



**Town of Berlin
Municipal Office Building
108 Shed Road**

**Berlin, VT. 05602
Regular Select Board Meetings
1st & 3rd Monday of Each Month**

SPECIAL MEETING

**Monday, May 30, 2011
9:00 AM**

Selectboard Members: Susan Gretkowski, Chair; Nancy Driscoll, Vice Chair; Brad Towne, and Jonathan Goddard. Absent: Roberta Haskin, Secretary. Present: Jeff Schulz, Town Administrator. All items are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

APPROVED MINUTES

Susan Gretkowski called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

Public Comment

Bob Laraway, River Run Mobile Home Park resident, stated that he was notified by Neville Company that the responsibility for cleanup rests with the residents of the park. He stated that Neville is supposed to oversee the park, but does not maintain the road and will not accept responsibility for the clean up of the park. **Susan Gretkowski** asked **Mr. Laraway** to get a copy of the email to **Jeff Schulz** and the Board will follow up with Neville Company. **Brad Towne** asked if a copy of the renter's agreement also be provided. **Susan** advised the residents to document all losses in detail as much as possible. **Jeff Schulz** stated that FEMA helps with funding for damage to the Town infrastructure, and there may be low interest loans for businesses for damages. **Susan** recommended that residents work through their own insurance companies to recoup any losses, and the Town would research other funding possibilities. **Jeff** stated that the Governor has declared a disaster for Washington County with the Federal Government, the Town will put in a declaration for damages and the Federal Government needs to approve the declarations before any funding is forthcoming.

Discussion of Flood Damage

Richard Tetreault, Road Superintendent, stated that the worst damage was on Bartlett Hill, Widow Moses Road and Muzzy Road. He stated that there was loss of pavement on Hersey Road approximately 31/2 feet deep, and Addison Drive sustained quite a bit of damage as well. **Richard** stated that the Town has hired trucks and equipment to repair roads enough to be passable, but it would be a while before all roads were back to normal. He stated that he could not estimate how much material would be needed, but would not be surprised if it was upwards of \$400,000. **Richard** stated that there will be ditch work to be done on almost all the roads in Berlin. He stated that he could not get up Darling Road due to the ~~culvert~~ culvert washing out. **Richard** stated that they would enlarge that culvert as it has been a problem in the past. **Brad Towne** stated that **Jim Ackerman** would like the Board to close Gun Club Road as people are getting stuck there and looking to him for help. **Richard** stated that Bartlett Hill Road and Marvin Road were further damaged with the storm last night.

Bruce Pollock, Red Cross, stated that on Thursday evening the Red Cross opened Berlin Elementary School, the Barre Auditorium and National Life as shelters. He stated that the Red Cross opted to bus everyone from Berlin Elementary to the Barre Auditorium due to the high number of people being evacuated due to flooding. **Mr. Pollock** stated that the Barre Auditorium is the Red Cross Regional Shelter

and anyone that needs a place to stay is welcome. He stated that they will receive three meals per day and showers at the Auditorium. **Mr. Pollock** stated that the area church groups, along with the Salvation Army, have been very helpful with meals, snacks and water for everyone. He stated that the Red Cross Emergency Response vehicles are going out to assess damages to houses in the River Run and Berlin Mobile Home Parks and a home on Marvin Road. He stated that the Red Cross assesses damage to single family and multi-family homes, but not businesses. **Mr. Pollock** stated that the Red Cross also has access to rakes, shovels and squeegees to help residents start cleaning up their homes at no cost to the resident. He stated that on Wednesday the Red Cross will set up a service center at the Barre Auditorium to give the residents a chance to meet with case workers which is all governed out of the Red Cross National Office. **Mr. Pollock** stated that they have not determined how much financial assistance will be available to the residents of Berlin, but that there will probably be some financial assistance forthcoming. He stated that Vermont Economic Services will provide temporary housing for an individual for 28 days and 90 days for a family. **Mr. Pollock** stated that the Red Cross is putting together a listing of referrals for individuals and families displaced by the flooding. He stated that the Red Cross has access to crates and food and water dishes for animals that need housing as well. **Mr. Pollock** stated that the Red Cross has called a Southern Baptist Group to try to get their muck out teams to come in and help clean up any owner occupied homes. He stated that they will not touch rentals or businesses, but are willing to help any home owner muck out mud and debris from the home at no cost to the homeowner. **Mr. Pollock** stated that the only problem is what to do with the refuse from those homes. He stated that on Thursday night there were 112 evacuees at the Barre Auditorium, 54 at National Life, 35 at Montpelier Elementary School and about 25 at Berlin Elementary School. **Mr. Pollock** stated that on Friday night the population of the shelter had declined to 40 people and has been at 20 people ever since then. He stated that the Red Cross will not help with outside cleanup, and that should be the responsibility of the park owners. The River Run Mobile Home Park residents asked if they were going to be able to live in the park again? **Susan** stated that the Board did not know if the park would be livable again, but that issue was being discussed.

Miles Silk Jr., Berlin Fire Chief, stated that the most damage to homes are in the Berlin and River Run Mobile Home Parks. He stated that there are trailers moved off of the foundations and sewer and water lines ruptured. **Miles** stated that there will be mold issues due to the flooding of the homes and some instability in the riverbanks. He stated that getting these homes inspected by an electrician is a must to help prevent any electrical fires. **Miles** stated that the water level in the river is back up due to recent storms. He stated that the Fire Department and the Road Crew are watching any steep bank, such as the one behind the Mobil station on Route 302, for erosion and mudslides. **Miles** stated that there are approximately 12 trailers along the river in River Run Mobile Home Park that are not livable at the moment. He stated that those trailers were the hardest hit by floodwaters and the land under the trailers may not be stable. **Miles** stated that he would contact the Agency of Natural Resources to see if there are any recommendations on where to bring the silt and mud from the trailer park. He stated that the fire level is at a minimum and the highest concern would be the health of the community in that area. **Miles** recommended that the Town not let home owners back into the River Run Mobile Home Park due to health concerns.

Rob Halpert, Town Attorney, stated that the Town could issue a health order based on notice and a public hearing to keep residents away from the contaminated area. He stated that based on the information given out ~~today tonight~~, the Town could issue an Emergency Health Order detailing the issues and distributed by the Police Department to all the residents in that area. **Rob** stated that the order could contain any order from not using certain facilities to not staying in that area. He stated that the Town has the legal authority to keep people out of that area for safety reasons, but where are the residents going to live in the meantime. **Rob** stated that the Town should be notifying the Department of Health on an emergency basis. He stated that the Department of Health has a statutory responsibility to assess the health risks. He stated that an Emergency Health Order would be temporary and would require the Board to hold a public hearing in order for the Health Order to be lifted. **Rob** stated that the receiver company has the responsibility to oversee the cleanup of the Mobile Home Park and if they won't accept responsibility, the residents should apprise the Court system of that, since the receiver company was appointed by the court. He stated that the State Environmental Health Department could assess the health concerns and let the Town know whether to let residents into the park to live or to just gather their belongings. **Miles Silk** suggested limiting the hours that anyone has access to the park, and this would help with looting issues and limit exposure to health concerns. A resident was concerned about being told that he could not live in the Mobile Home Park when

the residents of Barre are being allowed back into their homes that were flooded. **Miles** stated that there are entire streets in Barre where the houses have been condemned and the residents are not allowed back into their homes. He stated that due to the fuel oils and septic and water line ruptures, this year's flooding is totally different than any other year. **Susan** stated that the Town would issue a temporary health order for the lower and middle tiers of the River Run Mobile Home Park, and the Town would provide a storage unit for residents to put the belongings that are salvageable in to prevent looting in that area. **Jonathan Goddard** suggested having a Police Officer at the park during the night time hours to help prevent any looting or other traffic into the park. **Nancy Driscoll** suggested putting out an Emergency Health Order for the entire River Run Mobile Home Park, having a representative from the Health Department conduct an assessment of the properties, and adjusting the Order on the Department of Health recommendations. **Rob Halpert** stated that regardless of whether the Health Order affects the whole park, all the residents need to know what the health hazards are in that area. He stated that an effort needs to be made to notify all of the residents in person of the health order, if the individual cannot be reached, the order needs to be left on the door of the residence. **Susan** stated that an emergency health order will be given out to all residents of the River Run Mobile Home Park, the lower tier of the park will be closed, and the residents that want to return to their homes will know of the health concerns for that area. **Rob** suggested putting the addresses that are not to be inhabited and the hours that residents will be allowed into their residences. A resident stated that he is on a fixed income and staying in a motel, he stated that he is running out of money to pay for the motel and asked if there was any help for them? **Patti Lewis** stated that Vermont Economic Services will help with funding for housing for the displaced families and advised him to seek their help.

Motion by **Nancy Driscoll** to issue a temporary Emergency Health Order to close the lower tier of the park and notify all residents of the park of the health issues, the Town will arrange for a storage container for belongings and have hours from 7:00 a.m to 7:00 p.m. for residents to gather their belongings. Second by **Jonathan Goddard**. Motion carried 4-0.

Rob Halpert stated that a hearing needs to be scheduled for anyone who wants to contest the health order and language to that affect should appear within the health order.

Susan asked if there was any recourse for the residents of the River Run Mobile Home Park to notify the courts of the neglect of the receiver company? **Rob** stated that there are organizations to help with the courts and to help protect the tenant's rights.

Adjourn

Motion by **Brad Towne** to adjourn the Selectboard meeting. Second by **Nancy Driscoll**.

Motion carried 4-0.

For the Select Board:

Rebecca Richardson, Administrative Assistant