

The Carl Junction City Council met in special session on Thursday June 6, 2013 at 5:15 PM at City Hall. Mayor Mike Moss called the meeting to order with the following present: Richard Zaccardelli, Don Marshall, Steve Daniels, Sean Haase, Bob Cook, Tim Smith and Roger Spencer. Alderman Mark Powers was absent. Also present were City Clerk Maribeth Matney, City Administrator Steve Lawver and City Attorney Mike Talley.

AGENDA

Steve Daniels motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Sean Haase seconded. All in favor. No opposed.

DISCUSSION OF THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

Mayor Moss stated that 2 council members had requested a special meeting to discuss our policy on sounding our sirens.

Steve Daniels stated he had received an e-mail from our City Administrator about Chief Dunn's response to our change of policy. We need to let people know to get out of harm's way. We work for the people, the tax payers. He stated that the Doppler radar showed the potential of a tornado and he is afraid that the spotter's will miss it especially at night. People were concerned and were at the meeting. He thought ours had sounded but it was APD sirens. We need policy changes.

Tim Smith agreed with Steve Daniels. Technology has changed over the years and he feels like we need to change with the times. He understands that Bill is very busy and trying to keep in contact by radio with his spotters is a very busy time. He would like to give him some help. The TV was stating that there was rotation over Carl Junction. He also stated that some people don't get the local channels and the sirens are the only way they will know. He feels that when they say the City of Carl Junction has rotation we should sound our sirens. He understands that we don't want to cry wolf all the time and people not take it seriously but that is their decision. It is up to them if they don't want to take cover but the liability is off the City. He feels it is time to get Bill some help. He suggested that the Mayor and City Administrator get some radios. The Mayor tried to contact him by cell phone but did not get a response. The cell phones are not dependable during the storms.

Richard Zaccardelli stated he was appreciative of what Bill and his spotters do for the City.

Bill Dunn then addressed the council. He 1st stated that Mayor Moss knew he was at the Fire Station and that if he needed to talk to him he could have come down there. He does not always hear his phone. He also stated that it is a hard decision to make on how to do this. He had 14 spotters out and they only talk if they see something. It is not a lot of gibberish back and forth. The only way to prove a tornado is to have spotter's spot one. He said that rotation has nothing to do with a tornado. There was no hail no funnels nothing. The spotters did not see anything and that is why the sirens were not sounded. He stated that people need to look after themselves. Lots of people have cellars. If we blew the sirens every time they put us in a tornado warning we would be blowing them in broad daylight with no storms.

Bob Cook said that Bill has done a fine job for 30 years for the City. He asked where he was during the Joplin tornado.

Bill said that they do not do this just for fun; they are trying to protect our citizens. Tim said it is a dangerous situation and it can change in a minute. Bill said that they are spotters not storm chasers. Sean Haase said that we are not asking that he don't send out his spotters but at night we may need to do something else. They might not see if the pattern changes. He said that people rely upon the sirens. He does not agree with that but that is what they do. He feels that it would help the citizens be better prepared. It was also stated that Carl Junction was in the path of the tornado in 2011 but it changed course and hit Joplin instead. Bill said that if they want to change the policy that is fine but just let him know. Sean stated we are not trying to get rid of Bill but he feels that more than just one person should have the authority to sound the sirens. Bill just asked the council to tell him what they wanted. Mike Talley had the minutes from 6/7/11 when this was last discussed. Mayor Moss read the minutes which gave the Chief of Police the power to sound them also. It was stated that the council is just trying to protect the residents and they want to help Bill do that. Bill said that Joplin changes their policy every 2 years and he does not think that is a good policy. Bill said he would do what the council wants. Tim Smith said that he has a high regard for the volunteer fire department and the spotters and would like to see that continue. He would like to give the elderly more warning if the situation warrants sirens. Bill said that part of his previous comments were based on hearsay and he shouldn't have listened to it.

Bob Cook said that Bill Dunn is agreeable to change the policy so we need to set the standards and get on with it. Bill asked what the standard was that the council set the other night. Steve Lawver said that it was 70 MPH and a tornado warning for CJ. Bill also explained to the council that they have some trucks that have special weather computers in them to help the spotters. They pay a special fee for those so they are using new technology to help them.

Joe Perkins then addressed the council. He explained that he takes care of operations and he feels that there has been a lot of miscommunication. If we are going to change the standards then we need to do it right and consider all options. He said that all the players need to be in the same room at the same time. We need to get together and figure out a procedure and the entire procedure needs to be overhauled. He has talked to the Chief about that. If we set a policy then it takes pressure off of people. Sean said that is exactly what the council wants to do. We want to be on the same page and do it correctly. Tim agreed. Some of the council stated that they did not realize they had radar in the trucks and that they were sorry that it got to this point. They just want to get together to work out a standard. It was reiterated that right now we want the 75 MPH wind and a tornado warning for Carl Junction. Not a warning for the county but for Carl Junction specifically. Joe also stated that we need to educate people. They should not be waiting on the sirens, they have weather radios, scanners and that if people feel threatened they should take cover. They sell weather radios at costs. People need to take some accountability for themselves and we need to help educate them.

Steve Lawver suggested that Chief Dunn, Joe Perkins, Asst Chief Donham, Mayor, Chief Haase and himself get together to set a written policy. We will have a set of guidelines that will meet our code and the state statutes. The council agreed.

Mayor Moss stated that he always felt we needed a good working relationship with the other taxing entities (CJ School and Fire District). We need to work together. He liked Joe Perkins comments and we will figure it out. There was some discussion about the spotters and the need to protect them. It was stated that they are out there to protect Carl Junction and that we need them. They are trained to do that job. We also need to get some radios to the City for the City Administrator, Mayor and Chief of Police. We can't rely upon the phones. There was a lot of discussion about communications during a disaster and you have to have different ways to communicate.

Richard thanked the Fire Department for all they do.

Tim Smith stated that he has always heard nothing but good about our Fire Department. The only complaint he has had is about the sirens. Mayor Moss asked if we wanted to set a date for a meeting. Steve Lawver said he will call everyone and get a date set up.

LaDonna Allen commented that people are watching the weather and everything and they don't need to wait for the siren to take cover. They can take cover without the sirens sounding.

Tim Smith then stated he would like to take the NIMS class. Joe said he could help with that.

Sean Haase left meeting (6:25 PM). Bob Cook left meeting (6:25 PM).

Roger Spencer asked Bill if he was OK with what was decided tonight. Bill said yes. He does not want anyone killed by a tornado. We will set the guidelines. He also has a set of guidelines for after a tornado and never thought to give a copy to the council but he will get that to them.

ADJOURNMENT

Don Marshall motioned to adjourn the meeting. Roger Spencer seconded. All in favor. No opposed. Meeting adjourned at 6:27 PM.

CITY CLERK

MAYOR