

Minutes of board meeting held on 8th December 2008 at 1314 Washington Drive

Present:

Dan Craig
Winston Dunkley
Calvin Kidd
Ian MacKinnon
Kathy Burk
Brooke Doswell
Nancy Plaxico
Joanie Stone

Member of the community: Mr. Ellis and Ms Thompson-Staller

Meeting opened at 7.53pm

The Chair explained that she had called the emergency board meeting to review the fire on Shore Drive and to agree on our way forward.

Ms Doswell reported that many community members wanted to show their support of the families affected and it was agreed that an Oyster Harbor Emergency Fund would be created to receive donations to help provide relief if requested by the families affected. If any funds were remaining the fund would be kept open to support other families in an emergency situation. It was proposed by Ms. Doswell and seconded by Ms. Plaxico that the community purchase 2 computers and a printer at a cost of \$1900 as gifts to the families affected.

Ms. Doswell reported that Councilman Cohen had contacted the community to request our view of what happened. It was agreed that an e-mail blast would be sent requesting community members recollections. The President was requested to contact the Presidents of Highland Beach and Arundel on the Bay to ask them if their residents had useful photographs and a timeline of what happened. It was agreed to prepare a pack for Councilman Cohen within 48 hours.

The board then considered the questions they would request Councilman Cohen to ask of the fire department. The questions were:

- How long did it take before substantial quantities of water were being sprayed
- How long did it take before the first engine capable of pumping water arrived
- did the fire service have sufficient hose to reach the bay when the tide was out
- why didn't the fire service use the creek cut for water
- when was the fire boat dispatched / arrive / and when did it start pumping water
- is there a standard operating procedure (SOP) designed to address communities like ours with no hydrants, close housing and many wood clad properties
- when was BGE asked to turn off the power and when did it happen

- what is the communication process between the fire service and BGE to get power turned off
- is it necessary to delay pumping water until the electricity was turned off
- when did the water tanker arrive and when was it fully deployed in providing water
- what can the community do to help itself. For instance access points to the bay and creek being built to make it easier for the fire service to access the water or a holding tank somewhere in the community

Finally, the board felt strongly that there should be an investigation into the way the fire was handled and also felt strongly that the investigation should be handled by an organization independent of the fire service.

Since the beach fence had been damaged by residents needing to get vehicles away from the fire, a vote was taken on whether to remove the fence behind the Shore Drive properties and replace it with an easily accessible boundary delineation, e.g. wooden posts with rope between as at Fishing Creek Park. All were in favor except Mr. MacKinnon who, although in favor of the principal, felt the community should vote on this decision.

It was agreed that the community would post a thank you to the fire service for their efforts in fighting the fire and send our good wishes for a speedy recovery to the firefighters injured.

The board then reviewed the video with time tracking shot by Mr. Craig, which clearly shows that Mr. Bruce's house was not on fire when the firefighters arrived. Mr. Craig also commented that when he looked out of his window a little after 10.30pm, Mr. O'Connor's house appeared not to be on fire although he did not have that on video. Mr. Craig agreed to make a copy for the authorities to review.

The President agreed to hold a community meeting on Saturday 13th December at 9.30am at a location to be notified to update the community.

A motion to close the meeting was proposed by Mr. Kidd and seconded by Mr. Dunkley and was unanimously agreed. The meeting closed at 9.58pm.