

Minutes
District Safety and Security Committee Meeting
June 17, 2013

Superintendent D'Agostino called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm with the following in attendance

Richard D'Agostino, Chair	Mary Townsend
Mayor Scott Avedisian	Amie Galipeau
Colonel Stephen McCartney	Jennifer Ahearn
School Committee Chair, Bethany Furtado	James Ginolfi
Dennis Mullen	David Laplante
Robert Bushell	Ken Rassler
Frank Ricci	*Absent: Chief Armstrong
Marie Cote	

Principal Frank Ricci presented an Emergency Evacuation and Lockdown manual he put together for John Brown Francis and other schools to use as a template. He expounded on the manual, highlighting who his safety team members are, signaling and announcement methods, command post locations, who should be the media spokesperson for the district, location of a command post, identifying first aid providers, to include school personnel and area hospitals, outside assembly areas, which he stated would be determined from the police and fire departments, inside lockdown areas, sheltering in place areas, locations of crisis kits. Mr. Ricci noted that every school should identify a person responsible for emergency communication to police and fire, person to communicate with administration, staff and the media. Methods for responding to media, notifying students and parents through connect -ed, person responsible for contacting and coordinating outside resources, if needed. Mr. Ricci highlighted 9 points for a crisis procedure checklist for principals and staff responsibilities.

Currently, color codes would be used to alert faculty and staff of the emergency lockdown or partial controlled evacuation of a building. Mr. Ricci offered suggestions for other emergency alerts, possible use of a megaphone. Whatever alerts are recommended, it should be consistent with all schools.

Colonel McCartney expressed his concern that this template is generic and not made for a specific situation. A plan needs to be incorporated. He introduced Major Ray Gallucci, who is in charge of operational response for police to the scene, and Captain Thomas Hannon, 2nd platoon central command who possesses much expertise with operational response and is the police department's ICS principle.

Major Gallucci and Captain Hannon suggest that every school staff member should be presented the demonstration of the active shooter program. It's a "lesson learned" and leads the staff to think outside the box through the whole process. Captain Hannon and Major Gallucci have done this presentation in 5 elementary schools where it was received very well. The presentation can be done in about 1 hour. Dr. D'Agostino would like the Major and Captain to coordinate with Secondary Director, Dennis Mullen, and Elementary Director, Robert Bushell, to have this presentation done in all our schools.

Colonel McCartney talked about the need for updating the WPS Emergency Manual, language and terminology needs “tweaking.” Dave Laplante said all administrators and principals have taken the 103 Nims course which helps to understand the terminology. The Colonel said we need a good understanding of command and communications from each school so that upon police arrival they may take control of the scene.

- What are you doing prior to police arrival
- Keeping parents secure will be a challenge
- Need to know what is going on inside the building
- Need to know egress points

Principal Ricci said he purchased colored vests with the words JBF Staff written on the back so that police and fire can identify these adults from any perpetrator.

Dave Laplante said with the use of a BeSafe grant, all building entrances, water and gas shut offs are identified, along with contact information for that building. The Police and Fire Departments have a copy of this information on disk and every principal has one in their office. Mayor Avedisian requests that the City’s Department of Public Works receive a copy as well.

David Laplante said 152 cameras have been installed throughout buildings in the district. Cameras are only accessible with a passcode and IP address. Maintenance personnel and high school principals have access. Every couple of weeks the video refreshes.

Mr. Laplante said they will be installing magnetic locks in every building, including the administration buildings. Schools will have an intercom, camera and remote opening in place so that secretaries may view, speak with a person, and then buzz that person inside. Other entrances will have picture i.d. card readers for staff to swipe to gain access inside. The Mayor asked if a door was propped open, would this be identified. Mr. Laplante said it would not show the propped door; however, the system could be expanded, the system is very flexible. Mr. Laplante said that Phase II of the Fire Code upgrades will be taking place over the next couple of months. Seven buildings will have new doorways, smoke chambers, locks and fire alarms. The infrastructure is in place for all the updates.

Mr. Laplante said that the installation of locks is in conjunction with changing keys. There will be a 4 level master, restricted key system. The keys cannot be reproduced at any local store. Teachers and staff will have to do their due diligence in keeping doors closed and using their card readers to gain access inside their building. Marie Cote mentioned that consideration for Coaches, PTA Presidents and others who use the buildings need to be addressed. Mrs. Furtado said that everyone who wishes to use a school building must fill out the Use of Building Form and submit it to the proper offices for permission. No one should be allowed to use the building if they have not filled out the proper paperwork and received permission through the proper channels. Bob Bushell mentioned that we need to exchange information with the Boys and Girls Club as we are reciprocal with them in times of emergency.

Principal Ken Rassler attended disaster seminars in May. They included: 1) Active Shooter: Are you prepared?; 2) The Challenges of Providing Crisis Care when Children are Traumatized; 3) Assessments, Emergency Planning, Drills and You; 4) State Fire Marshal Resource and You; 5) Social Media and Emergencies; and 6) Private Security and the Active Shooter. Mr. Rassler said he learned there is no set protocol for a shooter. Principals, teachers, guidance personnel, school psychologists, and staff need to look for warning signs in students: depression, suicide, distraught, poems or letters written by students and listen to students. Two types of shootings: “gamer” and “revenge.”

Mr. Rassler said there was discrepancy amongst the professionals whether the shades in the classroom should be down or up. He will look to Colonel McCartney for guidance on the issue. Mr. Rassler said there is another course which looks informative, ICS 165 – Home Shooter, which anyone can take online.

There will be issues, especially with junior and senior high schools with students texting and calling parents. Parents will need to know where to go. Every Principal should have a SWAT kit. Mr. Rassler said FEMA has an excellent booklet on active shooters and a video too. Copies of the video will be made for each principal to show their staff. School principals should be instructed to give the kit to the officer in charge at the scene. This kit will provide valuable information to police and fire about the school and the procedures the school has followed prior to the arrival of police and fire. Mr. Rassler said that the State Fire Marshall action plan for lockdowns is not to exit the building. The principals agreed that students and staff will need to “de-program”. Example: fire alarm goes off, most people think of exiting the building.

Mrs. Ahearn suggested a school simulate a mock event. The Colonel said that really should not be done until the Emergency Manual is revised and procedural protocol is in place.

The effects of social media was discussed. Controlling social media in a crisis will be extremely difficult. With Facebook, YouTube, Tumblr, Vine, Flickr, students have access to everything. The Assistant Superintendent in Scituate has someone who tracks these outlets. Mr. Rassler was told that Vine is an extremely popular venue today.

The Mayor suggested to the superintendent that a meeting with Sue Baker, from his office, be set up. He would like protocol in place for notifying his office as to events as they are taking place. He feels notification, in the past, as left him “behind the 8 ball” and would like to be kept up-to-date with events as we know them.

Major Gallucci said the Warwick Police Department in conjunction with Jeff Kelly of Mutualink will run a school safety demonstration on Wednesday, June 26th -10am-12pm, at Pilgrim High School. Warwick is the first district to run this demonstration. All interested parties, police, fire, emergency managers, school administrators have been invited to attend. Major Gallucci said the Mutualink system allows first responders to view the interior of schools.

Chairwoman Furtado pointed out to Major Gallucci that all WPS cameras are mounted on the outside of the buildings. Only for this exercise will cameras be mounted inside the school. Mr. Laplante and Mrs.

Furtado pointed out that, unfortunately, to mount additional cameras inside school buildings would be extremely costly.

The Colonel suggested the subcommittees should be charged with: 1) Operations (manual) and 2) Logistics (communications and facilities). He advised beginning with Operations---updating the Emergency Response Manual.

The Committee agreed to meet on Thursday, July 11th, 9:00 am, Warwick Administration Building, School Committee Room.

Adjourned: 4:00 pm