

CITY OF ANTIGO
AD HOC WEATHER WARNING SYSTEM COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD
AUGUST 28, 2023

Ad Hoc Weather Warning System of the City of Antigo met in Regular Meeting on the above date at 4:30 PM in the Multi-Purpose Room, City Hall, Chairperson Glenn Bugni presiding.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Glenn Bugni	Chairperson	Present	
Barb Rebstock	Ward 1	Present	
Joel Wagner	Ward 6	Present	
AJ Jansen	Member	Present	
Terence Brand	Mayor	Present	
Jeff Geiger	Member	Present	
Hank Bie	Member	Absent	

Others in attendance were: Travis Krueger, Langlade County Emergency Manager (excused at 5:25 for County meeting); Kaye Matucheski, Clerk-Treasurer/Finance Director; Destiny Geiger; and Cheryl Barta, Administrative Assistant.

Questions to be Answered Before Survey

1. Who Would be Responsible for Activating the Siren System?

Aldersperson Bugni noted the issues with activation of the siren system in Maui was an issue and the person responsible justified that the siren was for a tsunami. He also noted there are a lot of liability issues and a lot of people lost their lives.

Upon Aldersperson Bugni's inquiry of ideas for who would be responsible for activating the siren system, Mayor Brand reported that Police Chief Duley has that answer in almost all sections of his report. Mayor Brand explained that Chief Duley's written report of who is responsible and the written policy discusses how and who activates it, from others.

Mayor noted that there are a few warning systems that are activated by a button and some that are radio activated. He also noted that some have a two step activation because they have an old system and a new system working together.

Upon Aldersperson Bugni's inquiry of who the principal person is, Mayor Brand reported Merrill has the Police Department Supervisor on duty activate the system; in Taylor County the Taylor County Dispatch activates the system; in Crandon the Fire Department activates the warning system; and one is based off a message that comes from the National Weather Service and then the button is activated.

Upon Aldersperson Bugni's comment of not knowing who had activated the button in the past, Mayor Brand reported there was a written policy from the previous system that the City had years ago. In reviewing the policy Mr. Bugni reported it does not say who activates the button but it seems to be dispatch.

Ms. Matucheski reported she had received information from a few of the municipalities that she had reached out to on the Clerks Network. She reported out of the few that responded, five reported they have discontinued or will be discontinuing their sirens. She added that White Lake is one of the municipalities that discontinued their sirens.

Upon Aldersperson Wagner's inquiry if they were discontinuing the use of the sirens due to maintenance costs, Ms. Matucheski reported the sirens are outdated and would have to be replaced and she believed it was also due to who would activate them.

Upon Alderperson Bugni's inquiry if there is any other information included in the documentation about Shawano, Mayor Brand reported Shawano is unique in that they have entire county coverage. He added it looks like they may partner with townships and smaller cities.

There was a discussion on who should be responsible for activating the system. Alderperson Bugni believed it should be Dispatch. The Fire Department was mentioned and Ms. Matucheski reported the Department's protocol is if there is a tornado warning, they take equipment to different sections of the City in case a tornado would hit in the City Hall area, their equipment is not all wiped out. It was determined that County Dispatch would be the best option. Mr. Krueger reported there would need to be a conversation with the Sheriff's Office, as he would not be able to speak for them. There would also have to be a conversation with Corporation Counsel, etc.

Upon Alderperson Bugni's comment that County Dispatch still seems to be the best option and if the City had to provide personnel to help dispatch then the City would need to do that. Ms. Matucheski inquired what was meant by that, did the City need to hire someone to wait for a tornado to hit? Alderperson Bugni stated it was to start a conversation. Alderperson Bugni added that he thought to supplement Dispatch was important as Mr. Krueger had stated they are overwhelmed.

Mayor Brand noted that it makes a difference in certain circumstances, it depends on the number of things going on at any given time and there would be concern if the activating of the sirens were missed.

Different scenarios were discussed.

There was also a discussion of a radio activated warning system and if the current radios would be compatible or if there would be additional costs. Also discussed was the possibility of remote activation.

Ms. Matucheski read a letter from Attorney Winter that stated his opinion has not changed and he believes the legislative or discretionary immunity would apply to make the City immune from liabilities if the City would decide to decommission or not put the sirens back up, if someone would have sued the City for not having the sirens the City would have had discretionary immunity. He further stated the City could face liability if the City would have chosen to keep and maintain the weather warning sirens and the sirens malfunction or are not maintained and do not sound off when severe weather approaches.

Ms. Matucheski noted if the City gets the weather warning sirens they must work. She also noted the insurance company said the same thing. Langlade County Emergency Manager Krueger stated there is more liability if the City has the sirens.

Alderperson Bugni stated the liability issue would have to be weighed against the benefit issue to the community.

Mayor Brand noted that the biggest liability is the lack of a maintenance program.

Alderperson Bugni stated the liability would be reduced with continued maintenance program.

Upon Mr. Krueger's inquiry if the question of the City bearing the burden of the liability be presented to Council to find out if they would like the Ad Hoc Committee to continue to research the weather warning system, Ms. Matucheski reported everything would need to go to Council for approval. Ms. Matucheski stated the two big questions are the liability and who would activate the system. She noted if the County would be asked to be responsible for activating the system, they would probably want the City to hold them harmless, and the insurance company would not want that. She added where the funds would come from is another question.

There was a discussion of information that would need to be compiled before taking anything to Council.

Upon Mr. Krueger's inquiry of what information should be taken to Council, Mayor Brand stated he believed the information should be how to minimize liability, which would be a maintenance and testing plan, and what others are doing.

Ms. Rebstock inquired if a company could come out and do a demonstration, Ms. Matucheski reported this would not help to determine how to minimize liability. Mayor Brand reported that he believes the company selling the product must have a liability policy and believes they would be a great resource of information on how to minimize liability.

Ms. Matucheski reported she thought the City would need to put out a request for bids, from more than one company.

Aldersperson Wagner asked to be excused for the County Board meeting at 5:14 PM.

2. Who Would be Recognized as Callers by Dispatch to Activate the System?

Langlade County Emergency Manager, Travis Krueger reported in Shawano if a storm watcher or civilian calls in a deputy is sent out to verify it. Mr. Geiger confirmed that the storm chasers call the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Mr. Krueger reported that a call from a first responder or NOAA is who the County would recognize.

Mr. Krueger also reported weather spotters are trained to call the weather service.

3. What Insurance would the City of Antigo be Required to Have?

Ms. Matucheski reported no additional insurance would be required.

4. What is the Liability of the City if the Siren is not Activated?

Ms. Matucheski answered this question in section one.

Ms. Matucheski reported she would check with the insurance company to see if any municipalities have been sued due to a warning system not being activated.

5. Where would Storm Chasers and Recognized People Call?

Langlade County Emergency Manager reported weather spotters are trained to call the weather service.

6. If 911 Number is Low on Staffing, would the City need to Hire Additional Help to be Located at the Dispatch Center?

This matter was discussed in section one.

7. Determined - the Configuration of the Siren System would Probably Not Include Voice

8. Locations of the Siren Stations – Non-Obstrusive as Possible

Presentations

1. Daniel Duley, City of Antigo Police Chief - Municipal Procedures with Regard to Sirens in Other Cities

Mr. Duley provided a written report discussed in Section 1 as he was unable to attend.

2. Kaye Matucheski, Clerk-Treasurer/Finance Director - Insurance Liability Issues

Information from Ms. Matucheski was discussed during the specific questions.

Information Items

Ms. Matucheski reported eighty (80) weather radios have been given out since the program started in 2015. She also reported the funding for this has been exhausted and would have to go back and ask for more funding.

Upon Alderperson Bugni's inquiry of the status of Everbridge, Mayor Brand reported the number had increased by two last month. Mayor Brand noted the real disappointment of getting people to realize the benefit of it.

Upon Alderperson Bugni's inquiry of who will contact the company to see if they can do a demonstration, Mayor Brand reported he would contact Mr. Desotell and see if he has any additional companies. Mayor Brand also noted he would make a list of the questions and get them sent to the different companies. Ms. Matucheski reported she has Mr. Desotell's file.

Mr. Krueger left for the County Board meeting at 5:25 PM.

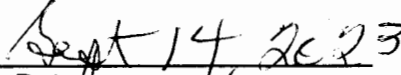
Adjournment

1. **Motion to:** adjourn at 5:39 PM

RESULT:	CARRIED [5 TO 0]
MOVER:	Barb Rebstock, Ward 1
SECONDER:	Terence Brand, Mayor
AYES:	Bugni, Rebstock, Jansen, Brand, Geiger
ABSENT:	Hank Bie
AWAY:	Joel Wagner



Glenn Bugni, Chairperson



Date