

Cass County  
Emergency Management Advisory Council  
Meeting Minutes  
2 November 2023

Meeting held at the Cass County Emergency Management Agency, 1227 N State Road 17, Logansport, IN 46947 at 7pm. The meeting was called to order by President Ed Schroder.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ed Schroder, Rich Bair, Mike Deitrich, Jeff Smith, Dan McDonald, Gary Chambers, Terry Dixon, Steve Martin, Nick Bowyer, Tim Minnick, Tracy Williamson

STAFF PRESENT: Rocky Buffum

MEMBERS ABSENT: Wally Bennett, Brady Wiles, Rick Lee

### **DIRECTORS REPORTS**

- I. Indiana Department of Homeland Security State/District Updates (if applicable)
  - a. Completed Stakeholder Preparedness Report. This is an annual review of our assessed strengths and weaknesses and helps guide planning, training and exercises for the following year, and also lets the state know what we will be focusing on.
  - b. Felicity attended the Emergency Management Alliance of Indiana Annual Conference. Attendance at this and other continuing education items impacts our scoring which impacts the \$30,000 reimbursement the county gets for EMA Salaries.
- II. Grants and Billing
  - a. Since the last meeting we received approval notice of two grants, \$16,085 from the Indiana Department of Homeland Security Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Program and \$1,000 from the Heidelberg Community Fund. The state grant will provide new training suits for HAZMAT Technician class, update books to the most current version, and also fund the rail car incident management course we want to bring in. The money from Heidelberg will fund an Instructor course.
  - b. Three billable responses in October, including one in Pulaski County for a propane truck that rolled over and was leaking. We are starting to see a return on investment from the propane equipment we purchased.
  - c. We gave the county attorney a heads up there are a few invoices approaching the past due date.
  - d. Grant revenue as of today is at \$84,705.29, up from \$59,952.13 last year
  - e. HAZMAT Billing Revenue is at \$38,507.00, up from \$13,730.75 last year.
  - f. Combined revenue is \$123,212.29, up from \$73,682.88 last year.
- III. Training and Exercise Activity
  - a. The battery course put on by HazMatIQ received positive reviews and was well attended. This was likely the last "big" training of the year. We would like to do a small exercise for healthcare partners to meet their requirements, and we may do another presser like we did last year ahead of snowfall season to coordinate with area media.
- IV. Finance/Budget for remainder of year
  - a. At the County Council meeting on Friday, October 20 we had an out of series transfer approved which was to free up funds for things thru the end of the year. On Monday, October 23 we received notice \$5,000 had been pulled from our budget, including the approved transfer.

- b. We had a vendor scheduled to do work on a warning siren that week (as we informed the council on October 20) and had to cancel that due to zeroing out of funding. I've spoken with the auditor since and she would like to use funds from somewhere else, she specifically mentioned county capital improvements and some other funds. We will have to get an estimate then bring a proposal to council, which means the earliest they would vote on approving or denying is November 17. Parts would likely be ordered after that, giving us a back in service date of late November/early December. I shared my concerns we have an Indiana Code requirement to report failure and corrective action plans, and to either maintain or decommission sirens. The non-functioning siren is in the Walton area, where we already have some particularly vocal citizens voicing concern about storm warnings.
  - c. They also zeroed out the money that funds attendance at the EMA Conference. The notification the funding had been zeroed came when Felicity was already there. At that point, costs had already been incurred. We will transfer from other places to compensate, however this makes the budget for the rest of the year extremely tight and any surprise repair items will likely now need additional appropriation and we will have delays getting broken things back into service.
  - d. It seems like there was an understanding we could just use non-reverting monies to cover whatever we want. These funds have Indiana Code restrictions about what they can and cannot be used for. We cannot use non-reverting fund for the EMA Directors conference or warning siren maintenance.
  - e. We continue to find transactions that were submitted to the auditor's office the day costs were incurred, however several months later have not been paid. Within the last few weeks we have found multiple \$500.00 plus transactions that the email records show were received, however they did not get processed. I believe this further skews the funds the auditor is believing we have available.
- V. Lithium Ion Battery Response Annex
- a. Completed plan was sent to area fire chiefs last week. We have ordered cell block, however it is on back order and has been for some time. December is the expected ship date. We will look into purchasing a variety of different size metal containers for different scenarios.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- I. Ordinance Updates
  - a. County attorney advises the Burn Ordinance update should be ready for review at the next commissioners meeting. Since it includes a citation provision it will also need to go before council.
  - b. The last ordinance, updating terminology, we do not yet have a date for.
- II. Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan Update
  - a. First meeting is November 13, 1pm, Ivy Tech. This is a plan that can provide a path to very large funding pools for a variety of projects. Only communities that participate can tap those resources. We would ask for the board help in reaching out to your respective towns and organizations to make sure they are represented.
  - b. Contract with Indiana University has been forwarded to County Attorney and Commissioners for review and signature.
- III. Radios

- a. Buffum with the county attorney about finalizing transfer of radios to individual fire departments. He believes an MOU is the way to go. We have sent the information he requested for document preparation. Awaiting further updates. We did include the Sheriff's request, there be a line indicating agreement no to program in talk groups without required authorization from the talk group owner.

IV. Any other old business

**NEW BUSINESS**

Other new business – Rocky Buffum reported an EMA vehicle driven by Felicity Perez-Nuscis was involved in an automobile accident earlier today. Buffum is working with Human Resources Director to review and complete needed actions.

Draft 2024 Training and Exercise Plan presented for review and input:



Cass County Emergency Management Agency  
Training and Exercise Plan  
Calendar Year 2024



Category	Jan	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
HAZMAT		HAZMAT TECHNICIAN	LEPC EX	RAIL RESPONSE COURSE		DECON EX					
ICS				ICS 300/400						WINTER WEATHER EX	
WEATHER		BASIC SPOTTER TRAINING						INTEGRATED WARNING TEAM	BASIC SPOTTER TRAINING		
COMMS					Radio Club Field Day						
INSTRUCTOR	Instructor 1						Instructor 2				Instructor 3

Additional trainings anticipated but not yet scheduled: NFA Safety Officer, Propane Response: 101 to Advanced Tactics, Noble Advanced Battery Course, Motorola Radio Programmer, Solar Farm Response

**CLAIMS REVIEW/APPROVAL**

Claims for September and October were reviewed. Motion to approve by Mike Deitrich, second by Terry Williamson. Motion carried unanimously.

**BOARD QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

Ed Schroder complimented the upgrades in integration at emergency management, which was seconded by Rick Bair. Schroder specifically mentioned updates of emergency plans and consolidation of plans to make things flow better.

#### PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

None

#### NEXT MEETING

December 6, 7pm

#### ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Gary Chambers, seconded by Steve Martin. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Rocky Buffum