

Grand Isle County Mutual Aid Association, Inc.
(and GI-REMC)
Meeting Minutes – April 4, 2022
Grand Isle Sheriff's Office, Grand Isle, VT / Virtual via Zoom

Attendance: Ray Allen (FCSO), Brandi Latimer (NH EMC), Erin Creeley (VDH), Ron Kumetz (Alburgh VFD), Shaun Coleman (NRPC), Patrick Robinson (SHVFD), Emily Harris (VEM), Mike Murdock (NHVFD), Al Getler (NHVFD), Angie Robinson (ARC), Desiree Maltais (GIR), Nancy Frantz (SHR), and Sara Kershaw (ARC),

Call To Order/Adjustments to Agenda

The called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. There were no adjustments to agenda. Roll call was made.

Grand Isle Regional Emergency Management Committee (GI-REMC) – Emily Harris, Engagement Section Chief, Vermont Emergency Mgmt.

Emily gave a presentation the statewide REMC program from VEM. Essentially, the REMCs replace the former LEPC for Grand Isle County except that each municipality has two appointees (the EMD or designee and one from a first response agency). A quorum for each REMC is a majority of appointed members. There may be grant funding available. Each year, the REMC must submit a regional response plan which is basically a contact list of REMC members and whether or not the members municipalities have a mutual aid agreement.

Each REMC is to have bylaws, officers and representatives to various state committees/working groups. The groups are the new statewide LEPC, the state risk assessment group and the statewide integrated planning and exercise working group. She provided an explanation of what each group does.

Emily also noted that 1 REMC member is eligible for free overnight stay at Lake Morey Inn for VEM's "Day of Learning" in May. The event offers various EM related training/workshops held at Lake Morey in Fairlee. There is also a virtual option.

Shaun explained that the GI-REMC could be a subcommittee of the well established GICMAA group. The bylaws will need to be updated to remove the LEPC references and then add the REMC references. There was not sufficient representation from each community to take action on the REMC so no action on the REMC could be taken. The group agreed to keep it on the agenda for now and if there is eventually a quorum then they could elect offices vote on bylaws as needed.

American Red Cross – Sara Kershaw, Disaster Program Manager - Northern Vermont

Sara introduced herself as the go-to Red Cross staff member covering northern Vermont. She discussed recent changes to the organization and current Red Cross activities. She also distributed her contact information to the group.

Critical Incident Stress Management – Erin Creeley, VDH Director, St. Albans District

Erin was attending on behalf of Liza Comiskey. Erin provided an overview of VDH and MRC activities related to Covid-19 testing and vaccination clinics. She also discussed Liza's role in provided critical stress management to first response agencies. Liza is an officially a certified crisis intervention peer supporter for first-responders through Group Individual Critical Incident Stress Management Training (GRIN) through the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation. She is part of the new Secure VT

Peer support program for first responders and is Certified Critical Incident Stress Management Peer Support Responder. Erin distributed Liza's contact information and will follow up in an email.

Treasurer's Report

Mike distributed the Treasurer's Report that Todd dropped off prior the meeting. Melissa had to attend a selectboard meeting tonight and sent her apologies that she couldn't be here.

Mike reviewed the financials.

R. Allen motioned to accept the Treasurer's Report. P. Robinson seconded. Motion carried.

Communications

M. Murdock reported there were no updates. Ron was on the line as well but didn't report anything.

Training

Al gave a presentation on recruitment and retention issues from around the state and discussed some strategies to address the need. Last winter, Senator Sanders held a virtual Town Meeting for fire agencies in the state to discuss various challenges departments are experiencing. There were several federal agencies in attendance to take comments on various issues including grant programs. Ms Vermont, who is a volunteer fire fighter, was one of the speakers. She is willing to put her position and energies to help recruit new youth members.

Two younger members, Gabby and Monica from Alburgh and North Hero are interested in developing a new program for recruiting members and to offer peer support. They are looking for support to start a female firefighters group which includes a firefighters camp for women. Kim Julow and Deb Benson will likely provide support through their perspective having given years of service to their departments.

There was a brief discussion after and everyone agreed it was a great idea to support.

On March 23, Grand Isle Fire members took part in the annual HazMat refresher course to stay current on certifications and keep up to date on hazmat scenarios and changing landscape. Harry Fell was the instructor. Earlier they held CPR/AED recertification with the Vermont Fire Academy for members.

Ray reported that R&R Camp was off again this year.

North Country International Fire School will be on this year on June 4-5th. Classes include: Firefighter Rookie, Intro to pumps, structure collapse, farm rescue, minimal manpower, etc. More info: ncifts.org.

Other Business

None

Public Comment

No public present.

Adjourn

R. Allen motioned to adjourn. P. Robinson seconded. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.