

Memo

To: Mayor and Council
cc: Department Heads
From: Pat MacQueen, City Manager
Date: September 6, 2011
Re: Manager's Report

Hurricane Irene

I drove up to Berlin on Sunday morning the day of the hurricane. Oddly, the wind and the rain didn't really pick up until I hit Plymouth and then it continued all the way to Berlin. Clearly, it was even worse as you went west from Berlin and into Vermont.

We got the flash flooding of all the small streams which led to some serious flooding for a limited number of households around the City. A few people had to leave their homes, but no one ended up going to the shelter at the Recreation Center which we had opened up. We had some road closures because of this and quite a few trees down, which in turn caused some significant power outages.

Chief Trull opened up the Emergency Operations Center at the PD and from there, Police, Fire and PWD coordinated efforts to do what we could to deal with the flooding and downed trees. On Monday, the power was still out in the northwest quadrant of the City, but PSNH brought in a portable trailer substation from Manchester and installed it in the Community Street substation which allowed them to restore power by late afternoon.

Chief Trull has coordinated the completion of the FEMA forms to be able to ask for damage reimbursement. Staff has had a post-hurricane de-briefing and as a result will be making some changes to our emergency plans. We started putting what

information on the hurricane on the City web site thinking that most people would not see it because of the power outage. As it turns out (as indicated by the attached comment to the website) many people saw and appreciated this information through the use of smart phones and the like as well as being told by relatives who did still have internet.

Commissioner Bald of the Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED) and Tom Wagner of the National Forest have scheduled a meeting in Gorham to discuss how they can help communities recover from the hurricane. That meeting is this Wednesday at 11am in the Gorham Town Hall. PW Director Michael Perreault will be attending for the City.

I have also attached a memo from WWTF Superintendent Henry Noel to the EPA which summarizes the experience of the WWTF during Irene. Not surprisingly, we had another CSO event which resulted in ecoli in the river above where they are supposed to be. We don't expect that the EPA will likely take any action as a result of this as they know we are working on a long-term CSO plan.

At first, Henry thought we had definitive evidence with this storm of the improvement from the newly lined pipe on the west side of the river which we did this year. It turned out though that they were just looking at data before the amount of inflow from I&I actually hit our system. Once it did, it surcharged the whole system. Henry and Mike still believe that the newly lined pipe has still stemmed a substantial amount of I&I.

Rail Plan Public Meeting

You may recall some time ago a gentleman by the name of Jan Zicha approaching the Council about encouraging the rebirth of rail in Berlin which in turn could include rail related industries. Mr. Zicha is still around and feels strongly that the City should be involved with the State rail planning to ensure that Berlin is not left out of it. He feels that Berlin should be a center of rail in the North Country.

Attached is a flier from NH DOT advertising a public meeting set for September 29, 2011 in the City Hall auditorium from 6-8pm. The purpose of this meeting is to hear and discuss the draft recommendations that DOT has put together as a proposed rail plan. People who cannot attend the meeting can provide comments at the following web site: <http://www.nh.gov/dot/org/aerorailtransit/railandtransit/rail-plan.htm>

Large Loads

The close to three hundred large loads coming through Berlin at roughly nine per day seem to be going quite well without having any major impact on us. They move at a

reasonable speed and traffic continues to flow quite well. They got some turned heads at first but now they seem to pretty well blend in with the woodwork.

PSNH Early Canal Drawdown

As you are probably aware, PSNH has drawn down the canal for its annual maintenance inspection a couple weeks earlier than they originally advised us. Attached is an email from them explaining that because of the fire at the hydro station which they experienced last week, they felt it necessary to do a drawdown immediately so that they could fully inspect/repair all of their equipment.

Commissioner's Regional Business Outreach Session

Attached is an invitation on behalf of Governor Lynch to attend the Commissioner's Regional Business Outreach session of Friday, September 23rd at 8:30am at NH DES at 29 Hazen Drive in Concord. This two hour session appears to be aimed more at local economic development people throughout the state in order to make them aware of all the resources that the state has to offer.

PWD Monthly Report

Attached.

Manager's Time-keeping

Attached.