
LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE
Regular Committee Meeting Minutes
March 11, 2021
via Zoom

A. CALL TO ORDER – Chair Warren called to order the March 11, 2021 meeting at 12:04 pm.

B. ROLL CALL – (Quorum established by at least one member present from four different categories.)

Present:

Category 1: Valerie Nelson, Assembly Liaison

Category 2: Fire Chief Craig Warren, LEPC Chair (SFD); Robert Baty (SPD Chief); Geraldine Laux (TSA)

Category 3: Becky Meiers (KCAW)

Category 4: Mim McConnell; Justin Mullenix

Category 5: Scott Wagner (NSRAA)

Category 6: Joel Hanson; Robert Hattle

Category 7: Jennifer Klejka, LEPC Coordinator (SFD)

Absent:

Category 2: George Bennett Jr (SEARHC); Shannon Freitas (SEARHC); vacancy; vacancy; Lance Ewers, (SPD)

Category 3: vacancy, vacancy

Category 4: Amy Zanuzoski (Sitka Counseling)

Category 5: Trish White, LEPC Vice-Chair (White's Pharmacy)

Category 6: Mary Ann Hall (Retired Medical Technologist)

Others Present: Paul Schmaus (Sitka Red Cross); Darryl Ault (SHARK Sitka ham radio club).

C. Welcome & Introductions:

Chief Warren introduced recently appointed LEPC member Geraldine Laux, appointed under Category 2. Geraldine Laux provided some background information on her experience - she has previously served on an LEPC in Montana & has been a Red Cross volunteer. She realized there was a lack of representation from the airport on Sitka's LEPC. Members welcomed Ms. Laux. Brenda Thayer was introduced as a new member to Sitka Red Cross.

D. APPROVAL of AGENDA: March 11, 2021

Chief Warren removed from the template agenda inactive items under H. Reports: 1. Pandemic Committee; 5. Food Committee. Chief Warren noted the Pandemic Committee could be added after the current COVID pandemic has subsided and there is no longer an active EOC.

Chief Warren added to this meeting's agenda under J. New Business: Report on LEPC authorization.

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Regular Meeting of February 11, 2021.

M-Meiers/S- McConnell to approve the minutes of February 11, 2021.

Motion carried.

F. COMMUNICATIONS

1. **SHARK/ARES Report:** SHARK members Darryl Ault and Becky Meiers provided the report: the mobile command post continues to be developed and fund raising is on-going. The mobile command post consists of three radios: VHF, UHF & VHF. The club recently acquired a "Go Box", which is an easily portable array of multiband radio, transmission and reception equipment. The club has acquired an antenna. Logistical issues to acquire the trailer from the lower 48 are

being worked out. There will be a field day at Mt Edgecumbe High School on June 26, 2021. It will be a demonstration and contest event. The public is encouraged to attend, and join the club. Regular meetings are 2pm on the first Saturday, monthly at the Sportsman Association building. A "Go Fund Me" link has been set up for any who would like to donate to the club.

2. **Broadcast Communications Update:** Meiers reported the radio-to-go rebuild project continues with Coast Alaska. The process has begun to merge with Alaska Public Broadcasting Incorporated, which was the entity to serve the rural satellite system. The contract was recently awarded to Alaska Public Media, KSKA in Anchorage. Coast Alaska decided to go into the process of merging. In addition to Sitka, radio-to-go boxes will be located in Anchorage and Unalaska.

KCAW revised guidelines for public service announcements are almost complete. Evergreen PSA's can be developed to be played continuously or seasonally. Ideas for PSA's are welcomed.

G. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. HazMat Report – Jenny Klejka, SFD LEPC Coordinator reported Tier II submissions have been received from the 36 entities required to report, there are only three remaining to submit reports. Any questions can be directed to Klejka at the Fire Hall.
2. LEPC Public Information Officer (PIO) – Chief Warren announced the appointment of Becky Meiers as Public Information Officer for LEPC. The primary duty will be psa's for LEPC.
3. Sitka Red Cross – Paul Schmaus reiterated and encouraged continued vigilance of wearing face masks. An additional benefit of face mask wearing - few incidents of influenza this season.

H. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. **Coronavirus EOC updates**

Chief Warren, Incident Commander (IC) for the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), reported the vaccination rate continues to climb. Tomorrow will be the first day the Johnson & Johnson vaccine will be offered. There are plenty of open slots available for appointments for vaccine through clinics held by Harry Race/Whites Pharmacies and SEARHC. Residents 16 and older are eligible for the Pfizer vaccine (available through SEARHC).

Chief Warren remains concerned about spread of the virus. Recently there have been at least five cases in Sitka of vaccinated individuals testing positive, asymptomatic. In two of those cases there were contact spread positive tests from the vaccinated individuals to another individual(s), also asymptomatic. There simply is no force field around individuals whom were vaccinated. With the upcoming Spring Break and increased travel of Sitka residents, continued vigilance is required of all. The Johnson & Johnson/Jansen vaccine is well suited for those whom do not want to have a second dose, transient individuals, and those unable to be available for a second dose in the required time frame (such as those engaged in the fisheries).

As Incident Commander, Chief Warren will closely monitor case rates. Case rates are always a week behind the actual time a person has contracted the virus. Once there has been a reduction of cases for at least a full week following Spring Break travel, he will consider an EOC shift from mitigation to recovery.

I. NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Brief History of the Local Emergency Planning Committee** – Chief Warren provided an overview of the origins of Local Emergency Planning Committees: in the late 1980's clean-up of "Super Fund" HazMat sites (hazardous materials pollution of a large area costing millions of dollars to clean up) were determined to be best facilitated through advisory committees from the

local area. There are seven categories to be represented in this advisory group, and most of the categories are required to have more than one representative of that category. On the bottom “footer” of the LEPC Roster, the seven designated categories of membership are listed and municipal, state and federal authorizations are referenced. The Federal Register lists SARA Title III: Superfund Amendment and Reauthorization Act (SARA). SARA Title III designates the State is to be involved through the formation of the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC), which would obtain reports from local communities via Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPC). The State of Alaska took this to the next level, recognizing LEPC’s and SERC would provide the platform to plan for all hazards and emergencies to local communities and the State (earthquake, pandemic, tsunami, volcanic eruption, any local hazard). Chief Warren encourages LEPC members and the public to bring forward topics for consideration and to ask the hard questions about the plan for any hazard or emergency. Some of these may be outside the purview of LEPC and the Municipality (ie: the airport plan falls under FAA and the State of Alaska). LEPC is authorized to respond to hazards and emergencies that fall within the municipality’s domain. Chief Warren emphasized the important role and work of LEPC, and appreciates every member’s participation, even when that participation might seem limited to meeting attendance. LEPC information is available to the public via the Clerk’s office, the City’s public website under Boards and Commissions, and via freedom of information requests. Assembly Liaison Valorie Nelson confirmed the LEPC roster, minutes and agendas are published on the City’s website, via the Clerk’s office, under Boards and Commissions.
<http://www.cityofsitka.com/government/clerk/boards/info/emergency/index.html>

J. COMMITTEE COMMENTS: As possible, Chief Warren would like to begin to present at least one emergency plan per meeting for LEPC consideration and updates. LEPC members will be provided information from Chief Warren in advance when a plan will be presented for review.

K. SET NEXT MEETING AGENDA/DATE(S)

Regular Meeting Date: monthly on the 2nd Thursday at noon.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, **April 8, 2021** at noon.

Attendance via zoom link or, given COVID risk level, in-person at Harrigan Centennial Hall.

M. ADJOURNMENT:

M/S to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Chair Warren adjourned the meeting at 12:45pm.