

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT USERS BOARD MEETING

January 12, 2024 · 9:00 a.m.

Pennington County Administration Building | EOC

Board members in attendance: Jason Culberson, Rapid City Fire Department; Travis Lasseter, Pennington County Commission; Brian Mueller, Pennington County Sheriff's Office; Christian Sigel, Rapid City Police Department (alternate); Gary Sortland, Pennington County Fire Service Board.

Others in attendance: Dustin Willett, Emergency Manager; Alexa White, Deputy Director; Brooke Love, Staff Assistant.

- I. MEETING CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m. by J Culberson, Rapid City Fire Department.
- II. PUBLIC COMMENTS: Nothing was brought forth.
- III. APPROVE AGENDA: *Motion to approve January 12, 2024, agenda by B Mueller, G Sortland second. Motion carried.*
- IV. APPROVE October 13th DRAFT MINUTES (Motion): *Motion to approve October 13, 2023, minutes by G Sortland, B Mueller second. Motion carried.*
- V. CONFIRM BOARD MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES: No change.
- VI. OLD BUSINESS
 - a. CERT Training: White reported that the Fall class graduated fourteen people (a mix of teens and adults). To date, 426 have been through the program. Currently, EM needs someone to train the trainers. The current plan is to have the new EM Specialist take a virtual training class to be able to step into the trainer role as soon as possible.
 - b. Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan (PDM)
 - i. Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP): Willett reported attending individual meetings. A White recently attended the meeting in Box Elder. Because of its size, Rapid City will have department specific meetings rather than one large meeting. Willett reported that wildland urban interface needs defined and that we are leaning strongly towards following Colorado's lead on how they have defined urban interface and some of the processes for delineating. He is confident that the products and deliverables coming out of this process will be good.
 - c. Duty Officer Program: Willett reported that he wanted to have the SOP out this week; however, it will be at least another week until completion. He is close to finishing and the officers have been identified. The first big task is making sure alert and warning system have additional personnel who can send out public alerts. There are nuances for public alerts and warnings. He is waiting for one mapping product produced from the Department of Homeland Security. When the SOP is completed, he will send it out to the Board for review.
 - d. Continuity Planning: Willett reported that he has not been able to work on this. Scoping wise, he plans to start with continuity of government, ie. commission and

city council. He stated that working with each department is a more feasible task going forward rather than trying to do a collective (large) group meeting.

- e. 511 Road Closures: Willett reported that there were some issues on how the DOT wanted this to play out. He informed the DOT that Pennington County needed some accommodations to make this work for our community. After a discussion about the issues with the DOT, the DOT sent out a statewide communication agreeing with the processes recommended. A no travel advisory at a county level is going to cover Rapid City, and that cities across SD will adopt the same processes. Willett reported that he submitted recommended names to the DOT for access to the 511 system; however, he has not yet heard back from the DOT when the training for the 511 system will be available. Willett's opinion is that this will be a good thing for the public.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- a. 2024 Homeland Security Grants: Willett reported that the window for grants is January 1, 2024 – February 15, 2024. State radio systems, PPE (albeit not bunker gear) for firefighting HazMat, SWAT/Intel units and technical rescue, and some forms of training all qualify for this grant. Once the closing date has passed, the state will go through a review process. Projects that have been approved for Pennington County will be returned to the EMUB Board and the Board will be responsible for ranking the projects in order of priority. Willett stated that Mark Hughes and Alexa White will attend that regional meeting, work through priorities, and disperse grant dollars out as equitably as possible. The Board collectively discussed the possibility of having a public meeting to present these projects to the public. Willett's thought was, if the projects are straight forward than an email or virtual information could be the best delivery format. However, if the projects contain more technical information, then considering a public meeting may be the best delivery format. It was decided that it would be most helpful to have a public meeting which Willett will plan and schedule.
- b. Staff Turnover: Willett reported that Troy Blevins, EM Specialist, has left for an EM Manager position in Pierre. Adam Davis has been hired as the new EM Specialist. Mr. Davis has a background in volunteer fire-EMT and with a helicopter rescue training and response company.
- c. Office Space: Willett reported that the EM office space is complete; however, we recently lost our hallway storage space to HR who needed the space to accommodate for an additional forthcoming employee.
- d. NIMS: Willett stated, we need to ask how this system can help us in the community. He spoke about how to advance and institutionalize this process, ie. drafting a problem statement. In addition, how to streamline transitions and make them smoother, better, and faster when moving from a normal call to service to widespread disasters. For example, the recent leaning elevator tower downtown, the gas leak in Adoba, and the Shroeder road fire. He stated that the process is looking to answer the questions--can we institutionalize some of these processes that allow us to transfer from normal call of service to management structure. Members of the board reported that there have been good discussions internally and there has been formalization of some of the things departments do day to day to make process more seamless for people out in the field making those decisions; however, the goal would

be to be more prepared for the first operational period and increase communication. It would be beneficial to formalize plans for behind the scenes and secondary responses. Willett responded that there have been great additions from state responders but agrees that we need to look at how the processes come together. Willett reported that the Weather Service used to do a statewide tornado drill and that during this drill, community members would use the opportunity to take part in regulatory emergency drills/plans within their organization. The first year after the Weather Service cut the drill, the EM department received multiple inquiries as to why it did not happen, with claims that the drills were needed for regulatory compliance. Pennington County has since taken over this service, which will include the public alert warning drill, EAS, wireless emergency alerts, weather radio alerts, etc. He stated that this has been a learning process and that during this process, certain questions were raised about when to run the drill that would work best for broadcasters, so as not to interfere with specific televised shows. The month/date/day/hour would need to be at a specific time. After consideration, it was decided that the next drill be held at 1330 on Wednesday, March 20, 2024. It will be the second community wide test. He recommended providing public education about the test and working on the wireless aspect of the alert (individuals can turn certain alerts off on personal cell phones; however, if people turn those off, they must re-enable them to turn the testing processes back on).

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION per SDCL 1-25-2(6): Executive Session was not necessary during this meeting.

IX. ADJOURNMENT: *Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:55am by Culberson, Mueller second. Motion carried.*