



Fire Department Report, November 2016

In October, We responded to 23 calls for service; 15 Medical, 1 Fire, 2 Mutual Aid calls one a medical call in Garibaldi, and the other a tornado in Manzanita, 1 Assist Law enforcement, 2 walk in first aid calls, 1 Flood, and 1 Assist Citizen. The Department completed 385 training and response hours in October. Additionally, I completed 184 admin hours bringing the departments total hours for August to 578. We are 8 calls away from our previous yearly call record. My total hours for October were 238.

Fire District Formation Committee:

In October, I reported that the Garibaldi Steering Committee and I recommended that the City proceed with the formation of a Fire District to include Bay City, Garibaldi, and the Garibaldi Rural District. This decision and the subsequent requirement of forming a district is the responsibility of the Citizens of Bay City and their elected representatives, the City Council. Has any action been taken to form a Committee or Workgroup of stake holders to look into this process?

City Ordinances:

In last month's report, I asked about clarification of roles within the department. My main area of concern is volunteer activity and liability. I currently feel that I, as Chief, supervise and manage our volunteers. This would place them under the control of the city and covered by the City's insurance. There are however a few gaps in our ordinances and possibly even conflicting language. I request that staff be assigned to address these issues with a workshop or committee. I have since spoken with the City Attorney about my concerns, but as of the writing of this report, I have yet to see any suggested ordinance changes. This issue was assigned to the Administrative Committee, and they will meet Wed 11/02. Unfortunately, I will be unavailable for the meeting. I will not be able to attend any Wed evening meetings, as this is our scheduled drill night.

Road side Conditions and Access: (All of these concerns remain the same)

*) Is there currently a plan for the mitigation of the slide on Portland Ave.? It appears to me to be moving with this recent rain. I have a concern that this slide could severely impact our response to a few residences in the area as it will exacerbate the closure of 9th St.

*) Access to 14th St, North of Spruce St. I have in the past asked about maintenance of Williams between 16th and 14th. This road was closed and gated due to concerns of vehicle traffic and mud. We have placed a frangible gate along the road way to block vehicle access. This road has overgrown to a point that it is impassable for fire apparatus. Would it be possible to clear the road and place some of our ODOT gravel in the roadway? The gate would continue to stop un-wanted vehicle traffic, and I would have a secondary access to several residences. This is a concern due to the fact that residences on 14th and 15th are accessible by less than standard roads. 14th is narrow and the initial Apparatus may entirely block this road. We had a structure fire here and experienced this very issue. Luckily, we were able to mitigate the fire in the vehicle before the exposure of the house was fully involved. Had the house required more water, we would have been hard pressed to supply the required water do to the Hydrant on 14th and no access to secondary hydrants on 16th street. Regarding 15th St, there are two residences that we will have to fight from quite a distance away. 15th St is so narrow that it is nearly a tunnel of brush, and we will not be able to approach from within that roadway. Currently, we would have to hand carry hose from Spruce St, and 16th St. this will result in an extreme delay, and the distinct possibility that we will have to fight defensively and simply protect exposures.

*) Access to Main St. east of 9th, including the Dew point area. In the process of the Patterson creek project, and our near miss of last December, I would like to ask about the possibility of secondary access to this area. Should Main between 7th and 9th experience any issues with trees, and or the adjoining creek, we will have no access to the residences (Approx. 37) that are in this area. **Additional re Main and 9th:** *The recent rain has shown an additional weakness of this area, we had water over topping the intersection of 9th and Main, and this would add to the need for secondary egress into this area.*

Emergency Preparedness:

The Fire Department continues to conduct needs assessments, and the biggest opportunity that I see is for the City to re convene its Emergency Preparedness Committee, and for the Council to oversee this undertaking. We have spoken about this at the last two council meetings, And have yet to have a meeting. Also the City's performance at our last weather event should be reason enough to convene this committee, the Council should be the party responsible for emergency preparedness and response within the City of Bay City. We briefly discussed the weather warning during the council meeting.

Fast forward to Thurs 10/13. At about 1730, I received a call of flooding on 7th by Captain Wakefield. I asked him to call public works and see if we could get any sandbags or other mitigation completed before the remainder of the storm came through. I spoke with Wakefield a bit later and he had still not heard from Public Works. I completed a task that I was conducting, and then responded to the area approximately an hour after my first call from Wakefield. I could see that the drainage ditch along 7th street was at capacity, and that water was over topping 7th just south of Ocean. Some of the drainage from the north side of Ocean was not entering the ditch system due to grass and dirt along the roadway and was crossing the intersection. As I arrived, Public works Director Bettis also arrived. Several home owners were out and pointing at water entering and or flowing underneath their dwellings. I asked for sandbags, and was told that Public works crews would be out early Friday to mitigate the area north of Ocean, and that they would purchase some sandbags. I cleared the scene and returned home. During the evening and night, I received several calls about flooding, mainly known problem areas that residents were looking for sandbags to mitigate. The first thing I do, is make sure that they are safe, and then ask what I could do for them. The calls were requesting sandbags for previously known areas of high water. A caller on 8th street above, Portland Ave, was worried that water behind his property would cause the slide along Portland Ave to move even further onto his property. I told him that sandbags would be available sometime tomorrow, and that I would pass this information on to Public Works, which I did.

Friday 10/14, I began to survey the area for damage at about 0700hrs. I found a tree into powerlines on E street, and requested PUD to mitigate. I checked the slides, and saw that the water that the homeowner was concerned about on 8th street had disappeared, and that the slide along Portland Ave had moved just a bit further into the roadway. Other than that, there were a few trees down.

After my survey, I went into City Hall to find out contact information for the on duty Public Works crew and who the supervisor was. I made contact with Waste water supervisor Miller who was supervising the crew. I spoke with him about the issues from last night as well as his plan for the day. At this time we were hearing about the tornado in Manzanita, and I had to arrange a third alarm response to the event. We sent a crew of 5 for coverage, and manned Station 41 with an additional 4. I began coordinating with Tillamook County's Incident Command Team. I also spoke with Miller, and he advised that the PW crew were sheltering in place at the plant until the tornado warning passed. We had one resident shelter at the Fire Hall because she was scared by the warning and didn't have a basement. I was advised by a firefighter that someone from city hall had called and said that City hall had closed and that the two employees at work had gone home at about 10:15. In my opinion, this was the single largest dereliction of duty that I have witnessed during my tenure with the Bay City Fire Department. This immediately transferred a work load to myself, and raised several questions among the Fire Crew manning the station. We maintained station coverage until about 1200 when all of our personnel were back and the storm had devolved into a typical rainy day. At the time I left, we were still getting a few calls and a few walk-ins asking questions about the storm, and what if the next storm was bigger as predicted. I told them about our plans, and asked them to contact the City if they have any questions for them.

Saturday, 10/15; Due to the prediction of an even larger storm hitting the coast, we manned the Fire Hall from 0730 through 1630hrs. Luckily this storm passed, but we had zero contact with any other City staff or Council during this time.

We need to consider the City's responsibility when these events occur. First, **pre hazard planning and mitigations**. Two items come to mind that I covered after the December storm: 1) Sandbags, 2) water on roadway signs. **Pre event planning**, who is responsible for what? Why was there no communication between departments before the event? Who is scheduled to work, and when? , and who is the supervisor? **Emergency Operations**, the City Council and as such the line of progression in our continuity of Government plan should be involved in every event.

Recruiting:

We are nearly fully staffed, we could however use another good volunteer or two. We have begun the online training program, and I am working out a system to document training and to incorporate this program into our overall program.

Respectfully,

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Fire Chief

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