

Waterbury Natural Disaster Preparedness Committee

Meeting Minutes

1/7/2026

Opening: The meeting was held in the Steele Community Room, Waterbury Municipal Center. The meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m.

Present: John Malter, Emily Gilde, Matt Dugan, Bette Lewicke, Stacey Schwarz, and Dani Kehlmann, Waterbury Disaster Preparedness and Response Coordinator

Approval of Minutes: Motion from Matt to approve minutes. Bette seconded. Minutes were approved at 5:32.

Approval of Agenda:

Business from Previous Meeting:

New Business:

Matt provided an update regarding strands of discussion over the previous several weeks regarding the Natural Disaster Response Committee's responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Waterbury Response Coordinator. Select Board member Kane Sweeney had provided to committee members clarification on the relationship between the committee and the response coordinator. Matt reported the following:

- The committee is to report to the Select Board, and the Select Board directs the response coordinator.
- The response coordinator does not direct the committee, nor does the committee direct the response coordinator.
- The response coordinator has many responsibilities and initiatives whereas the committee is tasked solely with creating, training, and equipping a disaster response corps.

The committee agreed that, in the six months, they will hold as many of the trainings for various disaster response positions as possible.

Dani mentioned that she had presented a response budget to the Select Board two nights prior (two committee members attended in person) and that, if this budget is approved, the acquisition of supplies will be the responsibility of the response coordinator.

Matt asked the committee to vote on a choice of options: recommend to the Select Board that they figure out how to hold the trainings, or to, as a committee, take responsibility for holding the trainings, with the idea being that the committee may need to recruit outside help.

Feb. 20 from 5:00-7:00 is the date of the first training, said John.

There was discussion about what the first training should be, a general overview of the response process or, more specifically, a mucking training.

The committee voted unanimously to explore the option of spearheading the trainings.

Dani announced that she does not have the hours in her regular job work week to do the job she'd like to do as the Waterbury Natural Disaster Preparedness and Response Coordinator and therefore is resigning her position effective at the end of January. She said that she will still help out as a volunteer and that she and Tom Leitz had identified possible replacement candidates. Dani estimated that a person with an available eight hours per week would be able to carry out the duties of the position. She also mentioned the possibility of the person being a CReW employee and said it's "worth a chat."

John thanked Dani for the job she's done and complimented her on the successful presentation of the budget to the Select Board.

Dani created neighborhood maps, now available in hard copy and digital versions, that will aid in volunteer organization.

John asked about the possibility of the town supplies trailer that has been discussed in the past. Dani reported that this is still on hold. For the time being, all the flood cleanup equipment is in the basement of the Municipal Complex. The gear is accessible during office hours. Matt said he'd prepare the gear in the days before the first training, which will be on mucking.

Bette offered to call the people who showed up at the summer event to invite them to the training. John will handle the pizza and seltzers. John will make macaroons. Stacey volunteered to make a cookie pie if 20 or more people sign up for the training. Emily will post the event on the Front Porch Forum and will ask CReW to post to their lists. Dani shared the volunteer signup list with the committee. The committee decided to invite all potential volunteers to all trainings, as, even if they do not plan to serve in all roles, this will help them understand how all the roles interact.

Communication to the community will begin three weeks prior to the event. Dani said she will connect with Stacey regarding maintenance of the volunteer form. Dani asked for a committee volunteer who is tech-focused to decide on a platform for document sharing. **There was some discussion about Stacey taking on this role.**

Dani said that she set up a Monday.com account but has not been able to access it due to issues with her town email account.

Based on John's suggestion, Matt said he would ask CReW if they'd like to send a representative to the training to speak.

Dani offered to connect Matt to a couple of muckers (Dana and Mal) for possible help with the training.

There was discussion about how to structure the training. There was also discussion about recording the session so that people could view it later.

Bette brought up the issue of how to discuss the issue residents in homes who appear to be available to help at a property but who do not.

There was discussion about having a committee table at Town Meeting as well as speaking about the topic in front of the town. John said he would be happy to talk about the volunteer corps at Town Meeting. Matt volunteered to be at a table for one to two hours to answer questions and maintain the signup sheet. **The committee did not reach a conclusion here.**

The committee will post to the Front Porch Forum and to personal lists. John will make an announcement to the Rotary Club. Dani mentioned that Cheryl Casey is writing a town newsletter. Emily offered to ask her if she can mention the event in the publication. The Waterbury Roundabout will receive a press release. John will work with a WDEV contact to get a mention on the radio. Stacey volunteered to put a poster up at the Waterbury Market.

John will kick off the training by discussing his role and the committee's role, and he will introduce Matt. Optimally, all committee members (absent Emily, who will be overseas), will be at the training and can introduce themselves.

April 24 and June 26 are the second and third trainings. The room is reserved from 5:00-7:00 for those dates. Dani volunteered herself and Nora as trainers for an April 24 training on assessment, administration, and evaluation.

June's training will be on truckers, runners, and inventory. Emily asked what the inventory team does. Dani explained that their role is mostly before and after an event; for example, a job would be to bring the supplies trailer to the town municipal offices when an event is about to occur or has occurred. Matt added that inventory team members will also be helpful in maintaining the mucking kits and delivering energy bars, water, etc.

Matt will share his notes on mucking training with the committee during the next meeting for feedback. The committee decided to break the training into two halves with dinner in the middle.

John asked Cheryl Casey if she could set up the next committee meeting with video capabilities.

The committee officially thanked for her work.

Vote to adjourn: John motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Minutes Submitted By: Matt Dugan