

Rhode Island Emergency Management Advisory Council

THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL WILL BE HELD:

Thursday, April 28, 2016

2:00 p.m.

Clean Care of New England, Inc.

850 Wellington Avenue

Cranston, Rhode Island 02910

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Tony Silva, Lt. Governor's Office, at 2:12 p.m. A roll call was conducted and 17 members were present. A quorum was not met.

Tony Silva, Lt. Governor's Office, announced that the "Subcommittee Reports" and "Open Discussion/Members Comments/Suggestions/Recommendation" sections of the agenda will not be covered in today's meeting due to a lack of proper notification. These areas will be discussed at the next meeting in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

Council Members and/or their Representatives

Lieutenant Governor – Present

Adjutant General – Present

Director of Administration – Not Present

Director of Department of Health – Not Present

Director Department of Transportation – Not Present

Director Department of Human Services – Not Present

Superintendent of State Police – Present

Public Utilities Administrator – Present

Director Department of Environmental Management – Present

Director Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals – Present

Director Department of Elderly Affairs – Not Present

Chairperson of the State Water Resources Board – Present

Chairperson of the Governor's Commission on Disabilities – Not Present

Chairperson of the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority – Not Present

Executive Director of the Coastal Resources Management Council – Not Present

Executive Director of the American Red Cross, Rhode Island Chapter – Present

Executive Director Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency – Present

Executive Director of the Commission on Deaf and Hard of Hearing – Present

Director Providence Emergency Management Agency – Present

Executive Director of E-11 Emergency Telephone System Division – Present

One representative of the Senate – Not Present

One representative of the House – Not Present

One Representative from the electric and gas industry – Present

One Representative from the telephone industry – Not Present

Executive Director of the RI Petroleum Association or other similarly situated position – Not Present

Two reps from general public, one who shall have expertise in disaster preparedness – Not Present
Rep from RI League of Cities and Towns – Not Present
Rep from the media – Present
Rep from the water supply industry – Not Present
Rep from the health care industry – Present
Rep from the Firefighters Association – Not Present
Rep from the Association of Fire Chiefs – Not Present
Rep from the ambulance company – Not present
Rep from a level one trauma hospital – Present

Participants

Sam Adams, URI Public Safety
Jim Ball, RI Dept. of Environmental
Management
Michael D. Borg, PEMA
Jay Burdick, RI VOAD
Michelle Burnett, RIEMA
Susan Earley, BHDDH
Steve Florio, RI Coalition for Deaf & Hard of
Hearing
Peter Ginaitt, Citizen
James Lanni, Dept. of Public Utilities
Dawn Lewis, Healthcare Industry

Susan Licardi, RI Water Resources Board
Elizabeth McDonald, American Red Cross
Sgt. Ernest McKenney, Rhode Island State
Police
Joseph Merrill, RI National Guard
Angelo Miccoli, United Way 2-1-1
Alysia Mihalakos, RI Dept. of Health
Lori Needham, RI Broadcasters
Brian Pires, US Attorney's ATAC
Gregory M. Scungio, RI 9-1-1
Paul Stasiuk, National Grid

Approval of Minutes from February 25th, 2016

- Peter Ginaitt would like the roll call to reflect that the representative of level 1 trauma hospital was present at the last meeting. He was the representative.
- Susan Licardi, RI Water Resources Board, would like the minutes to reflect that she was present as the Chair of Water Resources Board
- A motion to approve the minutes from February 25th was made by Peter Ginaitt and seconded by Michael Borg, PEMA. Minutes were approved at 2:24 p.m.

Old Business

Michelle Burnett, EMAC, reviewed the PowerPoint slides as summarized below:

Storm Ready RI Status – 39 communities in the state are engaged, 33 are in process and 6 communities are currently storm ready. The goal is for RI to be the 1st storm ready state in the country.

Code Red Status – All 39 communities are engaged and 28 MOUs have been signed.

- **Question, James Florio, RICDHH:** Is there a timeline for completion for Storm Ready Rhode Island?
- **Answer, Michelle Burnett, RIEMAC:** The goal is to have all communities storm ready within the next year.
- Tony Silva, Lt. Governor's Office notes that having all RI communities storm ready is one of RIEMA's 5 strategic priorities in the new strategic plan. He also congratulates the RIEMA staff for going out into the community to facilitate Code Red training.
- **Question, Michael Borg, PEMA:** Can the total number of individuals who signed up for Code Red in reach community be shared with the group?
- **Answer, Michelle Burnett, RIEMA:** Yes, I will make sure this gets shared.

EMAC Membership

Anita Flax, EMA, gave a brief overview of proposed changes to the EMAC membership. She notes that the purpose of the changes is to address the lack of quorum. She also states that the changes have not yet been introduced this session and that nothing is set in stone.

Question, Steve Florio, RICDHH: Will the changes be introduced this session?

Answer, Tony Silva, Lt. Governor's Office: This is a work in progress. We've brought the changes up in several meetings. We're trying to identify what an advisory council should look like that represents the entire state.

An e-mail from Shad Ahmed was distributed. Members were asked to please review his comments on membership.

Peter Ginaitt noted that he believes it is imperative to go forward with the membership legislation. Without the changes, there will be no quorum. He stated that it would be simple legislation that is easy to get passed.

Tony Silva, Lt. Governor's Office, notes that the office will push to get a bill in this session.

New Business

2016-2021 Strategic Plan

Michelle Burnett, EMA, notes that the strategic plans were given to and approved by the Governor's Office. One of the group's main goals is to be accredited by 2017. Michelle Burnett, EMA, provided a brief overview of the material in the plan: being a customer service oriented agency, building capacity, professionalizing the workforce, and building a state emergency management facility.

Peter Ginaitt underscored Michelle's comment. He believes that it is imperative for RIEMA to stress that we need representation in cities and towns and private businesses. He notes that the group is

viewed as not essential. He adds that establishing regional emergency management directors is also an option.

Michelle Burnett, EMA agrees with Peter Ginaitt's point and notes that only 2 or 3 cities in Rhode Island have emergency management directors for their communities.

Sam Adams, URI Public Safety notes the challenge in post 9/11 and station nightclub fire days that RIEMA is viewed as the cavalry that would arrive when something bad happens. Today, RIEMA's role has changed because federal grant money isn't there anymore. Part of the issue is people's expectations of RIEMA. Sam Adams, URI Public Safety suggests that RIEMA continues to do outreach to change public perception.

Michael Borg, PEMA notes that all emergencies are local. He adds that if the perception is that RIEMA is the cash cow/response agency, it negates the discussion of what resources can come from a local level.

Alysia Mihalakos, RIDOH, notes that the expectation that was set in Providence doesn't carry over to other communities. She adds that last year the sheltering plan was laid out but there was nothing about the expectations for local communities. She notes that the group needs to assess its expectations of cities and towns.

Steven Florio, RICDHH, raises the issue that he does not see a focus on access for special populations in the state plan. He stresses that EMAC needs to be considerate of all groups and suggests that having someone responsible for overseeing needs of special populations on a state level would be useful.

Michelle Burnett, EMA notes that RIEMA has very limited staffing and limited chance to add more positions, but adds that the agency is always taking into account how to best serve special populations. She notes that RIEMA can't dedicate a staff member solely for that purpose, but all the planning staff is aware that they need to be making those considerations when they create emergency preparedness documents.

Steven Florio, RICDHH comments that he does not see any of that consideration in the strategic plan.

Michelle Burnett, EMA responds that she will relay this concern to Director Peter Gaynor. She also adds that the agency has individual who they use to review all information and documents for these considerations. She notes that if there is another chance for cooperation, the agency would like that opportunity.

Elizabeth McDonald, American Red Cross, agrees with Steven Florio, RICDHH. She notes that in terms of special populations in emergencies, the agency needs to step it up. She notes that a few years ago the council had a special needs group that focused on including those with special needs

in planning. She adds that she has seen a similar situation boil up in Massachusetts and suggests that the council pull in people from special communities in as the plan is updated.

Alysia Mihalakos, RIHOD, gives some additional background on the way EMAC used to operate. She notes that EMAC almost never met unless there was something in the sub groups that needed to be reported on. Each month, the council would do updates for one of the subgroups. In terms of the special populations sub-committee, as plans were developed they would go through that group to have them flagged. She notes that Director McDonald shut that group down.

Elizabeth McDonald, American Red Cross, notes that the group is asking local communities to take part in sheltering but is not giving them any information or guidance about special communities that need special access.

Steven Florio, RICDHH, adds that he was the co-chair of the special needs committee. He notes that special needs populations are now referred to as access and functional needs. He hopes the council can host someone who could share more information on this topic so it becomes clear what is missing.

Tony Silva, Lt. Governor's Office, notes that he has never seen a strategic plan that didn't get similar comments. He notes that the plan is a fluid, working document. While it is not to be changed every month, it will be reviewed and all the suggestions brought up can be addressed at that time. He also adds that RIEMA deserves a tremendous amount of credit for the work that they did on this plan. The Lt. Governor relayed his feedback to Tony Silva that the strategic plan is a great document that deserves high praise.

Steven Florio, RICDHH adds that he too feels the strategic plan is very positive.

Statewide Emergency Notification Coordination Policy

The Statewide Emergency Notification Coordination Policy has been given to the Governor's Office. The policy notifies stakeholders in case of emergency. It is focused on who notifies who and the process of that notification. The agency is currently waiting on feedback from the Governor's Office. When the policy has been reviewed, the agency would like to provide it to the council to get feedback.

EMAC Schedule

The next several EMAC meeting are scheduled on the following dates: June 23, August 25, October 27, and December 15.

Open Discussion

Tony Silva, Lt. Governor's Office notes that open discussion will not take place today in order to abide by the open meeting laws. He extends apologies to all and notes that great discussion comes

out of this group. He also adds that it is important that the agency and the Lt. Governor's Office does their due diligence to follow the laws for open meetings. He notes that the next agenda will look different so open discussion will not have to be omitted.

Peter Ginaitt: Is there any status updated on the unmanned UAV legislation?

Anita Flax, EMA: No executive agency has flied formally. There are 3 bills that I know of and all of them have been held for further study.

Anita Flax, EMA adds that all committees need to have agendas and minutes filed on the Secretary of State's website. She also adds that if anyone has a topic they want discussed, they can ask it be placed in the agenda in advance. The topic must be detailed so the public can understand it.

Announcements

Adjournment

Peter Ginaitt makes a motion to adjourn, seconded by Elizabeth McDonald. Tony Silva adjourns the meeting at 3:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted:
Andrea Palagi
Policy and Administrative Aide
Office of the Lieutenant Governor