

## Westfield Local Emergency Planning Committee

Meeting Minutes of September 1, 2021

1. **Introductions:** Deputy Fire Chief Eric Bishop called the meeting to order and announced the meeting is being recorded. The sign-in sheet and email membership list was passed around. One new member was introduced. Justin Green, from the 104<sup>th</sup> ANG Base, is their new Emergency Manager.
2. **Acceptance of the "Corrected" May 5, 2021 and June 2, 2021 Meeting Minutes:** Deputy Bishop ascertained a motion to accept the "corrected minutes" of the May 5, 2021 meeting and the June 2, 2021 meeting minutes. Jack Leary made the motion. Mark Goodniss seconded the motion.
3. **Recertification of the LEPC:** The recertification application has been submitted but a response has not been received regarding the current status of the application.
4. **Review of LEPC By-Laws:** The recommended and approved updates (address change and optional meeting location) have not been added to the by-laws.
5. **COVID-19:** Currently the numbers are rising rapidly again in the area. There are a couple of clusters that are being monitored. There have been less deaths and hospitalizations because people have received the vaccination.
6. **City Wide Inventory List:** The list has been compiled and is on the City Share drive.
7. **Peter Miller, Director of Community Development:**
  - a. Firework show is being planned for October 9, 2021 at the South Middle School. Atlas will submit the application this week with Fire Prevention. Boys & Girls Club building will need to be secured and unoccupied.
  - b. Requests for comments and input will be opening up in regards to the data center project on Ampad Road.
  - c. There is a project to turn 70 Turnpike Industrial Road (old National Envelope) into a drywall finishing plant.
8. **Upcoming City Events:**
  - a. Pumpkinfest will be held on October 16, 2021 at South Middle School.
  - b. Last WOW concert will also be on October 16, 2021.
  - c. Boys & Girls ½ Marathon is on September 11, 2021 and start time was moved to 10:30 a.m.
  - d. Tree Lighting will be held on November 27, 2021.
9. **Past Events:** No events to discuss.
10. **Emergency Management:**
  - a. During Storm Henry, Cobble Mountain's lower dams, off of Granville Road, had a couple of failures. Crews were called in, heavy equipment brought in and backfilled. The Lt Governor called MEMA and they responded to the area to keep watch of the area. The holding pond was pumped down and water was diverted to keep pressure off of the dam. An inspection by Emergency Management will be done today as more rain is predicted.
  - b. Emergency Management is looking for a new office space.

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- c. Emergency Management acquired a Hummer from UMASS Amherst.
- d. Emergency Management would like to obtain equipment for the City in the case of flooding.

- 11. Report from MRC and CERT:** Ed Mello was unable to attend today's meeting. MRC will be active at the ½ Marathon on September 11, 2021. The CERT Team has a new group of 15 people to be certified. The goal is to build the CERT Team to 50 members. Currently, there is 25 members.
- 12. Tier 2 Updates:** Deputy Fire Chief Kane Jr. was unable to attend today's meeting. He did send an email stating he is waiting for the Bryx system to update so Tier 2 info can be uploaded into the site files.
- 13. MEMA:** Our new contact at MEMA is Scott Flebotte.  
Link to MEMA course calendar website <https://mematraining.chs.state.ma.us/TRS/trainingCalendar.do>
- 14. New Business:** This agenda item was incorporated into Departmental Reports.
- 15. Departmental Reports:**

104th – ANG is working on paperwork for the Department of Defense.

Airport – A site visit was conducted a couple of months ago for an airport conversion. Department of Defense will decide on having F35 or F15EX but the new jet wouldn't arrive until 2025.

The tabletop exercise went well and positive feedback was received. There are some action items to be followed up on.

A full-scale exercise does need to be scheduled and is required to be held every three years.

A police familiarization at the airport needs to be scheduled.

There was a security breach during the summer. A vehicle broke through one of the security gates and drove around the airfield before being stopped by security personnel. Gate 36 is currently blocked and emergency personnel cannot enter through this gate. First responders need to use Gate 35 in case of an emergency response. Sports team charters are flying in and out of the airport. Between UMASS and 2 visiting teams playing UMASS, there will be over 1200 passengers coming through the airport between the upcoming weekend and the end of October.

Baystate Noble – Currently the hospital has six active COVID cases at the hospital. Some protocols were activated again. Visitors are being allowed but limited to one visitor per room per day.

Dispatch – The quantity of medical calls was reviewed. In August 2020, there were 391 medical calls. August of 2021 had 535 medical calls. July 2021 had 480 medical calls; June 2021 had 461 medical calls. The 535 medical calls are just medical emergencies and does not include MVA or non-emergency ambulance transports.

As of July 1, 2021, the Westfield Dispatch Center is taking Southwick's dispatch services.

DPW – The upgrade to the fuel station has been completed. Currently waterways and drainage problems are being checked.

Flood – Army Corps of Engineers failed the Little River levee again. The tree debris has been cleared at the culverts. Low level of vegetation has also been cleared.

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Mestek – The company is expanding and some employees will be working at a facility on Westfield Industrial Park Rd.

Purchasing – Working with FEMA and MEMA for reimbursements for COVID-related expenses. Two of the grants were received and the vaccination information was submitted. Money was put aside for the COVID rooms for the schools through the Cares Act. The Cares Act is only allowed up until December. Upgrades to water and sewer projects are being reviewed.

School Dept. -- Grades 1 through 12 returned to school on Monday, August 30, 2021. Preschool and Kindergarten are returning on September 7, 2021. All students and staff need to wear masks. There is a new virtual school for the City for grades Kindergarten to 8<sup>th</sup> grade and has 120 enrolled students. The first safety meeting with Westfield Public Schools, Westfield Fire and Westfield Police is scheduled for September 9, 2021.

SWWT – There was a slope failure at the upper lagoon. Office of Dam Safety & MEMA was on site while SWWT was making repairs which have now been completed. With the rain expected today, personnel will be monitoring this slope. An engineering firm will be visiting the site to offer suggestions on re-facing the slope of the dam.

WMH – The big construction project is continuing. A new parking lot is being constructed behind the Clark Building. The old boiler plant is being removed. Staff is being tested weekly for COVID. The contractors on site are also being tested weekly.

WFD – The department is working with the School Department and training in houses and using a smoke machine to practice firefighter down and the rescue of occupants. The smoke machine obscures the firefighters' vision and replicates the situations in a house fire.

WG&E – Public Officials Newsletter was mailed a couple of weeks ago. The newsletter highlighted cyberattacks on pipeline security. The mailing for emergency responder program will be mailed on September 15, 2021. All LEPC members will be receiving this mailing. There are a lot of training videos and websites for information. WG&E would like to coordinate a field exercise and would prefer to have this exercise in the 2021 calendar year.

WPD – The police station has a generator inside the building that has an exhaust leak. With the storms and loss of power, the generator has been running lately. When this happens, the whole basement needs to be evacuated. WPD partnered with Behavioral Health Network and have the ability to co-respond to people in crisis. She works part-time out of the community policing office. At the end of September, a full-time person will also be added to co-respond to crisis calls.

WSU – Students have moved in and there are approximately 1800 students on campus. Classes start tomorrow, September 2, 2021 and the number can increase to 3000 students.

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Deputy Bishop ascertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Jack Leary made the motion.

Tammy Tefft seconded the motion.

10:05 a.m. – Meeting Adjourned

**Next Meeting** – October 6, 2021