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Grand Isle Mutual Aid Meeting
GI-REMC
April 1, 2024 – Draft Minutes
Grand Isle County Sheriff's Department and Virtual

Attendance: Ray Allen (GICSO), Bill Baron (GI EMD), Julie Benedict (VEM), David Carter (SH EMD), Carmine Centrella (ILM EMD), Peter Clark (C/N PQ EM), Shaun Coleman (NRPC), Robert Currier (VT F&G), Nancy Frantz (SHR), Bill Johnson (ILM Fire), Michael Johnston (C/N PQ FD), Jacquie Kelley (VDH), Ron Kumetz (AVFD), Sandy Ladd (Alburgh EMD), Brandy Latimer (NH EMD), Joe Latimer (NH SB), Mike Murdock (NHVFD), Chuck Pease (Alburgh Fire), Joseph Porcelli (public), Matt Reed (SHVFD), Angie Robinson (ARC), Pat Robinson (SHVFD), Harry Schoppmann (VEM), Rob Schell (public), Adam White (GIVFD).

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

Public Comment, Changes to Agenda - None

Minutes

Pat motioned to approve the minutes of the February Meeting. Ron seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report – Tabled.

Mike reported that Shelburne invoice needs approval.

Ron motioned to approve payment of \$9,575 to Shelburne for Dispatching Services. Pat seconded. Motion carried.

Grand Isle REMC

July and August Flooding After Action Report – Julie Benedict, VEM

Julie provided a presentation on strengths, lessons learned and areas of improvement regarding the July and August flooding that impacted many parts of the state. VEM is presenting the AAR to all areas of the state even those that were not affected in an attempt to improve state support. A survey was sent out to municipalities and the feedback was used for the report.

Areas of strength included use of technology for municipal outreach, responsiveness to needs of local responders, statewide briefings were valuable to communities. Dam personnel remained overnight and kept EMDs informed. Most respondents agreed state was flexible on evolving needs and pleased with state support during the response.

Areas of improvement included communication on debris management, clarification on what was billable under declaration, expanding mutual aid groups between towns and a disconnect between local EMDs and schools was noted. Coordination between Army Corps of Engineers and EMDs with response could be improved. A quicker transition from response to recovery was noted but Julie acknowledged this has more to do with politics. A high number of FEMA agents in the state led to mixed messaging.

Efforts will be made to improve communication regarding damaged homes and buyouts, and using town meetings for outreach. There are challenges with the current use of the SEOC phone number and 211 data. There is a lack of generator grants generally to meet the high demand. The state is looking for alternative to improve information flow.

Julie discussed the WAZE app for local road closures that officials could use.

<https://www.waze.com/partnerhub/userlobby/lobby?redirect=%252Fpartnerhub%252F>.

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Comments were provided to Julie including messaging on safe handling and disposal of hypodermic needles, volunteer management and recruitment during disasters for rural communities vs. higher population areas and use of Medical Reserve Corps.

VEM Update – Harry Schoppmann, VEM

Harry provided an overview of state EOC support for the upcoming April 8 eclipse. The SEOC will be activated during the weekend and through Monday. State’s role is supporting towns with any resource needs. Anticipating traffic impacts and travel delays due to high volume of visitors.

Local Emergency Management Plans are due May 1. Harry and/or Shaun can help if needed.

The State preparedness conference will be held on September 10 and 11 at Lake Morey in Fairlee. A free room is available to one member of the REMC. Send Shaun an email if interested.

Jacquie Kelley – VDH EP, Northwest Vermont Medical Reserve Corps.

Jacquie reported that anyone interested in joining the MRC can sign up on-line [here](#). There is a vetting process in place. Volunteers do not need a medical background.

The MRC may be staffing two first aid stations during the eclipse. Also, the health department is hosting a hazmat decon training on April 11 at UVM and April 12 at NMC. More info [here](#).

GICMAA

Grand Isle Eclipse Planning

There was a group discussion led by Sherriff Allen. GICSO staffed through the 8th. Biggest concern is Route 2. Assume deputies will not be available for marine calls. Schools will be closed. VSP monitoring I-89, I-91 and I-93.

Grand Isle and Knight Point State Parks will be open with minimum staff. Alburgh Dunes will be closed. Port-o-lets being brought in for Grand Isle SP. Red Cross shelter will be open in Waterbury if needed.

Fish and Game will have 6 Boston Whalers deployed on Lake plus several smaller vessels. They will be available to assist in NW. Coast Guard will be at station in Burlington.

Clarenceville/Noyan FD will be business as usual. There are provincial plans in place. Expecting increase in traffic as well. Border patrol will be fully staffed.

Grand Isle FD will have 5 members on call. Marine unit housed at station and available if needed. Department briefing is scheduled for Wednesday.

South Hero FD will stage resources to Landon Road and 314 if Route 2 travel becomes difficult. Eclipse Festival is being held at Apple Island Resort.

Alburgh FD will be monitoring totality festival at Industrial Park. Town offices will be open.

Isle La Motte is not planning any event. A few members will be available to respond if needed. There are four large parking areas to accommodate some visitors.

North Hero FD will have 6 members available. The marine unit will be in the water. Shore Acres is having an event. North Hero House having an event from 1 to 6 pm on pier. Town Offices will be open.

102 Expecting some traffic congestion in village area. Directional signs will be posted to guide visitors to
103 Knight Point State Park.

104
105 There was a brief discussion on comm channels and using VT Alert. Sheriff's Department will send out
106 traffic reports to Chiefs. Cell service may get disrupted with number of visitors. To boost service, the
107 state is working with AT&T to bring in FirstNet truck and trailers (cows) that are specific for emergency
108 calls. They will push calls through to 911 regardless of carrier. Matt was in communication with FirstNet
109 and will find out if they will be used in Islands.

110
111 **Committees - LEPC (hazmat), THIRA (hazards and risk assessment), EPW (state exercise and planning)**
112 *Ron motioned to appoint Brandy Latimer to the state LEPC, THIRA and EPW committees. Mike seconded.*
113 *Motion carried.*

114
115 **Critical Incident Response Team** – No report.

116
117 **County Emergency Services Coordinator Position** – No report.

118
119 **County Updates**
120 South Hero hosting Wildland Fire refresher training on Wednesday April 10 at 6 p.m.

121
122 Alburgh held all you can breakfast on Sunday.

123
124 **Other Business** – None.

125
126 **Adjourn** - *Pat motioned to adjourn. Ron seconded. Motion carried.*

127
128 Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.