

Emergency Response Oversight Committee

May 15, 2019

Meeting Minutes

Facilitator: Jessica Verfuss, Deputy Director, Department of Emergency Response

Notetaker: Geri Lockwood, Department of Emergency Response

Attendees: Brian Robison, TC Department of Emergency Response
Christina Dravis, TC Department of Emergency Response
Marty Kopcho, NYSP Troop C Zone 3
Jerry Wright, Cayuga Heights Police Department
Tom Parsons, City Fire Chief
Mark Bell, Volunteer Fire/EMS, Dryden Fire Department
Tim Bangs, Commercial Ambulance Service, Bangs Ambulance
Julie Holcomb, City IT
Deb Lawrence, Dryden Police Department
Josh Tagliavento, Dryden Police Department
Adam Mahnke, Cornell University Police Department
Jessica Verfuss, TC Department of Emergency Response
Joe Nelson, Trumansburg Police Department
Vince Monticello, Ithaca Police Department
Brian Wilbur, TC Department of Emergency Response
Jeremy Zigenfus, TC Sheriff's Office
Loretta Tomberelli, Ithaca Police Department
Tom Dunn, Ithaca College Public Safety

Call to Order: Jessica Verfuss called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Introductions: Introductions were made by attendees.

Changes to Agenda: Attendees who were not sworn in at the February meeting are to see Geri Lockwood following this meeting to do so.

Minutes Approval, February 20, 2019: Remove "This is a new Committee" from Old business, d. Policies;, then motion to approve by Christina Dravis, seconded by Julie Holcomb.

Old Business:

- a. Remaining Sub-committee Chairs: Fire & EMS – this will be on the agenda for the Fire Chiefs Meeting on May 28th.
- b. Medical Director: Lee Shurtleff has been meeting with Cayuga Medical Center (CMC), regarding Medical Director, Dr. Emmons. CMC would like Dr. Emmons to continue as the Medical Director, but it has not been formalized at this time. Tom Parsons feels we need a Dr. who is interested in the position, and would like Dr. Koch, with Bangs Ambulance. Tim Bangs would like to attend the meetings regarding the Medical Director position. Brian Robison will follow-up with Lee.
- c. Completion of Signature Pages: Jessica will work with Greg Potter on this.
- d. Policies: The Law Enforcement Sub-committee broke the LETSS policies into groups. Greg is working on the language and will forward them to the sub-committees.

New Business:

- a. Staffing: Jessica announced that the Department of Emergency Response (DOER) is in the process of hiring dispatchers to fill vacant positions. Christina is working on full staffing.
- b. Jessica also mentioned that there are office moves happening at DOER: John Halaychik has moved into the old break room, near the Dispatchers; Claudia Hutchinson has temporarily moved into John's old office; Jessica is moving into Claudia's old office; and other changes will be forthcoming.
- c. Brian R. announced that DOER has a vacancy posted for a Community Preparedness Coordinator, and applications will be accepted through May 21st. He requested everyone to encourage candidates to apply. Interviews will be scheduled after May 21st and Human Resources has approved the applications. He also mentioned that a full-time Fire and EMS Coordinator position will be posted in the second half of 2019. This position was created by splitting it from the Director's position. Lee is filling the position part-time, until early next year, and he will mentor and cross-train new hire prior to his full departure.

Standing Sub-Committee Reports (Members):

- a. Law Enforcement:
 - Marty Kopcho stated that Areas 326 and 327 have been re-established and that maps should be updated.
 - E-mail account requests should go through IT, using the form.
 - LETSS Policies were reviewed and reworded, using up-to-date terminology.
 - Location of flags are tagged to addressed, not to people and need to be reviewed for accuracy.
 - The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 30th, 9:00 a.m., DOER Large Conference Room, and all are welcome to attend.
- b. Fire and EMS:
 - Meetings have not been held yet.
 - Tom recommended that Fire Departments be encouraged to attend the "Traffic Incident Management" Course.
 - Tim mentioned mass gathering planning needs. Jessica responded that DOER staff is working with the Tompkins County Health Department (TCHD) on this. TCHD requires a completed full working plan be submitted before any permits are issued. NYS is requesting for more resources. Julie added that the City of Ithaca does not have the resources. Marty stated that First Responders have manned the posts in the past. He also made a reminder that it's not about what they're doing, but the number of people at one time and the catastrophic event(s).
 - Tom requested that the Hotel/Room Tax should be re-directed to staff Law Enforcement Agencies at mass gathering events.
 - Julie noted that infrastructure costs are not covered for events. Jessica added that Homeland Security targets funding, but Tompkins County has not been awarded targeting funds, and most festivals are held in the City. Mass gatherings are soft targets. Marty mentioned that public events with more than 500 attendees are targets.
 - Brian R. asked if the Grassroots permits could be shared (mass evacuations, traffic control, etc.). Jessica responded that they can be shared with Public Officials as a template, but they cannot be made public. Local and State permits are more in-depth.
- c. Dispatch:
 - Christina stated that the group has not met yet, but they will be meeting quarterly, directly following this meeting.
- d. Training:
 - Meetings have not been held yet. Marty will take CAD concerns, etc. into consideration. Christina and Jessica requested that Active Shooter Training (from ECROC) be considered. Marty added behavioral awareness, "BOSAR" training.
 - Jessica mentioned that the 2020 Baseball Hall of Fame Inductions in Cooperstown is in the planning stages now, and anyone interested in information should contact the NYS Police and/or OEM for plans. Contact information is available through her or Marty.
- e. Information Technology Administration
 - Due to Greg's absence, no information is available.

f. Executive

- At the meeting this morning, they discussed flagging, TIMS training, IamResponding (text notification, etc.). IamResponding is live in Tompkins County now, and it's slowly being added in with fire departments and EMS.
- FirstNet Wi-Fi is replacing the Verizon hot spots. Jessica stated that Agencies can set all members up, whether they convert, or not, then certified letters are not required. Christina mentioned that FirstNet is willing to set up a kiosk to discuss individual plans, if there's enough interest. Jeremy Zigenfus responded that the Ithaca AT&T store is quite knowledgeable with is.

Announcements (Personnel, Events, Projects, etc.):

Events/Misc.:

- Marty stated that Fentanyl is still a large problem, and that exposure by airborne dust can also affect your health. Narcan should be available.
- Tim asked how agency-reporting drug overdose is going. Christina responded that Bangs is great! Marty added that the State Police are directed by NYS. Vince Monticello asked if the reports can be accessed. Christina stated that it has all been set up by TCHD, but she will follow-up with them to see if she can grant permissions. Brian R. noted that there were three (3) or four (4) overdoses in Tompkins County yesterday, with one (1) fatal. Tim wondered if civilians administer Narcan, is the information entered in the system for reporting. It's important that this information is passed onto Law Enforcement for reporting.

Projects:

- RACES (amateur radio operators) assist with relaying emergency messages when systems are down. Christina stated an Agreement is being worked on now. Adam Mahnke added that RACES assists Cornell University with events, and that they do not charge, but they do accept donations.
- Brian Wilbur noted that there are currently 20+ projects at DOER, as well as many on-going programs. He provided a summary of the following projects:
 - Back-up Communications Center – the largest priority and largest project.
 - Air Truck transition – a procedure manual has been created.
 - Communication Center enhancements – re-design and re-furnishing to enhance operations.
 - HUGE – clean-up at DOER (a large quantity of old radios and communications equipment has been sent to Finger Lakes Communications).
 - DOER office space moves (mentioned earlier).
 - EMS Task Force – take-aways have been implemented.
 - Microwave system upgrades – on 10 towers, at end of life, and parts are no longer available. This is a critical needs project.
 - System Management repairs and upgrades, etc. – Jack Crance is working on three (3) antennas, replacing/repairing as needed (some are not working). They are critical to paging communication systems.
 - 800mhz radio – out-of-County/other County communications.
 - Integrated operability – required by State and Federal.
 - Tom asked what the radio replacement plan is for the end of life radios. Jessica responded that DOER made the initial purchase, and it's her understanding that the agencies are responsible for the replacements. She added that there may be grant funds available for this, and Brian R. stated this will be reviewed. There was a discussion regarding the 800mhz system not working as well as had been promised, i.e. issues with coverage inside buildings, etc. Tom and Marty inquired about the possibility of newer technology or available upgrades. Vince added that the Harris radio has long-range technology. Brian W. shared some history of moving to the \$20,000,000 800mhz radio system. Brian R. stated that it may be possible to make funds available to pay a portion of the replacements of tri-band mobile radios (the difference above the current mobile costs), as a solution to communicate when inside buildings.

Adjourn:

- Next meeting scheduled for August 21, 10:00 a.m. (Executive Committee at 8:30 a.m.), Department of Emergency Response Large Conference Room.
- Christina motioned to adjourn the meeting at 11:15 a.m., seconded by Jeremy.