



Local Emergency Planning Committee

Gem County LEPC
October 20th, 2020
Meeting Minutes

In Attendance:

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| Laurie Boston, Gem Co. EM | Bill Butticci, Gem Co. Commissioner |
| Curt Christensen, Emmett Fire Dept. | Elbia Christensen, EOC Logistics |
| Liz Gochmour, LEPC Secretary | Tahja Jensen, Prosecutor’s Office |
| Don Jones, Gem County EMS | Steve Kunka, Emmett Police |
| Bev Martin, Sheriff’s Posse | Jessica McBride, 101 st WMD CST |
| Fire Dist. #2 | Gordon Petrie, Emmett City Mayor |
| Lorin Price, Indian Meadows Home | Mark Rekow, Gem Co. Commissioner |
| Owner’s Association | Terry Wilson, Southwest Dist. Health |
| Lori Sperry, Southwest Dist. Health | Lillian Toumey, Id. Dept. of H & W |

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Gem County Local Emergency Planning Committee is an organized gathering of community members, response agencies, organizations, and public officials, sanctioned by Congress to work together prior to any emergency, natural or man-made disaster, or hazardous material incident, in an attempt to improve planning, response, and coordination as well as the mutual understanding of capabilities and resources to the situation.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Gem County Local Emergency Planning Committee is to enhance capabilities in order to successfully mitigate, respond to, and recover from emergency situations in Gem Co community.

Meeting called to order by Curt Christensen at 8:30a.m.

Approval of September minutes:

- Motion to approve September minutes as written by Bill Butticci. Second by Mayor Petrie.

IDHW Idaho Strong Program – Lillian Toumey, COVID-19 Crisis Community Resource Specialist (CCRS):

- The Idaho Strong Program is a grant funded program through FEMA and SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration). The grant is called CCP (Crisis Counseling Program). The team is made up of seven team members supporting the different mental health regions.
- It is a 9-month grant lasting until June 2021.
- Their focus is on helping people that have been impacted directly by the pandemic emotionally and financially.
- Part of Lillian's role is resource compilation to find available resources at the federal or state level, local organizations, or other opportunities to help those that are struggling or may need emotional support.
- Lillian is not a licensed counselor but has received training on how to respond to this pandemic.
- The program is confidential.
- The COVID Help Now line is staffed 8am – 8pm. Phone number is (986) 867-1073 or toll free at (866) 947-5186. People can call if they have a need for resources or emotional support. The responders on the help line can link callers to one of the CCR Specialists to help them.
- Examples of resources include: Help with testing, rental or mortgage assistance, those struggling with distance learning, a need for food, etc.
- How you can help: Get the word out. Referring people. Share community needs.
- Lillian’s contact information: email: Lillian.Toumey@dhw.Idaho.gov and phone number (986) 200-8995

COVID-19 Update:

- **Laurie Boston, Gem County Emergency Management:** Southwest District Health has put Gem County into the Yellow category. Valor Health and the School District continue to see cases. There are 388 total cases, 4 deaths (individuals primarily over the age of 70), and 241 improved for Gem County. Payette, Ada, Canyon, and Malheur counties continue to be hot spots. SWDH will potentially have strike teams available in the next month that will be able to provide testing to the counties.
- **Curt Christensen, City of Emmett Fire:** Valor Health has reported that they have had one transfer out of a COVID patient and a few pediatric COVID positive tests.
- **Lori Sperry, Southwest District Health Department:** A more successful COVID test is now available. The Binex now test is a 15-minute rapid antigen test. The first 50 - 100 tests will also have a second sample sent off to the Idaho Bureau of Labs (IBL) to double check the accuracy of the test. SWDH will have the ability to send these test kits to other places if they have the CLIA waiver. The CLIA waiver is given by IBL allowing you to preform many laboratory tests that have a very low failure rate outside of an actual laboratory setting. Some locations in Emmett that have a CLIA waiver in place are: Albertsons Savon Pharmacy, Emmett Eye Center, Emmett Family Medicine, Emmett Medical Center, Emmett of Cascadia, River's Edge, and Valor Health. One of the concerns for a private entity administering the test is that the cost of the Binex now test is not allowed to be charged back to the client if they are a teacher, an educational staff worker, or a student. Some of the tier one groups allow for a small administrative fee to be billed back. SWDH will probably not send them to a private entity until all other resources have been exhausted. Currently with the number of tests available they are only testing those in the tier one group, first responders and healthcare workers, and they must be symptomatic to be tested. Teachers and educational staff workers can also be tested. Lori's phone number is (208) 371-3197 and email is Lori.Sperry@phd3.idaho.gov for any questions.

Public Comments: No public comments.

General Reports:

- **Bill Butticci, Gem County Commissioners:** Cares Act Reimbursement requests for EOC and EMS equipment have been approved. The County Clerk's office is open for taking absentee ballots. The regular polling stations will be open as well.
- **Tahja Jensen, Gem County:** There was a meeting to work on a memorandum of understanding between City and County officials for use of the dedicated Emergency Operations Center. Courts have started the jury trial process. The backlog of cases should start to be resolved.
- **Mayor Petrie, City of Emmett:** The City was able to refinance the bonds for the Wastewater Treatment Plant which took close to two years off the length of the bonds. A lot of construction is going on, both public and private. Street work will be done to prepare for a grant that Mayor Butticci had received. In the last week of March construction will begin to widen John's between 12th and 4th streets. Power poles will be moved, sidewalks will be put in, traffic circles will be put in at 12th and 4th, and new pavement will be put down.
- **Curt Christensen, City Fire:** Care Act: City Hall will upgrade their IT equipment to be more accommodating to the open meeting laws by improving their audio/visual capabilities. The City Hall Annex will be remodeled to include a dedicated EOC on the 2nd floor. All City staff will have a computer to help with working remotely. All but \$12.35 was used of the Care Act money. Hats of to Mike Knittel for presenting to the committee to get these requests approved.

City Fire: The air quality is better and the fire danger is down and the burn ban has been lifted. A re-evaluation of the water system was requested with the ISO and will be done later in the month.

- **Laurie Boston, Gem County Emergency Manager:** One positive thing to note about COVID that has come about is the cooperation and collaboration between the City and the County for the benefit to our community.
- **Steve Kunka, City Police:** There has been a decrease in calls in the last few weeks in general and family disturbances have gone down. Once kids are back in school there are other resources available to those that need help that may have helped. There has been an increase in mental health issues, not just the normal calls for mental holds. Region 3 has increased resources available with help over the phone and with centers over the hill to help those in crisis. They also have a task force that can come to Emmett. October brings Stranger Danger presentations to the schools. The homeless population has increased at the Plaza and Washington bridges.
- **Terry Wilson, Southwest District Health:** It is flu season, get your flu shots. SWDH has been working on MOU's for closed pods. They are making sure that health facilities are ready for the COVID vaccine when they become available. In preparation for winter, make sure you have a go kit in your cars.

Meeting adjourned at 9:19 am. Mayor Petrie moved to adjourn. Bill Butticci seconded the motion.

Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 17th at 8:30 am. Direction will be provided at a later date on whether the meeting will be in person or remote.