



Local Emergency Planning Committee

Gem County LEPC
November 16th, 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:

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| Will Babcock, Emmett Police Dept. | Laurie Boston, Gem Co. EM |
| Jay Breidenbach, NOAA | Bill Butticci, Gem Co. Commissioner |
| Curt Christensen, Emmett Fire Dist. | Liz Gochmour, LEPC Secretary |
| Tahja Jensen, Gem Co. Prosecutor | Bev Martin, Gem Co. Sheriff's Posse/
Fire Dist. #2 |
| Janet Monti, Friendship Coalition | Heidi Novich, IOEM |
| Steve Nebeker, Emmett City
Councilman | Gordon Petrie, Emmett City Mayor |
| Mark Rekow, Gem Co. Commissioner | Denise Sorenson, Emmett City
Councilman |
| Barbara Weber, American Red Cross | |
| TJ Wilson, SWDH | |

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

Approval of October 19th Minutes:

- Motion to approve October 19th minutes by TJ Wilson. 2nd by Mayor Petrie. Motion passes.

Winter Weather Outlook for 2021/22 – Jay Breidenbach, National Weather Service:

- Season in Review: There were a record number of billion-dollar weather and climate disasters. Four tropical systems hit the gulf coast area, the most notable was Hurricane Ida. Hurricane Ida caused 50 billion dollars in damage, took 116 lives and caused flooding in several states up to New York.
- Drought Situation: Drought has been affecting most of the Western United States. The entire state of Idaho is experiencing drought. Wildfire and drought were the biggest disasters for the Western part of the United States. It may take more than a season's worth of precipitation to recover from the current drought conditions.
- Reservoir Situation: The Deadwood and Cascade reservoirs are currently at about 50% capacity, which is below normal for this time of year. There is plenty of space if we do have a big winter so flooding should not become a problem as we head into Spring.
- 2021-2022 Winter Outlook: La Nina conditions are expected again. We should see more than normal precipitation this winter with cooler temperatures. December through February should be are most active for winter storms. There has been 2.61 inches of precipitation since October. Hopefully we will be at 6 inches by the end of February with an average of 12 inches for the year.
- Current Weather Forecast: Temperature highs in the 40's with a hard freeze tonight into the low 20's. More precipitation moving back into the area Thursday night into Friday. Thanksgiving week could bring our first snow. There is an active pattern that should continue into December.

- Coordination with Emergency Management During the Winter Weather: When big storm events are expected, information will be sent to Laurie to distribute to the community.

Public Comments:

No public comments at this time.

General Reports:

- **Bev Martin, Fire District #2:** The Ola Community is coming back to normal with the school reopening. The Ola Community hall is now available for activities and the Fire Station will not have to be used for community events. We do have a problem with the generator at the Hall. It needs to be serviced and fixed as the battery is not starting the unit.
- **Laurie Boston, Gem Co. Emergency Manager:** COVID cases and hospitalizations are trending down. Medical officials are concerned about a spike in COVID cases due to the holidays and being indoors. Gem County has had 2,871 cases with 65 deaths. The incident rate from 10/24 – 10/30 has decreased to 12.90%. There have been 7,236 people in the 12+ category that have been vaccinated, which is 46.82% of that population. The Emmett School District reported 2 confirmed cases and 2 quarantined last week. The first infant death in Idaho was reported in October and resided within the SWDH area. SWDH is testing in Emmett on Tuesdays from 9am – 3pm. Call 208-455-9411 for questions and to get scheduled.
- **Tahja Jensen, Gem Co. Prosecutor's Office:** Last evening, 3rd District Administrative Court Judge Davis VanderVelde issued an order resuming jury trials December 7th unless further word from the Idaho Supreme Court.
- **Mayor Petrie, City of Emmett:** The City in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce will be having a ribbon cutting for the opening for S. John's at 12:00 on November 24th. On December 10th and 11th, the Emmett Community Playhouse will be performing "A Christmas Carol" at the Nazarene Church.
- **Denise Sorenson, Emmett City Council:** The Senior Center will have their free Thanksgiving meal on Wednesday, November 24th from 11am – 1pm tentatively. They are anticipating serving around 300 meals. Regulars will be invited to eat their meal in the Senior Center, all others will be curbside pickup. Chief Christensen and Chief Kunka have created a traffic plan to keep things moving smoothly and safely.
- **Chief Christensen, City Fire:** There will be a safety presentation with the Police department at the fire station with the Cub/Boy Scouts tomorrow. They have hundreds of children come for safety presentations throughout the year as part of the Fire Department's Community Risk Reduction program. The Fire department will be at Bi-Mart from 8am – 6pm on Friday and Saturday for Fill the Fire Truck. They will also be putting banners and lights up around the city for the Chamber of Commerce. Check your smoke detectors, they should be replaced every 10 years and make sure the batteries are working. Santa's ride through Emmett is happening again this year. It will be December 13th – 17th.
- **Janet Monti, Friendship Coalition:** Thank you to all the 1st Responders that will be helping with the Stuff the Ambulance and Fill the Firetruck. The Ambulance will be at Albertsons collecting food items. The Firetruck will be at Bi-Mart collecting toys. We are expecting to distribute 300 cheer baskets to families.
- **TJ Wilson, Southwest District Health:** For COVID testing criteria and questions, call 208-455-9411. With the Holidays coming up, there has been an increase of package thefts and break-ins. Be aware that homeless are also getting into unlocked cars to stay warm. They are looking at getting a mobile unit funded to better serve the public. Don't forget to get your flu shot.
- **Barbara Weber, American Red Cross:** There is an uptick in home fires during the winter time. The Red Cross will provide financial, mental health, and medical assistance to those displaced by a home fire. They will replace and install smoke alarms for free if the Fire department is unavailable.
- **Heidi Novich, Idaho Office of Emergency Management:** The Federal Declaration has been extended through April 1st. This provides a 100% cost share for public assistance items for COVID response. The State of Idaho is reviewing the staffing requests that they have out due to the COVID numbers going down.

Motion to adjourn at 9:24 am. by Mayor Petrie. 2nd by TJ Wilson. Motion passes.

Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 21st at 8:30 am. Direction will be provided at a later date on whether the meeting will be in person or remote.