

Building and Facilities Committee

Minutes of 2-18-21; Zoom

Members Present: Bowers, Sherman, Cardillo, Beasley, Cross, Hoglund, Cannon; Absent: Bianchi

Others present: Louis Botta, Emergency Management Director; Nathan Sheon, CERT Team Coordinator; Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. The roll was called, and each member present stated that no one else was in the room with that member.

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting of February 11, 2021, were reviewed by the Committee and were then approved unanimously.

2. Presentation by Louis Botta, Emergency Management Committee

The Chair welcomed Mr. Botta back to the Committee and thanked him, and all those who work with him, for all the work he had been doing of late with regard to the Covid pandemic. Mr. Botta had provided to the Committee prior to the meeting a statement of the Emergency Management Committee's activities and space needs (Attachment 1). He then discussed elements of the EMC's work and how it operates. This included that the Syd Crook Room in the Academy building is a good fit for the Emergency Operations Center, as it is in close proximity to the Administrator's office and the Finance Officer's office, both of whom are necessary representatives in the EOC itself. Thus, although they would be in the room during operation, they could easily go to their offices for any materials or information that may be needed. The Selectmen would also be in the EOC during its operation. The EMC Director's office would not need to be in the same building as the EOC. The upgrades to the Syd Crook Room which he discussed when last he met with the Committee are still pending.

The EOC requires the materials and storage space currently utilized within the Syd Crook Room. The radio, which is currently stored elsewhere, should be moved into the EOC room, and that could be done fairly easily utilizing the storage cabinets at the Syd Crook Room with new wiring.

The space needs being discussed are attached as Attachment 2

The Syd Crook Room has 600 sf of space, and his conclusion is that it and the furniture currently in use with the EOC meet all their needs very well and it

could be used as the permanent EOC for the foreseeable future. John Cannon and Kim Hallquist agreed that the Syd Crook Room is a good location for the EOC. In response to a question whether the EOC could be located somewhere else, he stated that it could, but would have to have the same amount of space and similar furnishings, but would not be in close proximity to the offices mentioned. He was also asked if utility service and internet service were sufficient, and he stated that they were, with an overlap of three providers for internet, and a backup generator on site, as well as a Town rolling stock generator, if needed.

Mr. Botta then explained that the EMC is working with the School system (SAU 65) for use of the school facilities in New London for severe disaster relief, such as when large numbers of people have to leave their homes and have a place to stay. Part of that effort is that the EMC is working on a grant to provide to the SAU a large generator that could power the entire SAU complex.

Mr. Botta informed the Committee that the EMC should have an office that would accommodate two desks and supporting file cabinets. He suggested a room of 100 sf. The EMC does not currently have this space. It would be used approximately three times a week for about two hours each time.

Mr. Botta then discussed and responded to questions regarding storage locations and storage needs. The EMC is currently using the room on the second floor of the Academy building off the main hall for storage of PPE and other supplies, including 12 oxygen generators acquired from the federal government when the Alternate Care Facility was shut down. This room is fully utilized with EMC materials. There is currently 160 sf storage there, along with another, separate, 60 sf of climate controlled storage in the Academy building. There is also 148 sf of storage of pet supplies in Whipple Hall basement next to the current P.D. training room; and a storage trailer with 250 sf storage capacity for emergency shelter supplies located in the vehicle building at the DPW.

There followed a discussion of supplies that require climate controlled space and supplies that did not; and an expressed concern that the amount of storage was excessive since we have been going through a real emergency situation with the Covid pandemic, and only 30% of the available materials were used. This would seem to indicate that the EMC would be better served to have fewer supplies and order new ones when the need arose, allowing other

communities with a current need to have those that weren't immediately necessary. This could dramatically reduce the storage space needs, which could then be better accommodated in existing spaces. Mr. Botta agreed that this was a possibility but noted that his experience in hurricane disaster relief efforts led him to believe it was better to have such materials on hand to be prepared for any unforeseen disaster.

Mr. Botta then introduced Nathan Sheon to discuss the CERT training program and needs. Mr. Sheon explained that there are three components – (1) training for the public, which would require a room large enough to accommodate them; (2) training for CERT personnel, which would require space for about 10 people, with tables and chairs for their use; and (3) a smaller space for team meetings and planning. He was asked if Whipple Hall would meet the needs as to the public training; whether the Fire Department Training Room would meet the needs as to the CERT training; and whether a conference room such as the Syd Crook Room would meet the needs as to the team meetings and planning. He stated that those solutions were satisfactory. As to storage of training materials for the CERT team, Mr. Botta stated that those materials were minimal and did not need to be kept at the same location where training was to occur, and could be stored at an office, if there was one.

Mr. Sheon then discussed the federal requirement that a pet shelter be provided. The EMC has cages which will account for some of the need, but there should be an area of about 600 sf for a pet shelter. He is looking into possible solutions, but has not yet found the answer. Mr. Botta noted that in the past the basement of Whipple Hall, used by the P.D. had been used for a shelter, but that this was neither a good solution nor an appropriate one. It should be located somewhere else. Mr. Sheon stated that the ideal solution would be a pet shelter in close proximity to the school, which would be in use as the shelter for residents. Both agreed that a shed with heat available during the emergency would suffice, and that although the pet supplies did not require a climate controlled environment, the MRE (meals ready to eat) would not last as long if they got too hot or too cold. Phil Sherman suggested that a possible location for the pet shelter could be the former library space at the SAU since even if it ended

up being used for the Recreation Department, that space would be available in a disaster situation when a pet shelter would be needed.

The discussion concluded with Mr. Botta responding to an inquiry about personal generators in Town, noting that a fairly recent survey carried out by Colby-Sawyer College found that roughly 25% of Town residents have a home generator.

The Chair thanked Mr. Botta and Mr. Sheon for their presentation and the work they are doing.

3. *Reports*

The Chair reported that he had scheduled an appearance at the Citizens Advisory Committee for Saturday, May 1, 2021. He has heard nothing further from Justin Garzia regarding the Recreation Commission's activities, nor with regard to meeting with Outing Club. He also reported that the Charter and purposes working group has made progress on a proposal for the Committee, but a few more modifications are needed before it is sent out.

Whipple Subcommittee: Mr. Sherman reported that some aspects of the Subcommittee's work had been included in discussions related to that space in the safety and security issues discussed in other Subcommittees.

Buker Building/P.D. safety and security: Mr. Sherman reported that the Subcommittee is proceeding with a sprinkler riser shield to protect the communications equipment, and that the subject of bulletproofing is proceeding well.

Police Station Subcommittee: Mr. Sherman reported that the Subcommittee was making progress with regard to the Stahlman building and the Buker building, and hoped to have a preliminary report by March 4, 2021.

Academy Building Subcommittee: No report.

Transfer Station land: no report

DPW: No report.

4. *Old Business*

None.

5. *Other items to come before the Committee*

John Cannon informed the Committee that the new Fire Inspector has begun his review of Town buildings and will follow that with a review of commercial buildings and new construction and Code reviews.

6. *Action Items*

Previous (from 1-21-28)

A. Colin Beasley to prepare a draft statement of the priorities discussions so far, for the Committee meeting on February 18, 2021. **Pending- date changed: to be reported on February 25, 2021.**

(from 2-4-21)

A. Chief Cobb to obtain from the real estate broker a copy of the Warranty Deed to Bob Stahlman (or his designee) of the property. **Reassigned by the Subcommittee to Colin Beasley. Done.**

(from 2-11-21)

A. Chair to contact Maureen Prohl to suggest that the Committee meet with the CAC at its April 3, 2021, meeting to discuss the status of its analysis regarding the Police Department. **Done. Meeting with CAC to be Saturday, May 1, 2021.**

B. Chair to prepare new draft of proposed charter and submit it to working group for review, and subsequent presentation to the Committee. **Revisions pending.**

The next meeting is by Zoom, on Thursday, February 25, at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Bowers, Chair

Attachment 1

1. Current uses of space in Buker building, Whipple Hall, and any other buildings or facilities utilized by the Emergency Management Committee, stating that use.
 - The New London Emergency Management Committee has no allocated physical **office** space in any building in the town of New London.
 - Our monthly meeting was historically held at the New London Fire Station, Since March 2020, we have been meeting exclusively via Zoom meetings due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.
 - Very few post-Pandemic meetings and exercise planning have been held at the Sydney Crook Conference Room, at the Town Administrator's Office (both in the Academy Building) or the Fire Station
 - Since the pandemic, our storage requirements have vastly increased, especially on Personnel Protective Equipment (PPE). All of our PPE needs and our emergency food (MREs) storage is located in the 2nd floor storage room in the Academy Building. MREs require climate-controlled storage to assure preservation. We have totally taken over that room and built shelves to store equipment. The equipment will be stored for the foreseeable future.
 - Emergency shelter supplies are currently stored in a 25' storage container in the Public Works area (cots, pillows, bedding, etc). In addition, we have allowed the Town Clerk and Keeper of the Checklist to store their PPE and emergency election supplies in our container.

- Pet shelter supplies, cages and equipment are in the Whipple Hall basement police training room
- We have a closet with emergency management gear, publicity supplies and oxygen generators in the Sydney Crook Conference Room.
- We have some files located with the Administrative Assistant at the Selectmen's Office
- Emergency Radio that would be used in case of emergencies is located in the Zoning/Planning Office

2. Current needs not now met, including for activities/ personnel/ storage/ other reasons; to include a statement of the function supported by any proposed additions/changes to the space now utilized.

Space Needs for an Emergency Management Function in New London

- Emergency Operations Center – Need partially met.
 - 600 sq feet at Sydney Crook Conference Room
 - Usage Time: Eventuality, during exercises, and during emergencies
 - Awaiting Space Committee Designation
- PPE Storage at Academy Building – Need Met
 - 160 sq ft of storage space
 - Room made available for Town PPE storage
 - Approximately 750 boxes of MREs
 - Room exists for additional purchases of emergency MREs up to 2,500 goal for disasters and emergencies
- Non-perishable Storage container located in Public Works – Need met
 - Currently used for non-perishable storage such as cots and bedding material (in sealed packages)
 - Also used for Town’s Election PPE storage
 - Usage Time: 100% use for that purpose.
 - Do not foresee expansion requirement
- Emergency Supplies Closet. – Need partially met
 - 25 sq feet at Sydney Crook Storage Closet
 - Currently used for EOC materials, informational and publicity supplies
 - Additional function to store radio equipment now somewhere else
 - Usage Time: 100%
- Emergency Supplies – **Need NOT met**
 - 60 square feet of climate controlled storage
 - Storage requirement for 8-12 Oxygen Generators (40 sq ft)
 - Additional storage for CERT equipment (20 sq ft)

- Most Oxygen Generators are new, still in boxes
- Life-Saving equipment for citizens of New London
- In place for eventuality of an Alternate Care Site (ACS)
- Currently stored in basement of Academy Building. Life-saving and life-maintaining equipment should not be stored in a basement.
- Usage Time: 100%

- Office Space – **Need NOT met**
 - Desk space for Emergency Management Director
 - Desk space for CERT Team Coordinator
 - Desk space must be separate
 - Small space for meeting (interviews, counseling, etc.)
 - Space for a filing cabinet
 - Total space 100 sq feet
 - Usage Time: 3 times a week for two hours each time.

- CERT Training Space – **Need NOT met**
 - Space for 10 people, four tables and 10 chairs
 - Storage site for equipment and training literature
 - Usage Time: Once a week for three hours

- Pet Shelter Supply Space – **Need partially met**
 - Storage at the Police Training Room

Statement of Functions for a fully functional Emergency Operations Center

- Emergency Operations Center must be limited to the public
 - Sydney Crook Room is suitable (30' x 20')
- Acting as the primary coordination center for town-wide emergency response and recovery services when activated.
- Activating the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan
- Activating the Continuity of Operations Plan when necessary
- Coordinating response activities with public and private organizations and agencies
- Notifying the State Emergency Management Agency of situation updates by regularly submitting Situation Reports (SITREP)
- Activating necessary local and regional governments and organizations
- Activating response agreements with State and Federal departments or agencies.
- Proclaiming a local state of emergency
- Requesting the State Emergency Management Agency to provide State and/or Federal assistance.
- Activate and manage town and regional sheltering activities

Attachment 2

EMC space needs (2-16-21)

Office: 100 sf; Use: 3 times a week for two hours each time

Emergency Operations Center: 600 sf (Syd Crook Room sufficient);

Use: Eventuality, during exercises, and during emergencies

CERT Training Space: Space for 10 people, four tables and 10 chairs;

Storage site for equipment and training literature;

Use: Once a week for three hours

Storage: 160 sf PPE Storage (currently at Academy Building – room exist

For additional purchases of emergency MREs)

25 sf (currently at Sydney Crook Storage Closet – need more)

15 sf to store radio equipment

60 sf of climate controlled storage for Emergency Supplies

148 sf Pet Shelter Supply Space (currently stored P.D. training
Room)

250 sf storage container for emergency shelter supplies (currently
stored at DPW garage (plus storage for Town Clerk and Keeper
of the Checklist to store their PPE and emergency election
supplies)

600 sf pet shelter