PDA) was expected as early as tomorrow (Thursday). He also pointed out that FEMA kick in after insurance.

In concluding his report, Mayor Richetelli stated cleanup would continue until all of Milford is completely cleaned, as well as continuing assistance with our citizens. He also spoke of the number of groups and individuals who have come forward to help and that it was very gratifying.

3. Ald. P. Smith and Ald. Goodrich made and seconded a motion to approve the request for an Emergency Resolution – Hurricane Irene.

Ald. Blake commended the efforts of the Police, Fire and Public Works Departments as well as the other agencies that have been involved. He stated the Governor today came out with a website and emergency number to help with the collection of data. www.211ct.org or simply dial 211.

Ald. Joy stated today officers were on quads taking pictures of the beach. He asked if that is part of the assessment process.

Chief Mello responded yes and explained that is one of the teams that Bill Richards is heading up.

Ald. Joy stated he wished to take this opportunity to commend Chief Mello and his officers for their work, especially where there have been a lot of sightseers and that the police have managed to keep the area under control.

Chief Mello reported they have placed additional officers in certain areas and that they are again patrolling on bicycles and on foot.

Chairman G. Smith thanked the Mayor again for his efforts during the storm, noting he received a number of messages during the storm. He asked if the Mayor could address the issue regarding power. He stated people are just getting anxious about when their neighborhoods will have power.

Mayor Richetelli stated he shares the same frustration. He stated they communicate many times during the day. He stated he along with the Governor and the power companies have stated from the beginning that it could be from days to a week. He went on to explain the priorities of the power companies which include emergency centers, hospitals, convalescent homes and the wastewater facilities. He stated those with special needs are also included on the list, as well as the schools and finally how many people a particular line will serve. He stated restoring power is complicated by the number of trees that are down.

Ald. Blake stated he has friends in other parts of the State who are serviced by CL&P and that they have a hot line number to call. He also asked if Milford had any thought of opening school locker rooms to take showers.

Mayor Richetelli stated Plant Fitness has opened all of its facilities for showers and charging of phones, etc. He also stated Fitness Edge has done the same. He also reported the Health Department is allowing people to charge their cell phones, nebulizers, etc. as well as the library.

Ald. German stated he has concern for those who lost their break wall, stating they are very vulnerable. He asked about the permitting process and the ability for residents to be able to get a permit as quickly as possible.

Mayor Richetelli stated that is something he has been working on and explained he has asked the City Attorney's Office to research expediting the process. He stated he hoped to have more information as early as the September meeting. He reiterated they are looking at the issue and will bring more to the Board.

Ald. Giannattasio asked about the quality of the water at the beaches, especially with the upcoming holiday weekend.

Dr. McBride stated the water was tested today and would be tested again. He stated their concern is not just with pollution, but with the debris floating in the waters.

Ald. Giannattasio asked if it would create any hazards for motor boats.

Dr. McBride stated their concern is basically with the swimming aspect.

Ald. Bevan asked if a message could be sent telling folks where to go as far as showers, charging their phones, etc. He stated it was important for people to have that information.

Ald. P. Smith commented as exhausted as she was and those living on the shore she was very grateful. She stated she has lived on the shore her entire life and this storm was really scary. She commended the Fire, Police and Public Works for doing an outstanding job. She also noted the strong presence of the Building Department and the Health Department in the aftermath of the storm. She stated she is very proud of the City and what everyone did.

Chairman G. Smith commented how the public has pulled together.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Ald. P. Smith and Ald. Goodrich made and seconded a motion to approve a request for and emergency Allocation, Transfer 4 (Hurricane Irene). Motion carried unanimously.

Ald. Vetro and Ald. Patterson made and seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen K. Huber
Recording Secretary