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2 **Grand Isle County Mutual Aid Association Meeting**
3 **GI-REMC**
4 **Feb. 2, 2026 – Draft Minutes**
5 **Grand Isle Sheriff's Office, Grand Isle, VT and Virtual**
6

7 **Attendance:** Ron Kumetz (Alburgh FD), Mike Murdock (NHVFD), Ray C. Allen (GICSO), Adam White
8 (GIVFD), Bill Baron (GI-EMD), Matt Gour (Alburgh Rescue), Jaquie Kelley (VDH), Shaun Coleman (NRPC)
9 and Michaela Foody (VEM).

10
11 President Murdock chaired the meeting which began at 7:06 p.m. A quorum was present.
12

13 **Public Comment** – None.
14

15 **Minutes**

16 *Chief Robinson motioned for approval of minutes. Chief White seconded. Motion carried.*
17

18 **Treasurer's Report**

19 The Treasurer emailed the report to everyone prior to the meeting. The ending balance of the account is
20 \$62,464.64. Two invoices that were previously approved for payment on January 20, 2026 have been
21 paid: Shelburne PD for dispatching for \$10,952.75 and Amerigas for St. Albans Radar Base site for
22 \$154.29. Once the checks are deposited, the balance is \$51,357.60
23

24 *Chief Kumetz motioned to accept the Treasurer's Report. Chief Robinson seconded. Motion carried.*
25

26 There were no bills presented.
27

28 **Grand Isle Regional Emergency Management Committee**
29

30 **Vermont Emergency Management:** Michaela reminded everyone that the LEMPs will be due on June
31 1st.

32 Spring Flood Outlook videos are available on VEM website.

33 The Federal Emergency Management Planning Grant the state is expecting to receive is still on hold. No
34 updates regarding other FEMA grant funding for mitigation work.
35

36 **Committee Updates (THIRA, LEPC, TPW):** Brandy emailed that she was unable to attend tonight. Shaun
37 reported he would be Brandy's backup for the LEPC committee if needed. Rob Morlino, LEPC Chair
38 emailed Shaun asking for a Grand Isle County representative to attend the meeting to meet quorum.
39 Rob realized he forgot that Brandy was the representative and did not include her in the meeting notice.
40

41 **Vermont Department of Health:** Jackie reported that she accepted a new position with UVM Medical
42 Center as an ADA Compliance Administrator. Tonight is her last GICMAA/REMC meeting. VDH will fill
43 her position, but until then, August Toynton and Erin Creeley will be overseeing the Northwest VT MRC
44 program. The group congratulated Jacquie and wished her well.
45

46 **Grand Isle County Mutual Aid Association**

47 **Non-Profit Status Update:** The Treasurer and accountant are still working on it.
48

49 **Budget:** Chief Murdock reported that Deb could not make tonight's meeting.
50

51 At the April meeting, the group should conduct a mid-year review and budget adjustment as needed.

52

53 Shelburne Dispatching services have been increasing. The town manager is the driving force.

54

55 **Public Safety Communications Task Force Update:** Chief Kumetz provided an update on Task Force’s
56 design concept and recommendations report that was released in January. The report outlines
57 recommendations for developing a reliable, secure, interoperable, and equitable statewide public safety
58 communications system.

59

60 Initial funding of \$11M from Act 78 will support the first three years of operations, including
61 governance, training, technology upgrades, and LMR improvements. Long-term funding will come from
62 dispatch fees assessed to municipalities not currently paying for services, phased in over six years.

63

64 There is a list of options being considered including allocating a percentage of cannabis tax revenue;
65 issuing bonds to fund capital improvements, such as the LMR network; increasing Vermont’s Universal
66 Service Fee (currently \$0.72 per line); and state/local budget allocations along with several other
67 proposals.

68

69 The Task Force recommendations include establishing an independent Public Safety Communications
70 Governance Board with decision-making authority to oversee and improve public safety
71 communications systems. Funding for staff and administrators for the board is proposed at \$1.59 million
72 over 3 years.

73

74 He recommended creating a list of concerns regarding the recommendations, and suggested GICMAA
75 invite DPS Commissioner Morrison to an upcoming meeting.

76

77 The legislature and governor's support and authorization are required to implement the proposed
78 framework and other recommendations. The assumption is that there will be hearings at some point
79 and that some Task Force members and some first response agencies will testify.

80

81 There are 218 towns that receive law enforcement dispatch services from VSP; 42 towns receive fire
82 dispatch services from VSP; and 42 towns receive EMS dispatch services from VSP. Shelburne Dispatch
83 is a designated PSAP. Middlebury Regional EMS and Ludlow Emergency Communications Center
84 (Ludlow PD) offer dispatch services. They are not PSAPs. Ludlow is unable take on additional clients due
85 to capacity issues. Nobody will be required to leave their current PSAP if that is a preferred PSAP.

86

87 Base fees will come, in part, from local funding allocations. Call volume, population and Grand List are
88 elements that will likely be factored in.

89

90 Chief Murdock noted that the proposed funding models are very reminiscent of education funding.
91 There is a risk of losing local control. The recommendations reference “fair and equitable” solutions so
92 we must ensure that it actually does.

93

94 There was consensus that when hearing testimony, GICMAA and other towns need to voice concerns
95 about taking money from property taxes to fund this. They should increase the Universal Service Fund
96 instead. Vermont’s rate is lower than other states. Increase the tax on cell phones. Do not take money
97 from property taxes

98

99 Chief Kumetz is unsure if this is headed to committee this session or when they are taking testimony.

100

101 Chief Kumetz said he was unsure what became of the Congressionally designated funds that were given
102 to the Chittenden County Public Safety Authority for their Dispatch Consolidation Study. According to
103 the minutes of their June 12, 2023 meeting, they voted to return the remaining funds to the state if that
104 were allowable. Stephen Locke, Chair and S. Burlington Fire Chief was going to meet the Public Safety
105 Commissioner to see if this was an option. He will try to track down where the funding went.

106
107 Chief White noted GICMAA has been with Shelburne for 10 years and the costs for dispatching are still
108 less than what GICMAA was paying Central.

109
110 **Shelter and Volunteer Discussion:** Chief Murdock had requested information on the status of warming
111 centers and shelters for the County. Shaun outreached to the EMDS and Chiefs to compile a response
112 and offer assistance if needed. Everyone agreed that media coverage (local and social) on the winter
113 storm that was impacting southern and mid-Atlantic states was contributing to storm anxiety. The
114 storm was not supposed to have a huge impact in northern Vermont; however subzero temperatures
115 were predicted.

116
117 Sheriff Allen reported that a meeting was held at the request of a resident (retired US Navy
118 Commander) Josie Henry. The group discussed what preparations were underway and which warming
119 centers would be open, outreaching to the homeless population, transportation services to overnight
120 shelters outside of the region, CIDER volunteers, church resources for warming center use and Red Cross
121 shelter fundamentals training.

122
123 Following the meeting, Jordan from CIDER created a flyer that included emergency assistance phone
124 numbers for food, sheltering and transportation services that was posted to social media and distributed
125 to those who are known to be homeless.

126
127 Michaela offered to develop a County wide sheltering plan. She also offered to reach out to Michaela
128 Olin, the Red Cross Disaster Program Manager about hosting a Red Cross shelter training course.

129
130 Sheriff Allen had also spoken with Angie Robinson from Red Cross who offered to help with sheltering
131 efforts if needed.

132
133 **Department and EMD Updates**

134 North Hero: Chief Murdock reported that a groundbreaking ceremony for the new fire station will be in
135 March.

136
137 Grand Isle Fire: Chief White reported their tanker is having eight tires installed tomorrow and will be out
138 of service. Engine 2 is out of service due to gas tank contamination. The chassis for the new truck is still
139 in Florida.

140 Lithium-Ion Battery Awareness for First Responders training will be held on February 18th.
141 GIVFD is offering Ice Rescue Training on February 20th and February 21st. Friday will be classroom and
142 Saturday will be the ice training portion.

143
144 Chief Kumetz reported Alburg Fire be offering Ice Rescue Recertification Course on February 6th and 7th.
145 This is for recerts only. Instructors: Bill Gett & Chris Retz.

146
147 There was a discussion about how to better coordinate ice rescue trainings within the county. There was
148 consensus to have a meeting in the near future regarding future ice rescue trainings.

149
150 GIVFD is sending 4 members to Maine to investigate whether a Wilcraft would be a viable asset.

151

152 South Hero: Chief Robinson reported there is a county basic training scheduled in 3 weeks.
153 SHVFD in process of activating First Due. The cost was ~\$6.5k/yr.
154 There is a 2-hour course on how to use First Due.

155
156 Alburgh VFD: Chief Kumetz reported they are having HazMat refresher training on Feb 23rd at 1830 hrs.
157 Mental Health Awareness training on March 1st at Bingo Hall.

158
159 Grand Isle EMD: Bill Baron reported that he was in contact with Matt Brouillette, Facilities Manager for
160 the Supervisory Union prior to the extreme cold temperatures. The Grand Isle School was available to
161 use as warming center or overnight shelter if needed.

162
163 **Other Business**

164 VFA is hosting FF1 and FF2 training in Grand Isle this fall. No venue has been selected. There is space for
165 15 people.

166
167 There was some mixed messaging from Department of Labor regarding liability around cadets and the
168 Explorers program. Explorers provides youth with hands-on first responder skills that align with police,
169 and fire agencies.

170
171 **Adjourn**

172 *Sheriff Alan motioned to adjourn. Chief Kumetz seconded. Motion carried.*

173
174 Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:37 p.m.