

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
EMERGENCY MEETING
HISTORIC BLIZZARD STORM

January 26, 2015
5:00 P.M.
Town Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Robert Merry, Vice Chairman Joseph Perry, Clerk Robert Snow, Jack Cook (Town Administrator Deborah Eagan, Assistant Town Administrator Doreen Glowik)

MEMBERS ABSENT: David Petersen

PUBLIC ATTENDEES: Lawrence White, Chairman of Finance Committee; James Broderick, Fire Chief/ REMA Director; Patrick Snow, Highway Surveyor; Robert Barker, Police Chief

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman Merry said this is an Emergency Meeting and called to order at 5:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chief Broderick led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Chairman Merry said the Board of Selectmen's regularly scheduled meeting on the Central Street Project has been re-scheduled to Monday, February 23, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. at Town Hall.

EMERGENCY BUSINESS

1. Discuss State of Emergency Declaration

Merry said the Governor has declared a State of Emergency and the Selectmen should do the same. Town Administrator Deborah Eagan said if any federal funds become available, the Town will have had to declare a State of Emergency. She said the Town should follow suit with the Governor for future funding.

Merry said he will entertain a motion. Joseph Perry said, "I, Joseph Perry, move that the Rowley Board of Selectmen declare a State of Emergency effective January 26, 2015, until further notice," second, Robert Snow, all in favor, aye (4-0). David Petersen- ABSENT.

The Selectmen signed the Declaration of a State of Emergency to be witnessed by Eagan.

2. Closing of Town Administrative Offices & Library during historic blizzard

Chairman Merry read the following:

“Rowley Town Hall, Rowley Town Hall Annex & Senior Center, and the Rowley Public Library will be closed on Tuesday, January 27, 2015 and re-opening at noon on Wednesday, January 29, 2015.

Additionally, the Town Hall Offices, excluding the Board of Selectmen, will be closed at 5:00 p.m., today.”

Eagan pointed out that a typo had occurred and the notice should have read: Wednesday, January 28th.

Eagan said if the Selectmen vote to approve, we will direct the staff of the Library, Town Hall and Town Hall Annex offices to stay home and it will be considered administrative time.

Joseph Perry made a motion to approve the closures as listed and to approve an administrative day for the affected employees, Robert Snow second, all in favor- aye (4-0). David Petersen- ABSENT

3. Update from REMA Director James Broderick on storm conditions

Chairman Merry asked REMA Director/Fire Chief Broderick to give an update on the storm.

Broderick said the National Weather Service has started naming winter storms and this storm is Juno. He said there are a couple of apps, PING4 Alerts or Mass Alerts which can be uploaded to an Iphone or smart phone. He said both give updated information pertaining to Massachusetts.

Broderick said at 11:30 a.m. Governor Baker announced a travel ban beginning at midnight tonight. Broderick then read the list of exemptions to the ban and said everyone else should stay home. He said in the event of loss of power, propane or charcoal grills should never be used in the home and should be kept far enough away from the house. He said the same for generators. Broderick also reminded citizens not to use hands to clear the snow on a snow blower. He said the Red Cross is setting up a shelter in Methuen and Seaview Retreat is available for a short term warming shelter.

Broderick also asked the public's assistance in keeping fire hydrants clear of snow.

Robert Merry asked that people keep an eye out for elderly or sickly neighbors. He also warned against going near any downed power lines, even if they appear to be cable or phone lines and to call the communication center. He said there will be staffing at the Light Dept. starting at midnight and throughout the night. Robert Snow agreed and said you should always assume it is a live wire.

Police Chief Barker said if you are out driving and go off the road, you may not be seen due to the snow. He said you should let someone know where you are going and let them know when you get there. Barker said it is best to stay home, but if you are on the exempted list have a blanket, flashlight and reflective vest in your vehicle.

Snow said to be sure to charge your phones, computers, etc. and Merry said candles should always be in metal or glass containers and blown out when you are not in the room.

Highway Surveyor Patrick Snow said if you don't have to go out, stay home. He said he appreciates everyone's patience, but to stay off the roads and let the crews do their job of clearing the snow. Barker reminded the public that there is no on-street parking allowed. Joseph Perry said the Highway Department does an awesome job and we want to support them. Patrick Snow said we try not to fill in the ends of driveways, but it is unavoidable.

Deborah Eagan said if you have someone coming home from Boston, there is a problem with the outbound trains, the Beverly /Salem bridge is out and affecting service to Newburyport and Gloucester. She said there will be no "T" service after midnight. She said there are buses from Salem to Beverly, but the trains can't get out of North Station; there is a two hour backup.

There being no further business, Chairman Merry called for a motion to adjourn. Jack Cook so moved, Robert Snow, second, all in favor – aye (4-0) David Petersen – ABSENT.

Meeting adjourned at 5:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Doreen Glowik
Asst. Town Administrator

ATTACHMENTS

1. Notice of Public Meeting for Proposed Reconstruction of Central Street
2. Declaration of a State of Emergency
3. Emergency Business #2
4. Who's exempt from Massachusetts travel ban