



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
GOVERNOR DANIEL P. MALLOY

State Team Organized for the Review of Management (S.T.O.R.M.) of Irene Panel

Special Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 28, 2011

Old Appropriations Room, Capitol Building – 11:00 a.m.

Members Present: (Co-Chair) Joe McGee, (Co-Chair) Major General James Skiff, Peter Carozza, Terry Edelstein, Lee Hoffman, Scott Jackson, Robert McGrath, and Cathy Osten

Members Absent: None

1. **Call to Order:** Major General James Skiff called the meeting to order at 11:04 a.m.
2. **Introductions:** Governor Malloy introduced the members of the panel.
3. **Issuance of Charge by Governor Malloy:** Governor Malloy issued his charge to the panel:
 - A broad, objective evaluation reviewing how Irene was handled in the state both in preparation and recovery. Identify areas that can be improved upon and – most importantly – make recommendations for future disaster preparedness and response.
 - Take a comprehensive look at state agencies, utility companies, municipalities, non-profits and the private sector, evaluating the response to the storm, how it was handled, and determining what in the future can be improved upon or modified.
 - To ensure that this review encompasses more than just this most recent storm, look more broadly at the state's disaster preparedness and response apparatus.
 - Understanding that the members are volunteering their time to be a member of this panel, he is hopeful that they can submit their report with recommendations to the Administration sometime during the month of December. He is looking for a concise statement and the panel's recommendations for the state going forward in addressing future disaster preparedness and response.
 - Work together to develop a game plan for how the members best feel this evaluation be conducted, the work divvied up and the report completed. While we do not have new appropriations available to conduct this study, the resources of the Governor's Administration are available to the panel. Staff in the relevant state agencies are aware

this evaluation is being conducted, and will work with the panel to provide information needed to achieve these goals.

- Look at the disaster preparedness and response procedures here in Connecticut, as well as other states to see what they do in these situations. Please reach out to other states, obtain information on their procedures, and compare practices.
- This is not about pointing fingers or placing blame, it's about making sure that we are as prepared as we can be the next time this sort of event occurs.

4. Discussion on Review of Management of Tropical Storm Irene: Joe McGee thanked the Governor and talked about how the panel would reach out to other states like Florida to learn from their experiences, look at possible scenarios for future events and their impact on infrastructure, as well as review the private sector response to storm Irene.

Major General James Skiff remarked on the opportunity before the panel to recognize successes as well as the great work accomplished by volunteers during the storm event.

Governor Malloy noted that specific items that need to be addressed include emergency power for cell phone towers, the usage of cable services for residential telephones, and sewage pumping stations as priority restoration points. The Governor further stated that the panel need not reinvent the wheel, but should take advantage of work completed on the topic if they believed it to be thorough. He stated that this process is about learning lessons from this experience and not pointing fingers.

Joe McGee said that it was his hope that this review would work towards positioning Connecticut as a leader in disaster recovery. He noted that a new framework for disaster recovery was recently issued by the administration in Washington that probably would prove useful for the group's work. Joe McGee asked Terry Edelstein to speak to how the panel would address the social services piece of their review.

Terry Edelstein spoke about the panel's task to address the impact of the storm to the more vulnerable population and to explore how healthcare and service providers can provide better services during these kinds of storm events.

Governor Malloy spoke about the importance of clear communication lines between state and municipal authorities.

Cathy Osten said that a checklist for municipalities for these kinds of events would be helpful. She noted that she had positive experiences with communication and coordination with her surrounding towns. Cathy Osten further noted that she observed social media being used successfully and that the panel should take a look at utilizing social media in such situations. Cathy Osten spoke to how she and her teams performed door-to-door checks on people who they believed to be at risk.

Scott Jackson said that he believed the daily calls between municipalities and the state emergency operations center (EOC) were very helpful. He stated that his town worked well with surrounding municipalities. Scott Jackson noted that municipal leaders need access to real-time data and clear lines of authority.

Joe McGee spoke about information he received from the University of Florida about the successful partnerships with utilities for storm preparation, including real-time exercises as opposed to just table-top exercises that would be worth reviewing.

Robert McGrath thanked the Governor for allowing him to serve on the panel. He also said that inter-agency cooperation, as well as training and exercises would be very beneficial to first responders in the state.

Governor Malloy thanked all of the members of the panel again for volunteering their time and noted that all resources are available to them for their work.

5. **Adjournment:** Joe McGee moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:36 a.m., seconded by Peter Carozza. All members present voted in favor. The motion carried.

Submitted by:

Mike Caplet