

LEYDEN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
Thursday, December 14, 2023 6:00pm
Town Office Building

Present members: Sara Seinberg, Liz Kidder, Dave Pomeranz, Nik Adamski, Marcia Miller, Tom Raffensperger, John Richardson, Anders Furguson, Beth Kuzdeba

Absentees:

Audience: Ken Medvetz

Meeting called to order: 6:02 pm by Dave Pomerantz

Minutes: motion to approve minutes by Marcia Miller, seconded by Sara. Approved unanimously

COMMITTEE PLANNING:

The Leyden Emergency Management Committee discussed meeting every few months.

UPDATES:

In 2024 LEMC will work on draft for the Select Board to read and begin to understand their role in emergency management. MEMA has a form that is universal for towns despite size, needs holes filled, communications is one of those holes that needs to be figured out. Resources needed to make a phone call to the right people to get help. Discuss with the board their responsibility/role with LEMC. Haven't declared any emergencies but need Select Board to sign off on emergency processes. Want to get MEMA to approve and then sign off with the Select Board. Need to move the process along to have good communication between committee and Select Board.

Towns people very engaged and a lot of good feedback from Ready Fest including how great Speakers talk was. People took time to write nice emails (Sara) about their enjoyment of Ready Fest. Positive about experience as a whole. Shelbourne official loved her sweatshirt and said it was great. Dave - review perspective of everyone at Ready Fest at next meeting including Health Dept. Fire dept. Police.

STATUS OF CEMP:

- CEMP - recruitment for EMD, looking for CO-EMD
- Beth - people signed up for first aid/CPR -- how would you like community participation? If we need to open a cooling and heating center can have those individuals help with shifts
- Neighborhood concept, where do people live and how can they be resources in their neighborhoods.

Sara- recruit neighborhood captains, mailing going out with three surveys and a rough draft of a map. Met with Sargent to talk about computer aided dispatch systems in the region. After opting in then you can say what you want to go in the system. There is a form to fill in saying a message that can be added. Like a dog or oxygen tank on premises, that only goes to emergency responders and not over the radio. One of the most important emergency responses is opting in to the CAD system, all citizens information is protected. Work on finding the best way to get responses from town citizens across communication challenges, suggestions are sending mailing, have people respond on the website, post at the library and on town website. Follow up with who filled out the form. CAD - is the same system that fire uses, communication received would be the same. The police computers list what is needed first as regards to care and focus for first responders or the information that the property owners need

emergency responders to know. It's important to have basic information for emergency response but it can become cumbersome to keep all data current. Discussion on different information that can be added such as lock boxes, COVID notification, dogs and other information that first responders would need.

Possible part of the responsibility of LEMC is send out something once a year to update info in system and remind people to check smoke detectors

Items for survey to go out:

- Need neighborhood map
- Find current mailing address list (Janell)

Discussion where to put supplies and using questions on survey to prod people to do something on their own. The primary job is to help people be more prepared. Inspire people to have what supplies needed for their household.

FIRE-

- Fire Department has seven members now with one being a first responder
- Recent incidents 4-5 fire fighters responded - good response
- Basic 6 finished by one of the fire fighter. Four fire fighters are qualified for interior fire.
- Rapid Intervention training in the spring for the whole fire department. EMR training in January to February, the level of training is 24 hours, two or three Tuesday nights and then two full days, there is space for more people to join in the training. Tom will email committee about the trainings
- Need an emergency responder coordinator, need to coordinate EMS and training. All firefighters get first responder training. We should have a write up for first responder coordinator starting small with first responders to provide help until higher aid can get there.
- Took brush truck out of service, failed inspection.
- Engine 4 for brush fires until we get a mini pumper. Looking for a mini pumper instate but is difficult. Out of state is harder to do. The Fire Department needs a vehicle with a good tank, pumping capacity, and can have a few people to ride in it as well.
- Tom is working on a policy to use personal vehicles for first responders. The goal is to keep people alive while waiting for an ambulance. John mentioned people need to drive responsibly so that no liability comes to the town.
- Quote from insulation for a grant, Dave and Tom chat about quote for insulation.
- Dave- thank you to the fire dept. Training is every Tuesday at 6pm. Dave is planning on coming to visit some Tuesday night. Key pad is going to get changed soon and when it does the Fire Dept will let the committee know.

POLICE:

Bernardston Police plan to going to invite/integrate Fire Dept. to some training at Bernardston School:

- shootings
- first aid first responder
- Practice commands
- Protocol for minors driving vehicles in an accident

GIS GRAPHICS:

Dave- Presented an interactive map being created with a start of 15 different items in the digital map by a resident in Leyden that is a GIS specialist for FRCOG. Not clear on where all the data was gathered from yet, maybe highway. Eventually would like all utility lines marked on the map as well as paved and unpaved roads, dead ends, neighborhoods and farms. Culverts are marked from fair to good as well as location of the dry hydrants. This will be a useful tool when completed. Police and fire to be able to pull this up in vehicles.

Sara asked if the GIS specialist is able to provide a readable map with street names and some shading to show the borders of each neighborhood and other easy to read information that could then be sent out with the survey. The Ready Fest map has the topography in it which makes it harder to read needs and street names.

PUBLIC SAFETY:

Public Safety met last week to go over and goals of the committee and the goals have been met. This committee was set up as a temporary advisory to the Select Board with the original goal to make people feel safe with emergency Fire, Police etc. and this goal has been met. The E&R grant is almost finished, it will be written up and spent by the end of the month. Through this grant the town was able to get

- security for the building
- office and computer set ups
- Emergency management now has a desk in the office with the Town Clerk and Admin. Asst.
- The Fire Station cleaned out

Possible merging of some activities into the LEMC in the future as there have been other districts merging. Some of the towns are mismatched on how they are doing their emergency and need to change things. Some Towns have seen a change in emergency response expenses from paying nothing to paying \$30,000 a year. Right now the town has an agreement with Bernardston for police and Colrain for ambulance and it is working well.

Liz suggested a request to the Select Board to merge public safety by the end of the month into LEMC. LEMC will work as a group so that if an emergency arises all areas work together. Anders and Liz are interested to continue in activity in LEMC in public safety. Full support from all members of the committee to merge knowing that if the needs arise again a public safety advisory committee can be created again. It was the consensus of the committee to propose to the Select Board to merge Public Safety into LEMC.

PLANNING:

- Discussion on how a CO-EMD can be appointed/chosen
- How often to meet with building the committee vs maintenance of committee

EMPG GRANT:

- Last year the town bought laptops and TV with the \$2500
- Grant amount is based on population –
- This year town looking at boosters for fire and other departments; police got repeaters and booster and it has helped with service in Leyden
- 413 Repeater was the company Bernardston Police used

- Dec, 29th grant write up due. Not a competitive grant
- Focus each year on equipment.

CO-EMD:

- Don't know how long it will take to find a Co-EMD
- Division of labor is still being decided
- Would like someone with a background in emergency response/management
- Plenty of online training available that a Co-EMD could learn it
- Possibly a deputy

PRIORITIES/NEXT STEPS:

- Follow up with residents after survey is out
- Have a presentation at town hall to get the word out about emergency management
- See about getting ID badges that state police recognize for LEMC member in case of emergency
- Highway working on getting high visibility vest
- Talk to Ryan about maps - Dave
- EMPG Grant at the end of the month - Liz
- Meet every other month, meet with SB and then committee next meeting next month

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Beth- FRCOG started talking about emergency preparedness for individual health departments and CPHS member from every board of health but ran out of time but it is on their radar, they haven't ever dipped into emergency preparedness.

Next meeting February 8th, 2024.

Motion to adjourn at 7:34pm by Sara, John 2nd. Approved unanimously.

Janell Howard
Administrative Assistant