

## **Franklin County Regional Emergency Management Committee**

March 22, 2022

### **Virtual Meeting Notes**

The FC-REMC meeting was held virtually. The meeting began at 10:00 a.m.

**Attendance:** Cathy Ainsworth (Fairfield Town Admin), Amber Baker (Georgia Administrator), Reginald Beliveau Jr. (Swanton Village EMD), Eva Gillilan (Fletcher EMC), Liza Comiskey (Highgate VFD, VDH), Maurice Lamothe (St. Albans City EMD), David Sullivan (Swanton Village PD), Steve Bessette (Fairfax EMD), Sarah Kershaw (American Red Cross), Shaun Coleman (NRPC).

Shaun began the meeting at 10:00 am followed by roll call. There was no quorum.

**Adjustments to the Agenda:** Shaun asked Sarah to present first followed by Liza.

#### **American Red Cross – Sarah Kershaw, Disaster Program Manager - Northern Vermont**

Sarah introduced herself as the new Red Cross Program Manager for northern Vermont. Matt Hull is no longer the representative. Sarah provided an overview of Red Cross services and programs. She shared her emergency contact information.

There was a brief question and answer period regarding designating community shelters as Red Cross shelter and the Smoke Alarm program.

#### **Vermont Department of Health and NWMRC – Liza Comiskey, VDH Northern EP Coordinator**

Liza provided an overview of the Health Department and Northwest Medical Reserve Corps activities related to Covid-19 testing and vaccination clinics.

Liza also discussed her recent training in critical incident stress management for first response agencies. Liza is now an officially certified crisis intervention peer supporter for first-responders through Group Individual Critical Incident Stress Management Training (GRIN) overseen by the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation. She is part of the new Secure VT Peer support program for first responders and is a Certified Critical Incident Stress Management Peer Support Responder. She is a resource to any first response agency members. Liza will distribute information about her capabilities and contact information in a follow up email to the group.

#### **Regional Emergency Management Committee Overview**

Shaun noted that Emily Harris from Vermont Emergency Management was unable to attend today due to a conflict. Emily or another VEM rep will attend future meetings.

Shaun gave a Power Point presentation regarding the REMC program. The presentation provided a recent history of the state's decision to merge all 13 Local Emergency Planning Committee's into 1. The initial state wide REMC idea began just prior to the pandemic. State statutes were amended to give legal authority for the REMCs to be formed by predetermined boundaries with representatives from municipal EMDs and emergency service personnel. The state issued an REMC guidance document summer/early fall of 2021.

**Organizational Tasks:** The voting members of the REMC are the municipal Local Emergency Management Directors and one emergency services representative from each municipality (2 votes). Each representative can assign a proxy prior from within the community prior to the meeting.

Each REMC is to elect a Chair and Vice Chair and bylaws using the state guidance. There was no quorum for this meeting so no action for officers was taken. Shaun will redistribute a draft set of bylaws based on the State's REMC Guidance document for the group to review and finalize at the next meeting (quorum dependent).

Each REMC is to send one representative to each of the following: the State's Integrated Planning and Preparedness workshop; the State's Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment and Stakeholder Preparedness Review, and the statewide LEPC. Each REMC is to develop and submit a Regional Plan to the VEM coordinator following VEM guidance prior to June 1 of each year. Each REMC is to develop a set of bylaws and elect officers. Quorum is defined as a majority of voting members, including proxies, being present. The REMC is to meet at least quarterly. RPCs are to provide administrative support with funding from VEM.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the REMC regional plan, funding, bylaw development and future speakers. VEM regional coordinator Emily Harris could answer any questions. Shaun offered to send any questions to her. A draft set of bylaws will be developed and sent out to the committee once a quorum is made.

#### **Local Liaison Program Overview – Shaun Coleman, NRPC**

Shaun gave a brief overview of the Vermont Emergency Management/Regional Planning Commissions local liaison program. Following a severe weather event, VEM activates RPC staff state-wide to reach out to municipalities to collect local situational reports. The information is provided to the state SEOC which may be partially or fully activated to assist. RPCs will contact one of the top three people listed on the Local Emergency Plan adoption page and run through a series of questions regarding life safety, sheltering, resource needs, etc. RPCs also share the information with VAOT and ANR staff to ensure all damages are captured and reported. This information, if severe enough, ultimately gets reported to the governor and helps determine whether a disaster declaration request will be made which triggers FEMA assistance.

#### **Other Business**

VEM is offering one free overnight stay at the Lake Morey Inn for one representative from each REMC for VEM's Day of Learning on May 26. (<https://vem.vermont.gov/conference>) Contact Shaun if interested and he will add your name to a hat and draw one representative.

The group agreed to keep the meetings quarterly due to busy schedules.

#### **Adjourn**

Meeting ended at approximately 11:30 a.m.