



Town of Mansfield Emergency Management Advisory Committee

DRAFT

Minutes of Regular Meeting

November 24, 2015

1. WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS – As Elizabeth Paterson has retired from her position with the Town as Mayor and not present at this meeting, and in absence of a Chairperson, Emergency Management Director, Fran Raiola, called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm in Council Chambers at the Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building.

Members present: Scott Crawford (Natchaug Hospital), John Carrington (Department of Public Works (DPW)), Robert Miller (Eastern Highlands Health District), David Dagon (Fire & Emergency Services), Fran Raiola (Emergency Management Director and Fire Marshal), Linda Painter (Town Planner), Emile Poirier, Carol Scott, Rosemary Marcellino, Michael Kurland, and Steve Baker. *Staff present:* Jennifer Thompson is attending to serve as secretary.

Member(s) absent: Paul Shapiro (Mayor), Matthew Hart (Town Manager), Kelly Lyman (Superintendent Mansfield Schools), Richard Cournoyer (Sergeant, State Resident Trooper), Bruce Silva (Superintendent Region 19 High School), Curt Vincente (Parks & Recreation/Community Center), Armand Biron (Amateur Radio), UConn EMD, and Will Bigl.

2. REVIEW OF COMMITTEE CHARGE AND RESPONSIBILITIES – Fran Raiola reviewed the basis for this committee as set forth in State Statute, supported by the Town’s Charter, and to involve community and business representatives as well as public safety and emergency response agencies. The purpose members being representatives of various interests are to provide collaboration on strategies that address all activities and measure of civil preparedness important to the emergency management program for the town. Prior to this meeting new mayor, Paul Shapiro, consented to possible nomination for Chairperson. Upon discussion and unanimous vote of members present, Paul Shapiro shall serve as Chairperson for this Committee. In his absence this evening, Fran Raiola shall continue to lead the meeting dialogue.

3. OVERVIEW OF EMERGENCY PLANS, PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES --

- Emergency Operations Plan
- Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Schools and municipal buildings
- Sheltering Plans w/ Region 4 and local towns
- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Medical Response Corp (MRC)
- Medical Emergency Response Team (MERT) – at municipal buildings
- Code Red notification system
- Eversource and generators
- Public education and resources

Planning, response and recovery activities during and after storms and other various emergency scenarios were reviewed; plus an overview of numerous Plans – Emergency Operations Plan, Hazard Mitigation, Schools Safety, emergency procedures guides for municipal buildings. Example of severe repetitive loss mitigation for flooding is the raising of the Baker home on Thornbush Road. Steve Baker spoke of the positive impact that has had for his family quality of life at their residence. Linda Painter noted that other areas of hazards mitigation that would be assessed and pursued as situational need arises would be repair of roads that washed out.

For sheltering needs, the town provides arrangements for warming, cooling, charging, and/or showers. Overnight sheltering would be at the Community Center. Multijurisdictional shelter is at E.O. Smith High School. There is an agreement between local towns of Ashford, Coventry, Mansfield and Willington for sharing commodities and resources. Support for staffing is town personnel, Red Cross and Eastern Highland Health District. In addition, trained CERT and MRC teams have been established. Rob Miller reported that the MRC has as some of its members fully vetted health professionals, nation-wide organization, resources from region for response to public health emergencies, ie mass dispensing from pandemic. Individuals are registered in database of health volunteers who are ready to serve during an event. Natchaug Hospital and group homes now required to have their own emergency plans.

CodeRed notification system has been implemented. It has a mass messaging capability for emergency and/or urgent, important messages to the public. Emergency Management staff work to continue building out this system. Residents and businesses in town are encouraged to register their phone, text, and email.

Eversource representative having familiarity with our region, an understanding of circuits, stations and maps, is staff to the town's Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The liason directly works with EMD, DPW, Fire and Police with live data recognize areas mobilize field crews to make-safe and address priority restoration in our community.

Dam safety inspections at Mansfield Hollow Dam / Windham Water, Eagleville Dam, Bicentennial Pond and Moss Sanctuary lead by State Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP).

Through public educations programs in neighborhoods or through agency hosting, town emergency management official give instruction for residents' preparedness.

4. REVIEW OF EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER -- A staffed centralized Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is effective. EOC purpose is for communication under unified command and control and a point of contact is required. It lends strength to cooperative efforts of the departments for situational assessment and assignment of resources. Evaluation on the format of the EOC is evaluated based on the incident and different phase of the event. On small scale activity, use Conference Room B at the Town Hall. If event grows in scope, use Council Chambers. Both of these rooms convert to an EOC use as may be integrated with laptops, phones, radios, communications equipment. Communications upgrades have been completed at all fire stations and for Department of Public Works with equipment also now on the UConn tower. Three days of commodities are maintained in ready access storage and sharing is coordinated with surrounding towns as well. Distribution will come from State if necessary but it takes time to obtain. There are generators and propane supply for seven days for the town's communications towers.

5. SUMMARY OF STATE-WIDE EXERCISE – A state-wide exercise is conducted annually. Participation of all towns is mandated. Emergency Operations Center is activated, staffed, and role play ensues based upon a different scenario presented by the State. Injects are given during the exercise present various additional challenges that may arise during an actual event.

6. SPRING MEETING DATE -- There was general discussion about meeting in the spring. Conversation concentrated upon a possible meeting tentative in April with a 6 pm timeframe. Day best for everyone's calendar remained questionable. Future agendas to include reporting, for example, from Emergency Management Director, Eastern Highlands Health District, individual agencies and/or subcommittees.

5. Q & A / OPEN DISCUSSION – Michael Kurland questioned whether emergency plans were or would be available online. Portions of the school plans are on the town website. Most plans, however, are not fully accessible to the public view due to the sensitive security nature. Hazard Mitigation is State Department of Emergency Management & Homeland Security (DEMHS) direct that, unlike the Emergency Operations Plan, anyone can request to view at the Town Planner's office. Whether more training for CERT members may become available was asked by Emile Poirier. Leaders for each local town need to recruit, develop and build on this more. MRC units share resources in eastern Connecticut for training and partnering national opportunities available. MRC participants are not only clinicians. An individual may volunteer as part of both the CERT and MRC teams. The challenge with both CERT and MRC is challenge to keep individuals engaged and active.

There being no further business to be presented to the members, and upon unanimous consensus of the members, the meeting was adjourned at 6:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Thompson