

A great deal has happened in the past 3 days since our first update. Over the weekend, Martinez Grocery, Melrose Women of Today and so many others have come together to gather resources for the families that have been displaced. Today, there was a meeting of the displaced families at which coordination was made to ensure they had some form of temporary housing. Plus, they discussed some long term placement solutions. Stearns County HRA has provided the City a few options late in the afternoon today. We will forward that to the displaced families. We must be patient and acknowledge the shock and stresses that these people are experiencing.

A **rummage sale** of the items donated will be held this **Friday, noon to 6pm and Saturday, 8 am till 6pm at Martinez Grocery**. I also believe, the displaced families have already taken what they need; these remaining items are available for the sale. I was told the funds from the rummage sale will go towards recovery efforts, but the specific dedications, will be decided in the next day or so by the Rummage sale organizers. From what I saw, there were some very nice items, please stop by.

In total, there are 11 businesses that are directly affected by the Fire. As many of you know, there are several businesses displaced. However, I know that **Unique Boutique (Pat's) and the Salon are open**. Please stop in and show your support to them. As for the other nine, there are still structural, safety and health concerns that must be addressed first. Those businesses that can enter their offices have been allowed to do so, to conduct an assessment of their space. They are looking at each location separately and making their assessments with the help of the Fire Marshal, Insurance Agents, and several others. This is a deliberate and slow process. We must be patient and acknowledge the shock and stresses that these people are experiencing. We are still in the Initial Response Phase of this fire. Again, we must acknowledge that people are under stress and still in shock.

The City of Melrose and Melrose Chamber of Commerce will be hosting a **Business Resource Round Table on Friday, September 16 at 10:30 AM at the Melrose City Center for the 11 businesses that were directly impacted by the fire**. The intent of the meeting is to bring in resources to aid these 11 businesses in their long term recovery efforts. We know that some of the displaced businesses have temporary locations. However, we know that some are still working on finding a solution. We will be reaching out to each business separately to ensure they are invited to this resource meeting. Hosting this meeting was determined very late in the day today. Mayor Finken has stated, that "we want to retain all of these businesses in our Community, I will do whatever I can. I will even help them move to their temporary offices if they will let me." I think this demonstrates how committed Melrose is to aiding in the recovery.

There are other long term options that have been discussed; however, we are focusing today on the Initial Response Phase. Long Term Recovery efforts will begin in the coming month or so. Once we learn more about the recovery efforts, I will send out another update. Thank you all for your efforts, generosity and commitment to the Community. We are a strong and resilient people.

Thank you,

CITY OF MELROSE