

SOUTH ORANGE VILLAGE
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HEALTH & PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, September 9, 2021 - 6:00 PM
Virtual Webex Meeting

Call to Order and Roll Call

Trustee Coalier, Chair
Trustee Haskins
Trustee Brown
Fire Chief Sullivan
Interim Chief, Capt. Dolinac
Lt. Acevedo
SORS Interim Chief Rothstein
Health Officer, Mr. Festa- **Absent**
OEM Coordinator, Mr. Egelberg
Village Engineer, Mr. Battaglia
Joycelyn White, Recording Secretary

Public Comments

Trustee Summer Jones, South Orange Resident/ BOT member , asked for an update on the impact of Tropical Storm Ida in the Village . Trustee Jones discussed traffic concerns in Seton Village and asked where Ward Place falls on the priority list? Lastly, Trustee Jones suggested that a crossing guard might be helpful for students crossing in that area.

In response to Trustee Jones, Lt. Acevedo detailed enforcement efforts made on Ward Place and Irvington Avenue (Mike's Service Station). Trustee Coalier suggested the SOPD and Seton Village Committee and Mr. Battaglia to discuss traffic calming measures in that area.

Annemarie Maini, South Orange Resident, asked Trustee Coalier to explain how the FEMA process and is the Village only able to replace what was damaged or use the funds to reimagine and improve facilities.

Mr. Egelberg stated FEMA is strictly reimbursement, the Village will have to repair the damage first. As long as the village can show that it was similar to what was previously there, that is fine. In regards to moving a facility, it would not be



covered under FEMA. Before the storm, the Village Administrator was currently working on State & County grants to address those issues. Trustee Coalier added that at the next Board of Trustees meeting, a bond resolution will be on for approval. This is to cover the initial funding for the storm recovery.

Report Summary & Questions, Follow Up and New Items

General (Impacts all)

Ida Impact & Recovery

Trustee Coalier discussed the magnitude of the recent Tropical Storm Ida, and thanked all the first responders for their hard work and dedication. In each department report, Trustee Coalier added the item "Ida Impact & Recovery" to get an understanding of what each department needs, in terms of recovery and other concerns. Trustee Haskins and Trustee Brown made remarks regarding the storm and thanked all public safety departments.

Care & Community Justice Update

At the last CC&J meeting, a PD task force was formed. Trustee Coalier discussed the progress of the programs infrastructure and the policy & and procedure manual. There are a few upcoming workshops planned for this month. On September 21, 2021, suicide prevention and awareness- Adult only. Also, a workshop relating to coping with anxiety-related matters for the ages of 13-18.

Health

In the absence of Mr. Festa, the Health Report will be discussed at the next Health & Public Safety Meeting, October 14, 2021.

OEM

Report Summary & Questions

Coordinator Egelberg discussed his bi-weekly Covid response meeting with Seton Hall University. South Orange was approved for FEMA disaster funding due to Tropical Storm Isaias.

Ida Impact & Recovery

South Orange had excessive damage caused by Tropical Storm Ida. Coordinator Egelberg is working with the various departments in regards to FEMA reimbursements and insurance. As Trustee Coalier mentioned, the insurance process started and Mr. Egelberg reported that all public safety departments had



been affected. In the initial assessment, there was estimated to be 4.8 million dollars worth of damage. This only includes municipal properties, fields, pools and vehicles. It is Mr. Egelberg's plans to be aggressive with FEMA and the insurance company to try to rebuild and recover. Thankfully, the village didn't have any condemned houses or deaths due to the storm. Next, OEM Coordinator and Mr. Battaglia will meet to discuss damage.

In response to Trustee Coalier, Mr. Egelberg stated that Essex County is not on FEMA's list of locations that have been devastated by this storm. If South Orange were on that list, individual owners would be able to receive assistance through FEMA. Property owners can apply but there is no guarantee that it will be approved due to Essex County not being on the list. Residents should keep in mind that FEMA funds only cover what insurance will not. In response to Trustee Haskins, Mr. Egelberg stated that the majority of the FEMA funds will be used for environmental cleaning, the remaining cost insurance will cover. Mr. Battaglia is currently working on the estimate, which will be substantial.

Rescue

Report Summary & Questions

Interim Chief Rothstien detailed items in the SORS monthly report. For more information please see the report attached. The Rescue Squad participated in National Night Out and thanked all the residents for coming out. A standby crew has been placed at the Columbia High School football games. Since the CPR program has been restarted, SORS continues to conduct classes. Chief Rothstien stated that the squad has invested in new organizational supply bins for their supply room and trucks.

Ida Impact & Recovery

Chief Rothstien reported that the SORS building had two inches of water damage on its first floor. The first floor is water protected except one room. The only concern is the damage can't be seen underneath the floor and dry wall. Though a few electronics were also damaged, the SORS building wasn't damaged too badly. Chief Rothstien has been working with OEM Coordinator Egelberg on the reimbursement process.

Fire

Ida Impact & Recovery



Chief Sullivan detailed the night of the storm's activity by the department. Being a life-long resident of South Orange, the Chief stated this is the worst damage he has seen in South Orange. The Fire department received a myriad of calls ranging from extreme water flooding to individuals stuck in vehicles. The Fire Department building suffered very little damage, thankfully. Though there was slight damage to their apparatus, the department were able to recover very quickly.

Public Comment

Annemarie Maini, South Orange Resident, asked for an update on the number of Motorola radio failures for the month of August, in comparison to April.

Trustee Coallier stated that the increase could be due to recent tracking, whereas the department hadn't counted the incidents earlier in the year. Chief Sullivan detailed the radio issues at various locations in town.

Police

Report Summary & Questions

Chief Dolinac detailed the monthly statistics report. For more information, please see the report attached. SOPD conducted one pedestrian safety enforcement detail at Vally Street & First Street. This resulted in approximately 40 summons for drivers who failed to yield to pedestrians. Chief Dolinac stated that the department plans on doing another detail soon, but due to the depleted fleet, it will be postponed for now. SOPD continues to work with body-worn camera vendors. The next step is for the I.T. Director to meet with the vendor to discuss and determine the scope of the project and technical responsibilities. CC&J staff have been on ride-alongs with officers to introduce them to the downtown and village in general. This will also help strengthen the partnership between CC&J and SOPD going forward and the Chief plans on scheduling more ride-alongs at a future date.

Ida Impact & Recovery

Interim Chief Dolinac thanked all his officers for their response to this storm and did a tremendous job. This type of flooding is not something that is experienced frequently, especially in deep water training, but officers went over and beyond to rescue residents in waist-deep water. The department lost 3 police vehicles, two patrol cars and 1 detective vehicle. This brings their fleet to 11 patrol vehicles and 2 unmarked vehicles. Due to the fleet being this low, Chief Dolinac is looking forward to assistance from FEMA and insurance. The police headquarters suffered



water damage in their fitness center, storage room, and locker room. Chief Dolinac thanked Coordinator Egelberg for assisting with FEMA forms and the BOT for the improvements made to the police building over the last few years. If not, Chief Dolinac believes there would be a loss of equipment , evidence, archives and networks.

In response to Trustee Haskins, Chief Dolinac will have a debriefing with the supervisors to discuss the department's strengths and weaknesses during the response to the storm. Once identified, going into the budget seasons, SOPD plans to ask for either deep water training or equipment to better equip the officers.

Digital Video System

Significant edits have been made to the Digital Systems Policy. The next step is to submit the policy for legal review. Once approved, it will be distributed to the public for any questions or comments. In response to Trustee Coalier, Chief Dolinac highlighted changes made to the policy, such as data security, authorized user documentation, added references (laws,) regarding bias policing and consequences. Most importantly, the facial recognition feature has been disabled.

Traffic Safety

Report Summary & Questions

Lt. Acevedo reported that in the last 30 days the department has responded to 2266 calls, 42 calls were classified as Teir 1. The busiest day of the week was Thursday and the busiest time of day was 3pm. Another Ward Place traffic study was conducted and Lt.Acevedo would like to meet with Mr. Battaglia to discuss the findings off line. Upcoming traffic issues during school hours are Clark Street (Montrose School). SOPD was made aware that the school would be using 55 passenger buses for transport. Their parking lot cannot accommodate the buses, so the SOPD will need to create a "no parking" zone in front of the school. The transport service will be door to door, and all of the buses must leave together, which will take more time. SOPD has canvassed in the neighborhood to bring this change to their attention, to get ahead of the curve. To follow up on the Chief's report, Lt. Acevedo mentioned that some of the pedestrian details will be postponed due to the lack of vehicles. SOPD is still looking to fill crossing guard positions.

Ida Impact & Recovery



Mr. Battaglia is currently assessing the village's situation due to the storm. The Village engineer anticipates having final numbers by Tuesday or Wednesday of this week. Redmond Road alone has an estimated 1 million dollars and needs complete reconstruction. Mr. Battaglia further explained that Redmond Road has a concrete slab under the asphalt, and requires the whole road to be redone. In contrast, Sherman Place is not a concrete roadway and will not need complete reconstruction. The estimated cost will be lower but still expensive. At the request of the DPW director, Mr. Battaglia did a structural assessment of their building. Due to the extreme water damage, there might be structural issues.

Road Repair/ Safety Upgrade Process- Local & County

Lt. Acevedo stated that there was no update on any improvements at that time. In response to Trustee Coalier, Lt. Acevedo detailed the possibility of a crosswalk being moved across from Marshall School. This is a challenging location that receives resident complaints and two crossing guards need to be assigned. Essentially, the change that was previously proposed, Mr. Battaglia explained to Lt. Acevedo wouldn't work. Discussion ensued regarding the villages "hot spot" improvements. Trustee Coalier asked Lt. Acevedo and Mr. Battaglia to consider the determined "hot spots" when plans are being made for road improvements. Mr. Battaglia stated this would be an opportune time to consider these safety improvements as roads are being assessed due to the recent storm.

Mobility Action Committee

Trustee Coalier discussed the difference in the restructuring of the Mobility Action Committee from the previous Transportation Committee. The Mobility Action Committee would address not only traffic, but pedestrian and cycling traffic. The Board of Trustees are looking for a chair and will be advertising the type of characteristics the committee needs for members.

Executive Session

Next Meeting Date

October 14, 2021

November 11, 2021

Adjournment