

**DRAFT April 17, 2007**

**APPROVED**

# **HOLLIS BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**April 16, 2007**

Selectmen Present: Melinda Willis, Vahrij Manoukian, Mark Johnson and David Petry

Staff: Catharine W. Hallsworth, Director of Administration, Russell Ux, Chief of Police, Don McCoy, Director of Emergency Management

Others Present: Peter Band, Former Selectman, Robert Stewart, Hollis Times

(NOTE: Due to emergency situations throughout the Town of Hollis resulting from an extreme rain and wind event, the regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Selectmen was cancelled and an emergency meeting was held with emergency personnel at the Hollis Pharmacy. This meeting change was posted on the Town's WEB site and Channel 12.)

Chairman Willis called the meeting to order in the upstairs office of the Hollis Pharmacy at 6:37 PM.

**Letter in regards to the Hayden Mill Pond Dam.** Letters directed to officials at the State Department of Environmental Services and interested parties involved with issues of the deficiencies of the Hayden Mill Pond Dam were prepared for Board signature. There was a brief discussion about changing and updating the letter due to the storm event.

## **Report from Director of Emergency Management, Don McCoy.**

McCoy described the storm as being unusual in the fact that it came on fast and was heavier than usual in the amount of water. He stated that everything filled up very fast. Fire Chief, Rick Towne was first called out at 3 AM and he was called out at 4AM.

McCoy reported on the Hayden Mill Pond Dam. He stated the Hayden Mill Pond had been drained previously and was very low prior to the rain event. But as of Monday morning, the water was up and the dam was leaking. McCoy contacted the Department of Environmental Services with concerns of the dam's collapse. In examining the Emergency Action Plan, the probability of the dam collapsing was estimated at 30% to 40%. The procedure in this case is to close Route 122 and evacuate downstream. While in preparation for the Hayden Mill Pond Dam collapse, a dam located in Milford at the end of Mossman Lane was breached and caused a water event through properties on Toddy Brook Road and Route 122. There were evacuations from Toddy Brook, along with the closure of Route 122 near Witches Spring and the closure of Ames Road due to the vulnerability of the culvert under Ames Road.

The Milford based dam broke completely and a wall of water came down the original path, taking out two driveways on Toddy Brook, part of the Route 122 roadway and compromising the culvert under Ames Road.

At the present time McCoy stated crews from the Fire Department are monitoring the Hayden Mill Pond Dam and are stationed on Route 122 to close the road if the dam is breached. Most of the residents that had been evacuated have returned home and have elected to stay in their homes. At this point in time no one needs to be sheltered, but there is a shelter available in Milford.

McCoy described that there were concerns about the students of families along the evacuation route. He asked the schools to shelter these students at the schools until parents could pick them up and to contact the parents of this change. Willis stated she had checked with the schools about 4 PM and that parents had picked up the students by that time.

McCoy reported that at this present time the two serious problems remaining are Hayden Mill Pond Dam and the Nissitissitt River entering from Hollis into Pepperell, MA at the property owned by Crystal. He went on to state that the State has inspected the dam and reported there has been a lot of damage done due to the storm. They felt it may breach and recommended continuing the check points and plan for the worse but hope for the best. A plan to sand bag the top of the dam was felt to be too dangerous to people.

McCoy described the dam as two granite walls placed about 25 feet apart and filled with sand. One wall is against the water. He stated if the dam were breached, large portions of route 122 and three bridges might be destroyed.

Band asked if the dam were removed in the future, what would be the consequences? Petry felt if the dam were removed waters from upstream would be compromised and that there would be the loss of the Hayden Reservoir and all the wetlands behind the reservoir.

Chief Ux reported that half of the Hollis Police Officers are manning 24-hour shifts over the next 48 hours along with half of the Hollis Firefighters doing similar shifts. He also stated that all DPW personnel were being used and rotated through at this time period.

The Governor has called a State of Emergency and costs associated from the storm should be reimbursed.

Questions were raised about the dam in Milford. It was unknown when it was constructed. McCoy stated an engineer from the DES was sent down to look at the site. It appears that no one knew of the presence of the dam. The DES had no record of it and the Town had no record of it. Ux related that the residents of 11 Toddy Brook had to be evacuated through the woods to Laurel Hill Road.

Willis had been on site with Chief Towne earlier in the day. The remaining Board members were interested in seeing the sites so the meeting was taken to the various sites.

**Toddy Brook Road.** The driveway was rutted and impassable with a vehicle. A large gouge was taken out of the driveway near the home at 11 Toddy Brook, about 8 feet deep and about 30 feet across. The culvert that had gone under the drive was 100 yards downstream in the wooded area. It was believed that both vehicles, parked near the garage may have water damage.

17 Toddy Brook, located further up the road and closer to the event, also had extensive driveway damage. Here the depth of damage was 1- feet with a 40 foot expanse. The cement culverts had been moved by the rushing water about 30 feet downstream. There was also a cement culvert high on the banking to the left in the woods. It is unknown where this culvert originated.

**Hayden Mill Pond Dam.** McCoy, Ux and Willis all reported the dam looked better at this time versus earlier in the day. The amount of water coming through the granite slabs had been reduced and the level of the pond had receded a small amount. There were large "sink holes" in the areas between the two granite walls and there were bulges of the granite stonework visible on the downstream side of the dam. Water was being drained from the pond along the sluiceway on the far side of the dam.

**Nissitissitt River.** The final stop was on West Hollis Road at the property of Crystal at the Pepperell, MA line. The river flows from Lake Potanapo in Brookline and eventually empties into the Nashua River in Pepperell. The homes in the Iron Works Lane subdivision were not affected, but two properties located at the bridge on West Hollis Road and the Nissitissitt River were extensively flooded. No one present ever remembered such extensive flooding of this river in previous history.

**Meeting Continuation at the Hollis Pharmacy.** The meeting continued at the Hollis Pharmacy at 8:30 PM.

**Letters to DES et al.** Johnson suggested signing the letters as written and place them in the mail versus extending the time to write or edit the letters at this time.

**MOVED by Mark Johnson, seconded by Vahrij Manoukian THAT the Board of Selectmen sign the letters directed to the officials of the New Hampshire State Department of Environmental Services and related interested parties. Voting in favor of the motion were Willis, Johnson, Manoukian and Petry; NONE was opposed. The motion PASSED 4-0-0. LeDoux was absent from the meeting.**

**Board, Commission and Committee Appointments.** Willis stated all appointment letters have been postponed until the meeting on April 30<sup>th</sup>. Next week's meeting had previously been cancelled due to the absence of two members. She suggested signing the appointments on April 30<sup>th</sup> as they currently stand and inviting the chairman of each board, commission or committee in to update the Selectmen on a rotating monthly basis.

There was discussion about the length of appointments. ZBA members must be appointed for terms not less than 3 years, however the length of term of other boards and committees are at the discretion of the legislative body. Willis suggested using one-year appointments for Historic District Commission members in order to reduce the total membership during the upcoming years from the current 7 regular members to 5 regular members and 5 alternate members to 3 alternate members. (NOTE: it has been determined that all land use board members, including ZBA, Planning Board, and HDC require a three year appointment.)

**MOVED by Vahrij Manoukian; seconded by Don Ryder, THAT the Board adjourn the meeting. Voting if favor of the motion were Willis, Manoukian, Johnson and Petry; none was opposed. The motion passed 4-0-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Catharine W. Hallsworth  
Director of Administration