SAFETY ADVISORY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
A G E N D A

JANUARY 25, 2012 - 5:00 P.M.

CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM
15 LOOCKERMAN PLAZA
DOVER, DELAWARE

Public comments are welcomed on any item and will be permitted at appropriate times. When possible, please notify the City Clerk (736-7008 or e-mail at CityClerk@dover.de.us) should you wish to be recognized.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

1. Discussion - Establishing City Emergency Operations Center

2. Update - Dover High School Construction

3. Briefing on Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) Projects - *Gary Laing*
   A. West Dover Connector
   B. South Governors Avenue Improvements
   C. Water Street Railroad Crossover
   D. Wyoming Mill Road Project

4. Briefing on Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Projects - *Rich Vetter*

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THE AGENDA ITEMS AS LISTED MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED IN SEQUENCE. THIS AGENDA IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE TO INCLUDE THE ADDITION OR THE DELETION OF ITEMS, INCLUDING EXECUTIVE SESSIONS.

Dear Members of Dover City Council;

I write to you today as a concerned citizen. I have lived in Dover for the past 12 years at 35 Upland Avenue. I am employed by the City of Dover as the Fire Marshal and have held that position for the past 15 years. I started my career in the fire service with the Smyrna Fire Department in October of 1979. I have been a Fire School Instructor since January of 1991 and continue that to the present time. I have attended Incident Command Training both with the fire service and with the City of Dover. In my capacity as Fire Marshal, I have participated in most major snowstorms and weather events since being hired in October of 1990.

My purpose for writing you today is not to point fingers; however, to express a deep concern I have for the lack of Emergency Preparedness Awareness outside of the emergency services and emergency management personnel who serve the public of this City in time of emergency. One of my biggest concerns is the lack of understanding and importance of the City having an operational EOC (Emergency Operations Center). In every training class I have attended, any major operation needs to have a central command to ensure the proper use and deployment of resources arrives in the areas that they are needed.

There seems to be this false sense of security that the State will come and give use what we need. After a major incident, we will be on our own for at least 72 hours if not more as the state will need to see what resources they have and where to send it. Even if the state sends us resources, they will be of little good if we have no unified command to utilize those resources effectively.

When the new library was being designed, it was asked that an EOC be incorporated into the design as this was the right time to at least start putting an EOC together as the building was being designed. It's my understanding that there were grant monies that could have been applied for that would have offset some of this cost. A design was done for an EOC by the Emergency Preparedness Coordinator. This was never followed up on or incorporated into the design of the building. The shame here is that after 9/11, there was billions of grant monies out there for this kind of project and because we were not in an emergency preparedness mind set, we missed out.

Several attempts have been made to have emergency power installed at City Hall. When Dover PD replaced their generator, the generator that was removed was either sold, sent to Mississippi for free to be used or is sitting in a warehouse somewhere. I can't seem to get a straight answer as to what happened to it. If City Hall had back up power, the conference room could be designed to be an EOC. Certainly, the generator from Dover PD could have been utilized if for no other reason than in time of emergency, City Hall the building that represents the seat of power for our community, could be lit up giving confidence that our elected officials are on top of things.

During an emergency it takes the help of a lot of City employees and Departments to bring the event to a successful resolution. Many of these employees may have to return to work and leave there families unattended. One of the lessons learned by other communities is it is easier to get your employees to

return to work to deal with the emergency if they know they have some place safe to leave there families and can easily have access to their family members while the emergency is going on. Once again, had we been thinking emergency preparedness when the Pitts Center was being designed, this would have been the perfect place to house employee's families that are called into work. Backup power and a small kitchen area could have been installed to feed the families staying there and City workers in the field should there be no electric to feed them at local restaurants. Again, another missed opportunity as the City did not even put A/C in the building. There were many who worked countless hours during the recent hurricane and went without seeing their families I heard from citizens who were grateful and satisfied at the way things were handled. I would hope that each of you went to those who worked and thanked them, ask them if they needed something, or if their families were being cared for?

In 2009 the Life Safety Division of Public Services was formed by combining the Fire Marshal's Office and the Emergency Preparedness Coordinator No additional funding was added to the Division for training, equipment, or public awareness. The city was trying to run emergency preparedness on the existing Fire Marshal budget. The funding was not put into place for emergency preparedness to succeed and thereby it didn't. We have some individuals who have been trained, who know how things need to be run; however, are not given the opportunity due to other responsibilities put on them. Are you willing to say that it was not a priority of City Council when something happens to our community? The problem is it is not a matter of IF something will happen but WHEN something will happen. We walk around with a false sense that things will be handled. The reason they are being handled is because you have Staff that is devoted to making sure this is done, not because they have the title nor the pay, simply because they know what is right

I would like to see the above concerns looked into by City Council as this is an issue that affects no particular Council person's constituents; however, all of Councils constituent's, and that Council seek training in the basics of the Incident Command System so as to better understand and help correct the concerns I have brought forth.

The concerns I have listed are but a few. I feel these are the most important that need immediate attention before we learn a lesson the hard way. Please do not just take my word for it, make contact with others in the City Emergency Services and get their opinions as well. We will not fix this overnight; however, we must first recognize that a serious problem exists. If we work together we can correct it.

I was going to send this to my Council representatives; however, due to the potential redistricting and the importance of the matter, I felt it best to send to City Council as a whole.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this important matter.

Respectfully,

Dave Truax