

Grand Isle Mutual Aid Meeting
GI-REMC
August 7, 2023 – Draft Minutes
Grand Isle County Sheriff's Department and Virtual

Attendance: Brandi Latimer (NH EMD), Pat Robinson (SHVFD), Bill Johnson (IVFC), Bill Baron (GI EMD/ GIFD), Ray Allen (GICSO), Adam White (GIVFD), Mike Murdock (NHVFD), Ron Kumetz (Alburgh VFD), Nancy Frantz (SHR), Shaun Coleman (NRPC), Lance Champey (South Hero) and Brian Smith (ANG).

President Mike Murdock chaired the meeting which began at 7:00 p.m. followed by roll call.

Changes to Agenda

None.

Minutes

Ron motioned to approve the minutes of the June Meeting. Ray seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report – Mike reported that the Treasurer e-mailed a summary of the GICMAA account which listed the debits (Shelburne Police, VSFA, and Alburg (frontline)) since last meeting. Fourth quarter invoicing includes:

South Hero Fire & Rescue= \$2,366.81
Grand Isle Fire & Rescue = \$2,429.31
North Hero Fire & rescue = \$1,592.59
Isle LaMotte Fire Co. = \$399.23
Alburgh Fire & Rescue = \$4,654.31

A discussion began on training expenses for the two EV first responder training being held this month at the Sheriff's Office. Many county trainings were previously covered under the annual LEPC grant. Mike noted that the grant funding was previously authorized by the state for use towards first responder trainings. The overall cost of the training will exceed the remaining balance in the LEPC account.

Pat motioned to transfer the remaining LEPC balance of \$336.11 to GICMAA's primary account to cover the EV training expenses and to close the account. Ray seconded. Motion carried.

Grand Isle REMC

Shaun reported that VEM staff are involved with a multitude of July flood recovery issues. There was a brief discussion on flooding and response efforts during the state of emergency.

The State Preparedness Conference is on Sept 21st at Burke Mountain Resort. The state is offering 1 free overnight stay for each REMC.

Adam motioned that the free overnight accommodation for GI-REMC go to Brandy Latimer, North Hero EMC. Ray seconded. Motion carried.

The LEPC is offered one seat for three different statewide working groups: LEPC which meets quarterly and deals with the Hazchem funding and hazmat planning; Training & Exercise Planning Working Group which meets twice a year and lays out the state's three-year plan; Threat Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment working group which meets once a year to review and quantify risks. No one volunteered to fill a seat.

Vermont Health Department

Shaun reported that Jacquie Kelley could not be at tonight's meeting but sent a summary of Medical Reserve Corps volunteer activities including:

- Responding to the floods by staffing the VDH lab call center, putting together water test kits and working the Multi-Agency Resource Centers (MARCs).
- Continue providing health screening clinics at Martha's Kitchen in St. Albans (weekly on Thursdays) and Abenaki Tribal Office in Swanton (monthly on the last Monday of each month).
- Supporting St. Albans National Night Out on August 1 and are hoping to be at the Substance Use Addiction Summit at the Champlain Valley Expo on August 11.
- Conducting a Points of Distribution training at the St. Albans District Health Office on August 15th at 5:30pm. I
- Conducting training on September 19 on Access and Functional Needs and Emergency Preparedness 5:30pm at the St Albans District Health Office.
- Possibly conducting a Mental Health First Aid training in October

VDH is seeking locations to host Narcan dispensary sites in the County. A brief discussion ensued and everyone agreed the health offices in Alburgh and South Hero would be the best locations.

Adam noted Jacquie was very helpful in helping fulfill a Narcan supply request for Grand Isle Fire.

Dive Team – Lance Champney

Lance introduced himself to the group. He lives in South Hero and is interested in forming a Dive Team for Grand Isle County. Tonight, he wanted to gauge the interest and seek support from GICMAA. He is at the early stages of research. The Dive Team will be available to anywhere in the state or beyond that it is needed. He noted that there are grants that would cover a lot of the team's startup expenses.

This led to a question-and-answer period regarding certifications, insurance, equipment, SOPs, ice dives, team capacity and related costs. The group suggested Lance talk to Mike Canon at Colchester Swiftwater Technical Rescue and Bill Goetz from the Tri-State Emergency team.

The group asked Lance to return once he has completed some research or if he has more information to share. Lance agreed to channel any information for the group through Shaun by email.

Critical Incident Response Team - Pat reviewed the draft SOGs. There was a discussion on protocols inside and outside of hot zones and protective equipment for first response units. Mike agreed to talk to Kinney Insurance to see if there would be increases in insurance costs which the selectboards will have to be notified of. Department budgets are typically submitted before the end of the year.

County Resources Inventory

Adam led a brief discussion about a county first response resource inventory. He and Shaun were discussing the need during events around the July flooding disaster. It would save a lot of time by knowing what is readily available within the County. Ray added it would be excellent information to have at the County EOC. Adam will send some information out to everyone prior to the next meeting.

County Emergency Services Administrator Position

Bill B. reported that he found the original 10+ year old position description that was used to promote the program with Selectboards. He reached out to committee members Ron and Nancy. There was some discussion about overall interest in supporting the position and finding new committee members. There was a lot of concern about the selectboards not wanting to fund a new position. Mike noted that the North Hero selectboard recently turned down a request by the fire warden for increased stipend which isn't much to begin with.

This led to a discussion led by Bill J. about the mission of GICMAA and what it will look like in 5 years. GICMAA formed after the 1998 ice storm disaster. There was a heavy rescue team early on and now we are starting to form a Critical Incident Response Team and have some outside interest in forming a County Dive Team and possibly a County Emergency Services Administrator position.

Adam noted the position could pay for itself with grant writing. GICMAA could approach the AFFGs as a county rather than competing for same funds as individual towns. Bill B. suggested and all agreed to change the title to County Emergency Services Coordinator. There was general consensus to continue supporting the creation of this position. All agreed to take up the mission statement discussion and county resource inventory in October during the annual meeting.

County Updates

- Grand Isle Fire looking to purchase a new truck in the next year or two.
- Grand Isle Rescue purchased a new ambulance.
- North Hero Fire is in need of new fire station.
- South Hero Rescue has new ambulance.
- Isle La Motte Fire Company engine is around 20 years old. They spent a lot of money last year on needed repairs to extend the life of their tanker. They have a new boat.

Other Business

Ray added that the Allenholm Farm will be hosting a first responder appreciation event on Aug. 12 from 10 am to 2 pm.

On August 19th at South Hero Congregational Church there will be a remembrance for Malcolm Allen.

Ron reported that Frontline Females had 2nd annual successful camp this year. There were 20 students this year. The 2024 camp is being planned.

There was discussion about the junior fire cadet program and what department activities cadets under 18 can participate in without violating child labor laws. They are not allowed to go on response calls.

Shaun added that next meeting on October 2 is the Annual Meeting.

Public Comment - None.

Adjourn - Ray motioned to adjourn. Pat seconded. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.