

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE LITCHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, 2011  
TOWN OFFICE BUILDING ~ 4:30 P.M.**

**Call to Order:** First Selectman Leo Paul, Jr. called the special meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. with Selectmen Diane Knox and William Dranginis also present. Paul Parsons and R. Christopher Blake were unable to attend.

**Public Comment:** None

**Discuss Issues Arising from Hurricane Irene:** Leo Paul said he wanted to update the Board on all aspects of the Town's responses to storm issues. Overall he felt the Town fared fairly well with fire and EMS departments, Police and Public Works personnel working very hard to keep up with calls. The Public Works Director began at 12:00 midnight on Sunday, and started calling in crews about 3:00 a.m. to address problems. There were a lot of flooding issues and road blockages. Tom O'Hare worked tirelessly with emergency management as well. There were some issues with the emergency messages that will be worked out. There are now only 35 homes without power, and he will send out a final message to townspeople via the LENS phone message. Shelters have been open for three nights and two more in case anyone needed them, but no one has needed them so far. The Emergency Operations Center was opened Monday morning after the mass power outage Sunday evening.

**a) Public Works Update – Jack Healy:** Mr. Healy reported that all roads are open with the exception of White Woods Road being closed temporarily for the power company to work on lines. The debris where trees were cut should be cleaned up by tomorrow. Several trees were taken down proactively ahead of the storm to prevent problems. The 20 miles of dirt roads are all passable except for Blakeslee Road (culvert failure) and Potash Road which is passable on one side due to a pipe collapse. West Morris Road Bridge, scheduled to be replaced, has been closed, and he has asked the engineering firm GM<sup>2</sup> to evaluate it. They also inspected the Blue Swamp Road Bridge, but that bridge will not be closed. Public Works has now inspected all bridges and all major cross culverts, 54 in total. Some will need work, but they are safe. Mr. Dranginis asked how much the storm work will cost the Town, and Mr. Healy said he does not know yet. Mr. Paul added that because both the President and the Governor have declared a state of emergency, we are qualified for 100% FEMA coverage on a reimbursement basis.

**b) Emergency Management Update – Thomas O'Hare:** T. O'Hare said he began preparations on Thursday with staff meetings and conference calls with the State. The Resident Trooper went visiting residents house to house who lived on Hubbard Pines. All equipment was checked by the fire services, and they responded to 200 calls. The three emergency shelters were readied for opening; Bantam Firehouse, Northfield Firehouse, and the Wisdom House, although no one needed them. Once a generator is installed at the high school, it can be declared a Red Cross shelter, and it may become the primary shelter. Seven emergency notification messages were sent out, beginning with the water release from Woodridge Lake on the Marshepaug River, and a final message will go out tonight. At the height of the storm 75 percent of the town was without power. The Red Cross gave the Bantam Firehouse water and snacks to prepare the shelter. Glitches in the Litchfield Emergency Notification System (LENS) process will be addressed. He praised everyone for their hard work.

**Vote to Suspend Town Bid Policy:** L. Paul explained that because there are so many repairs yet to be made, they want to bring in contractors to help so the Public Works Department can begin its regular work to prepare for the winter months. He would like to suspend the bidding process for storm-related items so the projects involving safety can be done now. Under the current bid policy it could take up to 60 days before any work could begin. For projects over \$10,000 they would like to be able to get three quotes, choose one, and get started much sooner. **Motion:** W. Dranginis moved to suspend the Town bidding policy for storm-related reconstruction only for a 60-day period. D. Knox seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Adjournment: Motion:** W. Dranginis moved to adjourn at 4:55 p.m. and D. Knox seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Leo Paul, Jr.  
First Selectman