

## **Emergency Management Meeting Minutes**

**Friday, October 13, 2023**

**Call to Order: 8:31 AM**

**EM Members Present:** Chief Jason LaForest, EM Director (JL), Lucinda Vermeulen, EM Public Relations Officer (LV), Mary McGurn, EM Deputy/Clerk (MM); Select Board Chairman George McGurn (GM) on Zoom; Fire Chief Joe Schneider (JS), Highway Superintendent Jim Noe (JN); Buildings & Grounds Superintendent Tom Reynolds (TR); Board of Health Director Juliette Haas (JH); and Council on Aging Administrator Peg Muskrat (PM) and Transportation Department Administrator Melanie Vicneire (MV). Absent: Water Department Operator Nat Stalker (NS).

**Guests:** None

**Minutes:** October 13, 2023 approved unanimously with one minor change.

### **Current EM Funds Available**

- JL reported that EM had \$6,255.43 in their operating fund.
- Unexpended funds are rolled over year-to-year.
- Any increase in revolving funds and larger item requests must be submitted to the Select Board and Finance Committee during budget season.

### **Welcome Transportation Department to EM**

- MV was introduced to the EM members
- MV appreciated being looped in on emergency preparedness that might require van transportation to shelters.
- In an emergency transportation situation, MV checks with drivers to see if they are willing to drive in possible hazardous conditions.

### **Alert Systems**

- JL and LV were tasked to identify if Blackboard Connect, Egremont's current alert system, is sufficient; if not, to explore and evaluate other options.
- LV noted another company recently acquired Blackboard Connect; LV will contact the new owners.
- LV will contact Cara Becker, who operates Code Red for Great Barrington, for her evaluation of Code Red.
- Before the meeting, JS forwarded an email he received from GoGov, a possible alert system. JS will get a contact for LV.
- MM will check on CivicPlus's alert system and report back.

### **MEMA Notice of Grant & Full-Scale Exercise (Radios)**

- JL reported that Chris Marsden said the grant had yet to be funded.
- JL asked members to review the list of items accompanying the grant access.
- JL brought up portable radios capable of using the new 800 frequency. He also reported that the state would change to the 800 frequency within the next two years.
- 800 frequency radios are pegged for Fire and Police, leaving out Highway and Buildings & Grounds; this may necessitate Egremont responders to carry two radios to maintain communications.
- JL is meeting with Josh Little from ProCon Services in Adams later in the morning regarding radios; JN and TM will join the meeting.
- JH mentioned contacting Peg McDonough, Grants Administrator, regarding possible grants.
- JL offered information on the MEMA full-scale exercise in Springfield and asked that anyone interested contact him.

### **Chris Marsden MEMA Rep**

- JL invited Marsden to speak to members; during the meeting, JL confirmed Marsden for November 15.
- Marsden informed JL that state vendors deliver food to shelters in emergencies; Town Hall, as a temporary shelter, will not need to contact these vendors.

### **COA Luncheon Presentation**

- PM is looking to early 2024 for a date for JL's presentation.

### **Residential Preparedness Survey**

- LV reported that she, JL, and MM are working on a draft survey; when ready, they will circulate the draft to members for discussion at a scheduled meeting.

### **Member Items**

- JL reported that National Grid was overwhelmed with storm-related emergency calls after a sudden and brief September rain storm.
- JL asked if there was a way to coordinate better phoned-in reports from police, fire, highway, and buildings & grounds.
- JL noted that National Grid prioritized reports coming from town officers.
- JL further reported that National Grid had a new app for first responders and that he would provide this information to those who wished to use it.

**Next Meeting:** November 15, 2023, at 8:30 PM

**The meeting adjourned at 9:25 AM.**

