

Addison County Regional Emergency Management Committee

<https://acrpc.org/acrpc-remc/>

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

14 August 2024, 12:00pm

Zoom and In Person at ACRPC Office, 14 Seminary St, Middlebury VT

12:01 Call to Order

Brief Introductions of participants

Roll call was taken- list of attendees at end of minutes

(9 voting members, 7 holding additional proxies, representing 8 communities)

Over the 1/3 (14 vote) quorum threshold

Motion to approve the May 8, 2024 Meeting Minutes was made by Bob Groff, seconded by Ben Mark, Unanimously approved by voice vote.

Speaker Ben Rose, VEM Recovery and Mitigation Section Chief (Ben.Rose@vermont.gov)

presented on the status of flood recovery from the 2023 and 2024 disaster events.

He focused on what towns and individuals can do to document and submit claims on damages from storms and natural disasters. He described the role of EMDs and Regional Planning Commission staff as liaisons.

There is a large round of hazard mitigation grants available with pre-applications due by August 30 (<https://vem.vermont.gov/funding/mitigation>) and already has taken a lot of interest.

Propose any projects your community is thinking about- there has never been a better time Receiving money requires having an approved Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, which is important for many reasons.

Most other FEMA grants provide only provide 75% of total funding, while current HMGP covers 100%

Email DPS.HazardMitigation@vermont.gov for questions or more information

There will be future rounds of funding as well, including Non-Disaster based Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grants for structures like bridges or culverts, scoping projects, and updating Hazard Mitigation Plans.

B. Rose noted that Addison County is likely going to get declared for both Public Assistance and Individual Assistance [it was approved for both on 8/20/24 as DR4810]

Questions and discussion on storm recovery topics

B. Groff asked about the status of the Federal Disaster Relief Fund and FEMA response money?

B. Rose clarified that FEMA has announced that project funding for disaster-related Public Assistance projects will not be released for permanent work until the funding issue has been resolved. FEMA announced late last week that for the foreseeable future, FEMA will not award additional funds for Public Assistance permanent work projects or Hazard Mitigation Grant projects. They will continue to make awards for Individual Assistance.

For applicants in a currently declared disaster, it is important that you continue to meet the deadlines of the FEMA PA program and continue to work with your FEMA PDMG to complete projects. When funding is made available, the State can release it immediately.

If damage to your community is reimbursable under a Public Assistance disaster declaration, you will eventually receive reimbursement for repairs to public infrastructure. However, that reimbursement will be delayed until Congress replenishes FEMA coffers.

Municipalities should continue to repair public infrastructure damaged in recent storms. Keep detailed records, take photos, and save all receipts for materials, contractor work, and other expenses.

Individuals also need to Document Document Document! (take pictures, get invoices, and make copies of everything)

FEMA and the state are working to improve the individual assistance process- applicants are expected to appeal initial award if they need more (call the FEMA hotline number)

REMC officer nominations and election was postponed

Discussion of upcoming needs and topics:

A brief discussion of the natural gas truck fires that occurred in Ferrisburgh was held.

M. Haitz asked about trucks now being routed along Route 17 through New Haven and Addison, rather than through Vergennes. G. Gardner provided information from a recent debriefing held at the Ferrisburgh Volunteer Fire Department on Wednesday 07/24.

NG Advantage has been moving natural gas from Colchester to Ticonderoga, using contracted trucks from separate company KAG, which was responsible for incidents. On September

A. L'Roe and M. Haitz will contact safety person from NG Advantage for more information and possibly a presentation.

Updates and Reminders

VEM Update- H. Schoppmann noted that the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) is still open, please use the State Watch Officer number, (800) 347-0488 to access it

EMDs/EMCs are urged to reach out to the SEOC for requests and for their awareness, especially if opening a local EOC or shelter (or if one is needed and is outside municipality's capability)

VEM regional representatives are trying to get out to communities more following events to assess needs and get assistance, and they are currently hiring for additional VEM regional regional representatives.

The MGT 417-Crisis Management for School Based Incidents for Key Decision Makers training was held in Middlebury on August 8-9 and went well. They would like to get more emergency first responders to these trainings.

LEPC- Danny Kuzio, LEPC rep provided updates from the last meeting

The hazmat team provided updates on recent major spills, including hydrochloric acid leak from rail car (Brattleboro), off-gassing ammonia from paint at 4-story apartment building (Killington)

There was a discussion of proposed OSHA regulations- there are lots of new requirements for training, physicals- it will be a big financial burden, and especially challenging for small fire departments, even the state HazMat team falls under potential requirements

The state is still trying to work out hiring for LEPC position: "HazMat Compliance Officer"

Position has a green light to go-ahead, but is still awaiting approval at Finance

At the next LEPC meeting, Len Wallace, US EPA Region I, Waste and Chemical Compliance Section, will present an explanation of the roles and responsibilities of the LEPC.

The next Regular LEPC Meeting is October 22, 2024

RPC updates (A. L'Roe)

A. L'Roe reminded EMDs to talk to their Select Boards and Planning Commissions about applying for Hazard Mitigation Grants for buyouts and infrastructure improvements. Several Local Hazard Mitigation Plans are being wrapped up and drafts will be submitted to the state- Monkton's LHMP is in draft form and will be available on the ACRPC website: <https://acrpc.org/local-hazard-mitigation-plans/>
Plan submission within 30 days of the disaster declaration is required for increased ERAF funding from the state, and an approved plan is required to receive HMGP funding.

1:00pm Adjourn

Submitted by Andrew L'Roe, ACRPC

Next REMC Meeting- Wednesday, November 13, 2024
Zoom and ACRPC Office

8/14/2024 REMC Meeting Attendees:

Municipal Voting Members

(* = voting member, ** = voting member & proxy)

** Bob Groff, Panton EMC

** Dan Kuzio, Starksboro FD

** Jason Covey, Middlebury EMD and PD

** Barbara Rainville, Lincoln EMD

** Ben Marks, Cornwall EMD

** George Gardner, Ferrisburgh FD

** Sandy Korda, Orwell EMD

** Ethan West, Goshen EMD

** Martin Haitz, Addison EMC

** Valerie Capels, Bristol EMD (partial meeting)

(9 voting members all holding additional proxies, representing 9 communities)

Also attending.

Beate Ankjaer-Jensen, VT Department of Health, Middlebury

Israel Phelps, Collins Aerospace

Harry Schoppmann, Vermont Emergency Management Regional Coordinator

Peter Brown, Middlebury College

Andrew L'Roe, ACRPC Emergency Management Planner