
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: TIMOTHY HERBST, FIRST SELECTMAN
FROM: MEGAN MURPHY, FIRE MARSHAL
SUBJECT: STERN VILLAGE
DATE: 11/19/2012
CC: ED LAVERNOICHI

Chain of events that occurred during the week of October 29, 2012, as they relate to problems experienced at Stern Village, specifically as it relates to management's non-responsiveness; *Any and all comments made in your presence by management as it relates to this incident.*

Due to dropping temperatures conversations were being held in the EOC as to, what should be done to help the residents at Stern Village. First Selectman Timothy Herbst had a phone conversation on Wednesday afternoon with UI to find out about power restoration for Stern Village. Once it was determined that power restoration was not possible for Wednesday night. Chief Kiely directed me to go to Stern Village and offer relocation services to the residents because of the dropping temperatures.

On Wednesday, October 31, 2012 at approximately 3:30 pm myself and Deputy Fire Marshal Alex Rauso responded to Stern Village. Upon our arrival we went to the community room and met with Harry Wise. I explained to him that power was not scheduled to be restored to Stern Village, and due to the dropping temperatures the Town felt it was in the best interest of the residents to relocate them. *I began asking Mr. Wise how many residents were still in the complex. He stated he believed a lot had left, but did not know for sure. Mr. Wise stated this was independent living, so he did not keep track of where people went.* I explained to him that firefighters from town, myself and police were going to go door to door offering relocation services to residents. *Three residents were considered "medically complex" and not able to go to the shelter. I had a conversation with Mr. Wise, and explained to him that we had three residents that were considered medically complex and could not go to the shelter. I asked Mr. Wise what arrangements he had to help these people. He explained to me that this was news to him that these people were medically complex, and that Stern Village was independent living and if these people were medically complex then they could not live at Stern Village. I explained to Mr. Wise that the definition of what was considered medically complex for the shelter was different than what Stern Village considered medically complex. I explained to him that the shelter was not able to accommodate residents that had open trach, incontinence and things to that matter. He explained to me that the residents would need to get a letter showing that they were medically complex and then they would have to leave Stern Village. I explained again to Mr. Wise that because the shelter is considering a resident medically complex does not mean that they are not fit to live at Stern Village. I asked him again what assistance can he give to these residents. He stated again this is independent living and they need to find their own accommodations. Based*

on that information I worked with Jennifer Gillis who worked with family members, and Trumbull Police Sgt Bernard who worked with families of these residents to get them shelter. As relocation continued into the early evening *Mr. Wise stated he was going to be heading out and we could call him if we need him. I asked him for his cell phone number. He stated that he did not have a cell phone and could be reached at his home.* By 5:30 all the apartment's doors had been knocked on to recommend that residents relocate. Many apartments did not answer. Numerous residents stated that they would be staying put. There were 9 residents who stated they wanted to go to the shelter. A resident at unit number 28 was having difficulty getting ready to go to the shelter. I assisted Mrs. Calloway in packing her bags and brought her to the Congregate building to wait for the bus. At 7:00 the bus arrived to transport the residents who requested it to the town shelter at Madison Middle School. When the bus arrived I took role call to make sure we had everyone who wanted transportation to the shelter. Josephine Esposito and Kay Buffalina, who stated they wanted to go to the shelter and needed transportation, were not there. *I asked Mr. Wise to please go see if he could find them. He again stated that this was independent living. I again asked if he could please check their apartments. Mr. Wise went to their apartments and stated that they did not answer the door.* The bus left with two cars following it and headed to Madison Middle School to shelter the residents.

On Thursday, November 1, 2012 I was at Madison Middle School when a resident who lives at Stern Village returned from getting a few personal items and said that it was 32 degrees in her apartment back at Stern Village. I had a fear of people coming down with hypothermia. I spoke with Jenn Gillis and we decided to go back to Stern Village and check on everyone. I arrived back at the community room at 11:45 to go to speak with Mr. Wise. The residents in the community room stated he went to lunch. There was a clock on his door that stated he would be back at 1:30. I went to go see Madeline at the congregate building to inform her that we needed to check on these residents and make sure they survived the night. I needed her and whatever staff they could give me with a set of keys. We also asked for a list of current residents living in the development. *She gave us a list and explained that the list she was providing us was from April, but that was the most current one she had.* We were going to check all the apartments. I called for more volunteers from the fire department and the police department. We all split up again, two firefighters or police officers with a staff member from Stern Village. We had three teams of three checking the units. We went door to door, and if there was no answer we went into the apartment to make sure it was empty. Unfortunately the fire department got a call for a fire up on the highway and we lost seven people. It was decided that we would continue checking on the residents who we knew were there. We knocked on their door again advising them of cold temperatures and to relocate. Most said they were going to stick it out. A few agreed to go to a family member's house. If there was no answer then we went into the apartment to make sure it was vacant. We finished checking the residents units and left Stern Village around 1:30.

A narrative of the emergency management techniques utilized by police and fire as they relate to the evacuation/relocation and the comments and actions of management to respond to the same;

Fire and police went to every apartment knocking on the doors, if the occupant answered the door it was explained to the resident that temperatures were dropping and power was not expected to be restored any time soon to the Stern Village area. We recommended that they relocate with family or friends. If they did not have a place to go the town would be opening a shelter and they could relocate there. They were also advised there would be transportation available to the shelter.

Any other information you feel is necessary to bring to my attention to develop an action plan for remediation of protocols and procedures at Stern Village;

There were numerous problems that I saw while trying to offer relocation to the residents of Stern Village. Even though Stern Village is independent living, this is still a community that requires some extra attention. Below is a list of what I feel could be improved to help ensure the safety of the residents at Stern Village;

- The director should be able to be reached at all times, providing the director with a cell phone could help with this situation.
- A current list of residents should be available at all times. This should be updated at least monthly.
- Asking residents to check in with the director, and keep a list when residents plan to be away for more than one night to keep an accurate track of the population.
- Having a plan to help relocate these residents when needed, especially those with medical needs that the shelter cannot accommodate.
- Providing the community room with a generator to allow residents to have a warm place to go with proper lighting. This would also allow residents to charge any medical devices that require electricity. The community room could also act as an onsite shelter for those who could not relocate to family or friends.

Name of the decedent at Stern Village, including the unit number.

At approximately 2:00 I received a phone call from Officer Joe Velky stating that they had just found a deceased woman in apartment 35. Based on the list we received from Madeline the name of the deceased was Connie Deprofio, but due to the list being six months old it was found out that the actual lady who passed away was Susan Hunt