



Local Emergency Planning Committee

Gem County LEPC
January 19th, 2021
Meeting Minutes

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.

In Attendance:

Laurie Boston, Gem Co. EM
Curt Christensen, Emmett Fire Dept.
Shauna Davis, Emmett School Dist.
Robert Feeley, IOEM
Tahja Jensen, Prosecutor’s Office
Troy Lindquist, NOAA
Len McCaulou, Gem Co. EMS
Dale Mock, Sherriff’s Posse
Gordon Petrie, Emmett City Mayor
Kandice Rembelski, Valley Family Health Care
TJ Wilson, Southwest Dist. Health
Donnie Wunder, Gem Co. Sherriff

Bill Butticci, Gem Co. Commissioner
Quincy Chung, USDA Boise Natl Forest
Bryan Elliott, Gem Co. Commissioner
Liz Gochmour, LEPC Secretary
Steve Kunka, Emmett Police
Bev Martin, Gem Co. Sheriff’s Posse
Fire Dist. #2
Steve Nebeker, Emmett City Councilman
Mark Rekow, Gem Co. Commissioner
Denise Sorensen, Emmett City Councilman
Lynsie Vickery, Emmett Fire Dept.
Craig Woods, Emmett School Dist.

Meeting called to order by Curt Christensen at 8:31a.m.

Approval of October, November, and December Minutes:

- Motion to approve October, November, and December minutes as written by Mayor Petrie. 2nd by Dale Mock.

COVID-19 Vaccine Facts – Lynsie Vickery, Emmett Fire:

- Lynsie has a degree in Biology and worked several years in a pharmaceutical research lab. She is not an expert on this subject, but does understand the science behind it.
- How the Corona Virus affects our cells: Our genetic material or instructions contain everything about us. Each one of our cells contain this information and have the ability to copy itself. The Corona virus is an RNA virus. All of its genetic material is contained on a single strand of RNA that also contain the instructions to duplicate the virus. What RNA virus’s lack is the machinery to make copies of itself which is why they need a host, which is us. On the outside of the Corona virus are protein spikes that bind into a spike on the outside of our cells like a key to a lock. Because they bind and fit, our cells let the virus into our cells to use our machinery to start replicating itself. Our cells then package the new copy of the virus all together and send it back out into our body to infect more cells.
- The basic premise of a vaccine is to show our immune system a harmless version of a virus, so that our bodies can mount an immune response and attack it with antibodies. The next time a live version of the virus shows up in our body our immune system will recognize it and start the fight.
- Vaccines have typically been made by weakening a live virus or just using a part of the virus.
- The vaccine for the Corona virus is made by separating out a small section of RNA. This piece of RNA is just the instructions for the spike protein on the outside of the virus. Our cells take in this piece of RNA

and use the instructions to make the spike protein. Without the other parts of the virus instructions present, this spike protein ends up on the outside of our cell that it infected. Our immune system sees the spike and mounts an attack on this cell because of the spike protein.

- This tiny piece of RNA is very fragile and quickly falls apart, so it has to be stabilized. To keep the RNA stable it is surrounded with a combination of fats, salts, and sugars. This is a big part of why the storage temperatures vary for the two current vaccines. Both vaccines are based on the same technology, but Moderna found a better way to stabilize the RNA, so it doesn't require storage at ultra-low temperatures.
- The technology for RNA vaccines has been around for more than a decade. Scientists had done research in the past on the Zika virus, Flu, and other vaccines. The whole world's focus was centered on a single mission. The money and the need were where it needed to be for this vaccine to be created. The human trial included 70,000 people. The findings were that the vaccine provided people with about a 90% chance of fighting the Corona virus.
- Other countries have been replicating and copying the vaccine very quickly and have been sloppy about it. These copies have a high occurrence of messing up part of the copy. This is called a mutation. Sometimes mutations make a virus more likely to survive. When this happens, the new "variant" will be more successful. The variants in the UK and South Africa have a mutation in their spike protein that makes them gain access to our cells even easier. This is one reason why they could be more contagious, but will not make people sicker. Scientists believe that the vaccines will still protect us. There is a concern that eventually a mutation could cause the spike proteins to change in a way that disguises the virus from our immune system again. Because of this, they are tracing the different variants.
- In Norway they are investigating several deaths in terminally ill patients. These people died within a few days of getting the vaccine. If someone is nearing the end of life, mounting an immune response to this spike protein might require too much effort. There looks to be a point at which the vaccine should not be recommended, based on age and overall health.

Public Comments: No public comments.

General Reports:

- **Rob Feeley, Idaho Office of Emergency Management:** IOEM is continuing their COVID response and they are monitoring a wind storm that came through Northern Idaho last week that still has a few people out of power.
- **Mark Rekow, Gem County Commissioners:** The Commissioners continue to work with land use matters. They are also wanting to address gas/oil issues.
- **Donnie Wunder, Gem County Sheriff:** Donnie was sworn in last week as Gem County Sheriff. He was appointed/promoted/hired Dave Timony as Chief Deputy, Will Barry as Captain, Jason McIntosh as Lead Investigator, and Chad Payne as a new Investigator. The jail has been pretty quiet and things at the Driver's License seem to be running smoothly.
- **Laurie Boston, Gem County Emergency Manager:** There have been 46 new COVID cases this week with 2 deaths. 90 first dose Moderna vaccines were given on Friday. Approximately 200 people from our community have been vaccinated at least once through Valor Health. Vaccination clinics are being set up for the school district. They are getting ready to get the 65+ age group vaccinated. **Bev Martin:** If you received your first vaccination on Friday how will you be notified to receive your second vaccination? **Tahja Jensen:** Valor Health is trying to set up an online scheduling system. Laurie will follow up with Valor Health and get back to Bev about getting scheduled.
- **Len McCaulou, Gem County EMS:** Last month EMS had a total of 218 total runs. There was a huge increase in BLS transfers mostly being COVID related. EMS had 76 second out requests in December. They have put in an application to get their 4th ambulance put back into service and while they wait for

their new ambulance in April or May. In the last 2 weeks they have had a decrease in the amount of COVID transfers.

- **Mayor Petrie, City of Emmett:** The City is continuing to work on a capital impact fee model. There have been more issues with State Legislature and funding in local governments. Johns Street construction continues as they are finding things buried under the street that were not documented.
- **Steve Kunka, City of Emmett Police:** There has been traffic changes at the 12th Street extension in front of the old Saunders Fruit Ranch. The bridge on the extension is now a one-way bridge, allowing North bound traffic only. South bound traffic leading to the cycle park or going out of town is no longer allowed. Traffic has decreased with patrols, but continues to be a problem. Please pass on the information.
- **Denise Sorensen, Emmett City Council:** The senior citizen population is anticipating getting the vaccine as soon as possible.
- **Curt Christensen, City of Emmett Fire:** City Fire had 207 calls for last year. Approximately a quarter of those calls were service calls involving smoke alarms and car seats. Please reach out to the Fire department if you know of someone that has been in a car accident and needs a new car seat or if anyone is in need of a new smoke alarm.
- **TJ Wilson, Southwest District Health:** SWDH is working with the State for continued vaccine roll out as they become available. Stay warm and get your flu shot.

Meeting adjourned at 9:19 am. TJ Wilson moved to adjourn. 2nd by Mayor Petrie.

Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 16th at 8:30 am. Direction will be provided at a later date on whether the meeting will be in person or remote.