

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
December 11, 2008/9:35 AM
25 Meade St., Worcester, MA

Note: Due to the forecast for severe weather over much of Worcester County this meeting was changed from Athol to a conference call which originated from the DHHS offices.

IN ATTENDANCE: Chris Montiverdi (Worcester); Kerry Clark (Region 2 Public Health Preparedness Coordinator); Trish Parent (Upton); Jamie Terry (Northborough); Phil Leger (Athol/Royalston); Lenny Izzo (Hopedale/Milford); Cheryl Rawinski (Sutton); Paul McNulty (Westborough); Lois Luniewicz (Grafton); Andy Pelletier (Auburn); Sandy Knipe (Hubbardston); Barry Lein (Program Consultant); Forrest Price (Program Consultant);

Visitors: None.

The Meeting was called to Order by Chairman Chris Montiverdi at 9:35 AM.

Minutes of the November 13, 2008 Executive Committee Meeting were presented for approval. Motion by Lenny Izzo to approve the minutes presented. Motion was seconded by Cheryl Rawinski. During the discussion Lois Luniewicz offered several minor corrections for insertion into the minutes. The motion was approved unanimously with the exception of Andy Pelletier who abstained (because he had not seen the minutes).

Next Meetings:

The Executive and Steering Committees will meet at 9:00am/10:00am respectively on Thursday, January 08, 2009 at the Athol Town Hall, 584 Main St., Athol. The Executive Committee will meet on Thursday, January 22, 2009 at 9:30am in Worcester at 25 Meade Street.

Chris Montiverdi briefed the Executive Committee members that the Region II PHEP Coalition offices would be moving soon. The current planned destination is the Worcester City Hall. However Chris is looking at other options for meeting locations since there is a lack of parking at City Hall.

Phil Leger stated that at a recent scheduled training for Reverse 911 for Orange, no one from the Sheriffs Department showed up to conduct the training. Chris Montiverdi stated that this issue was brought up at the last Homeland Security meeting. Due to budget cutbacks in the Sheriffs Department some non-union employees were laid off to include the R911 trainer. The position was filled by a patrol officer and he will be conducting the regional trainings. Chris has the contact information for this person and will send it out to committee members.

Program Manager Report: Kerry Clark

- Kerry stated that for this meeting he will roll any program manager updates in with the other sub-committee updates as appropriate.

Host Agency Report: Chris Montiverdi

- Chris stated that other than the pending move all paperwork has been submitted to DPH and we did get our next quarter's payment; we are just trying to track it down in the city's system to insure that it is put into our account.

- We are being audited. An audit company is looking at our last year's BT grants to see how we are spending the money. One issue was if the towns were sub-grantees of the award or were vendors. The auditor thought that the towns were sub-grantees which would require a contract with each town but DPH ruled that the towns were technically more like vendors. In response to a question from Phil, Kerry stated that this should just be an internal audit and should not extend to the towns. Kerry also said that he would let the towns know if the auditor decided to visit them.

Committee Reports:

Personnel Committee: Lenny Izzo

- Lenny stated that he and Kerry had a meeting last week concerning the hiring of the two extra consultants. Kerry briefed that Mr. Trevor Mormon who had done some EDS planning for Worcester last year would be coming on part-time. A Mr. Ed Ramstrom will also be coming on part-time. Kerry is just waiting on DPH approval on hiring these two people. This will aid us in reach out to the towns and completing our deliverables. We will now have two full-time and four part-time consultants.

Equipment/Acquisition/Training Committee: Jaime Terry

- Jaime commented that the committee will have to meet to decide on where to place the satellite phones.
- She also stated that Ken Gikas had done some research on the mobile radios and some of the weaknesses they have, particularly battery life. Lois mentioned the problem which Grafton had during their EDS Clinic drill and the fact that some radio batteries ran out quickly. The current batteries do have problems.
- Kerry added that the ICF project has been put on hold while they put the contract out to bid per DPH requirements. Jamie stated that she was still going to hold her meeting with all of the Fire and Police in order to set all the objectives and goals necessary for this exercise. Kerry agreed that this was a good move considering how difficult it is to get these people together.
- Kerry also briefed that the Amazon book order had been cancelled by Amazon. This was after numerous attempts by Kerry to contact Amazon and get the order shipped. It appears Amazon did this because of what they considered to be problems with the payment. Kerry has contacted DPH in order to try to keep this money and go ahead with the purchase through Barnes & Noble.
- Forrest added some information about the radio battery problem. Ken had researched new batteries and briefed Kerry and the other consultants on his findings. During this discussion the subject of FRS radios as an alternative was discussed. Andy stated that during the original test they tried the FRS radios but they were not powerful enough. Other people seemed to think that another look at FRS radios might be warranted. Chris asked that the city communications director be invited to attend the meeting to give some input and guidance from his expertise. Andy also suggested that we look at multiple channels to eliminate some problems.

Strategic Planning Committee: Phil Leger

- Phil suggested that this committee needs to be re-established and figure out what needs to be done. He suggested placing this on the Steering Committee agenda. Chris stated that the initial goal was to plan ahead and establish some long-term goals.

MRC Sub-Committee: Jaime Terry

- Jamie reported that they had had a conference call yesterday. Wachusett has submitted their request for funding. The committee had put aside \$3000 for them. The committee agreed that as long as their program complied they would give this money to Wachusett to put towards their bill which Jaime thought was about \$3100.
- There is still no answer on the issue of CORI checks yet. This question has been brought to Mary Clark who has brought this to the CORI board. Whenever we get an answer we will bring it to the group.
- Jamie stated that they are getting caught up on the state conference calls. Lois and Judie went to a conference and briefed the committee on that. Recruitment is moving forward although Wachusett will not be recruiting for the next few months since they will be concentrating on individual meetings with each MRC member. And the committee is still working on the Standard Operating Procedures.
- Chris briefed that Shawn Windsor is now on-board and has been here since November 17th. He reviewed the projects which Shawn was working on starting. Chris also stated that he hoped to be able to hire an MRC trainer in the near future.
- Sandy mentioned that the Wachusett MRC had been a great help to her town flu clinic and was very grateful for their assistance. Several other people made positive comments about Wachusett and their presence.

Mutual Aid: Andy Pelletier

- Andy stated that Sara had delivered four more town's mutual aid agreements. He said that we have a total of 40 agreements in place.

Homeland Security: Chris Montiverdi

- Chris reiterated the change in the personnel in the Sheriff's Department Reverse 911 program and said that he would get this information out to everyone.
- Chris also briefed that the Homeland Security council is trying to put together another regional meeting for the communities to let them know had been going on in the past four years, equipment purchases which have improved regional preparedness, and to let people know monies what might be available in the future. Chris has taken over the Pandemic Committee from Paul which has been rolled in with Mass Care, Sheltering, and Community Notification. He has about \$97,000 set aside for Mass Care and Sheltering which people might be able to apply for.
- Jamie asked if the Homeland Security council could provide money for the Walpole book project. Chris stated that the responsible committee (Training) has not yet met but it is on his agenda.

Local and State Advisory Committee: Sandi Knipe

- The group met on November 17th and will meet again on Dec 15th. The agenda was short and focused on their usual topics. One of the items concerned lessons learned and how to get them out to the communities.
- At Sandy's request, Kerry briefed on the recent Call Down Drill which was performed by Kerry and the consultants. The deliverable for this item only required the coalition to contact one community but our office decided to go beyond this and had each consultant (Sara, Ken, and Forrest) contact one of their communities to get a better idea of how our region was doing. This drill was very successful and we were the first coalition in the state to complete this requirement.

Old Business:

- No old business was discussed.

New Business:

- Kerry briefed that at the last regional coordinator meeting, Mike Coughlin from DPH is trying to put together a committee to discuss the boundary policy. Several months ago there was a discussion regarding how if communities wanted to leave one coalition and join another that there was no mechanism to do this. Mike is looking for someone to sit on this committee from our region. The demands of this committee should be rather low. In response to a question from Phil, Kerry stated that there are some communities on our western boundary that were interested in joining our region. Phil stated that he was willing to volunteer for this committee if he could participate via tele-conferencing rather than have to travel to Boston to meet.
- Sandy asked about the upcoming MEMA three-day course on Pandemic Planning. She wanted to know if people thought that this course was worth attending. Trish and Jaime have also signed up for this course. Chris stated that MEMA has brought some people up from the CDC to teach this course and that it should be worthwhile.
- Sandy also asked if we were sending anyone to the San Diego NACCHO meeting on emergency preparedness. Kerry stated that he needed to follow up on an email he had sent to Mike Coughlin to see if this was an acceptable expense with our grant. He then briefed the group that this meeting was geared specifically to Public Health emergency preparedness. He had asked Mike about this but had not received an answer. The meeting is scheduled for Feb 18-22, 2009.
- Chris briefed that DPH had released a new RFR using some ASPR funds. They are soliciting requests for proposals from the six preparedness regions for a sum of money between \$200-400,000 to enhance health and medical preparedness under the ASPR program. This program helps create partnerships between nursing homes, long-term care facilities, public health departments, and hospitals to enhance the response to health and medical incidents. There was a meeting this week between all of the stake-holders to see if this was something we were willing to go for. One of the key requirements is to have a Level-1 trauma center which limits the regions which can apply for this grant. Boston already has a partnership which started last year so they will probably get some funding for this. We would be in competition with Springfield for a new partnership. Worcester and the MMRS has done a lot of work in the past few years and has a strong foundation for planning. DPS has recognized a lot of the hard work we have done in this area and should be in a strong position for this funding. Chris asked if anyone would like to join the advisory committee to help prepare this request. He outlined some of the work which would be required.

Paul McNulty made a motion that the Executive Committee vote to support this project and sign on to the partnership application. This was seconded by Phil Leger. The motion passed unanimously.

Cheryl Rawinski made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Trish Parent. This was approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:35am.