

Rhode Island Emergency Management Advisory Council

Meeting Notice

THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL WILL BE HELD:

December 8, 2009

11:00 AM

RI Department of Labor and Training

1511 Pontiac Avenue

Building 73, 1st Floor Conference Room, Pastore Complex

Cranston, Rhode Island

AGENDA

Attendance

Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth H. Roberts

RIEMA Director David Smith Dr. David Gifford

Noreen Shawcross Nick Logothets

Janice Pothier Pac Alysia Mihalakos

Dawn Lewis Peter Marinucci

Kate McCarthy – Barnett Ed Johnson

Carol Kent James Lanni

Douglas Brown Bruce Rutter

Ray LaBelle Jay Corey

Robert Howe Alan Seitz

Sergio Desousarosa Richard James

James F. Vierra Gary Moe
Larry Grimaldi Nancy Smith Greer
Lori Needham Vladimir Ibarra

I. Call to Order/-Lt. Governor Elizabeth Roberts.

Chairwoman Roberts suggested switching the 2010 EMAC meeting dates from the fourth Tuesday of the month to the second. Members had no objections to the change.

Lt. Governor Roberts wanted to refer back to the October 27th Subcommittee report by Steve Preston in regards to the prohibition by DHS/FEMA against using grant dollars to sustain equipment purchased under DHS/FEMA grants and the dire consequences to current programs. She asked Director Smith if there was an update in regards to this matter. Director Smith reported that through collaboration between RIEMA and the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) lobbied for a change in policy and as of November 20th it had been reversed.

Chairwoman Roberts highlighted the recent link of HEALTH's Special Needs Emergency Registry and the RI E911 Emergency Telephone System (911). This development expands the current capabilities as more than 7,000 Rhode Islanders have voluntarily enrolled in the Registry. Lastly, Lt. Governor Roberts thanked all the members who made the Gainor Dam Exercise a total success.

II. Approval of Minutes from October 27, 2009.

The minutes from the October 27, 2009 meeting were unanimously

approved.

III. RIEMA Update.

Director Smith reiterated the great success of the Gainor Dam Exercise in which most EMAC members participated. RIEMA continues to re-write the current State Emergency Plans as they are inconsistent with the national framework.

Grants: Director Smith was pleased to inform members of a nine percent increase to Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG). Also, there were thirteen major grants initiatives that faired well. The Director thanked members for their participation and asked for their collaboration as Rhode Island sets an example and continues to sustain funding. Lastly, he announced the departure of Meghan Sullivan (Floodplain Management Team) to California.

IV. Update on H1N1 - Rhode Island Department of Health Director David R. Gifford, MD, MPH.

Lt. Governor Roberts introduced Dr. Gifford to provide an update on H1N1 and informed members that her daughter was vaccinated as of last Wednesday. Dr. Gifford stated that by next week school vaccinations would be completed. About seventy-five percent or 85,567 school-aged children have received the H1N1 vaccine.

Dr. Gifford has been very pleased with the community support at the clinics. He reiterated that although H1N1 is down the biggest concern

continues to be getting vaccinated and a possible spring wave.

HEALTH continues targeting kids and pregnant women. Rhode Island's model for vaccination of colleges and universities is being emulated in other states. Chairwoman Roberts asked a question in regards to a growing number of fraudulent emails referencing a CDC-sponsored State Vaccination Program for H1N1.

Dr. Gifford stated that there are no reported cases in Rhode Island but that individuals should be careful of providing information online. Moreover, they should visit the HEALTH website to cross reference information if they receive a suspicious email or contact HEALTH's hotline (401-222-8022).

Lt Governor Roberts asked about the regular flu vaccine. Dr. Gifford informed members that there was a higher uptake from August to November and they actually ran out of the vaccine. HEALTH made an order before May but the same manufacturer that makes the H1N1 is the one that makes the seasonal flu vaccine. For additional resources visit:

HEALTH at <http://www.health.ri.gov>;

**Archived partner briefings and regular news updates:
<http://www.health.ri.gov/news/flu/>**

Information Line (M-F 8:30 am to 4:30 p.m.) or dial 401-222-8022

H1N1 email address: h1n1@health.ri.gov

<http://www.flu.gov>

V. Temporary Shelter Capacity in Rhode Island; Challenges and Opportunities –Noreen Shawcross, Rhode Island Housing Resource Commission and Nick Logothets, RI Red Cross.

Nick Logothets, Director of Emergency Services for the RI Chapter of the Red Cross informed members that his agency can provide free training for volunteer workers. Director Smith interjected that Janice Porthier Pac hosted a subcontractor's citizen core volunteers meeting to support volunteer training. Following on the volunteer conversation, Mr. Logothets was very pleased to have exceeded the volunteer expectations for 2009 from 800 to 1300 volunteers.

Mr. Logothets illustrated how a typical shelter request would work. For instance, if a local EMA requests that the Red Cross operates a shelter and if that community is willing to place Police, Fire, EMS at the shelter, then the Red Cross will respond according to the memorandum of understanding (MOU) held with that community. Also, if RIEMA calls the Red Cross they will work within the State resources and the communities identified to secure Police, Fire & EMS. However, if there is no presence of Law Enforcement personnel the Red Cross will not initiate operation of a shelter.

Noreen Shawcross, Chief of the Rhode Island Office of Housing and Community Development provide the shelter piece of the presentation. She provided an overview of the agency's role as it coordinates housing policy, planning and programs including the development Block Grant programs and ARRA stimulus which

include the production of affordable homes. Also, it oversees the Neighborhood Opportunities Program which has built 1,300 homes since 2001 and the Building Homes RI bond which created 700 homes since 2007.

Ms. Shawcross explained that in regards to the shelters the agency funds beds and supportive services for the homeless system including \$3.2 million dollars. Furthermore, it operates new Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program in partnership with the cities of Providence, Pawtucket, and Woonsocket \$6.8 million dollars. The shelter sites include family shelter, adult shelter, 24 hour and overnight shelter, winter shelter and motel vouchers for families. Other services include transportation, case management, intensive case management in permanent housing, legal services, and financial assistance through the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP).

Statistics:

- **Total emergency shelter beds-584**
- **Total winter shelter beds-88**
- **Total Domestic Violence shelter beds-102**
- **Motel Vouchers (as required-limited funds)**
- **2006-2007: 6,773 used shelters in RI**
- **2007-June 2008: 6,437 used shelters. This includes 843 families and 1,770 children**

- **Locations throughout the state include: Woonsocket, Pawtucket, Providence, Cranston, Warwick, South Kingstown, Westerly, Newport, and Middletown.**

For two years, FY 2007 and FY 2008, the number of homeless persons decreased. However, the numbers have increased due to economic and housing situation.

OHCD Housing Resources Commission has been convening the Emergency Shelter Task Force since 1999 in order to meet increased demand for shelter.

The agency monitors the shelters needs of our state by overseeing the Crossroads Rhode Island overnight numbers, the demand at Harrington Hall and reports from outreach workers.

Ms. Shawcross indicated that the current challenges were sites for additional shelter and funding.

VI. New Business/ Member Comments and/or Suggestions.

During the meeting Director Smith received a message in regards to the possible inclement weather tomorrow and wanted members to plan accordingly. According to the information, the snow would start coming down at around 4 a.m. with one inch of precipitation an hour changing to heavy rain. On that same note, the Director wanted to remind members that next week will begin the Winter Awareness Month Campaign in collaboration with Lowes. Lastly, Director Smith announced the retirement of Ray Labelle, Associate Director of the

Rhode Island E 9-1-1 systems.

Adjournment.