

## **Board of Selectmen, February 12, 2013**

### **MINUTES OF EMERGENCY MEETING**

#### **BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**FEBRUARY 12, 2013**

Present: Anthony V. Vegnani, Vice Chairman; John F. Danehey, Shawn Harris,  
Richard W. Murray

Patricia A. Vinchesi, Town Administrator  
Chief Brian Stewart, Police Department  
Chief Richard Judge, Fire Department  
Representative Jim Cantwell

Press: Scituate Mariner

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:17 PM.

Mr. Murray made a MOTION that the Board of Selectmen VOTE to ACCEPT the Agenda for February 12, 2013. SECONDED by Mr. Harris. No discussion. Unanimous vote.  
(4-0)

2. VOTE TO RATIFY STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARATION ON FEBRUARY 8, 2013  
AT 10:20 PM

Ms. Vinchesi stated that the Governor declared a "state of emergency" on Friday and the Town decided they would do the same. The "state of emergency" stays in effect until the Selectmen decide that it is no longer necessary.

Mr. Murray made a MOTION that the Board of Selectmen VOTE to memorialize and ratify acting Chairman Anthony Vegnani's declaration of the Town of Scituate's State of Emergency as of 10:20 PM on Friday, February 8, 2013. SECONDED by Mr. Danehey. No discussion. Unanimous vote. (4-0)

3. STORM UPDATE AND RELATED ADMINISTRATIVE/MANAGEMENT ITEMS

Ms. Vinchesi gave the following storm update: Town offices have communicated with residents via reverse 911 telephone calls, five(5) storm updates posted to the Town website and live broadcasts via WATD. As of 7:15 PM this evening, 600 residents are still without power with the expectation that they may have power tonight by

12 AM. Over 200 people from National Grid were in Town yesterday and today to "get us up and running". "The effort by National Grid was nothing short of superlative. One hundred percent of our Town was without power 72 hours ago." National Grid liaison to our Town, Peter Duggan, was excellent. Mr. Danehey agreed that National Grid's

Page Two

Board of Selectmen – Minutes of Meeting – 2/12/13

response to this storm was very good and he hopes the Board will write a letter stating this fact. Ms. Vinchesi spoke about safety issues when residents return to their homes in terms of natural gas, electricity, water pipes bursting, etc. Instructions on what residents should look for has been clearly listed by the Building Inspector on the Town website. Friday night's communications challenges were discussed. Mr. Murray has been attending the daily emergency management meetings with the Department Heads at Town Hall and is very impressed with the level of communication. "Everyone is doing a great job." Representative Cantwell stated that this was a "historic storm" with the fifth highest amount of snow ever recorded.

Sustained winds up to 80 miles per hour and waves over 30 feet tall battered south shore towns. He noted the excellent work of the Town Administrator, Fire Chief, Police Chief, their staffs and the Selectmen. "The taxpayers should be proud of our leadership." He also thanked Governor Patrick for his recent visit to Scituate and for the work of the National Guard.

Mr. Vegnani announced that the storm shelter at the High School is now closed. It was open for four days and peaked one day at close to 200 guests. He noted the extraordinary work of the shelter volunteers and specifically Chief Judge, Kathy Judge, Jennifer Sullivan and Eileen Scotti. The ability for to offer showers and the opportunity to re-charge electronic devices was appreciated by residents. Chief Stewart spoke about specific, impassable streets, that residents should only use 911 in an emergency and that downed electrical wires are most probably "energized" at this point. Chief Judge stated that "the firefighters and the police officers are the ones that did all the work and the ones that deserve the thanks". Mr. Harris thanked Mr. Vegnani for working with the Town Administrator on storm related matters for the past four days. He agreed that every person working in the utility trucks should be thanked – they were all "courteous and professional". He also recognized the excellent work of the Department of Public Works and the Water and Sewer divisions. He believes the Town needs to be more aggressive with tree trimming in the future to eliminate some of the downed wires. Mr. Vegnani noted that the list of those to thank is very long and that it would be a shame to leave anyone out. He thanked WATD for their assistance.

Ms. Vinchesi noted that the Schools would be closed again tomorrow. The Transfer Station will open at 9 AM for residents disposing of trash in blue bags, recyclables and all other refuse will go over the scale. Extra compactors will be brought in. Town offices are open to staff only on Wednesday and will re-open for regular business on Thursday. The Library and Recreation Department will be open tomorrow. Road debris will take a while to be cleared and areas will be prioritized by emergency management officials. "We understand that people are frustrated, but we must segment the work going forward. Town Hall has no e-mail right now. There are many business functions that need to be taken care of tomorrow because we have been shut down for four days."

Page Three

Board of Selectmen – Minutes of Meeting – 2/12/13

Mr. Vegnani spoke about the need to deficit spend for storm related expenses that have not been budgeted for. The estimate is \$750,000 and if less money is needed, it will be returned to the Stabilization Fund. Federal funding may be available, but it will not be immediate.

Mr. Danehey made a MOTION that the Board of Selectmen VOTE to APPROVE the incurrence of a \$750,000 liability in excess of appropriation as permitted by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44, Section 31 in recognition of the continuing emergency and with the approval of the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. SECONDED by Mr. Harris. No discussion. Unanimous vote. (4-0)

Ms. Vinchesi thanked Representative Cantwell who was available at all times to the Town of Scituate. She thanked the Fire Chief and the Police Chief – "I think the world of both of them." Mr. Vegnani also thanked the Governor for coming to Scituate at which time officials were able to speak to him(Governor) on a number of issues, including seawalls.

Mr. Murray made a MOTION that the Board of Selectmen VOTE to ADJOURN the meeting at 7:57 PM and sign documents. SECONDED by Mr. Harris. No discussion. Unanimous vote. (4-0)

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

---

Joseph P. Norton, Chairman

---

Anthony V. Vegnani, Vice Chairman

---

John F. Danehey

---

Shawn Harris

---

Richard W. Murray

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberley A. Donovan, Executive Assistant