



## **MEETING MINUTES**

**Date & Time:** 2-24-22 11:00 AM  
**Location:** Zoom Meeting and In-person at Ottawa City Hall  
**Attending:** Ottawa Flood Commission members – see attached attendee lists  
**Concerning:** Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan update – Meeting #2  
**Discussion:**

1. Chairman Rob Hasty called the meeting to order at 11:04 AM
2. Approval of 2-17-22 minutes. Motion by Tom Walsh and second by Chief Andy Borkowski  
Approved unanimously.
3. Mat Stafford described the need to update the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (NHMP) to comply with CRS guidelines. He made a presentation on updating the NHMP and the next steps to be taken. This current meeting is about Step 5, assess the problem. The natural hazards identified and discussed last week will cause problems. The current plan's list of problems was discussed.
4. Mat Stafford showed photos of the 2013 food event to remind members of problems caused. He also showed a photo taken earlier today of ice build-up on the Fox River which has re-frozen for now. He will be watching for possible ice jams.
5. Committee members identified possible problems in addition to those already in the plan:
  - a. Jeff Hettrick's previous concern of loss of broadband and cellular service due to extreme storms was noted
  - b. Rob Hasty discussed the health as safety concerns each time Green Street and the Main Street Bridge are closed due to flooding, isolating the East side. Concerns are interruption of police, fire and ambulance services while isolated, not to mention the economic impacts of not being able to get to work or the high school. It was noted that a FEMA grant has been obtained to elevate Green Street above the flood height.
  - c. Dave Noble discussed problems and health dangers due to flooding:
    - i. Sickness due to pathogens in flood water by direct or indirect contact
    - ii. Possible electrocution
    - iii. Possible natural gas leaks and explosions
    - iv. Sickness from mold in flooded buildings
  - d. Bill Cairns discussed the problem of personal safety during tornados and asked if Ottawa has any official tornado shelters. Fire Chief Andy Borkowski confirmed there are not any at this time.

- e. Fire Chief Borkowski discussed concerns of extreme temperatures and the problem of needing warming and cooling centers. The normal centers at local churches and the PAD Shelter are closed due to Covid leaving few options.
6. Chief Borkowski suggested referencing the City's Disaster Response Plan in the NHMP. It addresses the initial emergency response to be taken in both natural and man-made disasters. A good mitigation strategy would be up update the Response Plan regularly.
7. Rob Hasty noted the health and safety problems with flooding of the existing YMCA. In addition to flood damage, there are pathogens in the water the potential of mold. The correct course of action is to relocate the YMCA to a higher elevation where it will not flood. This is currently being attempted with funding efforts underway and a flood buyout grant application in to IEMA & FEMA for the old building.
8. The proper function of the river flood plain was discussed, with desire expressed to protect flood plain areas. Plans being developed for the Harpers Farm property to create wetlands, help cleanup river water, and enhance flood plain storage were noted.
9. Mat Stafford said he will continue to accept additional comments and ideas via email.
10. Bill Vogel moved, and Bill Cairns seconded to adjourn the meeting until March 3rd. Unanimous vote.

Meeting adjourned at 11:34 AM

Next meeting will be on Thursday March 3, 11:00 via Zoom and in-person

Respectfully submitted,  
David Noble