

Emergency management 911 System – Chapter #49

The SLA was still trying to stay on top of the 911 emergency numbering system. One Laker commented that in Old Orchard Beach the numbering was very confusing. Rich Elias was still interested in inviting the fire department to talk with the SLA about the district boundaries and locations of hydrants.

Roger reiterated that the revision of the 4 digit house numbering program was still on-going. All homes and cottages should replace the tradition one and two digit numbers with the county assigned 4 digit number on lake homes because they were used to locate a property during an emergency. A motion was passed to have the Treasurer to pay the County Real property Tax Service bill of \$152 for maps and assessment rolls. It was noted that Country Club Road did not appear to be on the rolls and that some tracts, such as Prentice did not have 4 digit assignments.

Emergency Services (house numbers) was discussed at the August 2007 meeting. Ruth Lavin requested that articles were sent to Julie Ciferni. Susan Griffin spoke to Tony Santoro, Director of Fire and Emergency Management about 911 emergency response numbers and suggested she write an article on the issue. Susan said Tony was willing to come and speak about this issue. There was discrepancy between some addresses given to homeowners and what was on the computer files. Dave Boersma talked to the Sheriff's office and asked how they located a house number. They said they would find the street name on a map and drive down the street looking for the number. There was no computerized system. If numbers were out of sequence, they kept on going. Gabi Lischer noted that older houses came with old numbers and new owners were not aware. Bill Soules said he called the post office and got house numbers for every house in his tract.

On a request from Tract Director Sue Griffin, Mr. Santoro and Mr. Jae met with Sue at her cottage to verify the cottage numbers for 911 responses. They walked with Sue on her tract and found only one mistake: numbers had been transposed on one house. There was a concern about the 911 four-digit number system since its conception and particularly on the Institute and Old Orchard Beach areas. On June Drive on Tucker Tract; many mailboxes did not have the right numbers. Ruth Lavin asked if Mr. Santoro could give a form to SLA for the Tract directors to present to their members concerning the process of obtaining numbers for their homes while collecting dues in June of 2008. It was agreed and a form would be provided. The numbers on the tax bills were not accurate and there were duplicate street numbers. Bayne Johnson asked if there was a simple way to obtain your house number. It was explained to everyone present if you call 911 and say: "This is not an emergency. What number is showing on the screen for my home address?", the dispatcher would give you the numbers. Mr. Jae stated that on the west side of the lake, the address may appear as West Lake Road instead of the Private Drive number. Dick Swanson wondered if the dispatcher gave directions to the ambulance drivers. Mr. Jae said yes to that question and added that the dispatcher would ask the caller to please stay on the phone. With the inception of cell phone use, the dispatcher could not always match the phone number to the house. Mr. Jae also said that they were presently working with the town assessor Sue Kibler to put the correct numbers on the tax roll. When you built a new structure, the Highway Department added the correct number to the tax roll. David Boersma said when he contacted the Sheriff's Department, he was told that they just drive back and forth on the road to try and find the problem that was reported. On Lakeside Avenue in the Institute, the numbers did not coincide. The old streets were not on the map. Other issues that were mentioned by SLA were: there were two (2) Parkside Drives at Silver Lake; Lakeshore Drive numbers at Old Orchard Beach did not go in a chronological order; in private road Eberstein the homes were lot numbered. Mr. Santoro noted that not all private roads were on the database because they were often considered driveways. Bill Maurer said he had met with resistance on Prentice Tract to change from old two-digit numbers to the new four digit numbers.

A meeting was held on September 10, 2008 at Ruth Lavin's home. Those in attendance were: Tony Santoro, Manager of Wyoming Co. Emergency Planning, Roy Schneggenburger, Denise and Ron Ballinger, Sue Kibler, Assessor, Peter and Ruth Lavin; Bob Jae of the Emergency Planning was absent. The Ballingers and Ms. Kibler were in attendance

to provide much information about the emergency numbers around the lake. Ron Ballinger was a wealth of information. The Lake District was the worse district in the county. After a lengthy discussion it was decided by the committee that the Silver Lake Institute should be included to assist the association in correcting the situation. There were 24 tracts in the Silver Lake district and also the homes in the watershed should be provided. Mr. Santoro requested that each tract provide the names and numbers. The numbers would continue to be 4 digits. Ron requested as a volunteer fireman that the numbers should highly contrast with the color of the house. As an example the numbers could be black on gray, but reflective numbers were the best for the hours after dark. The plan to remedy the situation started in the spring of 2009 with the tracts of Silver Grove, Munger and Tucker; they met and begun their revisions and submitted complete numbers and road names for this process. Roy Schneggenburger walked the entire Silver Lake Campsite on Walker Road. There were 40 campers, 4 apartments and 1 home. Roy had identified the entire area!

Sue Griffin presented a map of Silver Lake for the emergency numbering system. She asked that all directors identify tracts on the map to help ensure that the proper ID number would coordinate with the emergency response GPS information. Sue was working with Tony Santoro and Bob Jae to continue the process of making the 911 Silver Lake district totally correct. The gentlemen wanted funding and personnel from the SLA to assist in this endeavor. Sue requested information from them for the SLA winter newsletter and they did not respond. There does not seem to be any sensibility to the direction the gentlemen were working in. Sue believed that this process was going to take a long time and presently was not happy with them. Ruth stated that they wanted the SLA to write the grants. Ruth continued by stating that the SLA could write the grants but could not submit them; grant submissions were only allowed by government agencies. Jim Coles asked if Joe Gozelski (town of Castile) could write the grant. Rich Eliaz said that Joe would refer the process to the county grant writer.

A discussion between Ann Heizmann, Roy Schneggenburger, Bill Soules, Mick Griffin, Linda Holz, Ruth Lavin, Sue Griffin and Mary Kay Barton included the following facts: there were templates to follow for writing grants; the SLA had a grant writer on the board of directors; the SLA could write the grant and have the government agency submit it; Greg McKurth (WCWSCD) wrote a grant for watershed samples and all information needed to be correct or the grant would be denied. Mick Griffin stated that the antique boat club applied for a grant and received \$25,000. They were able to submit a grant because they were a 503 Corporation.

Mr. Santoro requested that the address be a physical building. This was a major safety issue. It was again noted that Silver Lake was the worse condition District in the county. The town sent multiple fire and safety crews to every address that was on the 911 list. They used a GPS system to the phone; the GPS system did not work.

Ruth Lavin introduced the Wyoming County 911 Coordinator, Floyd Feather. Floyd was in office for 2 months and worked for the Sheriff's office. He was responsible for any address issues. Floyd met with Mick and Sue Griffin and discussed that there were specific laws for numbering publicly maintained roads. It was a slow and complex process to fix these issues. Floyd asked the group about seasonal vs. year-round occupancy and land line vs. cell phone use. Some roads were not passable year-round. The SLA was working on how to correct the issues on the private roads. It was also asked for Directors to fill in missing information on the Sheriff's maps.

Dick Swanson asked why Floyd wanted to see what house numbers people were using; right or wrong, was it not true that the number should match the one used on tax forms. Floyd answered, sort of. The information collected by engineers was mailed to the residents 18 years ago. Jim Coles noted that he had 3 different house numbers since living on the lake. Floyd wanted it done right the first time this time. Some of the previous information was wrong.

Floyd Feather was supposed to attend a Castile Board meeting. It was stated that he appreciated all of the hard work on the address maps. The solution could involve making the lake its own district with its own numbering system. Ruth had a concern over changing numbers a third time or having to put a third set of numbers up. Sue Griffin stressed the importance of calling 911 (stating not an emergency) and finding out what number was registered in their system.

Susan Griffin was absent but Dick Swanson read her report. Floyd Feather, Wyoming County Coordinator attended the Castile Town Board meeting to get the Inter-municipal Cooperation Agreement for Towns signed. Once all the townships in the county have signed, the county could get a countywide policy passed and would have the authority to enforce the use of correct road names and address numbers. Ruth said there would be all kinds of grief if numbers had to change. Ann Heizmann said it was sure that some would have to. Dave Boersma said it was a huge problem in the SL Institute and any change would get 911 there faster.

Susan spoke with Floyd Feather on the phone. He said he had received all municipal agreements from all 16 townships from the Town Supervisors. Mick Griffin noted the importance of this because once agreements were signed; the numbering system could be enforced. Susan and Tony Santoro would schedule meetings with all the town officials; building, safety, etc., to promote the emergency numbering system. At this point Silver Lake was still under discussion for a separate numbering system. Ruth noted that changing house numbers again affects not only physical house numbers but also checks, accounts, mail; everything must be changed. A discussion continued on the pros vs. cons.

Susan Griffin stated that Floyd Feather was no longer head of Emergency Management at the Sheriff's department. No replacement would be hired. The 911 emergency system address numbering issue was on hold. Susan met with Tony Santoro and he suggested she speak with the chair of public safety. A new law for the Lake District would not affect the villages. A law must be passed to get a grant and allow the numbering system to be enforced. Ruth mentioned that the utilities refused to use the 4-digit numbers. Joe Gozelski said that all comments were on the public safety agenda for the next meeting. The SLA would push for a new 911 coordinator and requested a letter from the Association to the public safety committee for the July 1st meeting.

In the Emergency Management report given by Susan Griffin she stated that she and Mick Griffin attended the Public Safety meeting. The 911 Engineering firms were contacted for quotes on 12 to 1400 parcels for the addressing project. Wyoming County needed to pass a local law in order to enforce the changes. It was said that many areas were in bad situations with the 911 emergency numbering. The county had set aside funds; however, they were also facing a 10 percent tax increase and laying off people. There were no plans to move forward with the 911 plan. Joe Gozelski passed out copies of the Silver Lake addressing issue noting the new computer aided dispatching system installation. This would include an extensive map upgrade.